

Reflections from the Pastor

TEACHING & LEARNING . . .

“As I write these lines, a new school year is beginning in many parts of the world. Our daughter, Debra, will be beginning her 29th year as a teacher in Puerto Rico. She has a great deal of confidence because of the many years she has taught. She also has many apprehensions as she begins to work with a new group of students.

As I have been contemplating her experience, my mind reverted to the experience Jesus’ parents had when they took him at 12 years of age to Jerusalem to celebrate the Passover with them.

As Mary and Joseph began their journey back to Galilee, they discovered that Jesus is not among any of the families in their group. They return to Jerusalem and spend the next two days searching for Him.



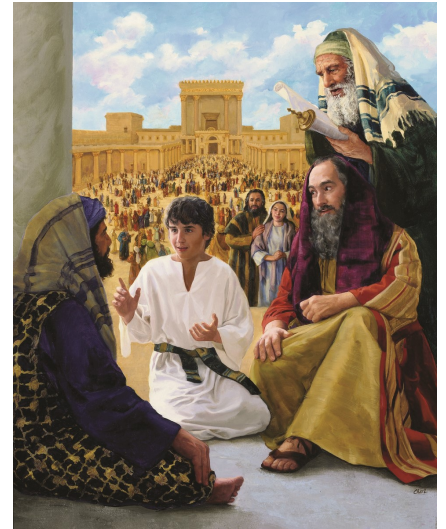
questions. As I revisited this story two thoughts surfaced which I will share with you.

The first is the scolding that Mary gave to Jesus for putting them through hours of anxiety in not knowing where He was. Mary had been made aware of Jesus’ unique origin when the angel Gabriel announced that she was to bear the baby

They find him in the temple where He is listening to the teachers, asking and answering

Jesus into the world. He clearly stated “... *the holy one to be born shall be called the Son of God.*” [Luke 1:6].

At twelve years of age, a Jewish boy was considered to have reached manhood. So, as Mary treasured all her experiences with Jesus, it should not have come as any surprise to her that when he became a man, he would be about His Father’s business.



Secondly, my mind raised the question of why the Temple was the last place they looked for Jesus. One might have thought this would have been one of the first places to look for Him. As the very Son of God, should it not have been logical for Jesus to want to be in His Father’s house?

Jesus’ response gives us some indication of how Jesus perceived his relationship with His Father: “*Why were you searching for me?*” he asked. “*Didn’t you know I had to be in my Father’s house?*” [Luke 2:49]. Jesus considered it the natural place for Him to be. Jesus assumed that if He was to do the will of His Father, He needed to be in constant contact with Him.

Is there not a lesson here for you and for me? If we ever hope to do God's will in our lives, will we not need to be in touch with Him to discern that will? Luke records that following this event, Jesus returned to Galilee with His earthly parents and was obedient to them. [Luke 2:51]. Let us not be misled to believe that when Jesus left the temple, He left the Father's work behind Him. He took the Father's work with Him as he returned to Nazareth.

The Holy Spirit speaks to my mind as I write. Is that not the way God wants to work out His will in all our lives? Do we leave God's work when we leave the church on Sunday?

No! We should be taking God's work with us every day and everywhere we go. This challenges me to make it a deliberate point every day to be about My Father's business. Even when I am writing this article for this Newsletter.

Pastor Ivan Schwenn
August 8, 2022

ST. JOHN'S UMC OUTREACH MINISTRIES

FELLOWSHIP MINISTRY

The Fellowship Ministry takes place every Sunday following the morning Worship Service. It is a time of sharing and social interaction among our worshippers. Individual donations are welcomed.



RUMMAGE ROOM MINISTRY



The Rummage Ministry Outreach is designed to provide good used clothing and other personal items to people

at a reduced cost. Any kind of dog and cat toys or other pet items are accepted, in addition to shoes, books, toys and gently used clothing.

CARD MINISTRY

If you would like to support this ministry, you can help by providing greeting cards, Christian bookmarks, stamps or by donating money to purchase these items.



THE FOOD PANTRY



Non-perishable items are always in demand. The Food Pantry can definitely use toilet paper, peanut butter,

jelly, canned fruits and vegetables, spaghetti noodles and sauce, cereals, juices, cookies and crackers. Items can be brought to the church on Sunday.

ST. JOHN'S CHOIR

If you love to sing, the Choir would love to have you join them on Sunday mornings.

All are welcome.



“One day Jesus was praying in a certain place. When he finished, one of his disciples said to him, ‘Lord, teach us to pray, just as John taught his disciples.’ [Luke 11:1 (NIV)].

We can learn two insights from this verse. The first is that Jesus had a habit of praying. Praying to Jesus was not something He did when He faced moments of difficulty. Prayer was a routine part of his personal relationship with His Father.

There is evidence that Jesus used his prayer life to discern His Father’s will for His life. His priestly prayer, recorded in John 17, manifests to the reader that many details of his life and the lives of His disciples were part of His prayerful concerns.



I am intrigued that the calling of the 12 disciples and sending them out to preach, teach and heal the sick came to pass after Jesus called attention to the masses of people following Him as *“sheep without a shepherd.”* He concluded His comments exhorting his disciples to *“Pray the Lord of the harvest to send forth workers into his harvest field.”* [Matthew 9:37-38].

The first verse of chapter 10 tells us that Jesus called His twelve disciples to Himself and gave them authority to drive out impure spirits and heal every disease and dispersed them to go to the various villages of Galilee.

Few Christians would deny that a prayerless life will be a weak life. The opposite can also be stated that a Christian who exercises their prayer life regularly will become a stronger believer.

The second insight is that praying was not a normal part of the life of even a disciple of Jesus. The first disciples are asking Jesus to teach them to pray. Their argument becomes stronger by the fact that John taught his disciples to pray.

You may argue that most Christians do not have a disciplined prayer life and yet they seem to get along quite well. That is because prayer does not

change our physical life. Prayer affects the life of Christ that is in us through the new birth. When we fail to pray, the life of God’s Son suffers in our lives. The life of God’s Son living in us is not nurtured by the food we eat. It is nurtured by prayer.

Too many prayers are simply a way of getting what we want from God. True Prayer is the way we get to know God and His life living within us. This brings us to the real focus of prayer. Prayer is not so much about changing things as it is about changing us. And when I am transformed by His grace, I can change things. **Pastor Ivan Schwenn**

A LITTLE HUMOR TO PONDER . . .

A man dies and goes to heaven. St. Peter meets him at the Pearly Gates and says: “Here is how it works. You need 100 points to make it into heaven. You tell me all the things you’ve done and I give you a certain number of points for each item. When you reach 100 points, you can get in.”

“Okay,” the man says. “I was married to the same women for 50 years and never cheated on her, even in my heart.”

“That’s wonderful,” says St. Peter, “that’s worth three points.”

“Three points?” inquires the man. “Well, I attended church all my life and supported its ministry with my tithe and service.”

“Terrific!” says St. Peter. “That’s certainly worth a point.”

“One point?” “Gosh! I started a soup kitchen in my city and worked in a shelter for homeless veterans.”

“Fantastic! That’s good for two more points,” St. Peter said.

“Two points!” cried the man. “At this rate the only way I will get into heaven is by the Grace of God!”

“Bingo!” said St. Peter! “100 points! Come on in!”





OPERATION CHRISTMASCHILD 2022

It is that time of year again!

Operation Christmas Child is an annual event sponsored by Samaritan's Purse. It utilizes the simple idea of a carefully packed shoebox filled with items that less-fortunate children around the world need. Packing a Christmas Shoebox is an experience in giving and evangelism.



Shoeboxes are available through Samaritan Purse along with instructions of what items to put in them. You can choose whether you want to pack for a boy or for a girl. These shoeboxes are gathered at your local church and then on the third week of November, they are taken to a drop off location where they are packed into larger boxes and placed into Semi trucks to be delivered to distribution centers. From these distribution centers the boxes will go to more than 100 countries around the world.

Samaritan Purse includes a spiritual Bible lesson along with the plan of salvation. Many pastors in recipient countries use the occasion of receiving shoeboxes to teach their people about the love of Christ. As a result, families are reached for Christ, churches are started, and others grow.

The objective of Christmas Child is for every child to know that there is a God who loves them.



ST JOHN'S ANNAL CHURCH CONFERENCE DATE SET!

The South District Superintendent will be visiting St. John's UMC on Tuesday, September 20th at 7:00 pm. All are welcome to attend to hear a review of our past year's accomplishments and plans for the coming year.

Measuring God's Love

For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son,
that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.
John 3:16 (NIV)

Based on John 3:14-17 (NIV)



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September 2022 Birthdays

September Birthdays



September 2nd	Melyssa Anderson's Birthday
September 3rd	Susan Coon's Birthday
September 9th	Jim Wooley's Birthday
September 14th	Jackie Treadwell's Birthday
September 16th	Marilyn Heimke's Birthday
September 21st	Chuck Moyer II's Birthday
September 21st	Alexandria Evans Redmon's Birthday
September 26th	Marjorie Baker's Birthday
September 26th	Sharon Martin's Birthday

St. John's United Methodist Church
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520-792-6398 E-mail: stjohnsumctucaz@gmail.com

Sunday Worship - 10:00 am
Adult & Children's Sunday School - 9:00 am
Choir Practice - 9:30 - 9:45 am
Fellowship in the Fellowship Hall - 11:00 am

Office Hours: 8:00 am to 4:00 pm