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WELCOME TO FAITH!

From Pastor Trent's Desk...

What is the connection between obedience and love? Is there a connection? Scripture seems to suggest there is; if you're wondering how to love someone better, read on! For those of us who count ourselves as part of the body, the Church of Jesus, it is very important that we understand the relationship between obedience and love. Many church leaders and church bodies are crafting new ways to best love those who are outside of the church. It is difficult for me not to wonder whether the focus of loving the lost has pulled some churches away from obedience to Christ. Is a love for people superseding a love for God? Let's look at how Jesus showed love to the world during his time on earth. . .

In Luke 22:42, it is recorded that Jesus prayed to God the Father: "Father, if you are willing, take this cup from me. . . ." It appears that Jesus wasn't thrilled about the idea of dying on a cross. But, as it turns out, God wanted to offer salvation to the world through the greatest form of love that man has ever known. John 15:13 - "Greater love has no man than this, that he lay down his life for his friends." God knew how to show great love to His world, and he knew our deep sinfulness required it. We often hear, "Jesus loves you so much that he gave his life for you!" And, of course, I agree with that statement; it is true that Jesus loves all of us with an incredible love. Even in our brokenness he loves us. But if it is true that our culture is the most narcissistic it has ever been and that we find ourselves living in a society of individuals who are in love with themselves, maybe we should consider embracing another way of communicating the same event. How does

this sound--"Jesus loved the Father so greatly that he obeyed him to the point of dying on a cross. His act of obedience to God created the possibility for you to join him in the presence of God forever"? It's the same truth, but it takes the emphasis off of us and places it on love and obedience to the Father. One emphasizes love for people, the other obedience and love for God. If we look closely at the death of our Savior on the cross, it seems that obedience to God is what opens the door of salvation to others, not love for people. That reality remains true today.

We can love people all we want, but if that love is not flowing out of obedience to the Father, it's fully possible to, "love them to hell" as the saying goes. We need to admit that we don't know how to love perfectly - not our friends, not our spouses, and certainly not non-believers. But God? He loves perfectly! God's perfect love is best shown to everyone around us when we're living in obedience to him. His love flows through us; despite our shortcomings, God is able to use us to give others a glimpse of who he truly is. This is why honoring Jesus as the Head of the Church is essential! We're to draw near to Jesus and trust that as we do that, his love is going to be on display. As 1 John 4:20 notes, "Whoever claims to love God but hates another is a liar." We can't simultaneously love God and not love others how we're meant to. We all know that we can't do this perfectly, but generally speaking if we're obeying God we'll be loving others well.

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God's unimaginable love for you and the entire world was communicated to us all through the event of Jesus' death on the cross, through an act of obedience. We have to trust that God's love for our communities will be communicated best not out of our strategies, but simply out of our obedience to the Head of the Church, Jesus Christ. 1 John 3:18, "Do not love in word or talk but in deed and in truth," just like Jesus did! Do you want to love others well? Commit your ways to the Lord. 1 John 5:3, "For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments." In loving God you will offend others, but remember that the greatest forms of love are often offensive. If you don't believe me, just look at our perfect savior hanging on the cross. It shouts at us, "your sinfulness is so great that it takes this: a tragedy such as this, a perfect man, the Son of God, nailed to a cross, just to create the *possibility* to make things right again." If we want those around us to not only experience our love, but also the love of God, we must commit to being obedient. We must do our best to be obedient in the obvious areas of life and in the details of everyday living. For the believer, obedience and love are inseparable.

Blessings,
Pastor Trent

Current Prayer Concerns...

- Pray for our search for a new Associate Pastor of Discipleship and Worship
- Pray for Africa Mission Team, now in Gabon
- Mandy and Nate Niekamp, death of Mandy's mother, Grace Cully
- Joann Boyer, recovering from hip replacement surgery
- Jay Berkey, receiving chemotherapy
- Pray for the elders meeting tomorrow, Monday, July 25th
- Pray for Auglaize County Fair Children's Ministry, July 31st thru Aug. 4

Community Choir Forming...

The churches of New Bremen will be cooperating again this year in sponsoring a community picnic on August 28 at Crown Pavilion. The evening will include a concert by AC Swing, and the churches have been asked to form a community choir for the closing, patriotic song of this concert. Rehearsals will be held on August 11 St. Paul's Church from 7:00 to 8:30 p.m., and at the Pavilion on August 25 from 8:30 to 9:00 p.m. There is no need to sign up—just come to the rehearsals! For more information contact Scott Kuenning at 419-305-1500, or email, scott@wotvh.com.



In Gratitude...

We are extremely grateful for a recent gift of \$30,000 that has come to the church. The governing Board has spent much time and prayer considering how to use this special contribution. At last week's meeting, the funds were allocated as follows:

\$2,000—down payment on a car for Pastor Jacob in Gabon

\$5,000—Gift to E-4 Project to help build a medical clinic in Gabon

\$6,440—Sealing and striping of front parking lot

\$16,560—contribution to the General Fund to cover operating expenses.

Again, we are grateful to the family who made this contribution. They have requested that the gift remain anonymous.

VBS Thank You...

Thanks to everyone who helped with Vacation Bible School this week. We averaged 70 children per night. Four children made first-time commitments to Christ! Thanks especially to Gina Tangeman, who directed the school, and to Loresa Burden, who coordinated the decorations.

Associate Pastor Search...

We have identified three lead candidates in our search for a Pastor of Discipleship and Worship. We will be conducting informal interviews with each of the three this week. Please pray for those involved as we seek to discern God's will.

August is Family Worship Month...

There will be no Kids' Church on July 31 or during the month of August in order that families may worship together and our Kids' Church staff may have a break. Children in grades K-5 are invited to join us in the main sanctuary for worship.

County Fair Gospel Tent...

While You are at the Auglaize County Fair, plan to visit the gospel tent each evening at 7:30 p.m. The following artist will be performing:

Sunday, July 31—Legacy Five

Monday, Aug. 1—The Jim Brady Band

Tuesday, Aug. 2—Triumphant Quartet

Wednesday, Aug. 3—The Isaacs

Thursday, Aug. 4—The Browns

Friday, Aug. 5—Soul'd Out Quartet

Saturday, Aug. 6—Guy Penrod (5:00 p.m.)

Financial Report

Offering July 17, 2016

General Fund: \$5,173

Local Mission: \$175

Great Commission: \$815

Adult Mission Trips: \$13

Building Fund: \$210

Kitchen Fund: \$10

Hope House: \$1,000

Youth Center: \$20

Tea House: \$10

District Extension: \$200

Attendance

Week of July 17, 2016

9:00 Worship—81

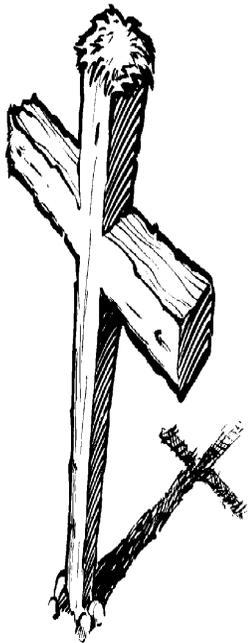
10:30 Worship—116

Kids—43; Adult Workers—10

Total Worship—252

International Class—14

RENEW



Sunday, July 24, 2016

Today

9:00... Early Service
10:30... Late Service
10:30... Kids' Church
12:30... Cookout at Pastor Trent's

This Week

Wednesday... Summer Youth Group
2:00-4:00 pm

MINISTRIES

COMING EVENTS

Aug 3rd...Last Day of Summer
Youth Group

Sep 7th...Youth Group Begins!

I am with you
ALWAYS
even to the end of the age.
Matthew 28:20

Broadway Maybies Talent Show...

The Family Center of St.Mary's will be sponsoring a talent show on Sunday September 18, at 2:00 p.m. The purpose of this event is to raise funds for the Center. Singers, dancers, magicians, instrumentalists, and other talented people are invited to participate. Acts must be family-friendly and no longer than eight minutes. Auditions will be held on Thursday, August 18, at 5:00 p.m. at Wayne St. UMC. The prize for first place will be \$75.

The mission of Family Life Center is to help young women and families with services, education, and care in order to achieve their full potential. For more information about this event, please call the center at 419-300-9756 or email familylife_ac@yahoo.com.

