

A monthly publication of Christian Church of Mountain Home in the interest of promoting the Gospel of Jesus Christ and goodwill among His people, our friends.

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Jesus Christ

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Beautifully Different

by Eric Dwyer

Not everyone thinks the way you do. I know that can be frustrating. The world would be a better place if we were all Kansas Jayhawk fans (get on board, people). All kidding aside, take a moment to recall a time when someone did not consider a task or an event as important as you did. Were you wrestling with frustration, resentment, or even bewilderment? "How can this person not understand the importance of _____?" You fill in the blank.

Those who do not accept Jesus as God do not feel called to the standard of relational interaction He laid out for His followers. Why would they? How does the world often respond to conflict? Would they get mad and get even? Would they turn that resentment into bitterness toward the individual? Perhaps they begin to devalue that person in the relationship. Christian, let me ask, how do you respond when you do not see eye to eye with both Christians and non-Christians?

Now consider how Jesus interacted with people who did not see eye to eye with Him. I know some of you reading this may think you are right all the time and life would be easier if everyone just fell in line, but you are not perfect. Jesus lived a perfect life. He was always right in every instance. This means everyone who disagreed with Him was wrong. Can you imagine living in a world where no one ever lived up to your Godly perfection? How mad would you be if every time you turned around you saw one more person falling short of your divine faultlessness? If anyone had the right to degrade someone, it would be the sinless One.

Make no mistake; Jesus could turn over tables and take a stand. He was not afraid to stand up and say, "Enough of this!" But His brimstone teachings were not aimed at the lost that were hurting, but the religious who were supposed to be healing and were instead turning the spiritual hospital into a clubhouse. To those living a life outside the will of God, Jesus showed an unprecedented level of compassion.

To unrepentant hypocrites, He would say, "Woe to you! You claim to be teachers and you tell everyone ELSE how they should live and you do not help lift the burden you force upon the shoulders of others!" Jesus was no pushover, but this never stopped Him from being completely loving. Even when they were wrong, He would still eat meals at the homes with these tarnished teachers. He wept over the very city which would shout for his murder by saying, "I long to gather you to myself, but you refuse me." He would even ask God to forgive those in the very act of killing Him. From the totally lost sinner to the completely misguided minister, His heart breaks for those who need to have their hearts mended. What can we take from the life of Jesus that would help us interact with people



on the right and the wrong side of the Kingdom when we're all just so... different?

Let's start with those who do not believe. It is true Jesus always showed love, but He never condoned sin. Because we follow Jesus, we are automatically different from the rest of the world. So how do we live our faith, our view conflict, with those who have not yet accepted the salvation Jesus offers? Should we avoid the challenge altogether by surrounding ourselves in a Christian culture where we are able to avoid opposition? You know that's not the right answer. One light in utter darkness does more good than one light surrounded by 1,000 others. We strive for God's holiness while at the same time standing out like salt in a bland meal. We don't cut ourselves off from the rest of society like some zombie apocalypse movie in order to keep ourselves from being polluted by the world. When we come into contact with those outside of Christ, we stand on the Truth of God's word while not behaving like we'd gleefully shut the Heavenly door in their face ourselves if they don't repent. We show the same compassion Jesus lived.

How do we interact with people inside the continued on page 3



For other articles and information about our congregation, go online www.ccmhar.com

The Death of



This article is a synopsis of a sermon recently presented.

From the Waltons in Ireland

Thank you for your support. We are so grateful to have you as partners in furthering the gospel. We have had three worship services so far in our new space. Please pray that more people would come and understand their need for a Savior.

Thanks for Elder Appreciation

The collection for **Elder Appreciation** during October came to \$1600. This amount was divided equally between our two Bible colleges for student scholarships. The expressions of appreciation both by cards and monetarily to our eldership was treasured by them all. Also, Eric Dwyer's expression of personal appreciation for each individual elder during In-gathering reflected our corporate feelings towards these fine men.

Preacher's Pen

Innocent people are being murdered. It is occurring within our own borders. In facilities purported to be dedicated to providing health care! Godly people decry the deliberate termination of innocent lives on the altar of selfishness, whether the motive is profit or personal convenience.

But the Bible records God's explicit instructions during the period of conquest to completely destroy entire groups of people. This, despite His clear command prohibiting murder. How can we reconcile God's seemingly contradictory commands? Specifically, how can we say God hates the murder of innocent children when His commands to Israel necessitated the same?

Inasmuch as proponents of abortion are asking this question and whereas this discussion has eternal implications, it is worthy of our attention and incumbent upon us to have a reasoned response.

A couple distinctions must be recognized. First, God alone has the power to create life and the authority to take life. God is not obligated to man. His sovereignty was displayed when He destroyed the world, including innocent children, in the Flood, and again when all but those in Rahab's house were killed at Jericho.

Excising cancerous growths always involves the destruction of healthy tissue. Chemotherapy is indiscriminate in its destruction of cells to eradicate cancer. When God commanded the eradication of every living being, He was excising the evil, pagan cancer cells, thereby preventing metastasis. God, therefore, is not implicated with injustice or immorality by commanding the destruction of the inhabitants of Canaan.

God's agents in destroying the pagans during the period of conquest were not guilty of immorality or injustice because they were carrying out God's instructions.

God explains in Deuteronomy 20:18 His reasoning for the total destruction of certain peoples. "So that they may not teach you to do according to all their detestable things which they have done for their gods, so that you would sin against

by Gene McCoy

the Lord your God." Among the "detestable things" were ritual prostitution and even child sacrifice.

A second distinction pertains to the fact that God's purpose has never focused on a nationality like it did with the Jews before Messiah came. We must not equate Israel of the Old Testament with any nation today. The Jews were regulated by the Law to keep them fenced in, so to speak, until Messiah came. Providing and preserving a nation through which the Savior would come required some drastic measures, like the utter destruction of the Amalekites, as recorded in 1 Samuel 15. God's eternal purpose was the redemption of sinners through His Messiah. This sometimes required the death of innocent people.

As horrific as these measures were, none compares to the death of The Innocent One, Jesus, the Savior Messiah. God's enduring love for sinners was unmistakably communicated at Calvary, where The Innocent One paid the price of eternal death for every sinner who would display faith in His blood at baptism. Among the deaths of innocents, **THIS** is the one that concerns and bewilders us most! The only way guilty sinners could escape the penalty of eternal death is through the sacrificial death of The Innocent One.

To enjoy the benefits of His atoning sacrifice, we must die to sin. Dying to sin and being raised to life is what baptism is about. To the same extreme degree to which the Israelites were to completely destroy the pagan influence in the conquest, so, too, are we to crucify self, die to sin, mortify the flesh and take up our cross daily to follow Jesus. Do we hate sin as we ought? Enough to be radical in allowing the Holy Spirit to excise it?

Our dying to sin is described in Romans (8:13) as putting to death the deeds of the body. Colossians 3:5 lists some specific examples.

Oh that every Christian would be as intent upon the eradication of sin in his life as he is in the eradication of ISIS. Declare jihad upon sin in your life. 

Beautifully Different, cont'd

by Eric Dwyer

Church who just aren't as awesome as we know we are? Jesus never needed the following question, but we flawed humans need to ask, "Is this person wrong or just viewing this situation differently than I am?" Differences of opinion and preference are a part of the Church. We can all read the Word of God and come away with a different lesson learned. The intellectual, the introvert, the type-A personality, the party dude, the young, old, rich, poor, man, woman, relational, emotional, the Quaker, the baker, and the candlestick maker can all grow together in pursuit of Christ. How is this possible? God is intellectual and relational. He is a perfectionist and one who extends grace. He is funny. He is serious. He knows everything and is still amazed by faith. He is so much more than we can comprehend and we are all created in His image with varying gifts in order to be more effective in His Kingdom.

If you are a carpenter, you do not have only hundreds of hammers for your work. You have a variety of tools for the right job as it arises. A worker would be considered insane if they were found shouting at a saw for not being a paintbrush. The Carpenter has a variety of tasks and a variety of tools to reach a wide variety of the creation He dearly loves. Just because there is disagreement, it does not mean there is a problem. It is when we do not seek to interact and grow from a conflict a problem begins to fester. I realize I just said if you are having a problem interacting with someone, you might need to work with them even more to find out what's going on. That is the much more difficult choice. Our natural reaction is to pull back from them. It is easier to make assumptions and degrade people. Thankfully, Jesus did not do this. Neither should we.

After examining to see if this is all a misunderstanding, if the person is found to be in error, then it is time to lovingly correct. If someone is falling short, love them (and your God) enough to find out why. There is usually an underlying or root cause for the behavior, but that takes further investment in the relation-

ship to discover. It's easier to punish people for being sick instead of showing the healing power of God. Jesus empowered His followers to heal others. Think about that for a moment. Jesus raised the dead and cured diseases and He freely gave this power to His followers. I don't know about you, but if I knew I could instantly heal the sick, I'd bolt to the hospital and start praying over people instead of finishing this article! We have the power and authority by God to make disciples of Jesus and baptize them into the most amazing healing of all and we had better not keep it to ourselves. By God's power and plan, we can raise people from spiritual death, but sin still rears its ugly head in the lives of those who desire to follow Jesus.

But we roll eyes, sigh, and think, "Why can't they just...not be sick?" And in our frustration and lack of truly loving that individual, we react to their sinful warning signs with contempt. Punishing the symptoms of sin instead of healing the disease itself is like wiping your child's nose with sand paper to teach them not to have a cold. When you don't see eye to eye and the other person is wrong, we should recall how God has treated all the wrong we've ever done and do likewise.

You don't spike the ball to prove a point. When you save your brother or sister from their erroneous ways, you will both be more like Christ. Extending a hand and untangling a mess as a team builds trust and loyalty. This loyalty is not only to each other as brothers and sisters in Christ, but it makes us more committed to the Savior. We will be a living example of compassion the world can see and long to experience.

On second thought, I wouldn't want everyone to think exactly the way I do (I know you just said, "Amen!" and I forgive you). I will gladly accept the frustrating differences between us and love you enough to offer the compassion and healing of Jesus because it models and glorifies Christ, widens the net we use to be fishers of men, and sharpens us to be better disciples.

C'mon, c'mon, let's work together. 

Family Info For December

MEETINGS

- 1 Benevolence Ministry Team 6:30 pm
- 2 Women of Worth Bible Study @ 9:30
- 3 Ladies' Christmas Party @ 6 pm
- 6 Worship Ministry Team @ noon
- 7 Willing Workers @ 1 pm
- 9 Women of Worth Bible Study @ 9:30
- 14 Elders @ 6:30
- 16 Women of Worth Bible Study @ 9:30
- 20 Education Ministry Team @ noon
- 24 Holiday Vespers @ 6 pm

Birthdays

- 2 Eric Dwyer
- 3 Clint Hinds
- 3 Jason McFarland
- 3 Jessica McFarland
- 4 Anne Mace
- 6 LaDonna Mendleski
- 12 Melva Derrickson
- 12 Kathy Alger
- 13 Sharon Belicek
- 14 Easton Peglar
- 16 Nelda Willming
- 18 Laura Hummitsch
- 21 Dorothy Sowle
- 21 Jesse Alger
- 23 Sabreena Massey
- 24 Karen Erickson
- 25 Maryln Evans
- 27 Julie Hickman
- 27 Adele Bettenhausen
- 29 Chloe Nosari
- 29 Barb Francis
- 29 Charles Monahan

Anniversaries

- 2 Chester & Jeanine Kocherer
- 7 Brad & Linda Berg-Mexico
- 13 Eric & Sarah Dwyer
- 17 Brandon & Courtney Pickett
- 18 Mike & Anita Lockhart
- 19 Joe & Maggie Salik
- 27 Ernest & Numreta McFarland
- 27 Dan & Anne Mace
- 29 Bruce & Vicky Wolf
- 29 Steve & Rhonda Hayward
- 30 Bryan & Mary Douglas

An Attitude of Gratitude

by Joyce Rhoads

The dictionary describes gratitude as the quality of being thankful; readiness to show appreciation for and to return kindness.

Robert Emmons and Michael McCullough are two of the leading American investigators of gratitude. These men's opinion is that gratitude is a personality strength. It is, they say, an ability to never take for granted those things that we love and to be acutely aware of those things when they happen to us. Individuals who are truly grateful express their thanks not just to be polite, but from the heart.

They found that thankfulness, wonder and appreciation for life itself has been linked to experiencing high levels of gratitude. And, their research has found that the outcome of expressing gratitude is being happier, healthier and having more energy. It even reduces loneliness, stress, anxiety and depression!

On Thanksgiving Day most people stop to think

about their lives and those things that they have for which to be thankful. It is a shame that Thanksgiving Day is one of the few times some people stop to recognize how fortunate they are.

Martin Seligman is a researcher and teacher at the University of Pennsylvania. He is considered the father of positive psychology.

According to Mr. Seligman, our moods, health and happiness could be improved by counting our blessings regularly. But, when we express that to others those feelings are greatly increased. One of the outcomes of his research was that the blessings did not have to be our greatest moments; that the smallest of blessings have as much benefit.

What parent reading this has not been moved by the precious toddler offering to share some of their slobbered-on cookie.

Spread it around. It will do all of us good!



The LORD'S COMMISSION is OUR MISSION
Matthew 28:19-20

Meeting Schedule
 Wednesday Evening 9:30 Supper
 Sunday Morning 11:00 Bible Classes
 Wednesday Evening 6:30 Bible Classes

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