

Mustard Seed

Kalona Mennonite Church

How Is Your Attitude?

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A wise person once told me that attitude is everything. It has also been said that people with good attitudes are much more capable of embracing challenges, able to trust others, can bounce back when difficulties get them down, and can even be more forgiving towards themselves and others.

Viktor Frankl, a Jewish psychiatrist who was imprisoned in Germany during World War II, said this of our attitude, "Everything can be taken from a man but one thing: that is the ability to choose one's attitude in any given set of circumstances." We do have the ability to choose our mindset. In Matthew 11:29, Jesus said, "Learn of me." In other words, through Christ we can learn new and better ways to live and think no matter what we are dealing with in life.

Sociologist Benjamin Barber said, "I do not divide the world into the weak and strong or the successes and failures; I divide the world into learners and non-learners." Jesus wants us to be learners by fixing our minds on the things above, not on the things of this earth.

How is your attitude? Do those around you often comment about your good attitude or your bad attitude? Your attitude will be a blessing to others and yourself if you are willing to keep your mind fixed on Jesus and learn from Him.

Scott Swartzendruber



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Special points of interest:

- Jeff and I would appreciate your prayers as we prepare and go on this trip, and invite you to follow along in the blog.
- Music..... can serve as a reminder to welcome..... someone outside your generation.

On My Way to India

India, the home of Mother Teresa and Gandhi. India, the home of the Taj Mahal. India, the birthplace of Hinduism and Buddhism. India, the home of elephants, tigers, and cobras. India, the setting for the Jungle Book (I love that movie). India, the other side of the world. India, a place I've never desired to visit (and that is saying something, because I've wanted to visit just about every other place in the world). And yet, I've purchased a ticket from Chicago to New Dehli on February 26th to accompany Jeff to India.

So why am I going to India and what am I going to be doing there? Those are two great questions to which I don't have a very good answer, at least in most peoples' minds. You see, I don't know what I'll be doing in India and I have no idea why I am going, other than I feel like it is what God wants me to do. It would be nice to see this as a life changing event, either in my life or in the lives of others, but I don't know if that will be the case or not. Maybe it will be, but maybe not. Maybe it will be to support Jeff. Maybe it is for knowledge I can share with the staff of PTL India. Maybe it is for the people we will encounter. Maybe it is to share our experiences with

others through my blog. But no matter what, it is to be obedient. I'd much rather obey than spend 3 days in the belly of a fish like Jonah.

I'm very excited about this upcoming trip and could fill the next couple of Mustard Seeds with more background on this trip as well as the steps of faith God has led me through and the answers to prayer he's provided. If you'd like to know more, check out the blog at curtwyse.blogspot.com or see some of the entries that are printed and hanging on the mission board at Kalona Mennonite Church. I hope to update this blog several times a week prior to our leaving, and as often as possible once we are in India. I will be sharing thoughts and concerns, answers to prayers and how God is working. Jeff and I would appreciate your prayers as we prepare and go on this trip, and invite you to follow along in the blog.

Curt Wyse



Word from Worship Commission

A couple of years ago the pastors and elders encouraged Kalona Mennonite to be more deliberate about being a multi-generational church. The worship commission would like to reflect variation in style during each service. Beginning in February we are planning on having both the worship team and hymns every Sunday. We recognize the only way to be a multi-generational church is to build relationships between generations. Learning to appreciate a variety of worship styles can be a starting point. Can we continue to find ways to be in relationship with those who are not considered peers? Let's be creative, how can we be deliberate about building multi-generational relationships here at KMC? Serving side-by-side in mission and in various church functions is vital.

You may be asking is it really important to think about the differences in generations? John Ortberg in Leadership Journal (2009) cautions churches from being an "aging church that wants to have more young people attending so that we don't die, but we don't

want to change enough to actually attract any of them to come." Don't underestimate the differences in age. Ortberg challenges the church to keep asking "who feels connected at your church?" Music alone will not connect us...But it can serve as a reminder to welcome in ways that tell someone outside your generation there is a place for them! "God is the God of every generation... We are richer people when we work together. Our relationships are enhanced when we have multiple generations around the table....God's plan is not for the church to be a one-generation operation with a 30-year shelf life (Ortberg, 2009)."

Please be in prayer regarding our worship at KMC. Please feel free to share with me regarding your suggestions or willingness to utilize your gifts in our worship services.

Karen Schrock, Worship Commission Chair

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Armor of God

" Finally, be strong in the Lord and in his mighty power. Put on the full armor of God, so that you can take your stand against the devil's schemes. For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms. Therefore put on the full armor of God, so that when the day of evil comes, you may be able to stand your ground, and after you have done everything,

to stand. Stand firm then, with the belt of truth buckled around your waist, with the breastplate

He is the protection we seek and need.

of righteousness in place, and with your feet fitted with the readiness that comes from the gospel of peace. In addition to all this, take up the shield of faith, with which you can extinguish all the flaming arrows of the evil one. Take the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God.

And pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests. With this in mind, be alert and always keep on praying for all the Lord's people. Pray also for me, that whenever I speak, words may be given me so that I will fearlessly make known the mystery of the gospel, for which I am an ambassador in chains. Pray that I may declare it fearlessly, as I should." *Ephesians 6:10-20*

Okay so there is the belt of truth, breastplate of righteousness, feet/shoes filled with readiness, shield of faith, helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit. Now let's see how much we know about armor. It's made of metal, it's strong, it's for protection. But I bet most people don't think about the care of the armor or how important



each piece is. We are vulnerable, we need protection. Would you be willing to go into battle with just a breastplate? Or maybe just a shield? Each piece has its place and each one *matters*. We need each and every piece of armor. If we don't have faith how can we have salvation? They are all linked together. Caring for the armor requires work. Each time you get hit there will be a dent in the armor and once the fight is over you need to take care of those dents because they weaken the armor and if you are really up to it you should wash and shine the armor so it doesn't rust and become vulnerable.

"God is our refuge and strength, an ever-present help in trouble." Psalms 46:1 The armor is God's way of becoming our refuge and strength. He is the protection we seek and need. We are vulnerable but God is strong. What are you willing to do to win this battle?

Larissa Wyse

WMSC

Twenty ladies and 2 children attended the January meeting of WMSC. Our lunch was million dollar spaghetti, salad, homemade bread and a fig pudding for dessert. The devotional was led by Doris Redding. The work completed was 7 rugs and 7 single flat sheets for our project donations. Join us in February for the all church work night. Our project will be items for the college boxes. Bring cookies and bars to share with others when the work is done.

Jennifer Brenneman



In Pursuit

It isn't unusual for me to walk completely around our grocery store two or more complete times when I am looking for someone. I don't think they are avoiding me but between the number of aisles, displays and people it is easy to move in such a way that you keep missing each other. Sometimes, I will get a glimpse of the person, but by the time I get there they are no longer there.

This is how I have been feeling about my time with God lately. It has been difficult for me to feel like I am in the presence

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of God. My difficulty doesn't come from aisles, displays and people, but from my mind. It just doesn't want to shut off. I do still see God here and there, but it seems to be more flashes, glimpses and peeks, not the awareness of being enveloped in His presence.

The problem, I think, lies in that I tend to multi-task. When I walk for exercise I often listen to a devotional. When I bake cookies I usually do other chores while each batch bakes. When I do bookwork at home I watch TV or have a conversation with someone or both. Plus, I often am planning or thinking over other things at the same time. Even when I am just watching TV for entertainment I find myself working puzzles on the computer or putting together a jigsaw puzzle.

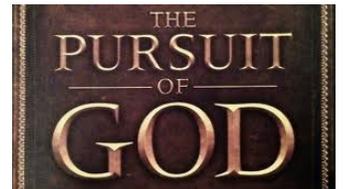
However, there have been "hints" that God has increasingly placed in my life that He wants me to give Him my undivided attention. It started out with stories of Elijah and the still small voice in 1 Kings 19, Isaiah (chapter 6) in the throne room with unclean lips and his request to "send me", Ezekiel (chapters 1-3) being commissioned and told to "eat this scroll and go speak", Daniel (chapter 6) whose time with God was more important than the risk of death, Jesus (Mark 1:35) went to a deserted place, and John (in Revelation) alone on the island of Patmos. I have run into these stories and others like them over and over again over the last few months. It fascinates me, the relationships that these people had with God. Just look at

what little the Bible tells us of their lives. It is incredible and it is not fiction. It is not impossible. It is the true results from their living faithfully for God.

I found myself thinking of these things more and more, wishing I had more of what they had in regards to God. Then one day I was reading a devotional and the author pointed out that to have a deep relationship with God you need to spend a great deal of time just listening for Him. You need to shut out everything else. God is there for us always, but if we insist on focusing on other things He will let us do that. Sometimes I really don't like free will. If God would only force me to listen intently to Him!

So here I am, wanting this new intimacy with God. I have tried to quiet my mind and listen with very little success. At first I kept finding that my mind wandered to concerns in my life and things I needed to get done. Another time I thought I was getting it, just to realize that I had dozed off and took a nap. That was truly disappointing. Only once I felt I could hear God and it was only for a brief time before my mind took over again. It was enough for me to know that I want to pursue this spiritual discipline. God's voice in your life is priceless. I know that I need help to grow in the area of silence and solitude in God's presence.

I fully intended to write this month about the knowledge of the Holy Spirit, but it became obvious to me that God was not going to help me to



write on that subject at this point and time. Spiritual growth has been placed on my mind.

Every Christian must be pursuing spiritual growth in our lives at all times. We also have an obligation to promote spiritual growth in each other, but I think we are too afraid of stepping on people's toes (or having our own toes stepped on) to do this effectively. We need to fear not. (Did you know that one of the most common commands in the Bible is to "Fear not?") (Cont. on page 5)

WHAT'S HAPPENING!!!

Wow, what a day! Wind chill of -20 degrees this AM. So it felt good to spend MLK Day inside watching the inauguration. It was good to see so many politicians all on their best behavior! One politician even quoted Alex Haley, "Find the Good, and Praise It." I thought good job buddy. I also enjoyed the variety of music. Well so much for that, you probably want to hear "What's happening" here at KMC.

Haley Slaubaugh graduated from Central College at Pella, Iowa in Elementary Education and then completed her student teaching at Knoxville, Iowa. Haley is now a substitute teacher at Williamsburg Elementary.

Lindsay Swartzendruber graduated from Morningside College with a Masters in Special Education. She is presently teaching at Prairie Point Middle School in Cedar Rapids.

Jeff Swartzendruber graduated from the University of Iowa in the Physical Therapy Program and is presently studying for his boards.

Chance Beachy graduated from the University of Iowa with an Electrical Engineering degree. His emphasis is actually in computers & software.

Congratulations: Haley, Lindsay, Jeff and Chance!!

**Congratulations
Graduates!**

Ben Wyse spent 3 weeks in Indonesia as part of a learning abroad program while earning college credit toward his degree at Calvin College in Grand Rapids, Michigan.

It sure is good to have Fred & Judy Yoder back in the community. They had been in Rochester, Minnesota for over 2 months while Fred had a kidney transplant. Welcome back home.

Cal Hochstedler recently went to Haiti for several weeks to do some plumbing for Troy Miller and "Water for Life". Shirley decided she would leave as well, so she went to Oregon to visit their son, Tim and his family. Why stay home alone!

Ivy Lin is here as an International Student through the Cambridge Program. Ivy is from Fuzhou, China, a city of 10 million people situated about 5 hours south of Shanghai. She is staying with John & Jane Schlaubaugh this semester while attending Iowa Mennonite School. She plans to go home for the summer then return to IMS for her last two years of high school. Welcome, Ivy.

Well that's it for this time. Stay warm and thank goodness the days are getting longer.

So long for now, *Ed V. & Carol Miller*

*Happy
Valentine's
Day*

(Cont. from page 4)

We are hurting our growth as a community, by not caring enough to encourage growth. Any good gardener will tell you to have a good crop takes weeding, pruning, fertilizing and lot of hard work. So is spiritual growth. We need each other's support to do it.

This is my challenge to you. Find out what area God is pushing you to grow in. Pray for the desire to want to grow in this area. Find one or more persons

to share this with and ask them to pray for you and encourage you in this pursuit. Also, encourage others to do the same. I know I would love to have all of you praying for my spiritual growth. We are called to be disciples and to make disciples. May we be obedient to this command from God. *As always, in pursuit.*

Dawn Wyse

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Our Vision is to be a life-giving church: Presenting the life-giving message of Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior to the people of the Kalona area and the world, challenging them to accept Christ, worship Him, and serve Him.

Our Mission is to fulfill the Great Commission: Leading people to Christ; discipling them in the faith; equipping them to witness; and sending them out to serve.



HAPPY BIRTHDAY TROY!!



Troy Miller, who is from our own congregation, is celebrating his birthday on February 18. Troy is in full time mission service drilling wells in Haiti for “Water for Life in Haiti”. Give Troy a mailbox full of birthday greetings and well wishes. Even if you don’t know Troy personally, send a card, make his day! Mail at this address is delivered weekly.

Troy Miller
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