

August 2010

Cyberspace News

Michigan News



Expressing Our Love for God through Obedience

Elder Charles Moore

Fall Retreat
&
Business Meeting
October 1, 2, 3

Winter Retreat
2011
Nazarene District
Center
Howell Michigan
February
4, 5, 6

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We have for the past few months examined some of the ways that we express our love for God. God tells us He wants us to love Him with all of our heart, with all of our soul, with all of our mind, and all of our strength. This month we will examine the expression of our love for God through obedience to His commands. Our obedience reveals our true love for God as Jesus said, **"If you love Me, you will keep My commandments. (John 14:15)**

Obedience then is the litmus test of our love of God. What is a litmus test? If you had chemistry in school, you used a colored litmus paper to determine how acidic something was, or its 'PH value'. If you have a swimming pool you know what I am talking about as well. When it turned a certain color you knew approximately how acidic the water was. The litmus test for our love for God is not how we feel about God or our affection for God. The litmus test for our love is measured by our obedience. Are we obeying his commands, following his teachings, doing

what He tells us to do? Everything else is just giving God lip service. Anyone can say they love God, but the proof is when we obey God.

Notice, we obey God's commands because we love God. The reverse never works; we can't obey our way into a love for God. In other words, just as Martin Luther and John and Charles Wesley learned for themselves, I can't make myself love God more by following God's commands. Those three men were clergyman and they tried to do all the right things. They tried to follow every commandment and every church teaching, but instead of experiencing God's love and grace, they were empty inside. Luther was even angry and bitter over how miserable his life was in trying to follow all of God's rules and regulations. It wasn't until each man was awakened to the incredible love God had for them in Jesus Christ that they were set free from the law so that they

might freely love God. Once they were in a loving relationship with God, they longed to follow God's commands. Unless your obedience flows out of your love for God, it isn't true obedience

If you have kids, have had kids, baby sat kids, or observed kids, you know that parents ask their kids to do things. When they ask their kids to do something, what do they expect? They expect their kids to do what they're asked to do. Silly parents, I know! Kids may do what they're asked for several reasons. Some are motivated by a fear of punishment. They are afraid of being grounded, given time out, or deprived of an outing. Some are motivated by a desire for rewards. Maybe their allowance is tied to whatever they are being asked to do. Some are motivated by guilt. They feel guilty if they let their parents down. Some are motivated by the love they have for their parents and they want to please them. I know this doesn't happen that way very often and, when it does, what a thrill it is! I know that as a parent we need every weapon in our arsenal to mold our kids into decent human beings, but it is obvious that love is the

(Continued on page 2)

best motivation. When our children do it for love, it's as if we recognize that they have achieved something truly great in their development, and in fact, they have.

In our relationship with God we can be motivated by fear (hell, punishment), reward (heaven, crown of righteousness) or guilt ('you sinner'). But know this, God desires for us to be motivated by our love for Him.

Frederick Buechner's little book of character sketches of people from the Bible has this to say about the angel Gabriel as he encounters Mary: "She struck him as hardly old enough to have a child at all, let alone this child. But he had been entrusted with a message to give her, and he gave it. He told her what the child was to be named, who he was to be, and something about the mystery that was to come upon her. 'You mustn't be afraid, Mary,' he said. As he said it, he only hoped she wouldn't notice that beneath the great golden wings, he himself was trembling with fear to think that the whole future of creation hung on the answer of a girl."

Gabriel's obedience to the Father God was unconditional. But what would Mary's response to God be? We all know that Mary was willing to accept her role in God's great plan to bring salvation to the world, but what about her motivation for obedience?

Mary could have chosen to obey God's plan for her life because she wanted the special reward of God's favor upon her because of her faithfulness to God. If so, the Holy Spirit could have seen this motive and passed her by to find someone else to be the Mother to the Messiah.

Mary could have been fearful that God would punish her if she refused, so she anxiously accepted the role God assigned to her lest God strike her dead. Would the Holy Spirit entrust the Christ child to an individual with such a view of God? God wasn't sending a Messiah to pour out His wrath upon disobedient sinners but to display His love for them in spite of their sin.

Mary could have felt she had no choice other than to impose a strict self-righteousness upon herself to carefully obey God and His law. The Holy Spirit would see Mary's righteousness as nothing more than filthy rags. Would God place His Son into the care of a self-righteous legalist when the Messiah's purpose would be to set man free from the condemnation of the law?

God had chosen wisely in selecting Mary to be the Mother of the Messiah. She lovingly obeyed God's purpose and plan for her life. **"Behold, the bondservant of the Lord; may it be done to me according to your word." And the angel departed from her. (Luke 1:38)** was Mary's simple response.

What's your motivation for obedience to Christ's command? Love is proven genuine through obedience. May you be a willing servant who responds with obedience because of your great love for your Master.

Some material for this article was taken from sermons by Matthew Stoll and D. Greg Ebie who are contributors to sermoncentral.com.

Cyberspace News

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August continued in the "hot" pattern we have had this summer. It has been a great summer for vacations!

I received a picture of all the ladies in the Lynn Vaughn and Peggy Charles' families from Rob Vaughn. Doesn't it look like a wonderful summer party!

Kay and Jim Nevil celebrated their 25th wedding anniversary this year with a wonderful European trip and a cruise down the Danube River. Their daughter Katy was in Europe doing mission work in Paris so they were able to join her for a visit and enjoy some sights together. Earlier in the month Kay, Jim, and Aunt Kathy and Uncle Joe Smeltzer traveled to Saint Marys Florid to see Josh Nevil off on one of his 3-month submarine stints with the Navy.

Leslie Miller sent a picture of her and husband Tom's son Alexander celebrating his first birthday. What a happy boy!

Jennie and Kane Begeman flew in from Phoenix so the family could have a shower to welcome Baby Girl Begeman's arrival in December. The shower had to be early as she is not supposed to fly later. It was a beautiful afternoon at the church.

News from Laurie Begeman Eckles—she broke her foot. She has a fashionable air cast on these days and has a handicap sticker. I think it will be for longer than she would like! Hang in there.

I am sorry that I need to send a change for Dorothy Layton's phone number I gave you last month. It is now 301-490-9008 which is her original number. She is almost totally settled in her apartment and likes it. Call her or send a card—she has not gotten much mail yet.

September 7 is a date that should be remembered in history! Jerome Ripley will be 90 years old and we need to help him celebrate!! Please send him a card or note. His address is 4865 Glen Ivy Lane S.W. Apt. C-207, Roanoke VA 24018. He writes that his hip continues to give him pain but he and Norma can still get around and enjoy some of God's blessings.

Ellen Momberger wrote about her great-granddaughter, Molly, who has inherited some of Ellen's artistic talents. She is 10 years old and Ellen is coaching her in drawing and using acrylics to paint on cloth. She has started at a special school this year to learn more. What a joy that must be, Ellen.

Michigan Report

Aurine Moore



According to the Farmers' Almanac, August is the month of the "Full Sturgeon Moon", in honor of the fact that "sturgeon, a large fish of the Great Lakes and other major bodies of water, were most readily caught during this month". I'm sure this is what Joe Smeltzer had in mind if in fact he got in a bit of fishing this month. He also found time to be part of the fund raising effort for Jefferson High School. Jefferson High staged a steak roast where Charlie and Aurine saw Joe and his mother Sally and Sally's good, good friend Ilene.

We've spent the month during worship services walking through I Peter chapters 1 and 2. One of the nuggets came when Peter said the believers were to have a sincere love for one another. He was talking about the kind of sincerity found in pottery that was sold without a coating of wax applied to disguise the pot's imperfections and flaws. We are afraid sometimes to let our fears and imperfections to be seen but we know from Peter, too, that "love covers multitude of sins" (I Peter 4:8). Thank God for Christian brothers and sisters who love us, warts and all.

Elizabeth Goins now has a mobile home across the street from her family and is a daily help to her family and a blessed part of their lives. James is home most of the time now and is looking good. Kathy Smeltzer has had a very musical month, spending time at all-day sings. In fact, singing the Echoes were part of the opening act for The Skyline Boys at the Gospel Barn in Bluffton Indiana. They opened their performance singing their always rousing and inspiring song, 'Lazarus' and the crowd and the Skyline Boys were blessed and impressed! Dale and Geneva, who love good gospel music, may want to listen to that group sing on their web site:

skylineboys.musiccitynetworks.com.

It may be the tail end of summer but we are already planning for upcoming events. Our fall retreat will be October 1-3. We look forward to seeing as many friends and family as can make it to join us and to hearing the Detroit Rescue Mission Ministries Choir

sing in the afternoon after dinner. Mark your calendars! Also, this is a big one; we have a date for youth camp next summer, July 31- August 5. That will be a big change, hopefully one that will let more youth come. Please talk up the change in date as you run into potential campers.

Diane and Tim Begeman had a special kind of a month. First, Diane had a wonderful visit with Rachel Sottile, who dropped in to see her while in town. Listening to Diane, you know she was just blessed to have the chance to have a good visit with her good friend. Later in the month, Kane and Jennie Begeman flew in for a baby shower for their soon to arrive little girl. That girl is going to be blessed! The family hosted a beautiful shower at church, with an imaginative diaper game where lots of wonderful, girly-girl gifts were presented.

It was a big month for Joel and Carrie DeHaan. Joel had a test for his trade licensing and Carrie had a big exam as she completes her doctoral training. The results aren't in but we know they passed. Congratulations! Katie Begeman has been hard at work at summer school and no doubt got a much needed break, going with her grandparents, Dale and Geneva, and parents, Jeff and Melinda to Gatlinburg, Tennessee. The family rented what sounds like a wonderful house. We're still awaiting their return and may have more news of their adventures next month.

Darren Chapman was a wonderful guest this month. He has moved back to Michigan and is living with his brother Steve. The move was occasioned by a change in Tennessee eligibility rules. It is wonderful that Steve is able to share his home with Darren and we, and his sister, Vicki, are able to see him again. We have many great memories of Darren's smile and heart. As he was returning to Michigan, the time came for David and Ruth Charles to saddle up the old horse, I mean Coachman trailer, and head back to Florida. We really enjoyed having them and look forward to their return.

Until next month, may you be aware of God's loving presence all around you.



**YOUTH CAMP 2011
JULY 31 - AUGUST 5**

**CHURCH OF THE
LORD OUR
RIGHTEOUSNESS**

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ANTIBODY - against everyone

BENIGN - what you be after you be eight

BOWEL - letters like a,e,i,o,u

CAESARIAN SECTION - a district in Rome

CAT SCAN - searching for lost kitty

CHRONIC - neck of a crow

CORTISONE - area around local court-house

CYST - short for sister

DISLOCATION - in this place

FALSE LABOR - pretending to work

GENES - blue denim

LABOR PAIN - hurt at work

LACTOSE - person without digits on the foot

MICROBES - small dressing gowns

PROTEIN - in favor of teens

RED BLOOD COUNT - Dracula

SUBCUTANEOUS - not cute enough

TABLET - small table

ULTRASOUND - radical noise

THE BIRTHDAY BOY



KANE,
JENNIE
&
BABY
GIRL
BEGEMAN



CHELSEY &
JORDAN
BEGEMAN

WHAT'S
IN
THIS
DIAPER???



HAPPY 1ST BIRTHDAY
ALEX



DALE, KATIE, JEFF & MELINDA



FRONT ROW—KRISTIN, LUKE, MONICA, AVA, MELISSA VAUGHN, ANNIE MALBURG
BACK ROW— JULIE, CHARLOTTE, SARAH CHARLES, LYNN VAUGHN AND PEGGY CHARLES