
EMMAUS

NEWSLETTER

Vol. 17 No. 10

Greater Dayton Walk to Emmaus

October
2005

Chairman's Corner - TEND THE GARDEN GOD HAS PUT YOU IN

Are you happy with your life? Do you look at others and feel envious and wish you could trade places with them?

Genesis 15:

The LORD God took the man and put him in the Garden of Eden to work it and take care of it.

God gave Adam and Eve a pure utopia, a garden paradise everyone would dream of inhabiting. Easy Assignment!! This was God's plan for all of mankind. What a perfect environment.

But Paradise didn't last long because both Adam and Eve disobeyed God and sin entered our world. They squandered the most magnificent life-style anyone of us could dream of.

Their new garden is far different, not as beautiful and rich. Ugly things were going to grow there from time to time. Even after sinning God still loved them (in fact, He loved them more!) and told them to "tend the garden". But He warned them that it would no longer be an easy task.

And so the beautiful "gardens of life" that was part of God's original plan for the human race, from that time forward, till the end of time, were forever changed. Especially as Christians, we know that it's not always ours to choose our environment, our "garden" if you will. And that environment can, does, and will change from time to time. Life is often a journey that takes us from the oasis to the desert and back again. Particularly Christians, who are called by His name, God has never promised us a "Rose Garden". To the contrary, Jesus cautioned His followers that they would face hard times, and persecution, and would be hated because of HIM. But no matter what environment we find ourselves in, God still asks us to "tend the garden", stay the course, and remain faithful. We are there for a reason; He has a job for us to do. And you know what; sometimes the wages are pretty poor, aren't they? Sometimes He may be just testing our faith. (cont'd on page 2)

Sometimes the environment can become so hostile it's easy to lose faith. But it's during those trips through the dessert, when our gardens are barren and ugly, that God is at His best in our lives.

Jeremiah 29:11-13 NIV

For I know the plans I have for you," declares the LORD, "plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future. Then you will call upon me and come and pray to me, and I will listen to you. You will seek me and find me when you seek me with all your heart.

It's during the journey into the dessert, when our garden appears most barren, that we often lose sight of our mission, as Christians. We forget to "tend the garden that God has placed us in". But don't despair and never give up because God never gives up on us.

Whether you're in the dessert or the lush green gardens of life, it's God's plan that you are there so please Tend the Garden God has placed you in!

*De Colores,
Sherry Kierce*

BOARD ELECTION CANDIDATES

Housing: Bill Bromley

Supply: Karen Roush

Men's Registrar: Don Adams

Christ UMC Representative: Mark Brown

To be eligible candidates need to have served on a Team, be active in their church and the Emmaus Community and be in a Share Group. If anyone is interested in being considered for one of these positions please contact Bob Hewitt at (937) 866-1108 or hewittgang@sbcglobal.net.

SPONSORSHIP TRAINING

This is an open invitation for all to come to this 45 minute training session before the next Gathering.
Date: 10/10
Time: 6:30 PM
Come and learn the best methods put forth by the National Emmaus Board.

SHARE GROUP ORIENTATION

For new members of the community to get connected to a share group.
Date: 10/10
Time: 6:30 PM

AN OPPORTUNITY TO HELP: Over the years, Normandy United Methodist Church has graciously allowed us to hold Emmaus Walks at their facility at virtually no cost to us. Now it is our turn to help them as they embark on a \$2.5 million building renovation in the spring of 2006. They have gone so far as to take our needs into consideration in their planning process. An initial donation will be made on behalf of the Greater Dayton Emmaus community to aid in this effort. Throughout the course of the project, additional donations may be made as needed. You are contributing to this very worthy cause through the offering that is taken each month at Gathering. Private donations will also be accepted by Normandy and further information as to how to go about that will follow in a future newsletter. Thank you!



From the SD's Office:

There are two prayers that God will always answer in the affirmative.

Imagine God sitting in heaven, running the universe, when this prayer comes into the heavenly email box:

“Dear God, please be with all those poor folks on the Gulf Coast whose homes and lives were destroyed by Hurricane Katrina. Bless Grandpa in the nursing home and help him to not be lonely. And please forgive me of my sins of thoughtlessness and selfishness”.

Now imagine God's response:

“Thanks, Dave, for reminding me of the poor starving and homeless people in New Orleans. Until you prayed that prayer, I had hardly given thought to those poor folks, what with trying to keep the Middle East from totally melting down and dealing with global warming. And I'll get right on that as soon as I visit your Grandpa in the nursing home”.

Something inside us says, “**NOT!**” Our God cares about people and even knows when a sparrow falls. Nope. God doesn't need to be asked to care for us. God's heart is broken to see the suffering of each person in this vast sea of the human family.

I have to confess, however, that I have prayed that prayer, “God, please be with...the soldiers in Iraq, Grandpa, the man whose uninsured home burned down, the people in New Orleans, (insert the name of a grieving person) etc, etc...” and then didn't think about what I had just prayed. Do I really think God is not with those people until I pray? Or even that “being with” them has some sort of way of helping those people to cope? How would I imagine God would **be with** them?

Let's face it folks. It's not really a meaningful prayer. If my child was sad and she came to me and said, “I'm so disappointed that my girlfriend ditched me for a concert”. Would I just say, “I'll pray that God will help you with this”? Or would I hold her in my arms, comfort her, and play a game or watch a movie or go shopping with her?

Prayer is not a request line where we put a nickel in God's answer vending machine. Prayer does not align God with our needs; prayer aligns us with God's will. So a more meaningful prayer would be, “God, it must make you exceedingly sad to see what has happened to those brothers and sisters of mine down along the Gulf Coast. God, show me what I can do to meet their felt needs or to help in some practical way the folks in my neighborhood who are hurting because they have suffered a disaster.”

God will not only answer that prayer, but also the prayer of forgiveness for my selfishness.

The first prayer, to which God will always answer “yes”, is this one:

God, forgive me of my sins of selfishness.

I guarantee this is a prayer God will always answer. I John 2: 1, 2 and 12 say this:

“My dear children, I write this to you that you will not sin. But if anybody does sin, we have one who speaks to the Father in our defense—Jesus Christ, the Righteous One. He is the atoning sacrifice for our sins, and not only for ours, but also for the sins of the whole world...I write this to you, dear children, so that you may know you have been forgiven on account of his name.”

This is not my guarantee; this is the guarantee of the word of

God. Isn't it a wonderful promise? It's such a strong and clear promise, that it's almost like asking God, “God, will you please make the earth go around the sun in its orbit today? I can just imagine God saying, “Well, that's no problem, my child; I have established the sun and the planets as well as the vast universe in their places and their relationship to each other. Yes, the earth will go around the sun today, not because you asked me to make it so, but because I ordained it from the beginning. In like manner, I have already established forgiveness through the death of my son on the cross. I have already forgiven you before you even sinned! I sent Jesus to be the atoning sacrifice for your sins and those of the entire earth's population, past, present, and future!”

“Well, God, if that's so, why do I even need to ask for forgiveness, then? If you've already forgiven me, then what's the point in praying? Why does anyone need to pray for forgiveness?”

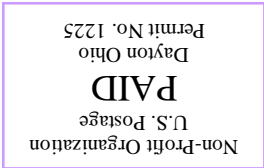
I believe that the reason for praying is not to bring God into awareness of our need, as though somehow we need to convince God that he shouldn't hit us because we've been bad. One way—an unfortunate way—to look at I John 2 is to think that God the father needs to be convinced to forgive us. Almost as if to say “if it weren't for good old compassionate and kind Jesus, God would be eager to punish us.” It's almost as if we can hear God, the angry dad, say “boy I'd like to get my hands on you, but Jesus, your brother, has interceded, and convinced me not to mete out the punishment you deserve. So I'll punish him instead. I need my bruised ego to be assuaged by blood. And it's a good thing Jesus took my anger instead or you'd be toast”. God: the heavenly toaster. We know that's not true. Jesus said, “The Father himself loves you”.

The good news is that prayer does not bring God into alignment with us; rather prayer brings us into alignment with God—which means that prayer is not a shopping list, or a dollar in a vending machine, or a honey-do list. Prayer is an ongoing conversation with God so that we align our will with God's Will. Prayer is more like this: “God, I confess my sins of selfishness to you. I am grateful for your forgiveness. I want to be like you and Jesus, loving and giving and forgiving. Teach me to be like that!” That is the second prayer that God always answers. Why these two? Because God wants more than anything for you and I to be reconciled to him and for us to love others as does He.

So, imagine a prayer like this. “God, please be with all those unfortunate flood victims in the gulf states of Louisiana, Mississippi, and Alabama. And forgive me of my sins and be with Aunt Bertha who is suffering from loneliness in the nursing home”

Just imagine God sitting there in heaven, keeping the universe going, making sure the earth circles the sun, and keeping track of reports about the war, when a prayer comes into the heavenly email box: “Dear God, please be with the poor folks down in New Orleans”. And God says, “Oh, I'm glad Dave prayed that prayer today. I wasn't even paying attention to New Orleans what with the war in Iraq and global warming and all. Thanks for reminding me, Dave. I'm getting a little forgetful these days. I guess that's why all those other Christians are praying for the folks in New Orleans, too. Guess I'll hop right on that.

DeColores,
Dave Evans



ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

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 www.daytonemmaus.org

HOW TO FIND US!

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UPCOMING WALKS

Normandy UMC 2006
 Men's Walk #39, January 26-29
 Women's Walk #65, February 16-19
 Women's Walk #66, April 20-23

GATHERINGS & BOARD MEETING

Normandy UMC	2 nd Mon	7:15
Christ UMC	3 rd Fri	7:00
Dayton Board	4 th Tues	7:00

CANDLELIGHT AND CLOSING

Candlelight	8:30 PM	Saturday
Closing	4:30 PM	Sunday

- To renew your newsletter:
- Fill out the following form
 - Address it to Newsletter
 - Send to the Emmaus address on the first page of this newsletter

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This is a:

<input type="checkbox"/> Subscription or renewal	<input type="checkbox"/> One year \$8.00
<input type="checkbox"/> Address change	<input type="checkbox"/> Two Years \$14.00
	<input type="checkbox"/> Three Years \$20.00

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