



Soccer, Shalom, and Squabbles

Bad theology can come from all quarters—including, sometimes, the conference rooms of high profile theologians—but good theology can also come from all quarters. Like maybe, sometimes, even a soccer field.

This week's *Sports Illustrated* tells the remarkable story of the way the Israeli soccer team is helping to nibble away at a centuries-old racial conflict. The Israeli team is made up mostly of Jewish players (no surprise there), but also includes two Arab players, Abbas Suan and Walid Badir. Starting far back in the pack, these two players have emerged to become superstars for Israel's team. The SI article begins, "On the night the Arab saved Israel . . ." and tells the story of a night last March in Tel Aviv's Ramat-Gan Stadium when Israel was down 0-1 against Ireland. From 22 yards away came a "scorching" shot by Suan that found its mark squarely in the goal and left the game at a 1-1 tie in this "most compelling underdog story of the 2006 Cup."

Then, unbelievably, four nights later the other prominent Arab on Israel's team, Walid Badir, scored a goal in the last minutes of a game against mighty France, again keeping World Cup hopes alive.

The significance of these events goes way, way, way beyond soccer. It's how the public is responding. Israelis are feeling more kindly toward Arabs. Signs erected to display the right-wing Israeli nationalistic slogan, "No Arabs, no terrorism," have given way to "No Arabs, no World Cup." OK, it's still a selfish motive ("Win the Cup!"), but, well, it's a start. Itche Menachem, the president of the Israeli Soccer Federation, said, "Soccer can be a bridge to coexistence. It's a bridge that we've started building; we're on it, and we'll complete it." The soccer events of the past few months have "turned the attitude of Jews to Arabs in this country on its head," according to former prime minister Shimon Peres.

What's the point? The point is, when we think of most of the squabbles and prejudices and bickerings of our lives, what's the point? Are they really, really, really that important? It's so easy to hyperventilate over issues – and in the process forget the precious people for whom Jesus died.

G. Crowe

Drop Your Backpack

There are many things that have haunted me in my life. There are many that haunt some of you as well: my fears, my doubts, my shame, my sins....the whole ugly truth about me. I would keep it with me, keep it fresh.

In fact, I would keep those things so close that they were a necessary part of my day. I would pick them up every morning and strap them to my back tightly like a backpack. I just knew in my heart that I had to carry them on my daily journey.

I knew in my heart that without these things strapped to my back, I would have no identity. These things defined me, reminded me of who I was. To let go of those things would mean simply one thing: no control. My identity would be up in there, out of my line of sight. I would have had nothing on my back to remind me of who I am.

My logic was not faulty. Giving up those things that you hold dearly, those things that crowd out your self-esteem, those failures, those feelings of regret and shame, means a loss of identity.

But while those things are initially convicting, God does not want our fears and failures to define us. He wants what He has always wanted . . . He wants to remove those things that weigh us down, hold us back, debilitate us. In short, *He* wants to give us our identity . . . *He* wants to define us.

~ Dan

Prayer Concerns...

Jon Vaught left Monday for 2 months in Kenya, Africa. He is doing an internship there for his pharmacy degree. Keep him in your prayers as he travels and works in a local hospital and HIV clinic....**Natasha Risley** will be going to the University of Cleveland September 14 to consult with a specialist for possible surgery for a back problem that gives her daily chronic pain....Continue to pray for **Joe White, Art Raguette, Marie DeWoody, Geneva Hamilton, Terry Pepper, Anna Dale, Eunice Whitesell, Mark Eddy, Irene Fox, Ramona Farris, and Delpha Allen**. Those in Rosewalk Village: **Paul & Ruth Marks, Minnie Scott, and Burnell Gulden**.

Serving in the military: **Josh Hunt** is in Iraq.

It's a Baby Shower!

Everyone is invited to a Come-and-Go Baby Shower for **Eryn Studebaker**, daughter of Jesse and Tammy (Vaughn) Studebaker, at the home of Mike and Scheryl Gaylor, 4524 Bur Oak Lane, Lafayette, Sunday, September 11, following the picnic, from 3:00-5:00. Please contact Scheryl, 474-8696, or Lisa Crowe, 447-6940, if you wish to contribute to a collective gift.



Voice of the Martyrs

Robert Brock, from Voice of the Martyrs, made an outstanding presentation at Elmwood last Sunday night. Following his presentation, over \$350 was contributed to his cause spontaneously by people who had been touched by his words. Some said they would be sending funds later. It's hard to comprehend the enormity of the VOM statistic that 160,000 Christians in the world are martyred for their faith every year. To obtain a list with specific prayer requests for Christians undergoing persecution, contact the church office.



Mr. & Mrs. Mark S. McClain

*request the honor of your presence
at the marriage of their daughter*

Sarah Elizabeth

*to Mr. Mark David Bird
son of Mr. & Mrs. Gary Bird*

Friday, September 16, 2005

at seven-thirty o'clock in the evening

Elmwood Church of Christ, 2501 Elmwood Avenue, Lafayette, Indiana

It's a Girl!



Ashleigh Myhre was born August 13 and officially adopted by **Jenna & Craig Powlen** on August 16. She weighed 9 pounds 11 ounces and measured 20 inches long. They are awaiting clearance of legal papers in Las Vegas before being able to take her home to California. Their address there is 801 East Walnut St. #1512, Pasadena, CA 91101. Congratulations, Jenna and Craig and grandparents, Jack & Sue McCoy!

It's a Boy!



Mike & Scheryl Gaylor have a new grandson! **Ethan Shane Gaylor** was born to Shane and his wife, Sonja, on August 26, weighing 6 pounds 12 ounces, and measuring 19 inches long. They live in Phoenix, Arizona. Congratulations to all!



A memorial service for Mike and Scheryl Gaylor's granddaughter, **Aevin Gaylor**, was held Friday, August 26, in Phoenix, Arizona. Aevin, born with a heart defect, was nearly 6 months old. Our sympathies to her parents, Tim & Chelle, and the Gaylor family.

August 28, 2005

Class: 218 Worship: 344

Contribution: \$7,831

Budget: \$8,100

ELMWOOD CHURCH OF CHRIST newsletter (USPS 758-630) is published weekly, except the week of Christmas, by the Elmwood Church of Christ, 2501 Elmwood Ave., Lafayette 47904. Periodical postage paid at Lafayette, IN. POSTMASTER: send address changes to ELMWOOD CHURCH OF CHRIST, 2501 Elmwood Ave., Lafayette, IN 47904.



Hunger Hike September 18, 2005

This is an annual event to help feed the hungry.

Schedule:

12:30-1:30 PM Registration at Riehle Plaza, downtown Lafayette; door prizes & fun activities.

2:00 PM 2-mile hike begins on the Wabash Heritage Trail.

Everyone who raises \$50 or more gets a free t-shirt. The first 600 people registered get a free water bottle.

New this year— Extended 4.5-mile route for joggers!

3:00 PM Party time! Live music by Hot Club of Colfax, clowns, balloons, hot dogs, popcorn, watermelon, and Coke products!

Donations will go to the Lafayette Urban Ministry's food programs, Food Finders Food Bank, and St. Thomas Aquinas Haiti ministry. Thousands of low-income families depend upon these programs for food security. Hikers and their sponsors help meet the needs of hungry families in the greater Lafayette area and overseas.

What should I know about hunger?

- It is estimated that more than 800 million people are hungry in the world. Each year 6 million children die from hunger or hunger-related diseases.
- In the U.S., 36 million people live in households that experience hunger or the risk of hunger, including thirteen million children.
- Over 15,000 persons in Tippecanoe County are eligible for Food Stamps.
- In 2004, Food Finders Food Bank distributed over 1 million pounds of food in Tippecanoe Co. Food Finders is where we get most of our food distributed through Elmwood's Food Pantry.
- In June our food pantry served 180 families (589 individuals) and in July we served 138 families (451 individuals) and because of the demands of time and resources, we are not currently able to accept any new families.

I am encouraging the youth group to have a big crew walk on the 18th. I hope that everyone will either join me or make a donation. I am planning to walk and if you would like to sponsor me let me know or you can even pledge to me online at: <http://www.justgiving.com/pfp/elmwoodyouthguy>.

If you help me pass my goal of \$500, I'll do the 4.5 mile jog instead of the 2 mile hike. Make me run! – Lee



Last week a large group gathered to witness the baptism of **Shirley Hileman** into Christ. Shirley has been studying with Phyllis Gray and Wanita White since January. She and her family, the Whites, and the Gray family all lived in the same neighborhood decades ago, and the relationship has continued ever since. Shirley retired after over 30 years from Eisner/Jewel and now works 3-4 days a week at Sand Ridge Bank. She and her husband, John, have two sons, four grandchildren, and four great grandchildren. Their address is 2701 South Street, Lafayette 47904, phone 447-2021. God bless you in your decision, Shirley, and welcome!

Thank You!

Thank you for your prayers, cards, phone calls and other expressions of love as I recently underwent my surgery. Elmwood is a wonderful family! Love, Rose Hunt

To all at Elmwood Church of Christ:

Thank you to everyone for their prayers, cards and support during mother's difficult days. To all those who were so kind to provide a delicious meal for the funeral party, thank you so much. Ernie & Elaine Todd & family



August 31, 7 PM....Bible classes for all
August 31, 7 PM....Men's Class, room 204,
Young Mom's Class, room 202

Sept. 4....New Quarter for Children's Bible classes; most children will move up to the next class;

Children's Church for grades 1-5 will resume

Sept. 4, 6 PM....Singing with Farrell Simmerman

Sept. 11....All-Church Picnic, Columbian Park;

no evening worship at Elmwood

Sept. 11, 3-5 PM....Baby shower for **Eryn Studebaker & parents, Tammy & Jesse**, at Scheryl & Mike Gaylor's home, 4524 Bur Oak Ln., Lafayette (south)

Sept. 16, 7:30 PM....Sarah McClain-Mark Bird wedding

Sept. 16-18....CSC Fall Retreat

Sept. 18, 6 PM....LIFE Groups begin!

Sept. 25, 12 noon....Adopted Student Lunch

Read:

Song of Songs, Isaiah 1-11;

II Corinthians 9-12;

Psalms 45-50; Prov. 22:22-23:8

2005 Spiritual Adventure

Week 37: September 12-18

Adoration and Praise

I've been reading a very good "back to basics/puts things into perspective" kind of book entitled ***Christian Prayer for Dummies*** by Richard Wagner. I've been reminded by this book of how adoration, that is, giving God praise and honor for who He is, must be the foundation of our prayers. Unfortunately, for most of us, adoration is the most difficult part of prayer because it's not about us. It's about God. On the other hand, confession, thanksgiving, intercessory prayer, or petitionary prayer seems to come naturally because these aspects of prayer are focused on *us*. Don't get me wrong, these parts of prayer are important, but adoration has to be the bedrock that our prayers are built upon.

Even with just a casual reading of this week's passages, I am struck by how Isaiah and also the psalmist found adoration to be a natural response to God. Take a look again at Isaiah chapter 6. That encounter in the temple impressed the prophet mightily! The Psalms overflow with eloquent praise to God for who He is.

Because of Jesus, we can approach God anytime, no appointment needed. Pretty amazing when you consider that He's the creator and ruler of the universe! How can adoration become a natural part of our prayer life? Richard Wagner, the author of the aforementioned book, suggests concentrating on the qualities of God:

1. His creation of the universe
2. His holiness that makes Him without blemish
(no wonder Isaiah was so distraught in Isaiah 6:5)
3. His faithful, selfless love for us
4. His boundless mercy and grace shown by Jesus' death on the cross
5. His perfect justice
6. His power over evil
7. His sovereignty
8. His unchanging nature
9. His infinite wisdom and perfect will

Wagner also points out that *"If you find yourself suffering from an inability to get beyond 'praise you,' check out the Psalms."* Adoration is worth practicing in our prayer life. Adoration draws us close to God, and isn't that what we desire most?

Joe Ruhl