

It's The Way We are Wired

Item #1: Last week's headline: "Korn Guitarist Finds God, Leaves Band." Korn is a hard rock band whose themes are known for the three A's: anger, anarchy, and anti-establishment messages. Their guitarist, Brian "Head" Welch, has suddenly parted ways with the group, saying he has been awakened to the work of God in his life.

Item #2: Last week's *Newsweek* carried an article on a new approach to brain scans that, according to some psychologists, can identify personality types. Researchers are also looking at genetic testing to reveal personality traits. Implications of this are far-reaching. Will job promotions in the future be based not just on past performance, but on a brain scan? Will a company one day decide who is to be CEO by giving genetic tests to all applicants? Researchers realize there is "something" at the core of every person that is just "there" regardless of training, position, or experience.

Item #3: I just finished Arthur F. Miller's book, *Why You Can't Be Anything You Want to Be*. In it he explores the important but often misunderstood topic of human giftedness. Every person, he says, must be asked, "How are you wired?" Each one of us, Miller says, has a God-ordained purpose, and that purpose is a part of every success (and impacts every failure) each of us has.

Put all three of those into a jar, shake it around, and what it comes down to is what the author of Psalm 139 meant when he wrote, "'For you created my inmost being . . . I praise you because I am fearfully and wonderfully made" (139:13-14). That is to say, when you go way, way down into the heart of every person, there is a core, an essence, that is given by God. Some people discover it and thrive, others ignore it and suffer. Many live only on the surface, facing a lifetime of guesses, regrets, and what if's. The wise explore how they might develop what God has given them into a gift that would bless both themselves and others.

God has gifted each of us with a soul, a spirit. Our job is to give that back to God one day with evidence that we have valued and nurtured it in this life, knowing that He will transform our paltry efforts into a re-creation of his own devising.

G. Crowe

Empowerment

Wow, God is good. I mean, he really knows how to work in some awesome and mysterious ways. Take you and me, for example. Flawed, fragile, and forgetful of His love and provision. And yet He chooses to work through us. In fact, God has always preferred human beings as His primary channel of operation.

Since humanity gasped her first breath, God has used unsure, uncertain, and unconvinced humans to make His will known. He loves using His people to make His power known.

I find it ironic, then, that humanity does not want to be used. The church does not want to be used. Even though we were made in His image (and were his masterpiece of creation), we choose fear over confidence. We, like Moses, choose impediment over empowerment, hiding behind false humility because we are "just human."

Sunday, Josh Boyd spoke on the importance of "leaving one's jar" (leaving the things most important to us) and following Christ. I wonder . . . would that include leaving false humility, fear, lack of confidence in the Spirit, and the like, to embrace the empowerment of the Spirit? I think the answer is a resounding "YES!" Indebted to God, we come; *empowered* to serve we are sent out among the world. More next week..... ~Dan



Joe White has been diagnosed with a brain tumor. They are still weighing treatment options...**Geneva Hamilton**, Margaret Gustafson's sister, at the IU Medical Hospital in Indianapolis, is not doing well. They hope to have her transferred to Lafayette yet this week...**Bob Stafford** has back surgery this Thursday, March 3, at St. Elizabeth Hospital...**Steve Mulligan**, father of Mary & Sarah McClain's roommate, is at IU Medical Center following surgery for cancer on Friday...**Ken Nicholson's** father, **Ken**, has terminal cancer...**Connie Nicholson** has been experiencing some health problems...Remember to pray for **Minnie Scott, Eunice Whitesell, Stan Newberry, Terry Pepper, Mark Eddy, Jay Verett, Ramona Farris, Irene Fox, Delpha Allen, and Bernice Todd.**

Serving in the military: **Josh Hunt** in Iraq; **Loren Sniffen** in Afghanistan.

Tsunami Relief Update

The following is information from the Court Drive Church of Christ in Palestine, Texas, who oversees the mission work in Thailand, and some excerpts from Penny Hollingsworth's letter that gives up to date accounts of their work and where the money is going to help tsunami victims.

To date over \$400,000 has been sent to those who suffered from the tragedy of December 26, 2005. On January 7, 2005, Skip Rodgers, minister in Denver City, Texas, and Danny Allison, elder of missions for Court Dr. Church of Christ, were able to go to Thailand and spend a week with Loren and Penny. While there money was given to: 1) members of the Church of Christ who lost jobs because businesses were closed; 2) deaf members to buy inventory for their business that was destroyed; 3) schools to help with teaching materials; 4) scores of school children, some of who had lost one or both of their parents; and 5) four college students who lost their families to complete this year of school and provide funds for next year's tuition, housing and food. Over 500 homes were destroyed and a pledge was made to rebuild 35 of them. *"They offered to let us name the village where they would be built. It was decided to call the village 'Quamswang' (the Light). It is my understanding that each home will have a plaque that says 'Built by Thai Saints.'"* Remote villages have been helped by providing funds for fishing boats so that the men can again provide for their families.

From Penny:...

Since I last wrote about 2 weeks ago we have been busy doing tsunami relief work. We had another special program at Achiwa Jr. College to present school funds for 60 more students who lost their parent(s) in the tsunami....The funds went to students of all ages through the next term. Most of the students were high school and university age, but when a young kindergarten student walked by himself to receive his envelope, I had a hard time controlling my emotions. He was so small and so brave and to think he had lost his parents just about killed me....We visited an 80 year old lady cared for by Tding, her granddaughter. Tding is finishing her last year at the Phuket Teachers' College. She goes back and forth (about 30 miles) to class and then home to take care of her grandmother. Her mother, father and sister were all killed in the tsunami. We are going to take care of her school expenses until she finishes... The tsunami recovery is very slow right now. It is almost impossible to find wood for boats....Nancy, the secretary at Court Dr. Church of Christ, sent us a package of notes and cards sent along with your contributions. We are so humbled and encouraged by what we read. We have been so blessed to have the opportunity you have given us to help....We pray that God is being honored by our feeble efforts and He will reward you all for your love and sacrifices.

Love, Penny & Loren



Thanks!

Elmwood children,
Thank you for the Valentine treats. We appreciate your thoughtfulness so much. What a surprise to come home from vacation and be remembered by you with the goodies.

-Rick & Doris Swensen



Margret Sterk, grandmother of college student, **Mariah Wise**, died Monday, February 28. Our sincere sympathies to Mariah and her family.

Join the Senior Servants

Elmwood Senior Servants meet this Wednesday, March 2, at 11:30 AM, in the fellowship room. Bring a sack lunch and enjoy the fellowship.

February 27, 2005

Class: 196 Worship: 278

Contribution: \$5,865

Budget: \$8,100

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Busy Times, Good Times!

As most of you know, we just recently returned from a wonderful experience at Winterfest in Gatlinburg, TN. This past Sunday, we did the first part of a two Sunday True Love Waits Seminar with fourteen of our teens. True Love Waits (TLW) is not just a seminar/program promoting sexual abstinence until marriage, but the message is to live a pure life now and forever. I am so blessed to have two able co-leaders in Alison Ruhl and Mariah Wise. Alison went through the program here at Elmwood a couple years ago and has been so blessed by it that she wanted to share the experience with others. When you see these two young ladies, make sure to thank them for their efforts. We started the seminar together with a wonderful lasagna meal, prepared by Gail Ruhl. Thanks Gail!

The main sessions of this TLW seminar are: 1) Purity...It's a God Thing, 2) Secret Sin, 3) I Can't...But He Can, 4) Living in Purity, and 5) Making a Commitment to Purity. If anyone was not able to be at the first session, you can still come this Sunday. We had originally planned to start at 1:30, but several would like to see the video "Sex Has a Price Tag," again (some for the first time), so we will start at 12:15 for those who want to see the video. If you come at 12:15, remember to bring something with you to eat for lunch. If you come at 1:30, eat before you come...we will have snacks, but not a meal. Yes, you may still bring friends. For those who miss either day, we will do our best to have make-up sessions in a timely fashion.

Leadership Training for Christ

It is really hard to believe, but the LTC convention at the Marriott Center (Marriott East) in Indy is less than 4 weeks away – March 25-27. Our students are working really hard to show the talents, gifts and abilities that God has so richly blessed them with. You will get to see a little preview of their work on Sunday, March 20, at 5:30 pm. As always, you are more than welcome at the convention, but you will need to register. If you are "web-savvy," just go to www.mwltc.org and follow the links to "Registration – Log In Now." Once you get to the log in page, follow the directions for Observers. If you do not have internet access, give Rose Hunt a call or give us a call at the office and we will be sure to get you registered. The hotel is not difficult to find and it is just about an hour's drive from Lafayette. **OUR KIDS ARE WORTH THE EFFORT;** but I didn't have to tell you that did I? **Please come!** – Lee

New Class Topic



The adult class, meeting in room 2 and taught by Rob Smith, will begin a study April 3 on the classic book, *The Christian's Secret to a Happy Life*, by Hannah Whitall Smith. All are invited to join in this study. Please let Rob Smith or Betty Brown know if you are interested before March 24, so copies of the book can be ordered.

Thank You!

To the church at Elmwood,

Thank you from the bottom of my heart for all of your prayers, cards, and love shown to our family. I am overwhelmed by your love and concern.

We are all relieved that Ian no longer suffers. He battled hard! Your church body did so much to encourage him as he walked that difficult path.

You did even more to lighten my load. I am free from all the medical expenses thanks in large part to your contribution. That was a big shock and a great day when I received your check. I wept with gratitude and relief.

Thank you!

In all things God works for the good of those who love him....Romans 8:28. Blessings to you all. –Lisa Morgan

LTC Help Needed

Two door monitors and nine judges (one each) are needed for Bible Bowl, Puppets, Large & Small Group Singing, Bulletin Boards, Christian Art, Scrapbook, Bible Reading, and Live Modern Drama. Contact Phyllis Simmerman, Rose Hunt, or Barb Tilley if you can help.



- March 2, 7 PM....Bible Classes for all; LTC training
- March 6, 6 PM....LIFE Groups meet
- March 19, 7:43 AM....Men's Breakfast at Elmwood
- March 20, 5:30 PM....Leadership Training for Christ Showcase; Finger Foods to follow
- May 20-21....Promise Keepers in Ft. Wayne
- Oct. 21-22....Men's Retreat at Camp Tecumseh

Read:
 Numbers 10-21; Mark 14-
 Luke 1; Psalms 51-57; Proverbs
 10:31-11:11

2005 Spiritual Adventure

Week 11: March 14-20

When I read the Old Testament, sometimes it is easy to get frustrated with the Israelites; it seems as if they are forever complaining to the Lord about their problems and disobeying His commands. He punishes their unrighteousness, then they cry out to Him and He heals them. Then the process starts all over again.

But when I think about it, I'm not sure I do much better than the Israelites. There are things in my life that I continually disobey God in. I get myself into trouble by not relying on God, then come rushing to Him when I need His help and His power. Why is it so hard to continually commit my life to Jesus? I think the number one reason is pride. When we fully rely on God and commit our lives to Him, we give Him control of our lives. That therefore means that WE are no longer in control of our lives. This scares a lot of people. I know that I, for one, don't like the idea of not being in control. I fall very easily into the trap of "I can handle this myself." But we are totally reliant on God. He gives us everything.

I used to get annoyed when babies cried in church. It was really hard for me to focus on the spiritual message being presented when all I could hear was a baby crying. But then I realized something. To God, I am like an infant. I cry out to Him and I am totally dependent on Him, just like that infant depends on its parents. So if you are like me, try instead to use that child's cry to remind yourself of your dependence on God and to never stop reaching out to Him. Psalm 55:22 proclaims, "Cast your cares on the Lord, and He will sustain you; he will never let the righteous fall."
 -Rob Flynn

 Weekly Schedule	 Elders	 World Missions
Sunday Worship 8:00 a.m. Bible Study 9:30 a.m. Worship 10:45 a.m. Life Groups 6:00 p.m. Wednesday Bible Study 7:00 p.m.	Bill Bell 463-1139 Joe Matthews 474-8369 Rick Swensen 463-6822 Don Vice 471-8653	Kevin Chambers World Christian Broadcasting Anchor Point, Alaska 99556 Loren and Penny Hollingsworth Phuket, Thailand 83000
	 Staff	
Elmwood Nursery School & Pre-K Preschool: Tues-Thurs 9-11:30 am Pre-K: Mon-Thurs 9-11:30 am Director, Susan McClain 447-2874	Ministers Gayle Crowe 447-6940 Lee Porter 463-6993 Dan Cooke 743-0954 Office Manager Sherry Marks 447-2874	City of Children Ensenada, Mexico Bren and Cheryl White P.O. Box 245 New Market, MD 21774

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