



Blue Christians vs. Red Christians?

A thoughtful article in *Time* brought into the open what we have known but would rather not think about: our division into Red States and Blue States is not just shorthand for political trends. It is, rather, a reflection of the deepening polarization our whole nation is experiencing. Rural vs. urban, the "haves" vs. the "have nots," conservatives vs. liberal, church-goers vs. non-churchgoers – we are witnessing tensions that show no signs of diminishing.

Jack Reese's new book, *The Body Broken*, asks if those same polarities are not becoming commonplace in our churches. People select churches based on whether they feel good to them. Ministers and others participate only in lecture programs in which they find common ground with the theological perspective of those who organize them. People select Sunday School classes where the majority of class participants think like they do.

What this means, of course, is that through all our selections and separations into common-minded enclaves, we rarely have to talk to anybody whose positions and perspectives differ from our own. "If we rarely have relationships with anyone we disagree with, we will be more likely to experience contentment and spiritual equilibrium, an attractive way to live during days of polarization and unrest. . . . Who wouldn't want that?"

But think again. The writers of the New Testament focused much of their attention in helping new Christians learn to live with and among people whose perspective they did not share. Jews and Gentiles, slave and free – the polarities of thought represented in the early church make ours pale in comparison. Transcending private points of view in deference to the unity of the body as a whole is, in fact, core to the gospel: Jesus died for all, and that "all" includes many with whom I may not agree. Reese's words are to the point: "Our task is not to choose our brothers and sisters; our task is to love them."

Are there areas in which I disagree with you? God has given you to me to help me grow. It's my job to love you, to serve you, to honor you. If I do, God will smile on us both. G. Crowe

Impatience

As I write this I'm at 35,000 feet. It's 5:45 p.m., Saturday. It should be 4:15. The airliner was an hour and a half late. People are grumpy. Some are downright mad. Stewardesses are apologizing, promising extra booze to take off the edge. To complicate matters, a Japanese man across the aisle from me has a rather severe nosebleed and they're trying to instruct the poor chap. . . . *but he doesn't speak a word of English!*

It all started with the *delay*. "Mechanical trouble," they said. "Inexcusable," responded a couple of passengers. Frankly, I'd rather they fix it before we leave than decide to do something about it en route. But we Americans don't like to wait. Delays are irritating. Aggravating. Nerve-jangling. With impatient predictability we are consistently – and I might add *obnoxiously* – demanding. We want what we want *when we want it*. Not a one of us finds a delay easy to accept.

One quality, however – a single, rare virtue scarce as diamonds and twice as precious – will immediately soften everyone's spirits. That quality? The ability to accept delay graciously. Calmly. Quietly. Understandingly. With a smile. Remember the verse?

But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self control.... (Galatians 5:22-23).

The ability to accept delay. Or disappointment. To smile back at setbacks and respond with a pleasant, understanding spirit. To cool it while others around you curse it. Just relaxing in the power of Jesus.

–Charles R. Swindoll

Great Songs of the Church CD

Circa 1962, a group of about 30 college students attending the Elmwood Church of Christ made a record containing 16 hymns from the *Great Songs of the Church* hymnal. The singing group was directed by Michael D. Ashley. Recently, Farrell Simmerman converted the vinyl record to a CD, and we want to distribute it to the church. Copies of the CD will be available in mid to late May. If you would like a CD, please put your name on the sign up sheet in the Farris Foyer. There is no charge for the CD, but if you can, please put a couple of dollars in the collection plate to help off set the cost of the CDs. We hope you enjoy listening to the hymns and praising God.

Graduation Parties!



Chelsea **Barnett** has graduated from Purdue's School of Nursing and has already begun work at Home Hospital's postpartum unit. This **Saturday, May 14, at 2:00 PM**, her parents, Jim & Teresa Jones, are hosting a graduation party at their home, 10820 S. St. Rd. 43, Brookston. Everyone is invited.

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Greg & Chris Sutherlin will host a graduation open house for daughter, **Kelsey**, on **Sunday, June 5, from 12 noon until 4:00 PM**, at their home, 2805 Union St., Lafayette. Kelsey graduates from Jefferson High School and plans to attend David Lipscomb University in the fall.

Area Opportunities:

Do you need help with academic or workplace skills, job search, GED preparation, or English language skills? If so, then sign up for classes at the Lafayette Adult Resource Academy. Classes are offered mornings, afternoons, and evenings. All services are free to persons 16 years of age or older currently not registered in a high school. To sign up for class, visit the Lafayette Adult Resource Academy located at 324 South Street in downtown Lafayette or call 476-2920.

Matrix Lifeline Pregnancy Center will hold two Spring Volunteer Orientation sessions to introduce prospective volunteers to the mission, history, services and volunteer opportunities of the ministry. Those interested may attend Monday, May 15, from 9:00-11:00 AM, or 7:00-9:00 PM. All who have a desire to offer alternatives to abortion, as well as support and education to young parents are welcome. Join us in celebrating life from its beginning with faith, hope and love. Call 742-1533 or email matrixlife@aol.com to RSVP by Friday, May 13, for the session of your choice. The Matrix office is located at 1824 Maple St, Lafayette.

If you are interested in serving women and families in a life affirming ministry, **LifeCare Services Pregnancy Resource Center** is offering volunteer counselor training June 6-10. Call 743-4488 by Wednesday, May 25.



Men's Breakfast

All men (young and old) are invited to the Men's Breakfast this **Saturday morning, May 14th at 7:43am in A-2**. Dan Cooke will discuss "Servant Leaders." A sign up sheet is posted in the Farris Foyer. Hope to see you there.

Thanks!



Many thanks for the donations to the food pantry recently. It was a tremendous help in restocking the empty shelves. Please remember the food pantry when you do your weekly grocery shopping. We can always use donations of any kind.

-Mary Ella & Herb King

Will our children have faith?

Westlake Church of Christ in Indianapolis is hosting a seminar featuring former Elmwood member, **Brian Simmons**, on **May 21-22**. Titled, "*God's Children and Faith*," it answers questions such as, "How do we engage our children on spiritual issues without putting them to sleep or turning them off?" And "How do we incorporate spiritual training into our family's busy schedule?" Brian speaks Saturday, May 21 from 9:30 AM-3:00 PM, and Sunday, May 22, at 9:00 AM.

May 8, 2005

Class: 184 Worship: 302

Contribution: \$6,763

Budget: \$8,100



Camp Info

I'm fully aware that I talked about camps last week, but I wanted to give a little more info. Not only that, Max Houlton told me I should talk more about camp and mission trip's effects on the spiritual lives of young people. I'll start there. Some might ask why it is true that these two types of events have such a large impact. It is fairly obvious. At camp and on mission trips, young people and adults are able to focus on the spiritual disciplines without the normal daily distractions of television, telephone, radio, the internet, etc. During these outings, we are able to move beyond our comfort zones and focus more on serving others and just "being Jesus" to the rest of the camp or the people we are helping on the mission trip. Where should camp and mission trip fit on your family's summer schedule? Call Max if you can't figure that one out!

Attention all 7th graders through 2005 graduates: Elevate – June 19-24 – may be calling your name. This special camp on the campus of Rochester College is one incredible experience. This camp has all the features of other camps plus a few extra...you stay in the college dorms, you eat in the cafeteria some, but many meals are catered, you get to rock climb and swim at the nicest health club/fitness center I have ever been in and you get to participate in crud wars! The cost (worth every penny – ask Josh or Ben Stafford) is normally \$160, but if you register by June 1, it is only **\$125**. You can register today at www.rc.edu/elevate. Be there!

Attention all current 8th graders through 2005 graduates: July 10-15 is the date set for our mission trip to do the camp for inner-city kids from Cincinnati. We don't have the exact costs as yet, but here are the basics: we will be serving as the counselors, teachers, activity directors, etc., for a week of camp for a group of young people who would not otherwise get to go to camp and who may not know Jesus. The overall theme for the year is FOOL FACTOR. We want to look at not being foolish like the world in the things we SAY, SEE, HEAR, and DO (each of these is one day's topic). If you want to go, let me know...NOW!

Attention all current 7th – 12th graders: the Senior Week our group will be attending is July 17-23. We do not know the theme as yet, but the week is always awesome! If you have never been, there are some really cool people we would like you to meet and the worship times are incredible! Cost is only \$70 if you register before July 1.

Attention all current FOURTH – EIGHTH graders: July 24 – 29 is our Intermediate Week at Spring Mill. This year's theme is "All Who Are Thirsty," great topic, it could be really hot! Please sign up TODAY! This session fills fast and many get turned away. Only \$70 if you register now. Y'all come, ya hear? See you there! – Lee

Prayer Concerns....

Dave Hunt's mother, **Betty**, fell and broke her ankle on Monday. She had surgery on Tuesday at Gateway Medical Center, in Clarksville, Tennessee. His father, **Henry**, has been experiencing some heart irregularities...**Elaine Crowder** will have hip replacement surgery at St. Elizabeth Hospital on May 17....**Joe White** has been released from the hospital....Continue to pray for **Naomi Hunt, Al & Anna Dale, Chuck Hanson, Burnell Gulden, Dovie Hurst, Geneva Hamilton, Terry Pepper, Minnie Scott, Eunice Whitesell, Mark Eddy, Bernice Todd, Ramona Farris, Irene Fox, and Delpha Allen.**

Expecting babies in the near future: the **Wilson, Hombs, and Studebaker** families.

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

May 17-19 Reunion



The John T. Smithson era reunion is fast approaching—May 17-19 (Tuesday through Thursday).

On Wednesday at 4 PM, a tree will be planted in honor of Scottie Morrison. On Wednesday night John will lead a devotional service for the congregation. Come share your memories and celebrate the ties—both spiritual and Elmwood—that bind us.

Memorial Service for Eric

A memorial service to remember the life of **Eric Gilley**, who died Thanksgiving Day, 2004, is being planned by his mother, Andrea Browell, on **Saturday, May 14, at 2:00 PM**, at the Elmwood building. All are invited to come and share memories with Andrea and the rest of the family.



May 10, 6:30 PM....Good Sense Class

May 11, 7 PM....Bible Classes for all

May 14, 7:43 AM....Men's Breakfast in fellowship room

May 14, 2 PM....Eric Gilley Memorial service, Elmwood

May 14, 2 PM....Chelsea Barnett graduation party at the Jones' home, 10820 S. St. Rd. 43, Brookston

May 17-19....Elmwood reunion for those of the

John T. Smithson era; special Wednesday night service

May 20-21....Promise Keepers in Ft. Wayne

June 5, 12-4 PM....Graduation Open House for **Kelsey Sutherlin**, 2805 Union St., Lafayette

Read:

I Samuel 20-II Samuel 3;
John 9-13; Psalms 113-118;
Proverbs 15:15-30

2005 Spiritual Adventure

Week 21: May 23-29

Once, as a part of one of our Bible lessons in the nursery school, we did an art project about "following Jesus." In order to do this, we rolled out a long sheet of white paper and at one end of it placed a cake pan with paint in it, and at the other end a dishpan full of water. The plan was for the child to step in the cake pan full of paint, walk the length of the paper, and then walk in the dishpan of water to get the paint off of the bottom of his feet. Needless to say, this plan didn't work out quite as well as it should have. The paint on the child's feet did not just rinse off in the dishpan. Instead, I had to get on my knees and actually wash and dry each child's feet after they had walked the length of the paper. That year there were 18 children in my class! It is a very humbling experience!

In this week's reading in John 13, Jesus washed each of his 12 disciples' feet. This was not because they had walked in paint, or even because their feet were dirty. This was so that Jesus could humble himself and become a servant to them. Peter didn't like the fact that Jesus was putting himself in such a lowly position and refused to let Jesus wash his feet. Jesus told him, *"Unless I wash you, you have no part with me."* After he finished washing all of their feet, he said to them, *"Now that I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also should wash one another's feet. I have set you an example that you should do as I have done for you. I tell you the truth, no servant is greater than his master, nor is a messenger greater than the one who sent him. Now that you know these things, you will be blessed if you do them."*

Jesus has set the example. Now that we know these things, we will be blessed if we do them.

-Sue McClain