



## Love is a Choice

Want the latest scoop on news that's not only timely but eternal? No, not from the newspaper. Try the book of Romans:

God's way of putting people right with himself has been made known to everyone—Jew and Gentile alike—because God loves all equally (chapter 1). That's good, because both Jew & Gentile have sinned and therefore need help (chapters 2 & 3). Proof of that is old Abraham who was favored by God both before and after he became a Jew, God's chosen one (chapter 4). Because we follow a suffering Savior, all God's people should expect to suffer (chapter 5) and experience lows because of sin (chapter 7) and highs because of God's Spirit at work in us (chapter 8).

Sandwiched among all this, as Jack Reese in *The Body Broken* reminds us, is chapter 6 with its discussion of the implications of baptism. The point of Romans 6 is not, "You must be baptized!" but the difference baptism makes. "In baptism we have hitched our lives to the power of the new age ushered in by the death of Christ. In baptism, Christ not only . . . forgives our past sins, but he empowers us to live holy lives today."

And for those who received the letter, this means living in heart-transformed ways that take into account the tremendous diversity (a-hem, read c-o-n-f-l-i-c-t) that existed in the Roman church. Gentiles and Jews did things differently. They thought differently. They viewed everything—including the work of God in their lives—from different perspectives. They believed and practiced many different things. Some kept holy days, some didn't. Some kept food rituals, some didn't. So in the last part of Romans, Paul got to his point, the reason for which he wrote the letter:

Don't congratulate yourselves about who you are, what you know, what you do . . . Don't just pretend to love each other. Even with the profound differences that you are aware of, love each other authentically. . . . Live in harmony even with those you disagree with . . . (Romans 12:3,9-10, 16 in NRSV).

Christian fellowship is not a right; it is an achievement that comes from the hard work of acknowledging each fellow believer as a gift from God who comes with his/her own unique perspectives. Showing love and tolerance is a Spirit-driven choice. *G. Crowe*

## Life Worth Living

Have you ever encountered someone who was opposed to Christianity because they felt it limited life too much? I have met a number of non-Christians who do not like the idea of serving God because it limits the amount of fun they can have . . . or so they think. In my mind, that means we have not done our job as a church body. We, as a church body, cannot allow the world to perpetuate this misconception! Being a Christian is full of fun! It is not limiting but expanding!

Your summer mission (should you choose to accept it): demonstrate the life-giving nature of Christianity, the life-fulfilling nature of Christ. Go outside and play. Enjoy the weather for a change. Boat, travel, picnic with friends. Enjoy all of what God gave us to enjoy . . . and invite your non-Christian friends. Let them see you enjoying life immensely! And they will also see your love and commitment to Christ!

Christians are not sticks in the mud. We are bottle rockets that, once lit, display a wonderful, awesome, and mysterious light that draws people toward us. They should see the fullness of our lives and be in awe.

Are you living life to the fullest? Are you taking advantage of all that God has offered you? Enjoy your summer and let it be an outreach to those who do not know the Lord.

~Dan



**Seth Mullen** continues to recover from spinal surgery at the Children's Memorial Hospital, 2300 Children's Plaza, Chicago, IL 60614-3394....**Rick Willison**, Jim's brother in Nashville, Tennessee, remains in a coma....**Elaine Crowder** remains at Rosewalk Village while she recovers and rehabs from hip replacement surgery. That address is 1903 Union St., Lafayette 47904....**Bill Royston** has eye surgery on Wednesday, June 1, at the VA Hospital in Indianapolis ....**Beth Holt** has surgery at Home Hospital on June 10....Continue to pray for **Joe White, Darrell Martin, Betty Hunt, Naomi Hunt, Anna Dale, Burnell Gulden, 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 **Hombs** and **Studebaker** families. Serving in the military: **Josh Hunt** is in Iraq; **Loren Sniffen** is in Afghanistan.

## Pantry Items of the Week



The pantry items for this week are **canned fruit & chicken noodle soup.**

## Graduation Party!

Greg & Chris Sutherlin are having a graduation open house for their daughter, **Kelsey**, on **Sunday, June 5, from 12 noon until 4:00 PM**, at their home, 2805 Union St., Lafayette. Kelsey graduated from Jefferson High School.

## Focus on the Family Programs

Upcoming **Focus on the Family** programs are heard on local radio, WHPL-FM 89.9 at **6:30 PM Monday-Friday.**

- June 2 & 3*     **Screaming Mothers**—Pat Holt and Dr. Grace Ketterman examine the various reasons some mothers scream at their children and offer help for overcoming that behavior. (Parts 1 & 2)
- June 6 & 7*     **The Key to Healthy Relationships**—Relationship experts Gary Smalley and his sons, Greg and Michael, discuss the "fear dance," a trap that damages relationships, and what we can do to enjoy healthier relationships. (Parts 1 & 2)
- June 8*         **What Husbands Need Most**—Todd Wilson shares helpful advice on how to make marriage work in the midst of the unique dynamics found in homeschooling families.
- June 9-10*     **Examining Addictive Behaviors**—Psychologist Arch Hart discusses hidden addictions and how to overcome them. (Parts 1 & 2)



## Congratulations!

Congratulations to **Julie** (Groves) **Phillips**, who graduated from Cosmetology School on May 23. She has a job available as soon as she takes her State Board exam.

## It's a Boy!



Congratulations to **Leslie & Carl Wilson** on the birth of **Allen Jay** (a.k.a. A.J.), who was born Tuesday, May 24, weighing 8 pounds 7 oz., and measuring 20.5 inches long. Big sister, Kyra, welcomed him home on Thursday. Congratulations also, to grandmother, **Tammy Tatman**, and great-grandparents, **Connie & Ken Nicholson!**



Congratulations to former Elmwood members, **Heather & Patrick Ward**, now in West Virginia, on the birth of daughter, **Bridget Anne**. She was born May 25, weighing 7 pounds 15 oz. Big sister and brother, Cassidy & Nathan, are all smiles and delighted with their new sister.

**May 29, 2005**

*Class: 170    Worship: 281*

*Contribution: \$5,785*

*Budget: \$8,100*

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## Congratulations, Kelsey!



## Spring Mill Bible Camp



Elmwood contributed \$1,500 to the repair project.  
Thank you!

## In Honor of the Whites

Joe and Wanita White have been members of this church since July, 1947. For their years of service to this congregation and the mission field throughout the world—and to celebrate their 60th wedding anniversary—Elmwood would like to honor them by sending a monetary gift to one or more of their favorite mission areas. Contributions may be given for the next two weeks to one of the elders or ministers. (If you give cash, be sure to attach your name to it so we can tell Joe and Wanita who contributed.)



Our sympathies to **Ken & Connie Nicholson** on the death of Ken's father, **Ken Nicholson, Sr.**, who died on Monday, May 30, from stomach cancer. His funeral will be at the Soller Baker Funeral Home on Twyckenham at the end of this week.

Sincere sympathies also to **Jenny Gibson** on the death of her grandfather, **Frank Talbott**. He had been in ill health for some time. His funeral will be later this week at Hippensteel Funeral Home.



*Elmwood Church of Christ,  
I would like to express my appreciation to the ladies of the church who prepared and delivered such delicious meals since I came home from the nursing home.*

—Dovie Hurst



**June 1, 7 PM...**Bible classes for all  
**June 5, 12–4 PM...**Graduation Open House for  
**Kelsey Sutherland**, 2805 Union St., Lafayette  
**June 5, 6 PM...**Singing followed by  
Finger Foods and fellowship

Read:  
 1 Kings 2-12; Acts 5-9  
 Psalms 127-131; Proverbs  
 16:25-17:5

# 2005 Spiritual Adventure

## Week 24: June 13-19

### To Be or Not to Be Filled with the Spirit—What's Your Choice?

Are you welcoming or resisting the Spirit? Either choice has consequences.

Consider the poignant story of Stephen in Acts 6 and 7. Stephen was chosen to help the disciples with their ministering duties because he was a man "full the Spirit and wisdom." Later he is described as being "full of God's grace and power," a man who "did great wonders and miraculous signs among the people." He was so "filled" that people who opposed him and argued with him "could not stand up against his wisdom or the Spirit by whom he spoke." That certainly tells us that the Spirit is powerful!

Stephen went on to relay in a thorough, logical way how God had worked in the lives of the Hebrew people through the years to bring about his Plan to bring the Messiah to them, the one whom they had just "betrayed and murdered." Stephen's wisdom and leading of the Spirit prompted him to bluntly say that they were "stiff-necked," had "uncircumcised hearts and ears," and would always "resist the Holy Spirit." After this encounter, Stephen's opponents killed him by stoning.

We may wonder why God allowed these consequences when Stephen was filled with "the Spirit and wisdom" and his murderers "resisted the Spirit." I can't answer that. But, I can say that the ultimate consequences of both are quite different. Stephen saw "heaven open" and Jesus "standing at the right hand of God." His murderers had no such vision of hope.

Isn't Stephen's consequence of welcoming the Spirit into his life what we want, rather than missing eternity with God which was the consequence of those who had resisted the Spirit?

*Lord, fill us with your Spirit and wisdom!*

**-Lisa Crowe**

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

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