



## Sin: Struggling Again?

Budget? What's a budget? A friend from Merrill Lynch said this morning that as he counsels clients who come saying they really want to set their houses in order, he recommends their setting up a budget. He may work with them for hours on establishing what they all agree will be a workable budget.

Guess who stays on the budget? The people who were already careful with their money. Guess who doesn't stay on the budget? (Yawn) Of course, it's the people who really need it, whose financial ships are going under for the last time. But that doesn't make sense! Reason would say that the folks who need it most would love to stay on it. (Ah, but what does reason and/or common sense have to do with anything?)

This week's Spiritual Adventure reading includes these words:

There is a way that seems right to a man  
but in the end it leads to death. (Proverbs 14:12)

Of course. It makes sense. All through life we have two choices: to do it our way, or to do it God's way. No brainer. Of course, knowing the options, we'll pick God's way every time. Right?

Wrong. Human beings are (insert word of your choice: careless, incorrigible, stupid, thoughtless, sinful, slow to learn). We keep thinking we can do it our way, when in fact we know (in our heads, not our hearts) that doing it God's way is infinitely better. We've spent a lifetime finding out dozens of things that don't work, but the next time a temptation comes along we have choices to make all over again, and down, down, down the chute we go.

Will we ever change? "Just have more will power." We've tried that. "I promise I'll never do it again!" We've also tried that before. How about praying this way: "Lord, I have this struggle against \_\_\_\_\_ sin. You know it, I've told you a thousand times. Lord, I honestly want to do the right thing. I am willing to desire the right thing. But, God, I need your empowerment to make the right choice. I yield my will to you. Please give me the desire to do what pleases you." Pray it today, and tomorrow, and the next day. God is faithful, and will answer. G. Crowe

## Spring Break

The CSC is undertaking a mission trip to Slidell, Louisiana, this year for Spring Break. We will be aiding in the Hurricane Katrina Relief Efforts currently taking place there.

There are 14 of us who will be going. We will be driving to Nashville, Tennessee, on March 10 where we will spend the night at the Central Church of Christ. The next day we will drive to Slidell, Louisiana, and spend the rest of the week doing demolition work, clean up, and hanging dry wall in homes that need it.

We need two things from the Elmwood community to help make this trip happen! Could you please pray for us above all else that we would be tireless in our efforts to help those in need? Also, could you provide us with more baked goods? We would like to have a bake sale on campus to raise some extra money for our trip. What money we do not use, we are donating to the church in Slidell to help with further relief efforts when we are gone.

We will plan to have a bake sale on campus the first week of March. So, if you would like to donate a baked item (cookies, brownies, etc.), please bring it to A-2 at church on Sunday, March 5. We will take them from there! Thank you so much for your support in the ministry! We could not do it without you!  
~Dan



**Kaden Koebcke**, grandson of Jack & Sue McCoy, remains in NICU at Riley Hospital in Indianapolis. He is currently having respiratory problems. He can now take 1 ounce of milk every three hours and is up to 3 pounds 8 ounces!...**Shirley Farmer's** husband, **Willard**, will have surgery this Thursday, February 23, for cancer...**Betty Brown** had surgery on her hand last Wednesday...Continue praying for **Natasha Risley, Laura Reel, A. J. Wilson, Josh Dieterle, Doris Swensen, Sharon McHenry, Terry Spenard, Marie DeWoody, Mark Eddy, Anna Dale, Ramona Farris, Irene Fox, Carrie High, and Delpha Allen**. Those in Rosewalk Village: **Paul & Ruth Marks, Minnie Scott, and Burnell Golden**. Serving in Iraq: **Jon Kiefner, Loren Sniffen, Dustin Holley, and Brad King**.

## Leadership Training for Christ

Anyone interested in participating in puppets should meet with Lynae this Wednesday, February 22, at 7:00 PM. Also, anyone interested in Large Group Singing, meet at the Simmermans' this Sunday, February 26, at 4:15 PM for our first rehearsal. We will decide on music at that time. If transportation is needed please let Phyllis know (474-6277). Even if you have not turned in your LTC registration and are interested in these two events, please join us.

## Let's Start Talking Team goes to Fiji

For the sixth time, Elmwood is sending a team of Let's Start Talking workers to teach Jesus using English conversation. This year, the team will be sent to Suva, Fiji. The team includes Josh, Gina, and Kinley Boyd; Ryan and Stephanie Middleton; and Alison Ruhl. The team will leave for Fiji in mid-June and will spend 6 weeks sharing Jesus and their faith. Please pray for all the team members as they prepare. If you'd like to contribute to the project, see Josh Boyd or go online to <http://1st.kintera.org/2006projects/purdue>, where you can contribute to individual members or click on "general team donation" for your gift to be used by whoever needs it most.

*Thank You!*

*I wish to thank all the Elmwood children for the lovely decorated Valentine bag of goodies and cards. Also, thanks to Yssa, Taylor and Audrey for bringing it to me. I appreciated it all more than I can say. -Delpha Allen*

*I would like to thank the children for their Valentines and "goodies." And thanks to Yssa, Taylor, Audrey and Marie for delivering them! I love you! -Ethel Cable*

*Children, thank you so much for the wonderful Valentine sack. I enjoyed some treat each day so I could remember you and how special you made me feel. The "goodies" were wonderful and the Valentines so very special. Thank you again. -Camilla Lawson*

*Thanks to the dear children, teachers, and mothers for the lovely Valentine gift. Special thanks to Becky. It is so nice to be remembered. -Oka LeMaster*

*Dear little friends,  
Your well-filled Valentine gift bag for Paul and me was appreciated so much. You made us feel so special! Hannah and Joshua Robson delivered it in person with big smiles and a hug. Thank you so much. -Paul & Argie Verett*

*To the children of Elmwood and their wonderful teachers,  
What a surprise! Sorry we were not at home when you delivered our Valentine bag. You are so thoughtful. Sincerely, Joe & Sandy Seele*

# EYU

## It's a Boy!



**Noah McCoy Powlen** was born Tuesday, February 14, to **Jenna & Craig Powlen** in Pasadena, California. Though he was born 7 weeks early, he weighed 5 pounds 6 ounces! He is off the respirator already and on a nasal canula. Prayers are requested as he will remain in NICU for a while. Congratulations to the Powlens and to grandparents, Jack & Sue McCoy!

## Attention Parents

There will be **no Children's Church for grades 1-5 this Sunday, February 26.**



The food pantry is in need of **canned fruit and soup.**

**February 19, 2006**

Class: 215 Worship: 287

Contribution: \$6,227

Budget: \$8,100

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## Winterfest

As usual, Winterfest was wonderful. We know that some of you were praying for us because our travels were uneventful and the sessions were a blessing and even timely for our group. The focus of the messages/dramas/etc. was apologetics. You will have to ask one of the students about the four pillar truths about the Christ and about the A, B, C, D, and E that support our faith. Of course, we all know that many things about God can't be proven empirically, so one session encouraged us all to just step out in faith – there is no substitute for living a life that is pleasing to God.

One of the reasons I was able to have a great trip is that we had some wonderful chaperones along to help share the loads of responsibility. Thank you Jim Jones, Kevin Lee, Jim Moore, Michael Nicodemus, Sharon Porter, Lynae Stafford and Sheryl Willison! We also had a couple college students to provide some "close to the inside" leadership.

## Mariah

I mentioned recently that Mariah was off to do her student teaching (close to her home). I just got the following in an e-mail from her. She has been such a blessing to our youth group and to the whole church. I hope that all of you will be in touch with her so she doesn't feel like we have forgotten about her. Not only that...she's going to need lots of support while she does her student teaching...you guys know how teens treat student teachers, yikes!

*I'd love to hear from anyone/everyone!!! They're welcome to contact me anytime—day or night! You and the Elmwood youth will always have a special place in my heart and I intend to visit as often as I can! Ya'll are welcome to come and visit me on the farm as well! :) Talk to you again sometime soon! In HIM, Mariah Wise (parent's address) 7817 S 1000 W, Claypool, IN 46510, cell—574-328-0108, mariah\_wise@hotmail.com.*

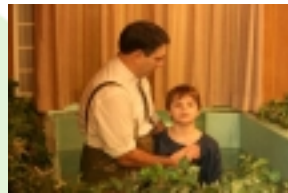
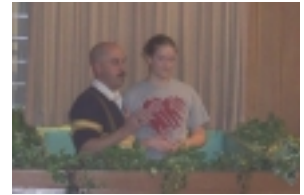
## Leadership Training for Christ – Take the Lead!

LTC preparations begin this week here at Elmwood. The convention is April 14-16, 2006 in Indianapolis. Anyone interested in participating in puppets should meet with Lynae on Wednesday at 7pm. Also, anyone interested in Large Group Singing, meet at the Simmerman's on Sunday, Feb 26th at 4:15 for our first rehearsal. We will decide on music at that time. If transportation is needed, please let Phyllis know. Even if you have not turned in your LTC registration and are interested in these 2 events, please join us.

–Lee



**Melissa Willison** obeyed the Lord in baptism on Wednesday night, February 15. Melissa is a junior at Harrison High School where she plays volleyball and softball. She is the daughter of Jim and Sheryl, and sister of Heather. Congratulations, Melissa, on your decision to make Jesus Lord of your life! Her address: 7616 Posey Lane., Lafayette 47905; phone 296-9600.



**Seth Ratcliff** was baptized Sunday morning, February 19, by his grandfather, John Marks. Seth, who will be 11 on Sunday, is a fifth grader at Cole Elementary School. His parents are Chris and Melanie, and brothers are Evan and Levi. Congratulations, Seth, on this important decision. His address: 7323 S. 450 E., Lafayette 47909; phone 523-3333.

## New Directory Pictures to be taken



Elmwood is shooting a new pictorial directory, and we need everyone to participate. A photo studio will set up at the church building on April 14, 15, 25 and 26 (Friday, Saturday, Tuesday and Wednesday). Every participating family gets a free directory and 8 x 10. There will be sign-up sheets available beginning in April, but right now you can go ahead and make an appointment time online at [www.signup.olanmills.com](http://www.signup.olanmills.com). Use the number 05991 as your contract number, and be sure to advance the calendar to April to find Elmwood's date options. Sign up early to make sure you get a convenient time! This directory is an important tool in our staying in touch with each other and in helping new members learn who everyone else is.



**Feb. 22, 7 PM....**Bible classes for all  
**Feb. 22, 7 PM....**Good \$ense Budget Class  
**February 22, 7 PM....**Begin puppet practice for LTC  
**Fewb. 26, 4:15 PM....**LTC Large Group singing rehearsal at Simmermans' house

Read:  
Numbers 12-33  
Psalms 22-28

# 2006 Spiritual Adventure

## Week 10: March 5-11

As I read Numbers 12 through 33, I thought of how the Holy Spirit uses this in I Corinthians 10. *“For I do not want you to be ignorant of the fact, brothers, that our forefathers were all under the cloud and that they all passed through the sea. They were all **baptized into Moses** in the cloud and in the sea. They **all** ate the same spiritual food and drank the same spiritual drink; for they drank from the spiritual rock that accompanied them, and that rock was Christ. Nevertheless, God was not pleased with **most** of them; their bodies were scattered over the desert. Now these things occurred as examples to keep us from setting our hearts on evil things as they did”* (verses 1-6).

Paul is saying that we who have been **baptized into Christ** could also miss our “promised land” if we set our minds on evil things. These things were written down as warnings to us; and if we think we are standing firm, we need to be careful that we do not fall (verses 7-12). In verse 13 we are promised that God will not allow us to be tempted beyond what we can bear but will provide **a way out** so that we can **stand up under** it. But we must choose to take God’s way!

Looking at Romans 6, 7, and 8, we see a similar picture. We were **slaves** to sin, but we were **baptized into Christ** and liberated to serve in the new way of the Spirit, no longer condemned to the wretchedness of a powerless life. God’s Holy Spirit, received at baptism, empowers us to live a righteous life. The Spirit desires and allows our minds to be controlled by the Spirit. Romans 8:12-17 says that we have an obligation to use the Holy Spirit’s power to put to death the misdeeds of the body. Those who are led by the Spirit of God are God’s children who will reach the “promised land,” where they will be heirs of God and co-heirs with Christ.

–Wanita White



# **This Week's Highlight: What About Reincarnation?**

A gracEmail subscriber writes: *"I tend to think that the soul breathed into my body pre-existed me and that I had demonstrated a disposition to follow God before as I do now. Perhaps that is why I was predestined to serve God in this life. I would appreciate your comment if you have time."*

The notion of pre-existing and reincarnated souls is a popular but ancient explanation of why good and bad things happen to people during this life and why it is important to do good and not evil while we live. Thousands of years before Christ, the Egyptians and Babylonians both believed that the body is but a temporary shell housing a pre-existent and immortal soul or spirit which might later revisit the earth in another person. Hinduism popularized the same ideas in India about two centuries before Christ. Some 1,500 years later, an impersonal version of the same general thought was incorporated into the fledgling Buddhist tradition. Meanwhile, the Greek philosopher Pythagoras of Samos also taught reincarnation, as Plato did in Athens some two centuries afterward.

In early Christianity, esoteric teachers known as Gnostics taught the pre-existence and reincarnation of immortal souls. The Christian leadership, grounded in the Jewish Scriptures and apostolic teaching, soundly rejected gnosticism as heresy and outside the limits of orthodox teaching. These ancient pagan beliefs reappear today in most New Age philosophy and in such neo-gnostic groups as the Rosicrucians and Theosophists. Although the notions of reincarnation and immortal souls are tantalizing and very old, they are quite different from the revelation contained in the Bible.

The Bible tells us that humans (and everything that exists except God himself) are created, not eternal, and that we did not exist until God made us. In the Bible, "spirit" usually means breath, although it sometimes refers to humans viewed in their inner, intangible self. "Soul" in the Bible normally stands for a whole living person, not an immortal interior part that inhabits but survives the body. Our hope for future life is not reincarnation but resurrection in a glorified and (then) immortal or deathless body suited for new heavens and new earth. This life is a one-time affair. It is appointed to humans to live once, die and eventually to face the Creator to give account (Hebrews 9:27).

The person who understands that we are created by God, redeemed by Jesus Christ and sealed by the Holy Spirit to be made immortal with a glorified body when Jesus comes again has every incentive to live rightly now. These biblical truths provide strong hope for personal bodily life forever with others in a perfect universe, something no concept of reincarnation of immortal souls can possibly match.

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