



How Do We Decide?

Acts 15 contains a wonderful story that can serve as a beneficial guide when the church is faced with a difficult decision concerning a change in the church. This particular story deals with the issue of their day: *“Must one be circumcised in order to be saved?”*

This was no insignificant issue. It was a heaven/hell issue for many, including the leaders in the church. And even among the leaders there seemed to be differing opinions. So the issue was brought to them to be resolved. Whatever they decide will impact those on both sides of the issue tremendously.

How would they make this decision? What would be their criteria? Would they look at tradition and ask, *“What have we always done?”* Would they base their decision on who barks the loudest — *“Who is more likely to leave?”* Would they base their decision on what keeps the most peace?

Actually, they don't base their decision on any of those things. The one criteria they used in this decision was, *“What is God doing?”* Look at Acts 15 and you will read phrases like:

- *God showed that he accepted them by giving the Holy Spirit to them...*
- *...He purified their hearts*
- *...telling about the signs and wonders God had done among the Gentiles*

The leaders of the church in Jerusalem looked for God's activity. They looked for God's Spirit at work. They looked for the fruit of God. *What is God doing? What is God blessing?*

Often all we need to do is open our eyes to the work God is already doing – to the work He is already blessing. I recently read an article that suggested this story is about the church catching up to the mission of God. I believe the church is always trying to catch up to the mission of God. We are always a little (or a lot) behind God. Our job is to ask questions about His activity: *What is God currently doing? Who has God already equipped? What is God already blessing? Where do we see His Spirit at work?*

-Gilbert

Render Unto Caesar

In Jesus' time, the image of the Caesar was everywhere. It was on coins, artwork, on houses and in the city courts. A Caesar would use his image to empower his own rule, and remind his subjects that they were to be subservient to him. He used it to claim ownership over all in the Empire.

In Luke 20:19-26 we read of an account where Jesus is asked whether or not it is lawful (under the law of Moses) to give taxes to Caesar. The people are trying to trap Jesus. If he says it is lawful, then he may be attacked by the people who had rioted against this particular tax in AD 6. If he answers in the negative, the government will arrest him as a disrupter of order and put him to death.

In Jesus' answer he asks whose image is on the coin. New coins were minted with the image of the new Caesar when the old one died, thus the coin had the image of the current Caesar- Augustus Tiberius (or perhaps the image of his father, due to the nature of circulation).

The image of Caesar claimed ownership of the coin. But the language of image has an important meaning for God's people as well, for all humankind are made in God's image. God has claimed ownership of our lives, and Jesus says that our whole lives are to be devoted to God. Jesus says to render the entirety of our lives to God, for God's image is stamped upon us.

-Phil

Carol Bell had back surgery at Clarian Arnett on Monday. She is already feeling the improvement and doing well. She will go home on Wednesday....**Kaden Koebecke**, Jack & Sue McCoy's 2-year-old grandson, had his chemotherapy treatment postponed due to illness. They hope he will be well and able to begin treatment next Monday....**Ginger Maxwell-Spenard, Oscar Miller** and **Lorraine Weckerly** are recuperating at home....

Continue praying for **Ann Vaught, Dick Waterstraat,**

Diann Doty, Jan Lucas, David Fulkerson, David Brutans, Charles Moore, Eloise Shank, Hattie Coffel, Mary Tavana, Ted Heitman, Annie Crowder, Dorothy Walters, Irene Fox, Edith McCoy, Eugene Zinn, Valley Stockton, Irene Sims, Marie DeWoody, Paul & Argie Verett, and Minnie Scott.

In the military: **Josh Martin** (Phyllis Simmerman's nephew), **Brent Kaufman**, and **Matt Kaufman** (nephews of Ronda Tidrick) are serving in Iraq.



Last summer Jimmy & Susan Huff, Amy Berkshire, and Jason Cochran led the Let's Start Talking team that went to Panama. Jason recently received word that the lead missionary, **Walter Leonard**, passed away unexpectedly. Susan, Jimmy, Jason, and Amy testify that he was an extraordinary servant of Christ who will be greatly missed.

Women's Ministry News

- If you want to attend the first Elmwood **Ladies Tea on June 27** and didn't sign up on a yellow card, please let Terri Miller know at 471-1045. There's always room for more!
- **Bingo Night at Tippecanoe Villa** is planned for **Tuesday evening, June 23, at 6:30 PM.** Please just show up at the Villa to play Bingo with Elmwood members and residents of the Villa. It should be a very fun evening! We are still in need of Bingo prizes. Look around your house and donate items that you think someone else could appreciate. If you can contribute snacks for the event, or have any questions, please let Stephanie Curwick know at 523-2452. The more the merrier!

Administering Grace

I want to remind all of you about the challenge that was given to all of us this past Sunday. We want to find ways to truly administer grace to others around us as we stand in our own containers of grace. Let me share with you what some wrote on their yellow cards:

- *I want to be more hospitable*
- *I want to do a better job of welcoming visitors on Sunday mornings*
- *I want to be a better husband who encourages my wife*
- *I will administer grace by showing more mercy & forgiveness to an enemy*
- *I will choose my words more wisely around others.*
- *I will spend more time in prayer for others*

These are just a few of the examples from the list of ways to administer grace to someone this week.

June 14, 2009

Class: 182 Worship: 300 Contribution: \$7,862

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Mission Trip

Jason Cochran and Jimmy Huff leave Monday, June 22, for 10 days in Haiti where they will do some work with the churches and schools there. They return July 1. Pray for their mission and safety.



*Dear Church family & friends,
Thank you so much for the lovely flowers sent for Dad's funeral. We were amazed at all the visits and concern shown to our family. Your prayers and cards and love helped us get through the last 2 months. **Thank you all.***

*Love the Moores
Jim, Marsha, Mark & Micah*

Join Us on a Walk



Hedi Devine and Joyce Flynn extend an invitation to all to join them this Thursday, June 18, to walk trails at the Celery Bog. They'll meet at 5:15 PM at the parking lot of the Celery Bog (off Lindberg Rd. in West Lafayette).



Sharing Jesus

Last Sunday night, we had a devotional with some of the youth at the Tilley's house. For the devotional thought I showed a little clip from the classic, *The Three Amigos*. In the clip Dusty Bottams, Lucky Day, and Ned Nederlander are riding their horses through a very hot desert and it is very noticeable that they are thirsty. They stop their horses and pull out their canteens. First, Lucky Day (Steve Martin) lifts his canteen and only a few drops come out leaving him very unsatisfied. Next, Ned Nederlander (Martin Short) lifts his canteen to his mouth and instead of water filling his mouth, sand fills his mouth. Lastly, Dusty Bottams (Chevy Chase) lifts his canteen and water comes gushing out. It seems like his canteen has a never ending supply of water in it. He even gargles with the extra water and tosses the still full canteen on the ground, ruining the rest of the water. With the others looking on in disbelief, Dusty pulls some lip balm out, rubs his lips with it. He then notices that the others are watching him and he offers them lip balm.

After I showed this funny clip, I turned to a story in John 4. This is the story of Jesus meeting the Woman of Samaria at the well. Check this story out. While this woman is pulling water from the well, Jesus offers her "living water." After some conversation, the woman realizes that this man is the Messiah, Jesus. And, being filled with this "living water," the woman runs to her town and shares her water with anyone who will listen. If you continue to read the story, you will read in verse 39 that many Samaritans from that town believed in Jesus because of the woman's testimony and they looked for him.

Don't be like Dusty Bottams. As Christians we are filled with living water for eternity, but look around. Notice the people around you who are thirsting. Be like the Samaritan woman. Share with them who Jesus is. Wouldn't it be great to have someone say, "Because of your testimony and the way you live, I believe!"

"O God, you are my God; earnestly I seek you; my soul thirsts for you; my flesh faints for you, as in a dry and weary land where there is no water" Psalms 63:1.

-Randy Kerrigan



Movie Night

This Sunday night at The Well we will have our movie night. In the auditorium we will be watching *The Second Chance*. It is a powerful movie about two churches in the same town that share the same faith, yet live in two totally different worlds. There are some powerful themes in this movie dealing with racism, pride, faith, and redemption. The movie is rated PG-13 and I would advise you to visit this website for a description and reason for the rating: <http://www.pluggedinonline.com/movies/movies/a0002549.cfm>.

There will also be a movie in A2 for the children. That movie will be Dr. Seuss' *Horton Hears a Who*, which is rated G. Come for a great night of popcorn, soda, and a movie.

Weekly Prayer Focus

Prayer Focus – 6-16-09 – Camp CUMO (Cincinnati Urban Mission Outreach)

As mentioned last week, camps and mission trips are two of the most important faith shaping events in the life of a young person (maybe adults, too!). July 19-24, a group of Elmwood teens (9-12th grades), college students, and adults will be going to Cincinnati to take 50 inner city children camping for the week. The teens will serve as counselors, teachers, mentors, worship leaders and more. Please pray that students will make the decision to participate in this important event and that God will bless them and work powerfully through them to show God's love and grace to the children He sends our way.

New Address



Beth & Tom Miller send greetings. We "miss Elmwood and are so touched at the love shown us while we were there." Their new address: 3 West Keklico Ct., Goose Creek, SC 29445.



June 17, 7 PM...Bible classes for all
June 21, 6 PM...Movie night at Elmwood

Read:
I Chronicles 6-25;
Matthew 19:1-22:22

2009 Spiritual Adventure

Week 27: June 29-July 5

And A Begat B and B Begat C and.... The Genealogies of I Chronicles

The stories of the monarchies of Israel are spread through I and II Samuel, I and II Kings, and I and II Chronicles. Some of the stories are told in two different places. Some are so captivating that they have been made into movies, the best known of which tells of David and his adulterous affair with Bathsheba. "Who did what?" seems an important concern of these books.


The books have another important concern as well: "Who fathered (or mothered) who?" A very good example are the lengthy genealogies of I Chronicles, chapters 6-25 where we have page after page of notations such as: "And in Gibeon Jeiel the father of Gibeon lived, and his wife's name was Maacah, and his first-born son was Abdon, the Zur, Kish, Baal, Ner, Nadab, Gedor, Ahio, Zechariah, and Mikloth." The people are not anonymous: we know their names, but for the grand majority, their names are all we know about them. "What," we might ask, "is the value of all this trivia?"

The answer to the question may lie in both form and content. First of all, it demonstrates to us that we are important in God's eyes. Gibeon and his wife, Maacah, did not just come out of nowhere, live unnoted lives and disappear into nothingness. They counted. They were significant in the history that God was making with the Israelites. They came from a long lineage and provided for the endurance of that lineage.

In *The Gifts of the Jews*, Thomas Cahill makes another point. The practice of the ancient Israelites to recognize people and remember their names has had a powerful effect on our contemporary society: "Democracy . . . grows directly out of the Israelite vision of *individuals*, subjects of value because they are the images of God, each with a unique and personal destiny."

Each name in the genealogies speaks of a person of significance. May we recognize and accept our own significance.

—Rob Smith

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 Mathews 474-8369 Rick Swensen 463-6822 Don Vice 471-8653 Staff Ministers Gilbert Kerrigan 418-3652 Lee Porter 463-6993 Phil Travis 447-2874 Office Sherry Marks, Manager 447-2874 Carol Bell, Secretary 447-2874	Kevin Chambers World Christian Broadcasting Anchor Point, Alaska 99536 Loren and Penny Hollingsworth Phuket, Thailand 83000 E-mail: lholly54@yahoo.com Bren and Cheryl White P.O. Box 245 New Market, MD 21774
		

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