



## Untwisting the Text #2

*“May the God of endurance and encouragement grant you to live in such harmony with one another, in accord with Christ Jesus, that together you may with one voice glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. Therefore welcome one another as Christ has welcomed you, for the glory of God.”*

~ Romans 15:5-7

This is another one of those texts that can sometimes get twisted into saying something the author never meant for it to say. Some have suggested that “harmony” and “one voice” imply conformity or uniformity. The question often gets asked, “How can harmony exist, and how can people bring one voice, unless there is a conformity to certain held beliefs?” I believe that greatly misunderstands the idea of harmony, and actually takes away from the power of glorifying God with one voice. It also ignores the context the scripture.

Before writing those words in Romans 15, Paul had just finished a whole chapter talking about the different beliefs brothers and sisters held within the one church there in Rome. They held varying beliefs on matters such as eating meats and observing certain days as holy. These may seem inconsequential to us, but these issues were of extreme importance to Christians during Paul’s day. And, like many of the issues that have divided our churches, these issues were dividing their churches.

We are reminded all through the New Testament letters that there was a great deal of diversity in the church. For example:

- There was a diversity of functions (Rom. 12:4-5).
- There was a diversity of understanding. Some were babes in Christ (1 Cor. 3:1), while others were mature in Christ (1 Cor. 2:6).
- There was a diversity of knowledge (1 Cor. 8).
- There was a diversity of customs (1 Cor. 9:19-23). As one author wrote, “It was true that in Christ Jesus there was neither Jew nor Greeks, but it was also true that there were Jews and Greeks in Christ Jesus. These statements are not contradictory.”
- There was a diversity of opinions (Rom. 14).

This is the context of Paul’s statement to live in harmony and to bring praise to God using one voice. Harmony is about acceptance, not conformity. As Ketcherside writes, “Harmony does not consist of seeing everything alike on the understanding level, but about welcoming one another on the faith level.” This is what Paul is urging when he writes, “Therefore welcome one another as Christ has welcomed you, for the glory of God.”

Elmwood is a wonderful example of this passage being lived out. There is great diversity in this body. There are many differing opinions, views, and beliefs in this body. We all come from different backgrounds, churches, and experiences. Yet, in the midst of that diversity we somehow manage to live in harmony, and with one voice we glorify God. It is an amazing testimony to the power of the gospel.

*-Gilbert*

## Who Is Wise?

### Part II

In last week’s article, I wrote about the need to avoid bitter envy and selfish ambition based on James 3:13-18. After I wrote that article, a friend e-mailed me asking that I also write about not just the need to avoid bitter envy and selfish ambition, but how one can avoid those things.

James says that selfish ambition and envy is worldly “wisdom” and does not come from God, so perhaps if we take a look at the wisdom that does come from God, we can avoid earthly “wisdom” by filling our lives with Godly wisdom.

In James 3:13 James says, “Who is wise and understanding among you? Let them show it by their good life, by deeds done in the humility that comes from wisdom.” From this verse we learn that humility and wisdom are connected. I don’t proclaim to be an expert on humility (that would be rather ironic) but I do believe that we can increase our chances of being humble by not comparing ourselves to others. It is altogether too easy to pick out the best aspects of ourselves and compare them against the worst aspects that we see in others. Of course we look good in that situation!

James goes on to describe wisdom that comes from Heaven as “pure; then peace-loving, considerate, submissive, full of mercy and good fruit, impartial and sincere” (v.17). These are many of the important qualities of wisdom, and I think, in particular “peace-loving” is hugely important in defeating selfish ambition and envy. Perhaps the implications of these terms can be worked out later, as I find I am now out of space!

*-Phil Travis*



To my wonderful Elmwood family,  
Thank you so much for the many  
prayers, visits, cards, flowers and food,  
and all my long distance hugs!  
Love, Armilda Follick



Congratulations to grandma and grandpa, **Joe & Joyce Mathews**, on the birth of their grandson, **William Mathews Witzel**, born to their daughter, Jodie, and her husband, Rob Witzel. He was born May 16 weighing 7 pounds 8 ounces and measured 20 inches long. They live in Centralia, Illinois. God's blessings on you all.

**"Freed-Up  
Financial Living" is  
a six session update of  
the former  
Good Sense  
Budget Class.**  
Janet Boston will begin  
a new class soon.

May 22, 2011  
Class: 145 Worship: 265  
Contribution: \$5,998

**Farrell Simmerman** had a successful procedure to insert two stents on Monday...**Steve Curwick** had successful back surgery Wednesday. He is in room 3S40, St. Elizabeth East...**Sherry Scoggin** will have back surgery this Friday, May 27, at IU Health Arnett...**Patty Vice** is home recovering from recent surgery...**Elizabeth Tinkle** suffered some injuries from a recent fall...Continue praying for **Seth Mullen, Marceena Miller (kidney dialysis), Armilda Follick, Jim Willison, Kathleen Cable, Barb Critser, Patricia Perry, Cain Harris, Tammy Beaver (breast cancer), Linda Weeks, Kaden Koebecke, Mickey Rigdon, Oscar Miller, Jan Lucas, Vickie Sanders, Marie DeWoody, Joshua Nelson, Wanita White, Max Raines, Carolyn Rigdon, Phyllis Gray, and Jan Swensen (melanoma).**



In the military: **Josh Martin** is in Iraq. **Matthew Kauffman** is in Germany. **Joe Newman** is in Chicago.

Continue to remember the following people who are home-bound or in a nursing care facility: **Ruth Carter, Irene Sims, Dorothy Walters, Ethel Cable, Hattie Coffel, Argie Verett, Dovie Hurst, Bill Gibson, Valley Stockton, Delores Hill, Henrietta Frampton, Mary Walker, Linda Bilyeu, Janet Achor, Clifford Farner, Eugene Zinn, Charles & Carolyn Moore, and Annie Crowder.**

## Decorating for VBS on Wednesday nights



On Wednesday nights, at 7:00 PM, we will continue to decorate for Vacation Bible School which is June 13-17, 6-8 PM. This week come prepared to PAINT (in other words wear old clothing)! Everyone is invited to meet (whenever you can) in the old 3 year-old classroom (room 102 across from Dorothy's office).

## Upcoming VBS work dates

**June 4: 10 AM until 3 PM; June 11: 10 AM until 3 PM; June 12: 2 PM until ?**

Registration forms are available on the bulletin by the teachers' workroom, or you may register online at: [www.groupvbspro.com/vbs/ez/elmwoodkids](http://www.groupvbspro.com/vbs/ez/elmwoodkids). Questions? Talk to Michelle Robson.



**Danielle & Michael**

*Mr. & Mrs. Daniel Myer &  
Mr. & Mrs. Dale Greenbank  
request the honour of your presence  
at the marriage of their children  
Danielle Rene Myer to Michael Ryan Greenbank  
on Saturday, June 18, 2001, 4:30 in the afternoon  
Faith Baptist Church  
5526 State Road 26 East, Lafayette  
Reception to follow at Faith Community Center*

## Movement in Concert, pt. 2

I am finding more and more that as a father, one of my primary jobs is relationship management. While it makes for great stories, especially in bulletin articles, the task of teaching my three children to exist in harmony with one another, much less their other relationships, requires a fair bit of maintenance and vigilance. One of the things I find myself saying quite often is, "If you want to have good friends, you have to be a good friend." I think I got that one from my mom, actually.

The thought I ended with last week is that Christ like relationships are something that we have to be intentional and strategic about seeking out. Often times, I think we assume that, given the right environment, community will just happen. The reality is that whatever the environment, relationships tend to break down instead of coming together. Communication naturally gets sloppy. Feelings tend to get hurt. Minutia replaces the vital in our dealings with others. Relational entropy is a fact of life.

Most of the subject matters of Paul's letters are themed in the language of intentional relationship. If we as disciples have now become the Body of Christ, he contends, then how we relate to one another becomes a primary source of connection to or disconnection from our Head. Like we stated earlier, people need people to help them move. Somehow it gives me great comfort to know that even for eyewitnesses to Christ, there was still quite a bit of messiness in figuring out how to live in holy, thriving community as the church.

Paul's advice was much the same as the mantra I repeat daily to my kids. He tells us that the best way to experience the benefits of Christian community is to intentionally engage in the practice of extending Christian community to others. To Titus, he even explicitly lays out the idea that more experienced believers have a charge to mentor those with less experience in the art of living in Christian community. When you think about it, this model applies to all of us, regardless of our age or experience. We all need to actively seek the wisdom and community of those who are more experienced at living in relationship with Jesus and the church, and we all have someone that we need to actively share what we've experienced with.

It's natural for us to gravitate to a place where we feel most accepted. What's not always so natural is to create a place that resonates with the acceptance of Christ. Yet that's what the environment of His church thrives on; a place where our identity is secured in the love of the Savior. The effectiveness of any given part of the great Body of Christ is measured in its ability to be the embodiment of His love and life to one another. The stakes are too high for us to not be as intentional about creating relationships that move in Christ's harmony as we are in seeking those relationships.

I encourage you to start making a couple of lists. One of them should be people that you are going to be intentional about seeking relationship with to grow from in wisdom and understanding of Christ. The other, though, is the list of people God is calling you to intentionally draw in to mentor and influence. No matter how young or inexperienced you may feel, God has set people in your path for that specific purpose. In order to move in concert with Christ, we need to be engaged in moving both ways, receiving and giving alike in our relationships.

*In His Grip, Travis*

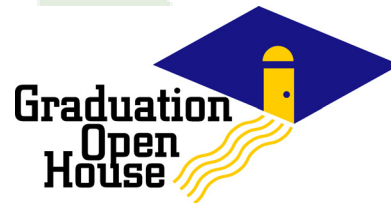
### UPCOMING EVENTS

May 29-30  
June 9-11

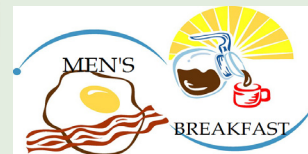
Year-End Shebang & Lock-in!  
Mission 2 Muncie

## Sunday Night, May 29 Activities Fun for the whole family!

Hope you are making plans to join us for an **end of school celebration this Sunday, May 29**, after our evening VBS prayer and dedication time. In addition to a great devotional time, we will have tons of food, games, and activities for your whole family, including a slip 'n slide and water fight, so be ready! We'll plan on going until 10 PM, at which point we'll transition into the Jr. High and High School lock-in. If you have questions, or want to help out, talk with Travis or Danae.



You all are invited to an Open House for **Dylon Shields** this **Saturday, May 28, from 1:00-5:00 PM**, 418 West Maple Street, Flora, Indiana.



The next men's Breakfast is scheduled for **June 25, 7:43-9:00 AM** in the A2 fellowship room. A sign-up sheet will be posted soon. Come enjoy the delicious food and watch the slide presentation on John Marks's return trip to Viet Nam in 2010.



**May 25, 7 PM**....Bible classes & VBS decorating  
**May 29, 6 PM**....VBS Prayer Night—afterward the end of school festivities for all families. Lots of fun for all!  
**June 13-17, 6-8 PM**....Vacation Bible School—save the dates!  
**June 25, 7:43-9:00 AM**....Men's Breakfast in A2 fellowship room

Read:  
Psalm 56-74; Hebrews 8-12

# 2011 Spiritual Adventures

## Week 22: May 29-June 4

### Keeping the Faith

As I was reading through Hebrews, I was reminded what this book of the Bible really means to me. It simply means “keeping the faith.” When I think of faith, I often think of it as the foundation for which everything was built. Hebrews 11:1 states, “*Now faith is being sure of what we hope for and certain of what we do not see.*” This is such a powerful statement. The fact that we believe so deeply, in something that we put all of our trust in it, that speaks volumes to me.

In Hebrews 10, there are many comparisons between the Old Covenant and the New Covenant. With the Old Covenant, sacrifices were offered every time a sin was committed. Then, once a year on the day of atonement, a sacrifice was made by the high priest for everyone and everything. This didn’t make a dent in the sin problem, and that’s how the New Covenant came about.

The New Covenant offered a completely different view on atoning for your sins. Instead of offering a sacrifice every time a sin was committed, Christ made a single sacrifice for sins. The Holy Spirit attests to this in Hebrews 10:16-17, “*This is the covenant I will make with them after that time, says the Lord. I will put my laws in their hearts, and I will write them on their minds.*” Then he adds: “*Their sins and lawless acts I will remember no more.*”

In Chapter 11 the faith of Abel and Noah is discussed. Abel brought a better sacrifice to God than Cain. It was what he believed, not what he brought, that made all the difference. That’s what God noticed and approved as righteous. After all this time, that belief is still noticed. Noah was told to build a ship in the middle of dry land. Most would have thought this crazy, but not Noah. He simply did as he was instructed and as a result, his family was saved. These two examples show that true faith does really exist.

Remember this, just because we cannot always know for certain, it does not mean we cannot keep the faith!

—Kristi 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.	Bill Bell 463-1139 Joe Mathews 474-8369 Joe Ruhl 463-7012 Rick Swensen 463-6822 Don Vice 471-8653	Kevin Chambers World Christian Broadcasting Anchor Point, Alaska 99536
Wednesday Bible Study 7:00 p.m.	 Staff Ministers Gilbert Kerrigan 418-3652 Phil Travis 743-0954 Travis Hutchinson 447-2874 Office Sherry Marks, Manager 447-2874 Carol Bell, Secretary 447-2874	Loren and Penny Hollingsworth Phuket, Thailand 83000 E-mail: lholly54@yahoo.com
 Our Vision: Knowing Christ, Making Christ Known.		Bren and Cheryl White P.O. Box 245 New Market, MD 21774

 **Elmwood**  
CHURCH OF CHRIST  
2501 Elmwood Ave., Lafayette, IN 47904  
(765) 447-2874 (765) 447-0878 FAX  
E-mail: office@elmwood-church.org  
www.elmwood-church.org

Christian Student Center  
PURDUE UNIVERSITY  
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W. Lafayette, IN 47906

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