

Another Word August 15, 2023

To our family and friends of First Christian Church

August is moving by rather quickly and before you know it we will be into September. We will try to have services at the pavilion as often as we can before the weather cools. We wanted to be outside last Sunday but it was just a little too swampy under the trees.

We are planning to have a 9-week study of the book of James. Thinking of having it at 9:30 on Sunday mornings. If you are interested, please let us know so we can purchase the study material. Would like to start it the first Sunday of September. Call the church and leave a message.

Paul Martin and the Jazz concerts will resume September 11th. Then continue on the first Monday of each month thereafter.

Our scriptures for the next 2 Sundays are as follows:

Aug 20th: Isaiah 56:1, 6-8. Lana Bell is our lead Elder. 2 Thessalonians 1:9, Ephesians 2:12, and Luke 19:10. From Safety to Rescue.

Aug. 27th. Isaiah 51: 1-6. Shelley Carpenter is our lead Elder. Matthew 16: 13-20. Who are you?

As we go to prayer, please remember Lyle Easterday, Gary Mowry, Ken Bee, Dick Gordon, and Mike McCormic who is in Maui with the Red Cross.

May we pray. Dear God of life, we thank You for our lives, and thank You for Your love. Sometimes our days are so busy we forget to remember You and to listen for Your voice. Please forgive us for not taking the time to slow down and wait for You. We thank you for providing us our daily needs and thank you for your guidance and

protection. We hold this prayer up to you in Jesus' precious name,
Amen

Last Sunday evening we were invited to a cookout and bonfire. There was good food, good conversation, and a lot of laughter. A while after the meal was over, out came the marshmallows; the extra-large kind. It was interesting watching everyone roast them on sticks over the hot coals. Some roasted their marshmallows very carefully, lightly browning as they slowly turned their sticks, not allowing them to burn. Others put them directly into the flames and burnt them to a crisp. One enjoyed their "creation" quickly while the other took their time and waited for the result they wanted. As a disclaimer, I admit I like them either way.

While watching, I was reminded of a 1972 study known as the "marshmallow test." The test was developed to study children's self-control; to gauge their ability to either delay or give in to temptations. A single marshmallow was placed in front of each child. They were then told they could eat it immediately or, if they could wait ten minutes, they would be given a second marshmallow as a reward. About one third of them waited the full ten minutes. Another third was able to postpone eating but gave in to temptation after a couple of minutes. The remaining third? They ate them immediately.

Let's face it, we all struggle with self-control. Temptations are all around us. Why do you think grocery stores put the candy at the checkout lanes? We all know that taking our time and waiting for something is better than acting too spontaneously. Bad decisions can be made and we can get burnt in the process. (Burnt marshmallows excluded.)

Paul, in his letter to Titus tells Titus to teach the older men and women on Crete to have sound doctrine, to be reverent, and to be temperate,

respectful, sound in faith and love, and to teach them self-control. And then he instructs Titus to have the older men and women teach their young men and women to also have self-control. (Titus 2: 1-6) Then Paul explains why. In verse 12 he says that having all these virtues and self-control allows us “to say no to ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live upright and godly lives.”

You notice that these virtues don’t secure our place in heaven. (That is what Jesus does for us.) But they do show our need to exercise self-control in all facets of our lives. God has given us everything we need. So, if we take the time to wait on the Lord, like the slow toasting of the marshmallow, we will be rewarded more than we could ever imagine.

In His Peace,

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