

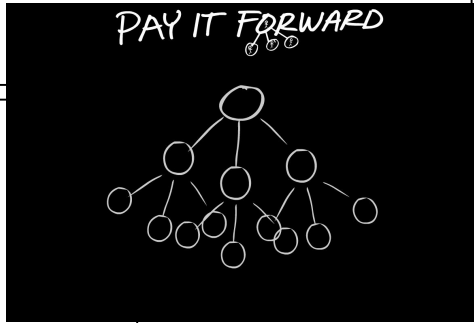
Central Gwinnett Ministry

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

Pay It Forward	1
Upcoming Events	1
Family Groups	2
Women's Corner	2
Attendance	3
Deacon Corner	3
Singular Significance	4
Reflections on Columbia	4

Pay It Forward

By Kevin Hutto



I recently shared in a Communion message about a movie I saw named *Pay It Forward*. The theme of the movie was that you could change the world; not by trying to pay someone back for their good deeds on your behalf, but that you should "pay it forward" to another person, and then ask them to do the same. The premise has three rules:

1. It has to be something big.
2. It has to be something they can't do for themselves.
3. They can't pay you back- You ask them to pay it forward.

Whether intentional or unintentional, this movie has a deeper spiritual meaning in my view and can definitely help us refocus on the teachings of Jesus and the message of the Cross. Jesus' death on the Cross was the ultimate "pay it forward" act. He did something BIG for you and I that we obviously could not do for ourselves - forgive our sins.

Jesus could have asked or commanded anything of the disciples once he was raised from the dead, but the Great Commission was what he wanted to leave with them and us. The Great Commission is rule three.

There is no way we can worship enough to pay him back. Our good deeds are but rags that wouldn't come close to paying Jesus back. Our best efforts fail to pay him back. This is okay though because he didn't ask us to pay him back. He commanded us to love God and to go throughout the world and pay it forward. Its amazing really. In the movie they make a big deal about how one little boy's kindness and actions toward a few people affected people across the country. We have that power.

(continued on p. 2)

UPCOMING EVENTS

March

3/18 Married BrothersBash- Rhodes Jordan Park, 6-10 p.m.

3/19 Medical EvidencesGuest Speaker: Tom Zeigler from Northern Virginia

April

4/16 Combined Easter Service at Gwinnett Civic Center with ACOC East

4/23 Special Teaching Seminar: The Qur'an & the Da Vinci Codepresented by Dr. Douglas Jacoby, 2-5 p.m. Doubletree Hotel in Marietta

The Swamp

Week 1 June 11-17

Week 2 June 18-24

Week 3 June 25-July 1

Week 4 7/5-8 (family camp)

Week 5 July 9-15

Week 6 July 16-22

Visit <http://atlanta.icoc.org/ministries/swamp/index.html> for more information and to register online.

(Continued from page 1)

When Kelly Herrin (Kelly Cloud at the time) shared her faith with me, it changed my life. But the changes didn't stop there. I was able to share with my sister Kelly Hutto. It changed Kelly's life. Several Years later we were able to share with our sister Jill. It changed Jill's life. Lots of people were converted at Georgia Tech and Emory with whom I was able to plant and/or water the seed. While in the fulltime ministry in Gwinnett, I was able to be in the bible studies of many teens and adults whose lives and eternal destinies were changed. Last, but certainly not least, I found my wife in the Church and would have never even met her if my life had gone a different direction. I have two beautiful daughters because of it. Their eternal destiny are shaped by it. Who knows how many generations of Hutto's will have a chance to know the truth because of that day in the laundry mat at Georgia Tech. The story of my life and family is forever changed because of one act by a true friend.

All these amazing things happened because one girl at Georgia Tech decided to pay it forward. She said afterwards that she had no expectation that I would ever even come out to church because she thought I was probably the craziest, most unopen person she knew. I am glad she didn't let her opinion of me get in the way of Jesus' command.

The movie was right, the actions of one individual can change the world. It changed mine. Let's "Pay It Forward" and change somebody's world this week.

Women's Corner

□ Captivating □

By Dian Knight

Welcome to the Women's Corner! It is exciting to know that with every newsletter the women of the Central Gwinnett ministry will have an opportunity to hear from the heart of one of their sisters.

My husband, Kendall, and I serve as deacon and deaconess for the music ministry. We are excited about the growth of this ministry over the past two years and are looking forward to developing a comprehensive Arts ministry for Central Gwinnett, which will include music, dance, drama and the visual arts. I believe that, along with providing us the privilege of worshipping God, music and the arts allow us to portray the beauty of God as well. This brings me to the subject I would like to share about.

I have been reading the book entitled *Captivating* by John and Stasi Eldridge, which I highly recommend to my sisters. It will not only increase your knowledge of who we are meant to be as daughters of God; it will help you to begin or continue the transformation.

Here is what I have learned about our essence as women and the decisions I've made to embrace that essence. My essence and the essence of every woman is beauty, not outer beauty, but inner beauty. This is one form of the incarnation of God in us. Its purpose is to in-

vite. Our God is a God who invites us. As a woman I was created to invite.

This beauty is talked about in 1 Peter 3:3-4;

Your beauty should not come from outward adornment □ It should be that of your inner self, the unfading beauty of a gentle and quiet spirit.

I desire to be that woman. It is from this place that I can be used by God to invite others to know him. I have decided to be a woman who invites others to rest not strive. Our world is full of women who are striving. I was one of them, an overachiever pursuing a career as an opera singer, then working full-time in the ministry as a women's ministry leader, more striving. During this time, nearly six years ago, I was diagnosed with Multiple Sclerosis. My

(Continued on page 3)

FAMILY GROUPS

If you have not yet connected with a family group, we invite to join any of our eleven different groups below:

John Yang □ Lilburn

Glenn Hayes □ Loganville

Phil Dawson □ Lawrenceville

Audie Flowers □ Lawrenceville

Russ McGarr □ Lilburn

Karl Lynn □ Snellville

Ward Rutland □ Lawrenceville

Barry Jennings □ Lilburn

Mike Garrett □ Snellville

Joe Washington □ Lawrenceville

Gary Roberson □ Lawrenceville

(Continued from page #2)

physical striving ended and God began to work on my heart. It has been a process of learning that God loves me for who I am, his precious daughter, not for what I can do.

I have decided to be a woman who invites others to be vulnerable, who offers mercy, who isn't demanding. This is a tall order since these qualities are the antithesis of my natural self. I am grateful for the patience of God; He is completing His work in me.

It is risky to be the woman of beauty God calls us to be. It involves opening our hearts up to others, which means we will have to stop hiding, stop dominating and be vulnerable and naked. It is the only way to allow others to see Christ and the only way for us to continue to be transformed into His likeness.

Singular Significance

By Roger Lamb

(from the DisciplesToday)

Every human being struggles for significance. From the time we are born we want to know where we uniquely fit in and contribute to our family, our social groups, our environment, etc. This is a crucial part of what drives us to dream and drives us to God. It also can be what drives us to sin and to reject God.

Too often single disciples have struggled for significance in the body of Christ. Many times those of us who are married add to the struggle even when we are trying to help. Too often all of us seek our significance from other people. Ultimately God is the one who gives us meaning, value and significance. Let's listen to his take on singular significance.

From the Womb

O LORD, you have searched me and you know me. You know when I sit and when I rise; you perceive my thoughts from afar. . . For you created my inmost being; you knit me together in my mother's womb. I praise you because I am fearfully and wonderfully made; your works are wonderful, I know that full well.
Psalm 139:1,2,13,14

God thought enough of each one of us to be personally involved in our life from the womb. What a joy that we are not the result of some random process or weird mutation..

(the remainder of this article can be found at DisciplesToday.com or at <http://www.chicagochurch.org/downloads/bulletins/2006-02-19.pdf>)

Deacon Corner

Weekly Attendance and Contribution

Deacon Corner			Weekly Attendance and Contribution		
			Date	Attendance	Contribution
Karl Lynn	Single Parents	770-978-4747			
Ken Watson	Benevolence	678-376-2677			
Peter Berry	Benevolence	678-376-1878	2/5	250	\$7,184
Patrick Freeman	Kingdom Kids	770-921-1811			
Glenn Hayes	Kingdom Kids	770-985-6921			
Dan Stehr	Visitation	770-925-2943			
Bill Francis	Visitation	770-806-8645	2/12	249	\$7,725
Todd Reynolds	Middle School	770-682-0027			
Russ McGarr	Middle School	770-381-5045			
Steve Collier	Teens-Parents	770-717-5784	2/19	258	\$6,100
Joe Hartline	Teens-Parents	770-277-4765			
Danny Emmett	Hope, events	770-985-4542			
Todd Shultz	Communications	770-277-4276	2/26	245	\$7,199
Birt Anglin	Ushering	678-849-0180			
Jeff Mueller	Order of Worship	770-492-0544			
Kendall Knight	Music Service	770-972-6887			

Reflections on the Weekend in Columbia

By Steve Collier

I had a great time attending the *Festival of Faith*. I am grateful to JP Tynes and the elders of the Columbia church for hosting this event. Fellowship with many friends from other churches was a blast. The messages also taught me some valuable lessons about my feelings toward the current condition of the church.

Although I am greatly encouraged by the direction of the Central Gwinnett ministry under the leadership of Richard, Allan and Steve, and about positive things I hear from other ministries, I am sometimes discouraged by the overall condition of the church in Atlanta. My personal faith in God remains strong and I see Him constantly blessing me and my family. However, I can become frustrated with the lack of unity and other shortcomings and impatient with the slow progress of rebuilding the church in the post-ICOC world. I become angry and want to lash out at whoever is responsible for this mess. At times, I am tempted to give up and go looking for some other alternative. I believe God spoke very clearly to me about these feelings during my time in Columbia.

First, on the issue of anger, Ron Drabot spoke about the woman caught in adultery. The Pharisees wanted to stone her for her sin. That's what I want to do: stone whoever is to blame for the state of the church, whoever

is at fault for failing to fix it, whoever makes a new mistake. However, as Jesus reminded the Pharisees, I too am guilty of sin. I too make mistakes. I have no right to cast the first stone. I need, and perhaps many of us need, to drop the rocks. I must stop wanting to stone someone. I must be like Jesus who said to her, "Neither do I condemn you; go and sin no more." The solution is to forgive and forbear each other's shortcomings.

On the broader issue of how I feel about the church, just about every speaker reminded me to love the church. The church is the bride of Christ and precious to him just like my wife is precious to me. The church belongs to Jesus and he is the head and high priest. He died for the church and continues to intercede for her. Jesus never gives up on his church. I shouldn't either. I should never walk away from the body of Christ. Cer-

tainly, the church has struggled of late and fallen on some hard times. If this happened to my family, I would not give up or walk away. I would stick in there and see it through. The church is also my family. I have been adopted by God as His son. I must remain true to His family and stick with it through the hard times.

I was reminded who makes up the church. Whoever believes

in Jesus, makes him Lord, repents of sin and is baptized becomes part of the Lord's church. That certainly describes my brothers and sisters in the various ministries around Atlanta that once made up the Atlanta Church (and around the world in the former ICOC). There is no reason to pull back from or feel

Jesus never gives up on his church. I shouldn't either.

weird about other disciples of Jesus even if I don't like or understand everything they decide. Even if we have

blown it and allowed the Atlanta Church to disintegrate when greater unity would have been better, even if our ministries are drifting apart more than they should, even if we cannot yet see how God will spark a full blown revival of the post-ICOC church, **it is still the Lord's church.** Despite our problems, our disorganized and decentralized state, our differences, the church remains the body of Christ for whom he died on the cross. Her wedding dress might be a little tattered at the moment, but she is still the bride of Christ who will one day be the guest of honor at the wedding feast of the Lamb.

We must continue to love the church and have faith in God's plans to give us hope and a future. My faith has been renewed and strengthened that despite the ravages of Satan's recent attacks on the church, God will continue to glorify Himself through His church and will show us the way forward. Our faith and hope are in Him.

