

Central Gwinnett Gazette

C E N T R A L G W I N N E T T M I N I S T R Y

UPCOMING EVENTS:

- Dec. 9th - 8th Grade/Teen Parent Workshop
- Dec. 10th - Christmas Program and Meal
- Dec. 17th Guest Speaker - Mike Taliaferro
- Dec. 24th House Church Services
- Dec. 28th No Mid-week Service
- Dec. 31st House Church Services

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Let Earth Receive Her King!

By Dan Stehr

This time of year we all contemplate the birth of Jesus, our Lord and King whom we serve. We recall the gifts this king received and how he came into the world to live among us as a man and then to reign over the Kingdom of God. It is a wonderful time of year when even people who do not worship God are motivated to be generous in giving to one another and to those in need. However, it can be easy to get caught up in the giving and receiving and lose sight of some other aspects of Jesus' nature.

While Jesus truly is our King, he was born into this world as a baby in a manger. Most kings in this world are served and raised in luxury from an early age, but not Jesus. He started out in humble circumstances, living as a man, being tempted in every way as we are tempted. He came not to be served, but to serve (Matthew 20:28).

Read what Philippians 2:3-8 has to say: Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit, but in humility consider others better than yourselves. Each

of you should look not only to your own interests, but also to the interests of others. Your attitude should be the same as that of Christ Jesus:



of you, being in very nature-God, did not consider equality with God something to be grasped, **but made himself nothing, taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness.** And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself and became obedient to death—even death on a cross!

Recently while thinking about Jesus, this passage came to mind and caused me to consider how I am doing as a servant in God's kingdom.

Jesus was willing to die on a cross for us, and there are many examples of Jesus' servant heart that I can imitate. In Jesus' washing of his disciples' feet (John 13:4-6) I see an example of Him being willing to serve without having to be asked and in a way that was less than desirable. How often am I willing to serve in ways that others aren't? Am I looking for needs that are going unmet?

I have to remember that everyone has been given different gifts by God and that there may be certain needs I can meet better than others. In the garden (Mark 14:35-36) I see an example of Jesus being willing to serve even when He'd rather not, but ultimately submitting to God's will. Other examples of the heart of a servant are plentiful in the Bible. In Matthew 6:1-3 I see how easy it is to serve out of a desire for human approval, but how I should be willing to serve even if God is the only one who sees.

In this holiday season let us continue to look for the good works God has prepared in advance for us to do, as we celebrate and commemorate the birth of our King!

Reflections from the Virginia Beach Leadership Conference

By Harold Carman

A time of reflection, of stepping back and evaluating what is really important comes about in all our lives. Paul certainly had those moments and expressed those feelings in many of his letters. In the letter to the Philippians, Paul said he had much to boast about, but the only thing that mattered was to know Christ. The Leadership Conference in Virginia Beach was one of those moments of reflection for me.

The theme of the conference was *Set Apart* and speakers addressed areas of our lives where we are to be Set Apart. In his opening speech, Mike Fontenot addressed three areas in which we are to be set apart. First, we must be set apart in our hearts. I Peter 3:13 – 15 says, "... in your hearts set apart Christ as Lord." Furthermore, God told the Israelites, "These commandments that I give you today are to be upon your hearts. Impress them on your children. Talk about them when you sit at home and when you walk along the road, when you lie down and when you get up" (Deut. 6: 6 – 7). The challenge coming from this passage is what are we passing on to our children? Are we passing on facts or heart?

Mike also talked about being set apart in our conviction. He read the account of Aaron being left at the foot of the mountain while Moses was up on the mountain

with God in Exodus 32:1-8, 22-29. In his absence, Aaron was to lead the people, but his conviction was shallow and his leadership was in response to fear of what the people would do or say.

Aaron's leadership was governed by the consensus of the people. The most convicting verse from a leader's perspective is verse 25, which reads, "Moses saw that the people were running wild and that Aaron had let them get out of control and so became a laughingstock to their enemies."

God's people need someone to be over them in the Lord. Mike pointed out that we need to be set apart in our convictions about the "narrow road" to Christianity, about who is a believer, about dating, about fellowship, about the lost world and about personal righteousness. Having weak convictions in these and many other areas leads to people "running wild andthem getting out of control..."

Harliem Salim, who leads the church in Indonesia, spoke about

being set apart for a mission. He focused on Jeremiah 7:1 – 24. Not speaking the truth causes others' commitment to weaken. The people trusted in deceptive words and would not follow the commands of God. There are many "truths" taught in the religious world that do nothing but sooth itching ears.

Jimmy Allen and Doug Arthur spoke about bringing back the baby we threw out with the bath water. Some of the things they identified were the role of the evangelist to preach the Word

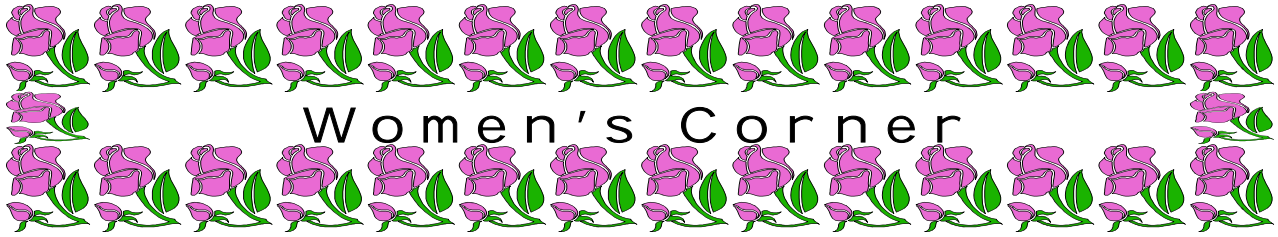
boldly, even if unpopular, God's vision for the church, the lost and leadership, the role of teen and campus leaders, and true discipling relationships, where we are taught to obey and held to a standard of righteousness.

Mike Taliaferro, who serves a ministry about the same size as our own, preached about *Revival in Your Church*. He spoke of

actions taken in his ministry that impacted not just a few within the body, but the whole body.

Three days of inspiring lessons cannot be summarized in a few words. It was encouraging to hear how many churches are growing and maturing and to learn some of the practical ways to make it happen here. It caused me to reflect on my path to fulfilling God's dream for me and my family. Is my path broad or narrow?

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Women's Corner

“Woman, You Have Great Faith”

By Sarah Hartline

Matthew 15:21-28

A Canaanite woman from that vicinity came to him, crying out, “Lord, son of David, have mercy on me!”

1. Great faith starts with great humility. Do you deeply feel the need for God’s mercy? Do you daily ask God to have mercy on you? Are you aware that you can do nothing without him? To ask for mercy requires humility. Your humility with God will be reflected in your relationships with others. Have you ever asked your husband or a friend to have mercy on you? To have great faith requires us seeing our need for great mercy and this starts with humility.

My daughter is suffering terribly from demon possession.

2. Great faith will express itself in love for others. She was desperate to seek help for her daughter. Faith is never a dead end, but will always be seen in a love for others. Who is your faith impacting?

Jesus did not answer a word. So his disciples came to him and urged him, ‘Send her away for she keeps crying out after us.’ He answered, ‘I was sent only to the lost sheep of Israel.’

3. Great faith is tested by silence. He did not answer the woman, and yet he answered when the disciples spoke to him. Can you imagine

being ignored by Jesus? How do you feel when your prayers are not answered? How do you feel when you see the prayers of people around you being answered? The woman did not get insecure or angry. She kept asking and waiting. Great faith must endure the test of silence and learn to wait patiently (see Isaiah 30:18).

The woman came and knelt before him, ‘Lord help me.’ He replied, ‘It is not right to take the children’s bread and feed it to their dogs.’

4. Great faith is tested by insults. Jesus called the woman a dog! How do you handle the insult test? How do you respond when you are misunderstood or your motives are questioned? Do you feel you have to always defend yourself? Do “walls” go up quickly in relationships when you are hurt? I have discovered that no matter what is said to me, there is always a grain of truth in it. Do you look for the “grain of truth” no matter how painful it is to hear? We must endure the insult test because we will have many of them! If we try to shield ourselves and stay safe we will never reach a lost world. Great faith will ALWAYS be tested by insults.

‘Yes Lord,’ she said, ‘but even the dogs eat the crumbs that fall from their master’s table.’

5. Great faith results in clear thinking. She did not become emotional, but used her head. Her faith told her that all she needed was a “crumb” of help from Jesus. Our emotionalism can keep us from seeing the obvious. The woman knew that a “crumb” from Jesus would

solve her problem. Her great faith resulted in a great answer.

Then Jesus answered, ‘Woman you have great faith! Your request is granted.’ And her daughter was healed from that very hour.

6. Great faith will overcome the barriers. What are the barriers that you are facing: A character change, a struggling child, a lost friend, a marriage, being used by God, loneliness, health, a difficult friendship? Your great faith will overcome the barrier. May Jesus say of you, “Woman you have great faith. Your request is granted.”

FAMILY GROUPS

If you have not yet connected with a family group, we invite you to join any of our ten 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
 Joe Washington—Lawrenceville
 Gary Roberson—Lawrenceville

Good News Blurbs Around the Kingdom Page 4

(taken from the disciplestoday.com website)

Nairobi, Kenya (<http://www.icoceastafricachurches.org/>)

Four disciples had 20 visitors at Bible talk. Eleven disciples shared with 32 visitors in Makindu. 300 disciples have been baptized this year in Nairobi. Praise God!

Hampton Roads, Virginia (<http://hamptonroadschurch.org/>)

At present 91 have been baptized into Christ and are prayerfully expecting another 10 or more this year. Set to end the year at 560 members. The contribution of the saints has increased \$2,000 per week. They also gave over \$200,000 in special missions contribution for India. Hampton Roads is planning their next church planting.

San Antonio, Texas (<http://www.saicoc.org/>)

While baptizing 16 last year, 30 have been baptized in 2006 so far. They are counting the cost with about 15 more souls in the next two weeks.

Los Angeles, California (<http://www.laicc.net/index.htm>)

Hosted the International Campus and Youth Leadership Conference on the campus of UCLA last July. Over 1,000 attended. God has moved the hearts of over 400 people to be baptized in the LA Church in 2006.

Chicago, Illinois (<http://www.chicagochurch.org/>)

Over 100 have been baptized into Christ in 2006. The disciples also gave over \$470,000 which all goes to **Eurasian Missions**. Plans are being announced to celebrate their 25th anniversary next year.

Seattle, Washington (<http://www.seattleicoc.org/home.asp>)

With a weekly contribution of \$23,000, the church gave \$140,000 to China and Washington Missions and their Adoption Fund and \$72,000 to HOPE worldwide.

Deacon Corner

Karl Lynn	Single Parents	770-978-4747
Ken Watson	Benevolence	678-376-2677
Peter Berry	Benevolence	678-376-1878
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
Todd Reynolds	Middle School	770-682-0027
Russ McGarr	Middle School	770-381-5045
Steve Collier	Teens-Parents	770-717-5784
Joe Hartline	Teens-Parents	770-277-4765
Danny Emmett	Hope, events	770-985-4542
Todd Shultz	Communications	770-277-4276
Birt Anglin	Ushering	678-849-0180
Jeff Mueller	Order of Worship	770-492-0544
Kendall Knight	Music Service	770-972-6887