

19<sup>th</sup> & C Streets, Antioch, 778-1893    **October - December 2011**

## Pastor's Corner

**I got busted on my way to a prayer meeting.** I had just picked up a friend and was on my way to the Antioch campus traveling 15 miles per hour over the speed limit... The moment I saw the lights flashing behind me I looked down at my speedometer and knew I was guilty. I stopped the car...the officer walked to my window...I brought the window down and the first thing I said to him was, "I'm guilty..." Not exactly the approach you might have if you were hoping to squirm out of it...but I was guilty and I had no excuse. I had broken the law. I quietly hoped the officer would cut me some slack. After all, it was only 15 mph over...and everyone else was doing it. But he proceeded to write the ticket. I didn't like the fact that I got pulled over by a law enforcer...and was given a ticket that cost me a lot of money. But its life...it happens to everyone sometimes...nobody's perfect...I wrote the check...sent it in and moved on with my life. I didn't lose any sleep over it.

Many people treat their sin and their approach to God the same way. Nobody's perfect...we all make mistakes... We are guilty. We pay the fine, nothing a few Hail Mary's or a few good deeds won't take care of, and we move on in life without losing sleep over it.

It is no wonder people hear about the cross and the sacrifice it took to deal with our sin and they respond with a monotone voice and a casual glance. People often don't have any alarm over their sin before a holy God. They treat their sin as though they've violated some heavenly traffic regulation.

We need a biblical view of sin. The word "sin" is an archery term which means "missing the mark" or "missing the bulls-eye". We often tell people that the important thing isn't whether we have missed it by an inch or a mile but that we have missed it, whether we were close or not. This gives people the impression that they can get close to hitting the bulls eye. Recently I have had to rethink this. I think none of us are even close to the bulls-eye. In fact I think for this analogy to align with biblical teaching we would have to say that none of us are aiming for the bulls-eye when we sin. We are aiming in the opposite direction and are taking matters into our own hands. We are rejecting God's way and choosing our way. To the God who gave us breath...who gave us life and everything we have, we choose to give Him only as much sway as we determine we want to give. We are in control. This is rebellion...this is revolt. The best of us have deep running bents to do it our own way. We are rebellious and enemies of God (Eph 2:3; Matt 15:19; Eph 2:1,5). We can't fix it. Our sin runs way too deep (Is 64:6).

When we see how lost we are, no matter how good we try to be, the work God did on the cross for us becomes vitally attractive. We will not respond with monotone voice or a casual glance at Calvary. We will stand grateful for His Work of mercy and it will move us to action for Him.

## **Halloween – One of the Greatest Opportunities all year!**

What are you doing for Halloween? Halloween is one of the greatest opportunities for sharing the gospel we have all year. When in the year do you have sometimes hundreds of kids all ages and adults (depending on what neighborhood you're in) coming to your doorstep to have you put something in their bags to take home? I would love to hear from you concerning creative approaches you use to share the gospel with people on Halloween. E-mail me at [gwestfam@aol.com](mailto:gwestfam@aol.com) with your stuff...

## Some Stories from the Field

### Accosted by a man in his 30's

One of our teams was visiting some people nearby 6<sup>th</sup> street in Antioch several months ago when they were almost accosted by a man in his 30's. This man was very angry, very drunk, was kicking a fence and yelling that he felt like hurting someone. He had some choice words for our team who lingered and briefly shared some strong but kind remarks in response. Not long after that, this man ended up in one of the 6 community bible studies happening through the COC outreach ministry. He was of right mind and he felt remorse over the way he had treated the team days before. He apologized for his actions and showed a sincere interest in learning from God's word. It wasn't long after, he responded to the message of the gospel and we watched as a wonderful transformation occurred. He is a different man. He is making changes in his life to show that he desires to honor Christ and not compromise. He is plugged in and moving along...

I think all of us are guilty from time to time, of stereotyping some people into a category of the unreachable...the hopeless...lost causes. We have many of those "so-called" at the COC. What is exciting about this is that it was with the so-called lost causes of His society, that Jesus spent an extraordinary amount of time and proved society's consensus wrong?

### Exciting Change from a Casual Encounter

Another man (19yrs old) was approached while he was walking his dog in the neighborhood and invited to consider the claims and character of Christ. He responded immediately. God had been stirring his heart previously. His mind had been dealing with the voice of reason and truth as he was asking a lot of questions. This seemingly random encounter was enough to tip the scale and turn this guy to begin running for Jesus. He has jumped in with both feet. He has turned his life over to Christ and for the last month has been coming to GHCC...He is coming to bible studies and going through a Discovery One class...He is being discipled. Pray for him. Praise God!

## PRAYER REQUESTS

### PRAY FOR THE POSSIBLE ACQUISITION OF OUR OWN PERMANENT COC BUILDING

SATURDAY KIDS CLUB is the First & Second Saturday of the month from 10:30am to 12:30pm. We are praying for the right people to enlarge our teams here. If interested in serving please contact Julie Verhoek @ 240-1128.

Please pray God will expand our impact into the community through the Resource and Referral Ministry. If you are interested, please call Tracie at x232. Right now we are meeting every Tuesday and Thursday

Pray for more drivers for our Monthly Field Trips...They usually happen on the last Saturday of every month. This month we are going to Apple Hill.

**Please pray for our teams going out every Tuesday...Thursday...Saturday Mornings & Friday nights...** We meet at the Antioch Campus...9am to 12:30pm on T, Th & S and at 7pm on Friday.

**Praise** – We collected and gave away 81 back packs to our children's ministry and 26 to our youth ministry for a total of 105 back packs. Thank you all for participating.

## **How Do I Get Credit for the Work God did Through Jesus?**

We are lost... We are doomed to suffer the punishment for our sin but there is one option provided. Either we are punished for our sin or we get credit for being punished through the punishment poured out on Jesus. How do we get credit for the work God did through Jesus?

We don't get credit for what Jesus did by baptism, being confirmed, going through catechism, by loyal church attendance, through confessions to a priest, through communion, by being a good standing member of a church, by doing good works, through the Five Pillars of Islam or the Eightfold Path of Buddhism, through its traditions and belonging to the Catholic Church, through good Karma, through renouncing wealth, material things or detachment from this world, nor from allegiance to Mormonism or the Kingdom Hall... We get credit for what Jesus did through repentance (turning from our sin) and faith (trusting) in Jesus.

*"He who knew no sin became sin for us... If righteousness could be gained through the law, then Christ died in vain... For it is by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves, it is a gift of God, not by works, so no one can boast."*

**Does it bother you...** that people in our society look down on anyone who would question the theory of evolution? It can get the better of us with anger if we aren't careful... God help us to *"let our conversation always be full of grace seasoned with salt..."* Most people in our society have bought the evolution idea hook, line and sinker, but they haven't thought it out very well. It is weird how dull of thinking people are when it comes to this. The evidence for evolution is manufactured and any real evidence is absent entirely. It would be helpful to outline the many points that could be made to show that a Creation believing Christian actually has more intellectual integrity than most professing evolutionists. There is great substance to share that legitimizes creation over evolution... Here are some quotes from Darwin we have shared before but I will put them in again and maybe later we will do more... There are some great books available on the subject for anyone interested.

### **Darwin's Doubts Concerning the Theory of Evolution**

If evolution were true there would be uncountable transitional forms in the fossil records. Listen to Darwin during a time when he had deep questions about the validity of his theory. "As by this theory, innumerable transitional forms must have existed, why do we not find them embedded in the crust of the earth? Why is all nature not in confusion instead of being as we see them, well-defined species? Geological research does not yield the infinitely many fine gradations between past and present species required by the theory; and this is the most obvious of the many objections which may be argued against it."

On another occasion Darwin wrote, "To suppose that the eye with all its inimitable contrivances for adjusting the focus to different distances, for admitting different amounts of light, and for the correction of the spherical and chromatic aberration, could have been formed by natural selection, seems, I freely confess, absurd in the highest degree."

*"The heavens declare the glory of God; the skies proclaim the work of his hands."*