

The GAZETTE.

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Resolved to Sacrifice



by Jason Wiltse

Recently, many of you heard me tell the story of my friend who designed our new Pathway brochure. In a meeting I explained to him the threefold focus of Pathways: Bible Study, Fellowship and Meeting the Needs of the Body. He had a puzzled look on his face when I said meeting the needs of the body. This is Biblical language that we all understand, but to the outsider this phrase brings up images of healthy food, diet supplements and exercise. So I explained. After he understood what meeting the needs of body meant for the Christian, he remarked, "I'll design this brochure for you as long as I don't become converted."

His statement revealed an understanding: our love for one another is righteousness and is truly of God. For a brief moment our light interrupted his darkness. He admired our caring for each other, but he was not com-

fortable with the implications of admiring it too much. Later, after reflecting more on his statement, this verse came to mind:

"A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another, even as I have loved you, that you also love one another. By this all men will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another."

JOHN 13:34-35

Jesus spoke these words to His disciples after He humbled Himself and served them by washing their feet. The Author of Love commanded that His disciples' love be modeled after His love. It must be sacrificial in character. When it is, the world will take note. My friend saw it clearly. He knew we were disciples of Jesus, because we proclaim a love that consists not just in words, but is committed to sacrificial acts. This is a mark of our faith. We esteem each other as better than ourselves and sacrifice for each other's good. What is interesting is that my friend never witnessed one act of our sacrificial love; his conviction (or rather momentary dilemma) was based on our determination to love one another as Jesus commanded. The more I thought about my friend's statement the more I thought about the power of determining and resolving to love sacrificially.

There are numerous times I have stopped on the expressway or pulled off on the side of the road to help someone whose vehicle has broken down. Most times, people don't need help. They have cell phones and the tow truck or family member is on the way. Even so, in every case the person I've stopped for is thankful. Sometimes they are surprised. "People don't stop to help others," or "you're the first one to stop; I've been sitting

here for a half an hour.” I’ve heard this more than once. I always try to respond with something like, “This is what Christians are supposed to do.” After all, we are the light of the world. Light should not be a rare thing.

I must confess though, there are many times I have not stopped to help someone on the side of the road. I have all kinds of thoughts as I zip by them...

It’s dangerous; I have places to be; time is short and I’m in a rush; I know they have a cell phone; that guy

is fine—he doesn’t need me. After I’ve talked myself out of helping, sooner or later I am always hit with Jesus’ words in the parable of the Good Samaritan.

Then I remember that the whole world has a good excuse to not stop and help. How many times is my “good excuse” the loophole to get out of obeying His command? How many times is my “good excuse” putting the lamp under the bushel? How often do I look for someone else to affirm that my “good excuse” was a legitimate good excuse so I don’t feel guilty about seeking the loophole and hiding my lamp? I never feel right as I pass someone by on the road that may need help. Why do I stop sometimes and other times just blow by, making excuses? The answer is in the prep work.

One thing I have realized is that I will stop and help someone when I’ve determined beforehand to do so.

When my heart is prepared to do a specific act, I will do it. That means as I’m backing out of my driveway, or perhaps even before that, I have this thought: someone may need my help today on the way to work and I’m going to stop and help them. By doing this I am preparing myself for sacrifice. I am ready and willing

to give up time, clean clothes, possibly money and sore back (sometimes pushing is required) in order to serve. When I am prepared in this way I don’t need to make excuses, I just do what I resolved to do. When I am prepared to do good, the good I do increases.

I remember Mike Vrenich saying that he would anticipate being asked for money daily by beggars on the streets of St. Louis. In order to prepare he had determined to have cash in his pockets in order to give and obey the command, “Give to everyone who asks.” Not only was his giving acceptable to God, but his preparation to do the good work was worship as well. Several families in our church are now considering their role in

“THESE GOD-GLORIFYING ACTS OF SACRIFICE REQUIRE FORETHOUGHT AND PLANNING.”

“IF THIS IS TRUE IN HOW WE DEAL WITH THOSE OUTSIDE THE CHURCH, HOW MUCH MORE SO IS IT TRUE FOR THOSE WITHIN THE CHURCH? JESUS SAID THAT ALL MEN WOULD KNOW THAT WE ARE HIS DISCIPLES IF WE HAVE LOVE FOR ONE ANOTHER.”

a ministry that may result in adopting children whose mothers are seeking to murder them through abortion. They are making determinations right now about how they will proceed if the opportunity presents itself. These God-glorifying acts of sacrifice require forethought and planning. If this is true in how we deal with those outside the church, how much more so is it true for those within the church? Jesus said that all men would know that we are His disciples if we have love for one another.

In *Charity And Its Fruits*, Jonathan Edwards provides a very usable guide to aid preparatory thoughts regarding the types of service or sacrifice we can give to our brothers and sisters. Imagine what would result if we all resolved in our minds to seek to sacrifice for the household of God in these ways:

“And we may thus contribute to the good of others, in three ways: by giving to them of those things that they need, and we possess; by doing for them and taking pains to help them, and promote their welfare; and by suffering for them, and aiding them to bear their burdens, and doing all in our power to make those burdens light. In each of these ways, Christianity requires us to do good to others. It requires us to give to others.”

One immediate application is to ask: Who in the church will I give to today? Who in the body will I do something for today? Which Christ the Word family will I suffer for today? What do you possess that you can give away? Is there anyone, or any family with a burden that you can make lighter?

Not every sacrifice has to be on the grand scale

of things: certainly stopping on the side of the road for someone is not on the grand scale, but it is acting on—and being mindful of—someone else’s needs. If we are mindful of others’ needs and prepare ourselves in advance to do good work, the good work will actually get done.

“Let us not lose heart in doing good, for in due time we will reap if we do not grow weary. So then, while we have opportunity, let us do good to all people, and especially to those who are of the household of the faith.”

GALATIANS 6:9-10

Getting to Know... The Baechles by Josh DeSonne

Many engagement stories feature candles, sunsets, songs or poetry. Ryan and Emily Baechle’s involved a seemingly endless walk around the Capitol, avoiding screaming teenagers, and goose droppings.

After spending a day seeing the traditional sights of Washington, D.C. and a fancy dinner, Ryan took Emily to the Jefferson Memorial, on the banks of the Potomac River, to propose. Unfortunately, they had taken too long eating and it was dark by the time they got to the memorial, which, combined with a yoga class which was being instructed nearby, forced Ryan to make a switch in plans.

After hiking over to the Lincoln Memorial and finding it swarming with screaming kids (despite the signs asking people to be respectful), they made the walk up the National Mall to the Washington Monument.

“It was really far,” Emily said. While she had been in heels, she was grateful that she had brought along flip flops.

While the reflecting pool on the National Mall looks beautiful on TV, in person, at night, it’s not quite the most romantic place. When Ryan and Emily were not dodging goose poop, they were refraining from talking to avoid taking in mouthfuls of the bugs which were swarming around the pool.

On reaching the Washington Monument, Ryan pulled out the ring and finally proposed. At least, Emily took him at his word that he held out a ring. It was too dark for her to actually see it.

While the proposal had its ups and downs, their marriage has been much better. In fact, they are expecting their first child, a daughter named Lucy, in March.

Ryan and Emily both grew up in the Toledo area. Emily went to Northview while Ryan attended

Maumee. Emily has one older sister while Ryan has one younger brother. They both grew up with some knowledge of Christ while being raised in Catholic families. However, other than going to services on Sundays, church was not a central part of their lives.

When Ryan was nearing the end of high school, he began to shift away from the Catholic Church and started attending Heritage Church of



God. While at Kent State University, he attended The Chapel in Akron, but it wasn’t until after college that he became interested in reformed theology and doctrine.

Ryan was introduced to reformed theology while living in Seattle. After graduating from Kent State in 2004 with degrees in English and French, he moved to Seattle with his brother and began working at Washington Mutual bank. It was while in the Pacific Northwest that Ryan began attending Mars Hill Church. There he became an intern and was a teacher in the children’s ministry on Wednesday nights.

When Ryan left the Emerald City to return to the Glass City in 2007, he applied for a job at Barnes & Noble. It was there that he met Emily, who also worked for the bookstore. They began dating in December of 2007, got engaged the following June, and then were married in May of 2009. It was Ryan who introduced

Emily to reformed thinking. He said his own experience in shifting from being Catholic to reformed helped him teach her the differences and guide her in the transition.

While Ryan left Northwest Ohio only to return later, Emily has never strayed too far from the area. She attended the University of Toledo and majored in accounting. While she worked at Barnes and Noble when she met Ryan, she eventually

left the bookstore and now works for Perstop, a chemical company where she works in customer service.

When Ryan moved back to Ohio, he began looking for a PCA church and found Christ the Word on the Web, since it was the only PCA church in Toledo. They began attending right around the time they began dating.

While attending Christ the Word was a little overwhelming at first, with so many new people to meet, it was the spirit of fellowship which was attractive to Ryan and Emily. They also were drawn by the solid Biblical preaching they heard at Christ the Word.

In their free time, Ryan and Emily watch movies and read a lot of books. Not too surprising from a couple who have worked at a bookstore. While Ryan’s hours at Barnes & Noble can be hectic, they still find time to spend quality time with each other and also enjoy playing games.

Pathways: What's Hitting Us

We asked Pathway members to chime in and let us know which teaching, Scripture, or experience has “hit” them the most in their groups within the last month and here’s what they had to say...

“The Pathway experience that has changed my thinking is the sharing of prayer requests and praying for each other. I used to feel uncomfortable sharing with others areas that I needed prayer. I felt that my needs were trivial or too personal to share. The leaders of our pathway by their eagerness and openness in this area have changed the way I feel about it. Now I look forward to sharing my needs as well as praying for the needs of others.”

Jeff Miller, Swanton Pathway

“At the Sylvania Pathway, we have been studying II Peter chapter 1. In verses 5-8, Paul tells of adding to our

faith, because of God’s promises, in order that we may be fruitful. Attending Pathway has challenged and encouraged me to be studying daily in the Word, confessing sin and repenting, exercising control in the area of submission as a godly wife, growing in brotherly love, and counting it a privilege to pray for others, while turning away from the idles of the world (like needless shopping, worrying & TV watching).”

Sheila Raker, Sylvania Pathway

“Through studying Romans, I have gained a greater understanding of the regeneration the Holy Spirit works in us. Tim Barton summed it up well for us, “You’re a new creation, now live like it.” Confessing my sins to my sisters in Christ has been an excellent way to help me carry this out in my life.”

Sarah DeSonne, West Toledo Pathway

“One thing that has hit me over and over again during Pathway is how much of the Old Testament is fundamentally tied into the New Testament. It seems confusing, yet

the writer of Hebrews says we don’t understand only because we’re dull of hearing. I am regularly challenged to immerse myself in the Word so I become less dull to what God says.”

Craig French, South Toledo Pathway

“The Lord roars from Zion And utters His voice from Jerusalem, And the heavens and the earth tremble. But the Lord is a refuge for His people And a stronghold to the sons of Israel.”

JOEL 3:16

Andrew Van Engen, Old Orchard

“Do not love the world nor the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh and the lust of the eyes and the boastful pride of life, is not from the Father, but is from the world.”

I JOHN 2: 15-16

Ben Byers, More Than Conquerors

Book Review: The Screwtape Letters

by Nate Miklovic

“His craft and power are great, and armed with cruel hate; on earth is not his equal.” Martin Luther

Most of us probably are familiar with the three great enemies God calls us to fight as Christian men and women: the world, the flesh, and the devil. We often spend our energy consciously battling the first two of these enemies. It is not hard to find opponents of the Church in the world. The rampant homosexuality, anti-Christian political sentiment, and the widespread murder of in-

fantants readily prove that society (i.e. the world) is God’s enemy. James 4:4 comes to mind: “Whoever wishes to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God.”

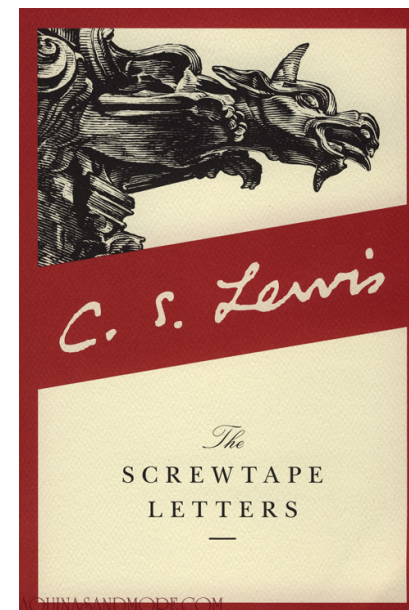
When we struggle with anger, gluttony, drinking, lasciviousness, and other indulgent sins, the flesh is our adversary. Romans 7:18 says, “For I know that nothing good dwells in me, that is, in my flesh. For I have the desire to do what is right, but not the ability to carry it out.” The flesh is set against the Spirit, making itself an enemy of the holiness which God requires.

Surprisingly, the opponent whom we most commonly overlook is the greatest of them all: the Devil. Often when we sin or face adversity, we attribute it either to the flesh or the world, forgetting that we have an ancient foe who seeks to work us woe.

C.S. Lewis’ The Screwtape Letters does a fantastic job of demonstrating the ways in which we are tempted and sifted by Satan.

The main character of this book is, naturally, Screwtape. He is a senior tempter, a demon far advanced in the “lowerarchy” of Hell. He writes a series of thirty-one letters to his young nephew Wormwood giving advice on sin. These letters make up the entirety of the book; there is no dialogue or narrative but simply the pure and unadulterated wisdom of Uncle Screwtape. Wormwood is a “guardian demon” who has one man under his care (the man’s name is never given). It is Wormwood’s duty to dissuade this man from all things righteous and secure his path to hell. Screwtape sends letters to Wormwood as the man’s life progresses.

Thus we see the advice which the



Semper Ref by Ashley Forney

I see them there crowding the floor

Bibles out, discussion flowing;

Still they enter through the door

And the car count is growing.

If you happen upon a jam-packed driveway along N River Rd, chances are that you’ve stumbled upon SemperRef, the fun, fabulous, five-point Calvinist college group of CTW.

A look at our roster reveals a rather eclectic group, at least initially. “The group began (in ’03 or ’04) as a college/20-some-things/singles/HS seniors/cool-people-desiring-to-have-an-informal-time-of-Bible-study-worshipping-God-and-hanging-out,” Ryan Brown recalls, “As the years rolled on, Living Word Youth began to crank out graduates.” It was at this point that CTW elders realized the

experienced demon gives on how best to tempt a man new to the faith, a man seeking a church body, a man falling in love, and a man being enlisted in the military.

Perhaps the most insightful counsel given by Screwtape regards the severity of sin into which Wormwood tempts the man. Wormwood thinks that it is best to tempt his subject to great disastrous sins like murder and adultery. But the wise Screwtape maintains that smaller and less noticeable sins are the greatest trap.

“Murder is no better than cards,” he says, “if cards will do the trick. Indeed the safest road to hell is a gradual one—the gentle slope, soft underfoot, without sudden

group needed to be defined before it collected the remaining population of CTW (youth/married/widows) to become a church within a church! They promptly installed Tim and Kerri Varner as leaders, with the goal of turning the group into a CTW pathway. Rumor has it that it was at this time that a search was begun to locate a government agent capable of containing the dubious gathering; a long waitlist prevented the Van Engens from joining the group sooner (Theory #79 for the Van Engen’s arrival at CTW).

Since the implementation of these actions, the tight-knit group has continued transformation. Stage pathway has been surpassed and the organization has achieved ministry status. During this process, Marc Brunner christened the gang “Semper Reformanda.” The group, however, is more commonly

referred to as “SemperRef,” or even “Semper” (to Sonya), or “sRef” (to Ashley).

The Latin name, which translates to “always reforming,” was found to

turnings, without milestones, without signposts.”

Satan’s goal is to separate us from Christ without our noticing it. Thus he tempts us subtly. He tempts us to dwell on quiet angry thoughts, and he tempts us to lose focus while we pray. He tempts us to recreate and not notice that we have neglected the Word in doing so.

Satan’s attacks are real, and we are called to withstand them. We do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against the rulers and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places. The Screwtape Letters, though fictitious, helps us to see this reality more clearly and thus better withstand Satan’s attacks.

be appropriate for the ameliorating (ie: changing) bunch.

Currently, Tyson and Jen Turner formally lead the group now covering more than three campuses. However, holding true to its title, Semper Reformanda has work under way to reinstate the students as leaders. Everyone in the group plays a role whether providing snacks, organizing worship, serving or teaching. On the latter note, sRef hosts several studies in addition to the bi-monthly large group meetings. Here is an overview:

Semper always has something fun going on whether it’s an impromptu hangout, a social event, or a service event (which turns into more fun than the socials!). Formal or not, SemperRef is an experience you can’t afford to miss!

- Sunday Morning Bible Study
- Sunday Night Bible Study
- BGSU Tuesday Women’s Bible Study
- UT Wednesday Bible Study
- Wednesday Calvin Study
- Owens Wednesday Bible Study

You may visit www.semperRef.com for an updated calendar of events. Come join us!

W

Women of the Word

The Husband God Gave You by Lynnette Killy

Wives, do you struggle with submission to your husband? I know we are all sinners so I'm going to brazenly assume you do! Not submitting is a red flag that you feel your husband isn't leading your family well. I'm just going to be straightforward here. If your husband isn't leading well, you are part of the problem. Are there cases out there where this is not true? Maybe, but I haven't met them in my experiences.

You hear someone else describe their family devotions, or read about liturgical Sabbath dinners, and think, "Wow, they are doing it right!" You feel a sense of urgency to see that (or a similar) practice instituted in your home. You assume that when your husband hears it he feels this way too. Mistake! Put your assumptions aside, my dear. Are you willing to clear out your notions and really see what YOUR husband wants his home to be like? That's what should excite you!

God gave you the husband you've got and told you to submit to him. Your husband's ideas are different than yours AND different than the next man's, but you are to follow your husband. You are to trust the husband God has given you. In scripture, Michal laughs at her husband David as he dances before the Lord. She is not able to look objectively at his behavior and see that he is pleasing the Lord. She inserts her own feelings of how she thinks her husband looks and makes a wrong judgment about his behavior. You, my dear friend, are no different! You think he is making decisions that aren't honoring the Lord. Whether it is his passion for cars or sports, the way he does or doesn't do devotions, his anger over something simple, or things you think he "wastes his time on." Now, daughter of Michal, are you willing to look at yourself? Scripture doesn't say you should strive to change your husband! It says to obey him and to do it as if you were doing it to the Lord. "Wives, submit to your own husbands, as to the Lord." **EPHESIANS 5:22**

Are there husbands out there who sin? You know they do. Are you sometimes right and they wrong? You know sometimes it's true. So what do you do with that? 1 Peter 3:1-2 says, "Likewise, wives, be subject to your own

husbands, so that even if some do not obey the word, they may be won without a word by the conduct of their wives, when they see your respectful and pure conduct." This verse applies to the non-believing husband as well as a believing husband you think is wrong. Be quiet. Listen to your husband, even if he's not saying anything with words.

Does this mean do nothing? Nope, Peter says to be respectful and pure in your behavior towards him. You've got a lot of work to do. Breaking old habits is plenty for you to focus on. Your husband is accountable to the Lord, not to you.

If your husband doesn't have a plan for your family it is probably because he has given up trying to fight you. Instead of leading you he's wasting energy fighting you! How can he make a plan if you are in his way? A man can't focus on leading his family if he's busy with your woes and wishes.

Do you know why those other homes and husbands I mention in the beginning look so attractive? There's something missing... a nagging wife! That's no accident. She has fought her flesh. You don't hear about how he plays cards on Friday night or waxes his car every Saturday. Why? His wife is joyfully supporting her husband, busy being his cheerleader. She doesn't go around assuming he's wrong. Don't assume your husband is wrong. Your attitude should be joy and trust in your husband and you need to just give it! Ask him to forgive you and to help you "take off the pants" you've been wearing! You can change. It won't happen overnight. **Philippians 3:14** "I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus."

Keep trying, keep asking both your husband and the Lord for forgiveness when you fail. Keep trying to see things with your husband's eyes and mind, not your own. Learn what a first down is, ask him about his car—the more you know about these things the more you can appreciate how it brings him joy. Work on yourself, not your husband. Trust God for the outcome of your family. If God says submit (and He does) then fight yourself, not your husband. Because really you're fighting the Lord, rather than trusting Him for the husband He has provided you.

Esther Post

Dear Esther,

I recently signed up with the hospitality committee to bring meals to people in our church. I'm eager to do this, but I am a little intimidated by the prospect. What do I cook and how much food do I bring?

Sincerely,
Curious Cook

Dear Curious,

Families with a new baby or a serious illness always are thankful to have a meal brought to their home. There are a few simple guidelines you can follow that will ensure that their experience is a good one. First, make sure that you cook enough food to amply feed the family.

Many women have a perfected recipe that they bring every time they provide a meal. This is a great idea, but when you bring your tried-and-true dish, be sure to adjust the quantity accordingly. An average 9x13 casserole recipe will easily feed a couple with young children. However, you should double the recipe if the family has several older kids and/or teenagers. Make sure that you always bring a complete meal. A main entree is great, but without vegetables or side dishes, the family may have to scramble to pull dinner together.

Also, always call early in the day (or even the day before) to arrange a drop-off time. You may be planning to bring the meal at 5:30 so that it is hot and delicious—but if the family hasn't heard from you, they will anxiously be wondering if they should order pizza.

When possible, bring the meal in disposable dishes or transfer the meal to one of their pots when you arrive. At the very least, clearly mark your name on your dish so they can return it to you. Then, wish them "Bon Appetit!" and enjoy the bond of friendship that develops as you serve others in Christ.

Do One Thing... by Ashley Marcuz

Let's look at the great examples given to us by Diane and Andrea this month. They are not just 'doing one thing' on their own, but are including others in the adventure!

Diane Walls had an open house for her neighbors at Christmas time. Those neighbors who came enjoyed sitting around and talking with one another with a few staying almost 45 minutes beyond the open house time frame! Two families had never been in the Walls' home before this open house. Some neighbors are already Christians so Diane is thinking of ways that they can reach out to their neighbors together.

In December, Andrea Van Engen got together with a few college ladies for a cookie exchange. They traded cookies, packaging them in Christmas bags with attached Scripture. Some were taken to homes to pass out to other people. Andrea distributed her packages at work with the hope of opening doors for future conversations. Elizabeth Bayly took her Christmas bags to Mud's nursing home. Another bag was given away to an international student from India who attends a Bible study at UT. This student was especially touched

by this gesture, as she had not experienced this sort of care before in her home country. Other Christmas bags were given away to neighbors who were blessed by the sentiment, while some were given away to friends for encouragement. Let's all work together for the Kingdom!

Announcements

WOW Un-Retreat!

Don't forget that the "Un-retreat" is quickly coming up! Be sure to mark your calendars, prepare your gaming skills, brush up on your conversation starters and get ready for a fun night with the adventurous, humorous, and entertaining women of Christ the Word! The festivities will take place on Friday, February 25th at Holland Free Methodist church. The fun will start at 7:00 PM and extend late into the evening (or in some cases until the next day!). In order to provide some yummy late night fuel for our tummies, please bring a snacking food or sweet something to share. See your invitation for more details or feel free to contact Julie Morgan with questions. Looking forward to seeing you there!

Time Change for Baechle Shower

Come join Ryan and Emily Baechle as they look forward to the birth of their daughter! A baby shower to celebrate this event will be held on February 5th from 9:30 to 11:30 am at the home of Barb Oostra. If you have any questions, please see Sarah DeSonne.

February quote:

"Now, prayer is one of those things without which no one can find the Lord. That is how we seek Him, and if we do not seek Him, how will we find Him?...May the Lord stir you up to pray mightily, stir you up so that, like Jacob, you will not let Him go until He blesses you! As you wait for the Lord, He will cause you to find rest for your soul."

Grace and Power, Charles Spurgeon

Getting to Know... The Bellases

by Laura Barton

You may have seen Eric and Judi Bellas around church, though they can be hard to track down. Eric and Judi currently live in Temperance, Michigan, and both Eric and Judi grew up in Northeast Ohio.

Eric was raised in Rossford, Ohio, the fifth of seven children. Both of his parents were one of nine children, whereas Judi, raised in Point Place, Ohio, was the first of two children, from parents who were both only children!

At Rossford High School, Eric was interested in choir, and was the captain of the wrestling and football teams. He played the middle linebacker (defense) and fullback (offense) positions in football. After high school, Eric attended Owens and earned his Associate's Degree in Electronics Technical Engineering, and then returned to the University of Toledo and earned his Bachelor's Degree in Electrical Engineering in 1995.

Judi was interested in choir and drama at Whitmer High School and attended a semester at UT and a semester at Owens, pursuing a nursing degree, before deciding to take time off from school and work with a temporary placement agency until marriage.

Eric was raised in a Catholic family, but would say he came to Christ in college at UT, before meeting Judi. A college ministry group was having an open meeting in the common area on the UT campus, and Eric was opened up to discussion about Christ and eventually was led by UT students to begin attending Friday Night Bible Study.

Judi's parents always went to a Lutheran church growing up, and currently attend Westgate Chapel. Judi always believed she was a Christian, attending Young Life for 6 years, throughout junior high and high school. Eventually, she was searching for a Bible-teaching

church which led her to a revival at a Nazarene church, where she felt the Holy Spirit call her to give her life to Christ. Eventually, a friend kept asking her to attend this Bible Study, which happened to be Friday Night Bible Study, where she met Eric.

What impressed Judi most was when Eric brought his mom to Friday Night and introduced her as the most important woman in his life. It was several months until they began dating, in 1986, and after a short time apart, they were engaged in November of 1987—which is a story worth hearing:

A gentleman named John Barton was hosting a party at his farm, complete with a hay ride. Eric took Judi to *Rosie's* restaurant for dinner before the party, and Judi remembers constantly saying "you are really acting weird." The evening was rainy, so neither Eric nor Judi wanted to go on a hay ride in the rain, and Eric drove Judi home. On the way, on route 65 by the Maumee river, he pulled into a park; the rain was coming down so hard on the roof of his Ford Escort, they could hardly hear each other, so when he asked Judi something, she had to respond with "What?" As he did not yet have a ring to give, she had no indication what he was asking, and when he repeated his question more loudly, she happily accepted. After an 8-month engagement, they were married in July of 1988.

Seth, their firstborn, is 21, and is currently a senior in his last semester at Covenant College, ready to complete his degree in English with a minor in Sociology. Where he will go from there is a matter of much prayer in the Bellas household.

Abbi, 20, is a freshman at Owens going into Social Work. She currently has her STNA (State Tested Nursing Assistant) license in Ohio and works as a nursing assistant. She also is a great addition to CTW's softball and volleyball teams, and loves helping with the Drees' After

School Kids Club.

Micah, who will be 19 on February 11, is a freshman at UT. God is still working in him, and he does not currently attend Christ the Word.

Lydia, 15, is a sophomore in high school, back to homeschooling after being in public school from seventh through ninth grade; she has been



better able to focus on God at home.

Nathaniel, 10, is in fifth grade and likes to play soccer and video games. He enjoys reading and will be having cataract surgery in a few weeks.

Simeon and Samuel, both 7, are full of energy and life, and keep Eric and Judi young. They are interested in wrestling, soccer, and baseball, and still try to trick their parents every once in a while. Not identical twins, Simeon is the older of the two by 40 minutes, and is slightly bigger and resembles Eric. Samuel, the younger twin, resembles Judi's side of the family.

The Bellases attended Springfield church, a church that had lost its pastor, and began seeking a church with leadership. Matt Miklovic told Eric he had to meet David Bayly, and the family began visiting CTW in 2001. Shortly after they started visiting, Eric lost his job, and the CTW family was very supportive.

The Bellases praise the Lord for Christ the Word's youth group not being worldly, as is often the case with youth groups, and for the Living Word Youth not being afraid to confront sin. Eric's favorite part of CTW's worship is the confession of sin and the music. Judi enjoys the strong male leadership, and both look forward to their children growing strong for the Lord.

Building Pictures Wanted

We are looking for pictures of our new church building taken during any of the construction or times when you have gone to the site of our future church home. We are hoping to create a record of the construction and would be especially grateful for your pictures. If you would be willing to put them on a disk or get them to Scott Killy in some other format this would be very helpful. If you have questions please contact Scott.

Souper Bowl Invitation for Sunday, Feb. 6

Following evening worship on Sunday, Feb. 6, everyone has been invited to join the SDA as they watch the Super Bowl and eat snacks and pizza in the Fellowship Hall. There is no cost, however they are asking people to bring cans of non-perishable food (or soup if you'd like to play on the pun) as a donation. They are seeking to take 500 cans to donate to a local food bank. Donated cans are welcome even if you do not plan on staying to watch the game.

SemperRef: Spring Break in the UP!

Come join other college students and young adults for a Spring Break Trip to the UP! We're leaving Wednesday, March 9th and returning to Toledo Saturday, March 12th. There will be options for skiing, sledding, snowmobiling, camp fires, and more! We'll be staying at a rustic northern Michigan lodge. For more details and to RSVP, please talk with Tyson or Jen Turner or with Josh Zellers.

R.S.V.P.: Couple's Night: Saturday, February 12

Mark your calendars now for CTW's annual Couple's Night scheduled for Saturday, February 12 from 6:30 till 9:30 p.m. We will be joining together for a wonderful evening of fun activities, delicious food, and great fellowship at the Dominguez home located at 9035 Salisbury Rd in Monclova OH. In order to help with planning, please R.S.V. P. with Wendy Foulke.

CTW Camping Trip Signup Set For June 29 - July 2

Don't let snow or cold weather keep you from thinking about all the fun to be had at this year's annual CTW Family Camping Trip. This year's trip will take place Wednesday, June 29, through Saturday, July 2 at Somerset Beach Campground in Somerset Center, MI. This is an exciting time of fellowship and fun. It is one of those trips that builds friendships and creates memories that will last a lifetime. Don't miss it. You and your family will have a blast!

The cost is \$23 a night for electric and \$18 a night for non-electric sights. Make your reservations NOW! This is a very popular event and sites tend to fill up quickly. You can choose to stay Wednesday night, Thursday night, and Friday night or if you cannot stay all three nights pick and choose what fits your schedule best. If you have questions or to make reservations please contact Jeff or Shelley Schriener at si1@metalink.net or 419-290-3299.

CTW's Annual Skate Night This March 16

Come join the fun as we gather together at Swanton Coliseum on Wednesday, March 16 from 6:30-8:30 p.m. Admission is FREE! You can bring your own roller blades or skates, or if you need to rent skates there is a \$3 fee. Swanton Coliseum is located at 12725 Airport Hwy in Swanton, Ohio. Hope to see you there!

Annual Maundy Thursday Celebration

Christ the Word's annual Maundy Thursday Celebration at Nazareth Hall will be on April 21st this year. Mark your calendars and start looking forward to this night of feasting and fellowship as we praise God for all His goodness. Online registration will be available soon.

Prayer requests are now available online! Just go to:

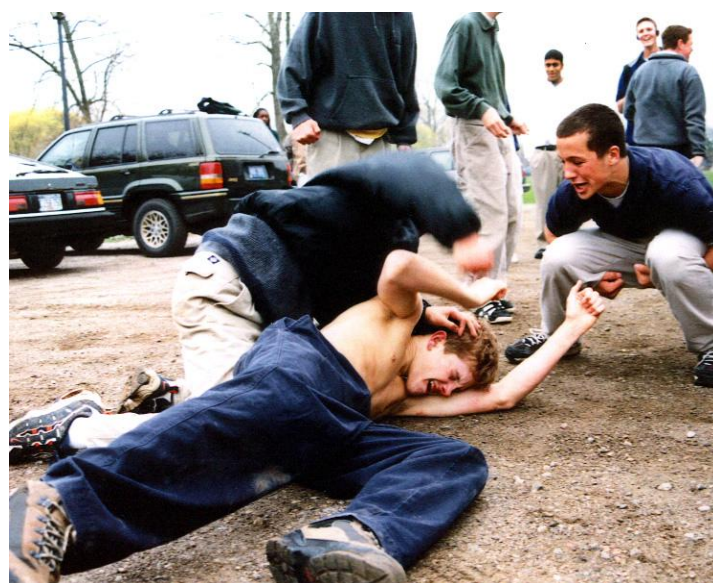
www.christtheword.com
->community links
->prayer list

Then sign in with your password. It's just that easy!

**Taking the Imprecatory Psalms One Step Further.
When Brotherly Love Just Isn't Enough.**

**Christ the Word's
Man Posse**

Not for the Faint of Heart or Those Opposed to Bloodshed



Any men in the church who are interested in being part of **“Christ the Word’s Man Posse”** should see Pastor Gary after the service.

The Man Posse will be convened on an as needed basis to beat the fear of God into men, who, for whatever reason, have been hardened to other, more reasonable appeals.

Man Posse members will be expected to stay in tip top shape, or at the very least, be conversant in the use of chairs to effectively beat people about the head and neck.

Think Jesuit. Think Man Posse.

**The Secret Origin of
the Man Posse,
or, “How Come
Christ the Word has
a Brute Squad?”**



by Sarah French

After last month’s detailed description of how to execute the secret Man Posse greeting, and the fabulous depiction of the aforementioned salutation by Ben Byers and Dale Raker at evening service, you might be asking yourself, and rightly so, what is the Man Posse, what is its purpose, and how on earth did it come to pass? Herein lies the answer. And it might shock you. Hold on to your knitted cap, fleecy layers and

thermal socks.

The Man Posse was conceived by a woman in the spring of 2003. Yes, this most manly of institutions (can you imagine it without chest hair and loud grunts?) was initiated by a member of the fairer sex. Me, in fact.

And really, perhaps this shouldn’t surprise us, since all the males I know have their genesis in a woman. But still, at first glance, it might seem a little surprising.

Like many good ideas, the man-posses was born when new thoughts and experiences combined to meet a need. Think of the electric car (lithium-ion batteries/eco-consciousness) Dyson vacuums (cone of suction / dirty floors), or high tech golf balls (new aerodynamic pimpling / lots of bogeys).

The ideas and factors contributing to the formation of our corporate electric car are many, and bear repeating. Then, as now, our church leadership was comprised of manly men. Men who applied the Bible to their actual lives, said what they meant, talked loud, and liked to make potatoes go ‘boom.’

Accordingly, or at least in harmony with the first two characteristics listed, they emphasized the importance of Godly manhood and fatherhood. Not new ideas to many, but certainly not ones spoken of so regularly and applied so systematically. In addition, a Sunday sermon series around that time highlighted

the imprecatory Psalms (Psalms that contain curses or punishments for one’s enemy). And finally, David Bayly was 50 pounds heavier, Gary Knapp (a giant of a man) was the assistant pastor, and Steve Altman (now a pastor in Napoleon, but then a tamer of semi-trucks) attended the church.

The details of the initial need the Man Posse met are onerous. Suffice to say, traditional entreaties to turn from sin did not meet with success, and in disgust, I suggested a Man Posse go and dispatch some sense. The thought being that the mere sight of David, Gary, Steve, and a host of others lumbering towards him would suddenly make this man more malleable to their entreaties. I believe there is even a poster with the tagline “Think Jesuit. Think Man Posse.” floating around somewhere. Since then, the Man Posse seems to have matured and developed into more of a brotherhood than a taskforce. While I hear that members are sent out from time to time, it seems they typically meet with good results—men eager to serve God and join the brotherhood themselves. *Long live the Man Posse!*

**Couples’ Night
by Wendy Foulke**



Imagine, in the midst of your busy day, your husband telling you that he is all yours for one whole evening! That’s right! No children, no housework, no sweatpants. It’s an opportunity to get all prettied up and stare longingly into your loved one’s eyes.

This occasion would have all the bells and whistles that you would want to experience, such as delectable food and romantic ambience.

You don’t have to just imagine this perfect date, you can live it. The only hitch is that you would be experiencing it alongside sixty other

swooning couples from Christ the Word!

The annual Couple’s Night will be Saturday, February 12, 2011, at Mario and Lisa Dominguez’ home beginning at 6:30pm. Husbands, be certain to make plans to escort your stunning wives to this lively event. This year will feature a rousing “Newlywed Game” that you will not want to miss! You will also want to hear what our speakers, Matt and Sarah French, have to share with us.

Please make your RSVPs to Dave and Wendy Foulke by Wednesday, February 10.

calendar of events

February Calendar

- Feb. 5** **Emily Baechle Baby Shower**
- Feb. 5** **Presbytery**
- Feb. 12** **Couples Night**
- Feb. 18-20** **LWY Winter Retreat**
- Feb. 25** **WOW Fellowship Event**

Mark Your Calendar

- Mar. 9-12** **SemperRef Spring Break
in the U.P.**
- Mar.16** **CTW Skate Night**
- Mar. 24** **WOW Fellowship Bead Night**
- Mar. 26** **Keren ten Haaf Baby Shower**
- May 7** **Presbytery**
- May 14** **Sarah Frank Bridal Shower**
- June 29** **CTW Camping Trip**
-July 2