



The Foothills Flyer: *Keeping the Church on Mission*

The Resurrection and the Supremacy of Christ

Value: **Christ the Head**

By Mike Potter

Supreme. It's a pretty powerful word that unfortunately in our culture has been reduced to the kind of pizza we eat at Pizza Hut. The word actually means strongest, most important, or most powerful. It is the thing or the person that is superior to all others. It's not a word that should be used carelessly, and when it comes to deciding who we will allow to be supreme in our lives, we really need to exercise great discernment and caution.



When we were small children, perhaps our parents were supreme in our lives. My father was a large man – both in size and in presence. His voice could boom, and it did when he was excited. I remember when I was 6 years old playing infield on my t-ball team and threw out a baserunner for the first time ever. My dad, who was also my coach, jumped up and down in the dugout and roared with excitement. It nearly made all of the other 6 year olds in the dugout cry! I remember to this day the great feeling of not only knowing that I got the baserunner out but knowing that I made my dad – the one who was supreme in my life – happy with me.

From then on, I remember trying to do things that would re-create that moment between me and my dad. I wanted to have him jump up and down and roar his approval of me like that again and again. When I was in grade school, I played whiffle ball with my friends on the school playground at recess. It just so happened that I could hit the ball pretty far, so I asked my dad if he would come by at recess and watch me hit. I'm sure he didn't have the time nor the desire to do so, but the next day as we ran to the ball field for morning recess, there was my dad, sitting in his car waiting to watch. I don't know if I hit the ball well that day or not, I just know that I wanted to please my father and make him excited about me again like he was before. He was a big deal to me because he was supreme in my life back then.

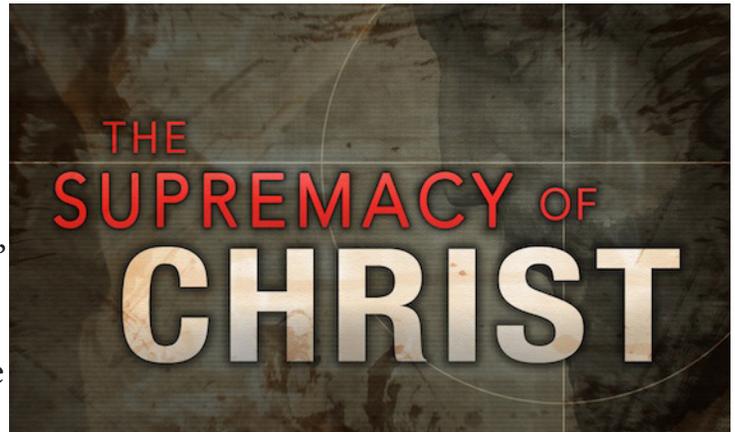
You and I have since grown up, and no longer are our parents supreme to us – but someone has most likely taken their place. There is someone in our lives who is more important than all others, and the challenge for the Christian is to fight the temptation to put our spouse, our children, or some other human in that spot. Christ must be the one who we allow to reign supreme in our lives. We must recognize Him as the most important – superior to all others – and live our lives in light of this. Just as I had a driving desire to please my earthly father because I saw him as supreme, so should we desire to please our heavenly Father because He is supreme.

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Read these words from the Apostle Paul about the supremacy of Christ from Colossians 1:15-20: He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation. For by him all things were created, in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities—all things were created through him and for him. And he is before all things, and in him all things hold together. And he is the head of the body, the

church. He is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, that in everything he might be preeminent. For in him all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell, and through him to reconcile to himself all things, whether on earth or in heaven, making peace by the blood of his cross.

Paul clearly states that Christ is supreme (preeminent) because He is “the firstborn from the dead.” His resurrection from the grave (an event we celebrate this month with great rejoicing!) has propelled Him to supremacy over all things and all people. Because of the resurrection, Christ is the strongest, most important, most powerful One and is superior to all others. May we be reminded of this once again as we celebrate His resurrection this month, and may we live in such a way that we affirm His supremacy over us by our worship, our obedience, our delighting in Him, and our desire to please Him in all we do.



Spiritual Gifts Imperative

Value: Unity in Community

by Pastor Joe Eastman

As we as a church continue to discover and deploy your gifting I wanted to share something with you all concerning spiritual gifts which occurred to me recently. Namely, that one of the best illustrations of the use of Spiritual gifts actually comes out of the book of Deuteronomy. In the 29th Chapter Moses is giving his final instructions to the people and God is getting them ready to enter into the Promised Land under the leadership of Joshua. In Deuteronomy 29:1-13 Moses reminds the people of two things.

The first is that God has always been faithful to them. Moses recounts how God brought His people out of Egypt, destroying the armies of the most powerful nation on Earth at that time. Moreover, Moses reminds them that even when they wandered in the desert their very clothes and sandals didn't wear out and that even though they were in the desert they always had food and water. Moses was reminding them that no matter where they have been and no matter what they faced God was always faithful to them.

The second thing Moses tells them, is that this past faithfulness on God's part should translate to present action on their part. Too often the people of God will take God's faithfulness but not feel an obligation to change our present in view of that past. God was telling His people through Moses that since he was faithful in the past they are required to face the present with faithful action. And to me, this is the heart and soul of Spiritual Gifts. For the Children of Israel their calling was to conquer the land. To do so they were required to bear on their faith, get their swords out and go face the enemy. An enemy who was entrenched, stronger, better equipped and supplied than they were. To go against the enemy in battle was to risk their lives and the lives of their entire nation but, God's past faithfulness to them demanded that they go and trust God.

If you are a Christian then you have been, saved, redeemed, and gifted for the purpose of going forth to war for God. To use your gifting to expand His kingdom, not with a sword like the Children of Israel, but with love, peace, goodwill, and most importantly the Good News. Spiritual Gifts are the tools God has given us to do this

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very thing. So, as you discover or rediscover your gifting ask God to show you how you can put them to use for Him, because after all, he has always been faithful.

For the last several weeks we have been experiencing our Spiritual Gifts Imperative. The reason I consider this an imperative is for two reasons. One, I believe the Bible is clear that all Christians have a set of gifting from God by which they are to be stewards of and use for God's glory. Second, I think the Bible is equally clear that is the church's job to help those in the church to find their gifts, grow their gifts and deploy their gifts. In that vein, I wish to offer to you all a way in which you can get involved in using your gifts. That way is in offering your skills as a tutor in the International District. At East Central Ministries there is a tutoring organization working to help refugees and their families. They are called IRRVA and are looking for volunteers to help these families learn to read and write. The following information was provided:

Tutoring Volunteer Opportunity

“Tutoring sessions will be held on Mon and Wed, from 4:00-5:30, at East Central Ministries building

at 126 Pennsylvania, NE. Volunteers may sign up to tutor on either Mondays or Wednesdays or for both days. WE ARE ESPECIALLY IN NEED OF TUTORS ON WEDNESDAYS. The goal is to assign one-on-one or groups of two students with similar reading levels to each tutor. Half the tutoring session will be devoted to reading instruction, the other half to helping with the child's homework. All students' reading skills have been assessed and, based those results, intervention materials have been compiled for each students. The materials you'll need to use for tutoring will be provided. Each student will have a binder, with their individualized reading intervention program, inside. YAY! That makes it so much easier for everyone! However, there will still be some opportunity to individualize sessions, for those who enjoy doing that. PLEASE CONSIDER BEING PART OF THIS EXCITING ENDEAVOR! You may email me if you would like to volunteer as a tutor, or if you have any questions regarding the program. Our next training meeting for volunteers will be held during the last week of March 2015. Time and day are yet to be determined.”

If you are gifted in teaching, hospitality, giving, mercy, or just feel that you can help please let me know and I will pass on more information to you.

Testimony of Small Groups

Value: Intentional Families

by Ben Abeyta

Joe Eastman asked if I would write an article about small groups at Foothills for the Newsletter and I was very excited to do this. As I began to think about what to write I thought of how excited I am that 66% of our community of Foothills is a part of small groups and that we now have 12 small groups with very dedicated leaders. We are also in the midst of going through spiritual gifts imperative in which leaders are going through this assessment with the people in their groups and ultimately will be employing their gifts both in community and individually for the glory of God! How very exciting that we can learn and encourage each other in community.

Attached are several pictures of our new grandson Benji (Benjamin the 4th)! He was born December 31 and is such an amazing gift from God. Geretta and I are presently in Fort Worth, Texas, “Benji-sitting” while his



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parents Benjamin and Emily had to go back to work. While we've been in Fort Worth we have had the opportunity to watch our adult children live life around us and I am so blessed and impressed as they have transitioned to becoming parents with love that is off the charts! A little background on Benjamin and Emily, they are both Family Practice doctors and in their last year of residency at JPS Hospital in Fort Worth, Texas. They have been married almost 6 years and love the Lord! They are active in their church here in Fort Worth and are part of a small group that meets on a weekly basis.

As I was thinking about writing this article about small groups I was captured by the community of life being lived out by our children in a way that describes the essence of small groups and the mission of Foothills so I wanted to share our most recent experiences with you.

Ben and Emily live in the Fairmount Historical District of Fort Worth, the homes here are old Craftsman style homes that are either as is, being restored or have already been restored. The people here walk everywhere. One block away is Magnolia Street where there are many shops and restaurants. Year round the neighborhood has pancake

breakfasts near the park once a month on Saturday mornings; this was started by their small group as a way to reach out and meet the neighbors. Neighbors actually talk and get to know each other. There is a community garden which Bemily have a plot and have already planted. It is a wonderful environment to be a part of.

So we begin the story with; one night as we are making dinner we find out neighbors Tyler, Bethany and little Phoebe coming through the back door to join us for dinner. A few minutes later we find Nathan and Lindsey, our next door neighbors, are coming through the front door for dinner. I find Nathan in the kitchen learning how to make tortillas from Geretta. By the way he sent us pictures a few days later of his first batch of home-made tortillas, pretty cool! Our standing joke from then on was "guess who's coming to dinner?" The next day we had "the ice storm of 2015" which meant everything shut down. By the way did I tell you Ben & Emily are very active? So being shut in isn't in their vocabulary. We slid to the park to throw Frisbees. When we came back we began to shovel ice and snow from our sidewalks, Nathan joined us for snowball fights and we then proceeded to clean the neighbors' sidewalks. Rich came out to join us and then Joshua saw we had cleared his sidewalks and he came out and the next thing you know we were drinking hot toddies and playing cards with all the neighbors in Bemily's dining room.

On another night we find out Bemily are watching little Phoebe while her parents go to a missions meeting. We all had a great time watching this precious little girl of less than 2 years. Later in the evening we went to Tyler and Bethany's house down the street to put her to bed until her folks came home.

Monday night is small group night and this time is at Bemily's home. They invited Geretta and me to have dinner with their small group of about 10-12 people and participate if we wanted. We had a great time meeting their small group and again saw the gift of hospitality and love they have for their church family. Emily was caring for one of the women (an oncology doctor) who had a very difficult day of dealing with much suffering and death.



Did I mention Mike and Maureen, the neighbors of the north side? They are in the “Keenager Category” and love Ben, Emily and Benji! Mike every now and again brings over Rahr Craft Beer that he gets for volunteering at the Rahr Brewery. Then there’s the neighbor that lives across the street that we are not sure what is going, but suffice it to say a problematic situation, but Ben and Emily are in prayer for him and his family. Once every month Benjamin goes over to Rich’s house to administer shots to his son as it is difficult and stressful; for Rich to do it himself, what a blessing to this family. We constantly walk in the neighborhood and take strolls to the park or go to the community garden, in which they always make time to stop and talk with most anyone they see.

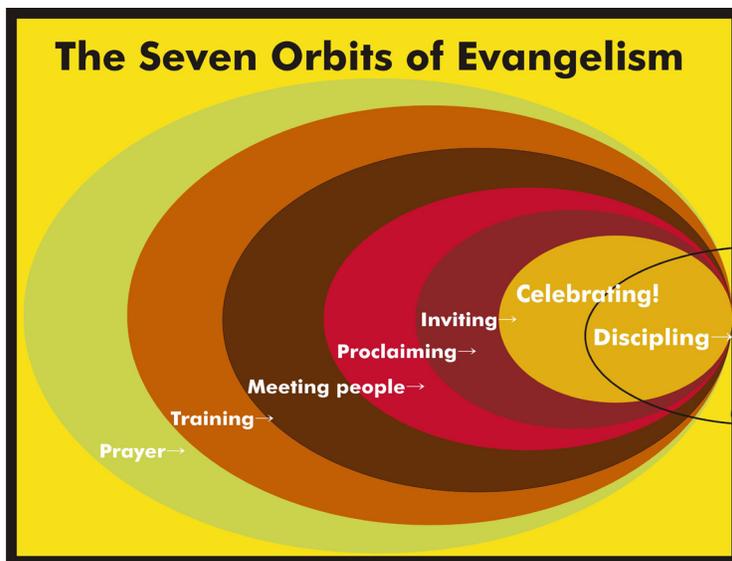
Yes, these two young people live their lives for Christ. They live and love in community, they are intentional in building community in their lives whether it is church, neighbors, family or co-workers. They have their identity in Christ and yes they struggle just as we all do but foundationally they trust and cling to Our Lord for guidance, strength and love.

Life in Small Groups and in community is meant to be shared. Romans 12:15-16 Rejoice with those who rejoice; mourn with those who mourn. Live in harmony with one another.

So these young people whom we have shared life with this past month are very encouraging to us and give us much hope for the future, 1 Timothy 4:12 Let no one despise your youth, but be an example to believers in word, in conduct, in love, in spirit, in faith, in purity.

I am very excited for our small groups especially as we are growing in number as well as growing in faith. Now that we are in the midst of learning more about who we are as Christians especially learning about our spiritual gifts, let us use them first in community of family, small groups and then to our own neighborhoods and community who do not know Christ! In Hebrews 10:25, let us not give up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but encourage one another- and all the more as you see the Day approaching.

Let us challenge and encourage each other in making a ripple effect in the lives of the people around us. What ripples and waves are we setting in motion with our words and works for Christ?
Blessing in Christ, Ben



The Foothills Flyer is a monthly newsletter under the oversight of Pastor Joe Eastman and designed by Rachel Gard that is aimed at Keeping the Church on Mission and committed to our 9 Core Values.

OUR MISSION: Foothills Fellowship exists to be a worshiping community of God’s people whose lives are shaped by the life, death, burial and resurrection of Jesus and who participate in the mission of God’s kingdom by proclaiming the good news locally, nationally and globally.

OUR CORE VALUES: 1) Jesus Christ, the Head 2) Biblical Leadership 3) Everyone A Minister 4) Ancient/Future Worship 5) Hospitality Without Exception 6) Unity in Community 7) Intentional Families 8) Global Missions 9) Holistic Discipleship