



The Foothills Flyer: *Keeping the Church on Mission*

Curiosity is the Key to Learning Well

Value: **Biblical Leadership**

by Rod Pauls

Curiosity killed the cat, or so the old proverb goes. No doubt there are times when being overly curious can lead someone into a tight spot. If you've read your share of Curious George books you know all about the problems George gets himself into because of his curiosity. We've been taught from a very young age that being curious is a bad thing... something to be avoided. But where would we be if it weren't for curiosity? Is it possible that curiosity is actually a good thing, something that we should cherish and cultivate? Lindsay Olesberg, in her book "The Bible Study Handbook", writes that curiosity is an asset that can be developed by anyone regardless of who they are or what they do. She shares four benefits of curiosity:

- * It makes your mind active instead of passive.
- * It makes your mind observant of new ideas.
- * It opens up new worlds and possibilities.
- * It fuels creativity.

Curiosity is what leads us to discover new places, new things, and new strategies for solving life's problems. Curiosity helps lead us to invent new machines and technologies that improve our quality of life. Curiosity enables us to learn and to grow. As Walt Disney once said, "We keep moving forward, opening up new doors and doing new things because we're curious... and curiosity keeps leading us down new paths."

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Curiosity also is an indispensable quality when it comes to studying the Bible. When we come to the Scriptures with open hearts and open minds, curiosity is what enables us to look deeply into the text and to see all that we can see. Curiosity is what keeps us looking for the "clues" that will lead us to a correct understanding of the author's intended meaning. Just as a detective curiously probes the crime scene, wanting to see everything and miss nothing, the wise student of Scripture curiously investigates every nook and cranny of the passage, not satisfied with just a cursory reading or a superficial study. Curiosity keeps the student of Scripture moving forward, opening up new doors and discovering new insights. Without a healthy dose of curiosity, our study of Scripture would quickly become stale and lifeless.

Too many times I have studied passages of the Bible and have landed on an interpretation that seemed to be the correct one only to discover that I needed to be more curious.

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When I looked again I saw that I had missed something—a key observation in the text or a piece of historical/cultural background—and with the new information my understanding of the author’s meaning totally changed.

When I first studied Luke 11:5-8, I initially thought Jesus was teaching his disciples that persistence is what moves God to answer our prayers. After all, the word, “persistence” is used. But curiosity drove me to look more closely at the text and I noticed that the petitioner is not really persistent at all: he never knocks and he only calls out one time! As I dug deeper into the historical and cultural context I learned that the word translated “persistence” actually means “shamelessness.” I also learned that preserving the honor of the individual and the community was—and is—a very important feature of Palestinian culture.

I realized that Jesus’s parable is more about God’s sense of honor. He answers our prayers not so much because we persist in asking but because he will not allow his name to be dishonored. My understanding of what Jesus is teaching in this parable shifted dramatically.

Curiosity is something to be celebrated rather than discouraged because curiosity is a key to learning well. At Urbana 15 we will study portions of Matthew’s gospel using an inductive method called manuscript study. During these manuscript study times we will encourage you to become curious learners— people who investigate every nook and cranny of the passage seeking the clues that will help you understand the meaning of the text. We invite you to embrace curiosity and to see it as a positive quality in your life.

Curiosity may not be so good for cats, but for students of God’s Word, it’s absolutely necessary.

My Message Memo

Value: Holistic Discipleship

by Sarah Dumas

We are off to a great start this fall exploring two new potential curriculums for the My Message program. We spent October exploring Old Testament stories in “The Gospel Story” curriculum and now are interacting with various truths from the Bible brought to us by the “ORANGE” curriculum. The 6-10 yr. class is focusing on the two greatest commandments “Love God/Love Others” and the 3-5 yr. class is learning about how God made us, God loves us, and nothing can separate us from God’s love. We will be studying these Scripture truths through November, when our studies will then shift to the Advent season and the beauty, sacrifice, and importance of Christ’s arrival on Earth. Please continue to pray with me over these two curriculum trials as we interact with the materials and present each lesson to your children, in attempts to determine what would be the best match for our children’s ministry.

I want to give an overwhelming thank you to my many volunteers who have committed to teaching throughout this school year! We are building a great team, however, we are still in need of one regularly scheduled assistant (3-5 yr class). Please contact me if you are interested and I can send out dates and information.

Thank you again, I know this is going to be a great year for our little Foothillians!



November - National Adoption Month

Value: Intentional Families

by Melissa Eastman

Since the month of November is National Adoption Month, I would like to take this opportunity to shine a little light on foster care. Foster care can bring many different emotions and images, but I hope to shed a positive light, and show how YOU can support foster parents. Or even show how YOU may be called to be a foster parent yourself.

As many of you know, Joe and I have been foster parents for 5 years. In that time we have had 14 children come into our lives, and have met many more doing respite care for other foster parents. Foster care is an emotional roller coaster, and unlike the celebrations that come with bringing home a new baby, bringing a foster child into your home is always under sad circumstances. There are no baby showers for foster infants, and sleepless nights take on a whole other realm when dealing with drug addiction. Older children are their own emotional wreck, and come with lots of baggage. My weeks are filled with therapy sessions for the kids (many would agree I also need therapy), and I have seen more hurt than I care to know about. Our biological children go through constant emotions and share every part of their life, sharing their rooms, toys, and parents. We are a spectacle in public places, due to our family size and makeup. Our life is chaos. By now, you must be thinking, "How in the world is she going to make this positive!?"

Well, I have to tell you that despite all this stuff, I find it a joy and privilege to do the job the Lord has called me and my family to do, and it is absolutely Kingdom work. I have been on the front row seat of God's show as he heals brokenness. For example, I have seen God's power every time I walk into the NICU and pray for a baby. Heart rates go up, feeding issues dissolve, and breathing issues subside. I have seen a child labeled with the possibility to never walk...walk. As a Christian family, we have the opportunity to bring these children to church where they not only receive acceptance, but love from a church family. Probably my favorite thing I have experienced is hearing a toddler come from so much trauma in a short life sing "Jesus loves Me" as they play in their room. So trust me when I say, this is the positive: the rejoicing in knowing love can overcome anything that I will encounter when I walk into a hospital room or whatever has happened to the scared little one holding a stranger's hand knocking on my door in the wee hours of the night, and whatever the future holds I trust in God's hand over these precious little lives.

Foster care is not only a worldly issue, it is a Biblical issue. In fact, there are a number of Scriptures that support fostering and adopting, and it is abundantly clear that God loves the orphaned and oppressed. Foster children meet the description of both oppressed and orphaned. For space sake, I will just list a few scriptures, but I must type the one that gets my heart every time I feel like I want to quit.

"Speak up for those who cannot speak for themselves, for the rights of all who are destitute. Speak up and judge fairly; defend the rights of the poor and the needy." Proverbs 31:8-9

Other scriptures that I pray you will read and see that God desires all of us to somehow be involved to love these precious ones: Psalm 82:3-4, Mark 9:37, Psalm 72:4, Mark 10:14, Isaiah 1:17, Matthew 25:40, Psalm 72:13-14, James 1:27, Matthew 18:5, Isaiah 58:6-12

Sadly enough, the statistics are staggering when we look at the number of children in foster care. According to the Children's Bureau update in September 2014, there were 415, 129 children in foster care nationwide! That is up from 402,378 in September 2013. Here in New Mexico, according to CYFD, on any given day, there is at least 2,500 children in foster care. Unfortunately, these numbers will continue to increase, and this brings even more sad news because there has not been an increase of the number of foster parents to keep up with the number of kids. This puts pressure on the families that are willing to take in more kids, stretching already stretched hands and resources even further.

Now, I know looking at those numbers brings emotions, at least I hope they do. However, I am not writing this to cause a guilt trip or anything like that. I am writing to tell you that this is a huge ministry need. These children need love and acceptance. They need hope and healing, and they need the love



of Christ shared with them and their broken families. This article is intended to encourage those of you who may feel called be a foster parent to take the leap. There is countless excuses to give as to why you can't. I went through them myself.

However through God's grace and power I have overcome every excuse I could come up with, including a chronic illness. With love I tell you, this IS hard, you WILL get attached, you might have to SAY GOOD-BYE, your heart WILL break, you WILL have meltdowns, and basically every bit of comfort you can think of WILL be challenged. BUT, if you are called to do something, then you do it. Jesus doesn't need to know the obstacles and excuses in the way, He just needs obedient workers willing to pick up their crosses, and He helps overcome the rest! If you are inter-

ested in becoming a foster/adoptive parent you can talk to Joe or me, OR check out CYFD's website.

With all that being said, I am fully aware that not everyone is called to be a foster parent. According to God's word we are all called to be involved somehow. So, I have thought of ways that you can be involved: 1) Pray for the children and foster families. 2) Give some encouragement to foster parents, because most days they feel emotionally and physically exhausted. 3) Offer to make a meal, especially if you know they just took a new child or more in. Sure, they didn't just birth them into the world, but there is a lot of trauma and adjusting being done in the home. 4) Be understanding and gentle when dealing with the children both foster and biological in the family. Sometimes, there are often unexplained behaviors when a child is hurting and all the adjusting the family is going through. Don't take offense.

I'm sure in all your creativeness you can think of other ways to bless foster children and their foster families, and I pray so much that you will get involved in some way. Thank you to those who have encouraged Joe and I, and to those of you who have watched any of our children so we could have a few seconds to recharge! Please continue to pray and walk in His service with us!

"Defend the cause of the weak and fatherless: maintain the rights of the poor and the oppressed. Rescue, the weak and needy; deliver them from the hand of the wicked." Psalm 82:3-4

Here are a few links : <https://cyfd.org/>

<http://www.adoptuskids.org/for-families/state-adoption-and-foster-care-information/new-mexico>

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 worshipping 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