



Joy Mennonite Church Newsletter

PASTOR'S CORNER

Since the tornadoes in Oklahoma, volunteers have come from all over the country to help the tornado victims clean up and rebuild. Volunteers who lay down their concerns for a period of time to help those in need are good people. There are a good many retired people who come and face the Oklahoma heat. There are youth groups from a thousand miles away. Perhaps the most admirable of all are those who take time from their jobs or take vacation time to help unfortunate victims. Volunteers are good people. We have a story in the gospels (Mark 10) of a

young man coming to Jesus inquiring about salvation. He was a good young man who kept the commandments of the law. One thing you lack, Jesus told him. Go sell your possessions, give the money to the poor then come and follow me. This was more than the young man wanted to commit and he went sadly away. We should not judge the young man when we also may set our limits lower than Jesus asks. We also struggle with the idea of selling all our possessions. It is not reasonable to ask all believers to sell all their possessions. This story however, does give us some principles that apply to those who disconnect from their possessions even if only for a week. I interpret the story as the young man asking Jesus how he might have that soul relationship to God

that he observed Jesus had. Jesus had basically no earthly possessions but devoted his time to preaching, healing and doing good. He depended on the good will of people to give him food and shelter. Jesus would not have asked these people to sell all the goods. Jesus however devoted himself to make the will of God a reality, and described this passion for his Father's will as comparable to ones desire for food. Jesus now said to the young man that to have that relationship of your inner being with God you must do as I have done. Earthly possessions will distract you. This story has meaning not only for those who give up everything but also for those who give up a portion. The important issue was not how much good the young man's money would do for the

poor but the possibilities of the young man connecting with God in his most inner being. Volunteers can use the same principle. It is not how much good I will accomplish but what happens in my spiritual journey toward God. (Do gooders often don't help much anyway, do they.) I congratulate the volunteers and the churches who have sent volunteers to Oklahoma. Oklahomans are appreciative of all your efforts. We need to teach all our people the importance of disconnecting from our love of possessions and devote ourselves more to the needs that surround us. This is the will of our Father. It is a spiritual journey. God bless all of you.

Moses Mart

Editorial By

Terry Hostetler

In Sunday school recently, I spoke to our young people about the parable of the rich young fellow who asked Jesus what he'd have to do to follow Jesus. My students weren't too thrilled about the idea of giving everything to the poor to follow Jesus. I guess you can't blame them. I don't know many adults really excited about this idea. I've

heard so many interpretations of this parable, most aimed at keeping their money. But I'll not dispute those, I don't know all the answers, I don't even know all the questions. Do you remember though, the old saying "money is the root of all evil"? Think about it. Most crime is money motivated. Drug dealing, prostitution, robbery, burglary. Then there is white collar crime, fraud, scams, embezzling. Some folks will do anything for money. Most of you

reading this are thinking "We're not like that" and you're probably right. But does that mean money has had no negative effect on you? Our whole society is set up on the idea that wealth makes you good. The upper class folk are those with money. Money makes people acceptable in our society. And I am sure some folks with a lot of money are good people. I'm equally sure there are many rich folk who aren't. I've known guys, business men, Christians who were financially stable for many

years. Who were really well respected and good human beings. Each of these men, when business took a down turn, had to make decisions as business men should. Unfortunatley each forgot their value system and in attempts to save their business and money they turned their backs on what's right. They lied, cheated and in some cases even stole to save their money. They won, they were so proud. But they didn't win - these men all lost. They lost big. Their self respect was lost. Some

of those guys don't seem to let that bother them much – as long as they have money, but they are obviously changed. I truly feel sorry for each of these because in their minds money is their saving grace, not God – not Jesus. Their greatest fear is losing their money not their morals or ethics. Maybe in the parable, Jesus was saying money gets in the way of being a Christian, of being a good person – so choose what is truly important.

Iraq Sanctions

Joy Mennonite will participate with an effort led by Mennonite Central Committee to appeal to members of Congress to end sanctions against Iraq.

Background:

- August 6, 1999 marks the 9th anniversary of comprehensive UN trade sanctions against Iraq.
- Sanctions were imposed *before* the Gulf War in response to Iraq's invasion of Kuwait.
- The sanctions are the *most stringent ever* imposed on a country. They ban 90% of Iraqi imports and 97% of exports.
- In 1996, the United Nations began an oil-for-food program to counter the devastating impact of sanctions.
- Money from oil sales is tightly controlled by the UN and is used for war reparations, UN oversight fees, and to purchase limited

supplies of food, medicine and equipment.

- Iraqis receive a sparse monthly food basket which lasts on average 20-23 days. Some Iraqis are able to supplement food basket items; many are not.
- In addition to sanctions, U.S. and British planes continue to bomb Iraq at least several times a week.

Impact:

- According to UNICEF, one child dies every 7-9 minutes (5,000 to 6,000 children per month) in Iraq from preventable diseases or malnutrition directly linked to the sanctions.
- Some 30 percent of children in Iraq suffer from either acute or chronic malnutrition. They are especially vulnerable to water borne gastrointestinal diseases.

News

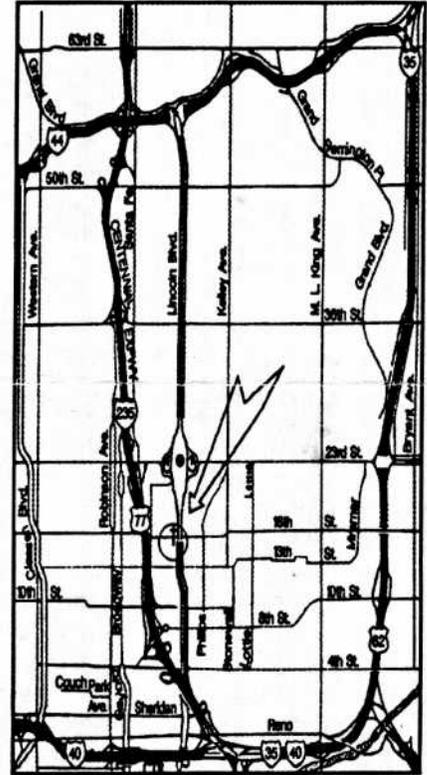
July 24th, Chester and Grace Roley celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary.

Peter and Kay Brueckner left Saturday morning to take their grandchildren back home to Indiana.

Prayer Concerns

Chester and Grace Roley need our prayers. Chester had the first of six in a series of chemotherapy.

Del Shoemaker is still with us but seems to be getting weaker.



Joy Mennonite is located at 504 NE 16th. We meet on Sundays at 10 am.

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Joy Mennonite Church
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