

Todd & Melanie Monthly

- The Support newsletter of Todd & Melanie Hiestand -
November 2001



"For just as you presented your bodies as slaves impurity and to lawlessness, so now present your bodies as slaves to righteousness..." (Romans 6:12)

During my undergraduate training, one of the most life-changing classes for me was my class on the Pauline Epistles. In that class we studied the Book of Romans (as well as some of Paul's other writings). It was in this class that I began to realize how amazing my salvation was. A big step during this time was my understanding of my sinfulness. Once I was able to grasp the magnitude of my dependence on God I was able to better grasp the amazing fact of my salvation. To me the question was, why would such an awesome God save me? The only answer I have found thus far, is the simple fact that he loves me (because if I am honest with myself, there is nothing in me, that is worthy of God's love). Why then are we saved? Grace, Grace, Grace...and more Grace. Why God saved me I do not understand. But, this truth I treasure more than anything in the world.

How does this relate to Jericho Valley Church? Well, we have been studying through the book of Romans during our weekly Bible Study. And again, the book of Romans is challenging me in ways that I will have a hard time expressing in writing. The verse above calls us to "present our bodies as slaves to righteousness." In an earlier verse Paul tells us, "now that we have been freed from sin" we need to be "enslaved to God."

Enslaved to God. That seems to be an oxymoron. How does this work? I am beginning to see, through this passage and some friends who are influencing me with their lives, the high calling that we have as Christians to live lives wholly, 100% devoted to him. The phrase "wholly devoted" however, does not quite describe the passion involved. If I am a slave to Christ, that means my life is not my own. It means that everything in my life is meant for God, to God and about God. This may mean giving up a lot of things in this world. It may also mean forgetting some of my "earthly desires" and following after God at all costs.

Sometimes I think, yeah Paul did this, and he even "considered all things loss in view of the surpassing value of knowing Christ." But he was Paul. I can't be as committed as Paul. He wrote the Bible! I could never live up to Paul. While this is almost assuredly true, I believe God calls us to view our lives in this same way. Melanie and I have prayed that God would give us the grace to be able to "count all things loss compared to the value of knowing Him" and live our lives as slaves to God and righteousness.

Now, you may be asking, what does this have to do with my ministry at Jericho Valley Church and my Seminary classes? Well, hopefully this gives you a good example of what our ministry at JVC is about. Melanie and I being convicted in this manner is a result of the example of our Pastors, friends and Bible Study at JVC. We trust and pray that God will use our ministry to help others gain a passion for a life committed to Christ and his Glory!

SUPPORT UPDATE:

Support Goal:
\$1500/month

Committed Monthly Support:
\$870/month

We have just about made our goal of \$900 by the end of October. Praise the Lord for His provision! The new goal is \$1100 by the end of November!

We are looking for individuals or families to help us meet this goal with support of \$10, \$20 or \$30/ month. (Special Gifts are welcomed also)

If you are interested, please contact us by phone or e-mail.

What's Going On!

- Todd has been putting together the Jericho Valley Church Weekly Devotional. This devotional is based on the Sunday morning message. Its purpose is to give families and singles a chance to interact with the message throughout the week. Also, it (hopefully) acts as a great tool for family devotions.

- ❑ (If you would like to receive a copy of our devotional via e-mail let us know. We would be happy to send one each week) **Please pray that this will be a useful and practical tool for our congregation!**
- ❑ Todd will be preaching on the 18th of November. **As this is Todd's first time preaching "for real," please pray that day for comfort, confidence and wisdom!**
- ❑ The church will be returning to Bristol, PA (a lower income area of Philly) on the 17th of November to give a Turkey Dinner to those less fortunate. **Pray this can be a good opportunity for our congregation to minister together and encourage the families of Bristol.**
- ❑ Todd will begin working at UPS starting the 5th of November to replace his job at the insurance company. UPS offers full health benefits for part-time employees and up to \$2000 a semester in tuition assistance. This is an answer to prayer, as we have been responsible for our own health insurance. **Pray for us as we make this transition.**
- ❑ Both of us have had wonderful opportunities to share our faith in Jesus Christ with those we work with. **Please pray for these relationships and for these friends.**

- ❑ You can receive this newsletter via e-mail? Write us at TMHiestand@aol.com for more information.
- ❑ You make donations online at www.studentministriesinc.org? (If you need help with this process please give us a call and we will help you!)
- ❑ You can send our support directly to:
Student Ministries, Inc.
PO Box 22212
Milwaukee, OR 97269
(Be sure to write our SMI ID # (54012) on the check.)
- ❑ ***Support received after the 26th of the month will count toward the following month's support.**
- ❑ **You can feel free to write or call at any time if you have any questions, ideas or concerns!**
- ❑ **You can learn more about Jericho Valley Church at www.jerichovalley.com**

By His Grace, For His Glory...

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Did you know...?