



PRAYER REQUESTS

- **Stephen Miller** is recovering well from his appendectomy and returns to work tomorrow.
- Continue to keep **Pam Richards'** parents in your prayers.
- **Reagan Kenyon, Sasha Tompkins & La Donna Gammill** all need your prayers as they continue to seek great results.
- Beverly and Clifford Gunn, Judy Roybal, JO Vick, Dick and Judy Bird, Belle Yokum, Willie Johnson, Bobby Wright, Larry Reeder, Zell Gammill, Koben Puckett, are all in need of prayers.

VOLUME 5, ISSUE 10

MARCH 4, 2012

Announcements

- Keep the families of **Dolores Gonzales** and **Alice Cleaver** in your prayers since adjusting to the loss of these deeply loved ladies will be hard for them.
- **Ladies' Night Out** was awesome last week. Many thanks to every woman in the congregation who brought so much to help make it a success. The meal and decorations were amazing and Pam Richards was a delightful and inspiring speaker. Thank you all for your help and encouragement for our community.
- On **Wednesday** evening we will meet at **7 PM** for Bible class. **Les Miller** has books in the back and you are welcome to take one for you and for a friend.
- Congratulations to the **Vixens** for emerging victorious in the first round of the state basketball tournament. Our girls will play on Tuesday in Bernalillo at 4:30 PM. Congratulations as well to the **Foxes** for their victory in the first round of state basketball. They will play their next game on Wednesday at 8:15 PM at Bernalillo. Thank you for always supporting the children of our community.

Benevolence Update

We are collecting **Nestles Quick** and **green beans** for the Portales Christian Children's Home this month. Our goal is 100 items and while we are a small congregation, the children are even smaller..... We know we can do this for the children :-)

Silas Shotwell will bring the lesson today
Men Serving this Month

- **Announcements:** Tom Oliver
- **Scripture:** Bob Addison
- **Song Service:** Mark McCollum

Happy Birthday

March 9— Steve Roberts

Anniversaries— None this week

Calendar of Events

Today— Potluck Sunday. Plan on staying and sharing a meal with us. We promise there will be PLENTY of food and lots of great fellowship!!

March 9— No School

March 12-16— Spring Break, No School

March 21— Working for the Master

EYES OPENED! BY PHIL WARE

So often, we blow our heaven-sent opportunities with people because we do not see them as Jesus does. We view them from our own selfish and critical eyes that choose to see them differently than Jesus. As Jesus and his closest followers were going about the Lord's ministry, we find this event in the Messiah's life: *As he went along, he saw a man blind from birth. His disciples asked him, "Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?"* (John 9:1).

These people so close to Jesus are so far from their Savior's heart. They are looking at the man as a religious question. He is not a man with feelings and emotions -- or in this story, they didn't even consider the fact that he was blind, not deaf. They talk about the man as if he wasn't even there. They start speculating on his sinfulness as the cause of his blindness with him right there. He is no longer a person to be known, but a question to be explored as the man's feelings are tossed aside. But don't we do the same? "Isn't she divorced?" "I heard he might be gay?" "Don't they believe in other gods?" "I heard they really don't like Christians?" So we easily dismiss our need to engage others in relationship and treat them as a person made in the image of God because we are not sure how to answer our questions about them. We banish them from personhood so we can explore some religious sounding questions. Yet, Jesus makes very clear that this approach to people is wrong: *"Neither is a sinner"* (John 9:3).

Of course there are other ways to dismiss the importance of a person. *"Isn't he the beggar? How can he now walk?"* (John 9:8), his neighbors ask. Yeah, just slap a label on someone and then you don't have to know that person's name -- notice the neighbors never mention his name! The person is no longer significant. He's tall. She's fat. He's too young to be given that responsibility. She's too old to be able to understand that. She's a Republican, you know how they think about ... He's a Democrat, you know what they say about ... They're rich. They're poor. The list could go on forever. But clearly, Jesus looks at this man as something much more than a label.

A little farther along in the story, we find that the religious leaders look at this man as a problem. They had created their own ideas of how religion should operate, especially how it should operate on special days. But this happened on their special day and didn't fit their theology so they are determined to get rid of the problem -- not by changing their understanding, but by denying the goodness of what happened (John 9:14-16). This precious soul is now treated as a problem they needed to be rid of!

Then comes the way to view that completely disgusts me above all the rest. When no one can quite figure out how to deny the miracle or validate the man, they call in his parents. Surely they will rejoice that their son who had been blind for 38 years who can now see because of Jesus' grace. But if they stand up for their son, they will lose their place in the community. So they throw him under the bus because they see him as no more than a biological product:

"We know he is our son," the parents answered, "and we know he was born blind. But how he can see now, or who opened his eyes, we don't know. Ask him. He is of age; he will speak for himself" (John 9:20).

So here we have a man whose name we do not know, who has been blessed by a great miracle because Jesus sees something special in him that no one else can see. And this man is in a very religious environment among people who had seen him nearly every day as their neighbor and this is how they viewed him: A religious question they could ponder. A label they could attach to him. A problem they had to get rid of. A biological product that could get them into trouble with others.

Ouch! It sounds very similar to how we can view and treat people if we are not careful. So how is Jesus different? *"Neither this man nor his parents sinned," said Jesus, "but this happened so that the works of God might be displayed in him"* (John 9:3).

Please, please, realize that Jesus isn't saying that the man was born blind so that Jesus could heal him. This is a statement about how Jesus looked at everyone. You find the exact kind of terminology being used earlier in John's story of Jesus about what are truly the "works of God" (John 6:28-29). Jesus also emphatically tells includes his disciples in the challenge to view people this way: "... we must do the works of him who sent me." (John 9:4).

Jesus sees everyone as someone in whom the works of God need to be done. So with each person we meet, we must ask: How can I show this person the grace of God? How can I help her know her value to the Creator? How can I help him see how precious he really is to me? What can I do to show God's love and help them come to faith in God's Son?

http://www.heartlight.org/articles/201203/20120304_eyesopened.html

Leadership of the Fort Sumner Church of Christ

Elders

Tom Oliver 355-2591

Les Miller 575.760.3833

Deacons

Pow Carter 355-2998

Gary Good 355-6426

Silas Shotwell: 575.512.4400

Supported Ministries

Miguel Garcia Zaragosa, Mexico

Satish Bontha Chennupali, India

Check out our web site for electronic versions of the newsletter and other resources to support your walk with Jesus—

<http://fortsumnerchurchofchrist.com>