



Pastor's Perspective — The More Things Change...

By Ron D. Lindholm, Senior Pastor

The notion that our lives are no different than those of the people of Israel in the latter years of the 9th Century B.C. might seem like a stretch—but if it is, it's not much. When Elijah posed the mother of all questions in 1 Kings 18:21, the people said nothing. Until convinced otherwise, they were perfectly content to go through life with one foot in the Lord's camp and the other in Baal's. In their estimate Baal was just as likely as the Lord to fill their lives with meaning and come to their rescue if they needed it. The people lived in a world littered with the delusions of false gods.

It doesn't take much imagination to apply the context of their situation to our own. We live in a world equally littered by false gods—perhaps a little more sophisticated, but still false and empty. The false gods of our age are money, drugs, sports, power, and, above all else, celebrity—and people (including many Christians, perhaps even you) looking to these false gods for sig-

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nificance, for meaning, for hope, for help.

According to author Jon Katz, a former executive producer of *CBS Morning News* and a contributing editor of *Columbia Journalism Review* and *Rolling Stone Magazine*: "[Celebrity and] celebrity worship is akin to a national religion in the United States." The comments of writer Ziauddin Sardar are even stronger: "The urge to acquire celebrity status is the ethic on which everything in our world depends. Nothing in our world moves without the imprint of celebrity. There is no boundary that celebrity has not transcended."

Baal and Baalism promised much but delivered nothing...

We are no different than the people of Elijah's day. We worship delusions—idols that offer much, but then starve our undying souls of life. When crisis comes, celebrity will not help you. It never could. *How long will you waver between two opinions? If the Lord is God, follow Him; but if Baal is God, follow Him.*

A Great Week of Ministry

This year's Vacation Bible School was conducted on July 21-25. There were a total of 70 students registered, with an average daily attendance of 62. Ministering to such a good group of children was both a privilege and a challenge for our twenty-four volunteers, who worked as teachers, game leaders, snack helpers, music directors, decorators and administrative staff. We are grateful for their dedication and sacrifice for the benefit of the children!

The curriculum was "Amazon Expedition," produced by *Answers in Genesis*. The emphasis was the Bible as the History Book of the Universe. During the week, the students surveyed the "Seven C's of History" from Creation to Consummation, with an emphasis on the historical truth of the early chapters of Genesis as the foundation for the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Throughout



the week, the children saw videos from the Creation Museum in Kentucky that bolstered each day's lesson. An offering of \$140.27 was received for the work of the museum.

Of the 70 registered students, 16 were from our own congregation and a few were connected with our Awana and ESL ministries. Most, however, were from the community and were by and large unchurched. There was excellent feedback from the parents on the program, and a number of parents showed genuine engagement with the material, giving our teachers the opportunity to minister one-on-one with parents. Several showed interest in our church, and expressed a desire to know more as well as to visit. God has opened the doors of ministry and we will be following up with these families with the goal of seeing them won to Christ and added to His church.

Fearlessly Focused

Fellowship's annual Missions Conference will be held on September 5-7, and will challenge the church to be "Fearlessly Focused" on exalting the worth of Christ and His gospel, in recognition of the Lord's ability to overcome any obstacle or opposition. This year's speakers are Fellowship's own Larry and Sallie Fogle, as well as Gary and Janet Goodge and Nathan and Sarah Sloan. Larry and Sallie Fogle are ministering to national pastors and church leaders through the Pastoral Enrichment Program. The Goodges are returning to France as church planters, and the Sloans are serving unreached people groups in Nepal and Tibet. Please look for the sign-up sheet in the church foyer where you will be able to volunteer to provide housing or a meal for one of these missionary families.



News from the Front Lines...Helping Here at Home

✦ From June 30 to July 13, Rose Wasserstein participated in a summer missions trip to Peru sponsored by Focus on the Family. We are thankful for this opportunity to minister to people in Peru in the name of Christ, and for the Lord's work in Rose's life through this missions experience. Rose will share a report with the church during the evening service on Sunday, August 24.



✦ Dave, Julie and Josh Ray departed for Malaysia on July 14 to begin their new ministry there. The Lord provided for them in a remarkable way, as Dave and Julie were able to raise about \$1,850 in new monthly support and over \$18,000 for outfit and passage in a short time. The Rays are committed to living among their target people group and have found a house to rent in an optimal ministry location. They are currently working to secure a vehicle and household goods. Please pray for this family as they adjust to a new culture and declare the Lord's glory among a spiritually needy people group.



✦ In the search for a new missionary to add to Fellowship's missions team, the Missions Committee is currently considering Travis and Becky Gravley, who visited Fellowship on Sunday, June 8. The Gravleys are appointees to Romania with Baptist Mid-Missions. Please pray for the Committee as they interview Travis and Becky on August 22 and seek the Lord's direction in this important decision.



✦ Join us on Sunday evening, August 24 for a time of fellowship as well as an opportunity to restock our Missions Cupboard in preparation for the Missions Conference in September. A list of needed items will be made available at the church.

Money Matters

Replacement of the church's two outside air conditioning units, both of which failed in June, has been completed. The Lord's hand was evident as He directed us to a company that worked diligently and professionally in the installation process. Through His people, the Lord also provided over \$10,000 to help with the cost of this unplanned project. About \$26,500 was drawn from the Building Fund to cover the remaining cost.

The other major project for 2008 is replacement of the Fellowship Hall flooring, which should be completed prior to the start up of fall ministries in early September. While some of the flooring cost will be covered by the Ollie Dickens Memorial, about \$5,700 will have to be taken from the Building Fund.

July Giving Per Week (General Fund)	\$5,539
Weekly Need	\$5,568
Year-to-Date Giving (General Fund)	\$174,916
Year-to-Date Need	\$167,054
Year-to-Date 50@1 Giving	\$9,827

LADIES...are invited to meet at the Borders bookstore in Springfield on Friday, August 15 at 7:00 PM for a time of informal fellowship.

As a result of these projects, Fellowship's Building Fund balance will drop from \$33,100 to just under \$4,000. Therefore, the church is encouraged toward continued over-and-above giving to replenish this fund.



Calendar

Aug. 12	Nursing Home Ministry (2:00 PM)
Aug. 15	Women's Outing to Borders (7:00 PM)
Aug. 16	Youth Outing to National Zoo
Aug. 20	Missions Prayer Meeting (7:30 PM)
Aug. 23	Men's Outing to Potomac Nationals Game (6:35 PM)
Aug. 24	Peru Missions Trip Report—Rose Wasserstein (PM Service); Missions Cupboard Shower/Ice Cream Social (after PM Service)
Aug. 31	Exodus Tour Report—Pastor & Neita Lindholm (PM Service)
Sep. 5-7	Missions Conference

MEN...bring your son(s) or a friend to a Potomac Nationals baseball game on Saturday, August 23 at 6:35 PM. See Pastor Lindholm to purchase tickets.