



Pastor's Perspective — Lamenting a Loss

By Ron D. Lindholm, Senior Pastor

I am deeply saddened by the death of singer Michael Jackson, but not in the way you might think. I grew up with Michael. We were born in the same year. I remember his rise to prominence. I also remember the bizarre changes that we all observed in his life over the years.

Michael Jackson was a handsome young man, but he became a grotesque adult. First his hair changed; then his face, his eyes, his lips, his nose, and finally even the color of his skin. These outward changes paralleled the appearance of numerous disturbing onstage mannerisms and then came a host of allegations and rumors about his sexuality and sexual preferences. It was all very contemporary—and, in some way, I think it's accurate to say that Jackson's moral decline mirrored that of the world in which we live.

I know of some people who are glad that Jackson is dead. In their estimate, our world is a better place without him. My opinions are not so severe.

My sorrow over the death of Michael Jackson is sadness for him. There is no evidence to suggest that Michael Jackson knew the Lord. If, as I suspect, Michael died without Jesus Christ as his sin-bearing, wrath-

absorbing Savior, then Michael is forever separated from God and is now experiencing the horrors of hell which are irrevocable and unrelenting.

In my estimate, the strange behavior we witnessed in the life of Michael Jackson and the extremities to which he went to change his appearance had nothing to do with creative expression or a mere desire to recapture a childhood lost. They were the desperate cries of an empty man who longed for meaning in his life, who sought fulfillment, who yearned for satisfaction and turned in every direction to find it, but never turned to Jesus Christ—the way, the truth and the life.

For all of his genius, Michael never used his mind for its intended purpose, which is to hear and respond in faith to the Word of God. I suspect that what we observed over the years in Michael Jackson was that progressive darkening of intellect and hardening of heart toward God that occurs in the life of the unsaved, due to the fact of their separation from God (Ephesians 4:17-19). It isn't always so obvious...

If my sorrow seems to you misplaced, I would remind you that even when the people of Jerusalem had refused Him and were poised to put Him to death, Jesus still lamented their loss (Matthew 23:37-39).

A Close Encounter with God's Word

We're counting down to fun at *Operation Space: A Close Encounter with God's Word*. In this galactic Vacation Bible School (July 27-31, 9:00 to 11:30 AM), kids will learn how God reveals Himself through His world and His Word. The adventure begins the minute kids walk through our doors, when they are transformed into cadets receiving *BASIC Training* at a space academy. Each day, they'll learn more about our great Creator as we crisscross the cosmos, answering questions about space. They'll also meet God on the pages of the Bible, learning how the Bible is unique, where it came from, why it is our absolute



authority, how we can avoid being "lost in space", and what we should do with God's Word everyday.

All children 3 years old to 6th grade completed are invited to attend VBS. Registration forms are available in the church foyer. Please use the flyers on the information table to invite children from your own neighborhood. Our desire is to see the Lord reach whole families with the gospel through this ministry.

Cookies are needed and can be placed on the counter in Fellowship Hall. Please also see the list of needed craft supplies on the back bulletin board at church.

Answers Conference



A video conference will be held at Fellowship on Friday, July 31 (7:00-9:30 PM) and Saturday, August 1 (9:00-11:30 AM) as a follow-up to Vacation Bible School. This conference is provided by Answers in Genesis (AiG) as a cost-effective means of sharing the truths of the Bible and is designed to re-ignite people's passion for God's Word by answering some of the Bible's most asked questions.

The video sessions will cover the following topics:

"Genesis: The Key to Reclaiming the Culture,"

"Six Days of Creation,"

"Where Did God Come From?" and

"Why Won't They Listen?"

Also available for sale at the conference will be DVDs, books, and *Answers* magazine. A love offering designated for AiG will be received to help with the conference cost. Please invite family, friends and neighbors to attend.

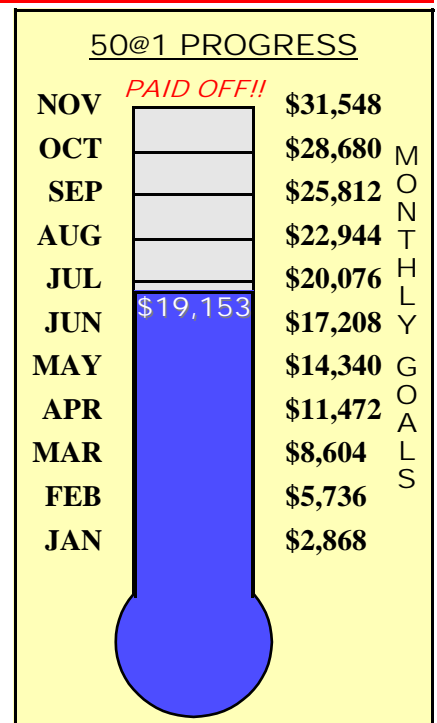
Money Matters

We are now over 60% of the way to reaching our goal of raising \$31,548 in special giving in order to eliminate Fellowship's mortgage by Thanksgiving. Giving toward this effort as of the end of June exceeded our monthly goal for June by almost \$2,000, leaving only \$12,395 still needed to eliminate the mortgage by Thanksgiving. We continue to praise the Lord for His provision through the generous giving of His people! A three-man task force, from among our

June Giving Per Week (General Fund)	\$5,312
Weekly Need	\$5,689
Year-to-Date General Fund Giving	\$137,004
Year-to-Date General Fund Need	\$147,921
Year-to-Date Building Fund Giving	\$321

Pastors and Deacons, has been charged with developing a specific proposal for the reallocation of funds now devoted to the mortgage, which proposal will be presented to the church later this year.

Following a weak month of May, General Fund giving rebounded in June to very near the level of giving for the first 4 months of the year. However, General Fund giving still lags behind the budgeted need by a little over \$400 per week. Please pray the Lord will give us a strong second half of the year.



Called to France

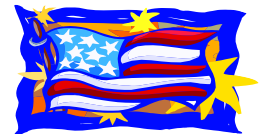


Missionaries Gary and Janet Goodge will be in ministry at Fellowship on Sunday, July 19. After a time of service in missions administration, Gary and Janet are returning to the foreign field with Titus International to work alongside a national church in planting additional churches in the southeastern region of France. Here at Fellowship we have come to appreciate the Goodges as they have participated in two of our past missions conferences.

During their visit, the Goodges will teach our youth Sunday school class, share a word of testimony in the

morning worship service, and give a presentation of the new ministry they have been called to in France during the evening service. A love offering will be received for this missionary family.

The Missions Committee will be interviewing Gary and Janet during their time at Fellowship as we consider whether the Lord would have us become one of their sending churches.



An Evening of Worship

HeartSong will be in concert at Fellowship on Friday, July 24 (7:00 PM). This talented group from Cedarville University presents a variety of contemporary music and traditional gospel songs along with testimonies, Scripture and congregational singing.

A free-will offering will be received. Invite your family and friends to attend this special performance. See Pastor Lindholm if you are able to help with housing.

Calendar

July 14	Nursing Home Ministry (2:00 PM)
July 18	Fellowship in Homes (Deacon Groups)
July 19	Missionaries Gary & Janet Goodge
July 24	<i>HeartSong</i> Concert (7:00 PM)
July 25	Baby Shower Lunch for Yelka Esquivel (11:30 AM at Victors II Restaurant in Falls Church)
July 27-31	Vacation Bible School (9:00-11:30 AM)
July 29	Quarterly Business Meeting (7:30 PM)
July 31-Aug 1	Answers in Genesis Video Conference (Friday: 7:00-9:30 PM; Saturday: 9:00-11:30 AM)