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The Heart of Discipleship

Whenever Jesus would come to a city to teach there would be large crowds of people to greet him. These people had heard of the miracles that Jesus had done, how he had healed the sick, caused the blind to see and the lame to walk, or how he had fed thousands of people with only two loaves of bread and a fish. Jesus' popularity was at an all time high, and we can't help but wonder what it would be like to have been present and seen Jesus and his miracles with our own eyes, hear him teach in his own words and voice. If we were there, we wonder how much stronger our faith would be and how our doubts would be dispelled and vanish. But the reality is that although Jesus drew large crowds of people, not everyone believed in Him or truly followed Him as a disciple. Many in the crowd just wanted to see Jesus perform a miracle, or be blessed by just being around Him, and even when they did see a miracle, still they did not believe.

Jesus had many hard sayings about what it meant to be one of his disciples that turned people away. In the Gospel of Luke we have this account. ***“Large crowds were traveling with Jesus, and turning to them he said: ‘If anyone comes to me and does not hate father and mother, wife and children, brothers and sisters – yes, even their own life– such a person cannot be my disciple. And whoever does not carry their cross and follow me cannot be my disciple...those of you who do not give up everything you have cannot be my disciple.’”*** (Luke 14:25-27;33) If we are true followers of Christ then we must be his disciples, but being a disciple is never easy. Jesus says it will cost us something. He wants us to count the cost, give up everything as loss, take up our cross and follow Him. That's what being a disciple means.

These are truly hard words from Jesus, but does he really mean it? He must be speaking in hyperbole. Surly he doesn't want us to hate our family! Surly He doesn't want us to give up everything we have! What Jesus does demand here is that our love for Him be so great, that the natural love we have for family and even ourselves looks like “hate” (or a better translation “of a lesser kind of love”) in comparison. Our love for Jesus should supersede any other kind of love that we have. The same goes for our possessions. We should be willing to give up anything and everything we have, in order to have Jesus.

One of my favorite secular authors, who isn't a Christian, has this observation. ***“If you don't know what you really want, you end up owning a lot of stuff that you don't. The things you own end up owning you. It's only after we've lost everything that we're free to do anything”*** – Chuck Palahniuk I believe this is the same sentiment that Jesus has here in the scripture. He is asking the crowds and us this simple question, “Do you really want me? Do you really want to be my disciple? Or do you want all this stuff?” He wants us to be ready to give up anything for Him, not because he wants us to be poor or unhappy, but as His disciple, He wants us to be free and unburdened by the things of this world, so that we would be free to do His will and be blessed. So we must ask ourselves if we have truly counted the cost to follow Christ, if we are ready to give up everything as lost for the joy of knowing Him, and if we have daily taken up our cross and died to ourselves to follow Him.

Soli Deo Gloria (Glory to God Alone),
Rev. Shant Barsoumian

Holy Week

The week that begins with Palm Sunday and ends with Easter Sunday is called Holy Week. We are planning to have the following worship services.

Palm Sunday, April 13, the Sunday School students will participate in the morning worship service.

Maundy Thursday Service, April 17, Choir Concert, and the celebration of the Lord's Supper at 6:30 p.m.

Resurrection Sunday, April 20, The Easter morning worship service is a family service. The Sunday school students will begin worship with their parents in the Sanctuary, and be dismissed for a special Easter lesson.

Easter Breakfast, Sunday, April 20. The annual Easter Breakfast sponsored by the ACC Youth Group (ACYF), will be held from 9:00 a.m. to 10:30 a.m. Tickets may be purchased at the door: \$6.00 for young and old alike.

Maundy Thursday

On Thursday, **April 17,** we will remember our Lord's last hours on earth through a special worship service that will include special music by the ACC Choir, and celebration of the Lord's Table. The evening will start with a special reflective supper in the ACC Fellowship Hall at **6:30 p.m.**

ACC Women's Fellowship Annual Lenten Luncheon

The A.C.C. Women's Fellowship is sponsoring their annual Lenten Luncheon on Friday, April 11 - at 12:00 noon. Admission is \$15 per person. Come enjoy a beautiful program. Both men and women are welcome. To RSVP please contact the church office.

Easter Flowers

Those wishing to arrange for an Easter flower to place in the sanctuary on Easter Sunday, please call the church office. The deadline for placing an order is Monday, April 13. The lilies are \$18.00 each, and the tulips are \$15.00 each.

Middle School Sunday School Class Studying Proverbs

This year our middle schoolers (actually grades 5-8) are finding words of wisdom and learning to apply practical life lessons through their study of the book of Proverbs. In addition to reading directly from the Bible, we are using two supplemental texts: "Proverbs, Uncommon Sense (LifeWay)," and "Studies on the Go – Proverbs (Zondervan)." Class discussions have included topics such as: wisdom, as opposed to intelligence or knowledge; learning from the wisdom of parents; the power and impact of words; managing anger; love, as it relates to friendships, generosity to others, Christianity, etc.

As a practical and challenging exercise to accompany our studies, we generated an expanding list of our own, original proverbs: "The Proverbs of the Middle School Sunday School Class." We've discovered that our class includes a number of "young Solomons!" Our list can be found on the bulletin board in our classroom, should anyone want to stop by and take a look.

As always, we continue to enjoy ourselves and review our knowledge by occasionally playing highly competitive games of "Bible Trivia" or "Bible Charades," during which stickers are won and lost and accumulated towards the end-of-year "sticker grand champion" award. A monthly "movie Sunday" is also still on our agenda. We have a small but lively group this year, and we look forward to spending time together on Sunday mornings!

-Barbara Keteyian

ACC Middle School Sunday School Teacher

Family Night

The ACC Women's Fellowship Family Valentine's Night was held on Friday, February 21, 2014. Everyone in attendance enjoyed a delicious dinner and an evening of fun and fellowship with their church family. Many thanks to all those who helped in making this evening a success.



The 99th Anniversary of The Armenian Genocide

This year's April 24th Commemoration, by the four Greater Detroit Armenian Churches, will take place at St Sarkis Church, 19300 Ford Road, Dearborn, MI 48128.

The Divine Liturgy will begin at 7:00p.m., followed by "Madaghorhnek" (distribution of the madagh).

Vartananz

On Thursday, February 27th all the Detroit Armenian Churches gathered together to commemorate Vartanants. The service was hosted by St. Vartan Armenian Catholic Church and held at St. Toma Syriac Catholic Church in Farmington Hills. The service was led by Father Andon Atamian in memory of St. Vartan and the Martyrs. Father Andon also gave the Armenian Message and highlighted the blessing we have all inherited through the sacrifice of St. Vartan. This was a special occasion since it would be the last Vartanants service led by Father Andon who will be leaving for a new position in California. The English message was delivered by Fr. Garabed Kochakian who emphasized that St. Vartan and the Martyrs fought so that their people can be free, just as many today and even those in our US history fought like Vartan and in his spirit so others might be free. He reminded us that they fought "Vasen Kristosi, yev vasen Hayreniats" "For Christ and For Armenia" and that Christ and their faith in Christ took priority in their fight. After the worship service we enjoyed a wonderful reception put together by the ladies guild of St. Vartan's church and there was a greeting and presentation by the Sons and Daughters of Vartan sharing their history, mission and goals and encouraging others to join their efforts in hopes to bolster Vartan's dream.

Book of Life

Entered his rest. George Terterian. We extend our heartfelt sympathies to Rose Terterian and the family on the passing of George Terterian, father, grandfather, brother, relative and friend, who made his transition on Wednesday, February 26 at St. Rose hospital in Henderson, Nevada.

ACC Gratefully Acknowledges the Following Donations

Dr. /Mrs. Misak & Hourig Abdulian – Heritage
Hachig and Susan Gopigian – Heritage

Save The Date

22nd AEUNA General Assembly

19th AEYF Convention

June 26-29, 2014

University Square Hotel

Fresno, CA

“Forging Ahead For Christ”

Hosted by Pilgrim Armenian Congregational Church. 3673 North First Street, Fresno, CA 93726 (559) 229-2915

Camp Arevelk

Are you looking for a summer camp program for youth ages 10 to 16. This program provides the campers with many opportunities to experience the beautiful outdoors, while learning more about God’s Word. The camp is located on the beautiful grounds of the Ararat Center in the Catskill Mountains, and it will be held August 10, thru Saturday August 16, 2014. To obtain more information, you can contact CampArevelk@gmail.com.

Special Request

The ACC continues to generate an email list of its members to better communicate upcoming events, updates, sermon topics, etc. If you would like to be on our email list please submit your email address to the church office.

Reminders!

Is your anniversary, birthday or graduation approaching? Why not share your celebration with the church family by sponsoring the Flowers on the Altar or the Fellowship Hour. Please sign-up on the bulletin board or call Souzanne at the church office.

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