

May God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ give you grace and peace.

Report from Paul Leonard in Turkey

Acik Kapi Church is doing great and we're feeling blessed! We could probably continue on as a church like we are for decades. But that isn't what we want. We are a group of mostly foreigners coming together to worship. But we are called to be salt and light in our community. Most of us live in the community where the church is. We've spent the last couple of months getting set up, organized and forming into a community. But we've got to get out of our walls and into the community.

We have a number of plans to do this; English club, art events, Christmas festivities, online outreach, etc. However, my experience is that the greatest outreach happens when we spend time in prayer and then God shows us what He's been up to the whole time. I've seen this sort of thing happen a number of times in our years here and it's always an amazing experience. I've noticed that these opportunities usually coincide with people tell me that they've been praying for us. If 3 people tell me in a week that they've been praying, I usually expect to see God at work in special ways the coming week.

So, could you spend some time praying for God to open up opportunities for us to discover relationships in our community. There are three neighborhoods right around us. One is called Cayyolu (Chai-yolu), the second is called Dr. Ahmet Tanner Kislalasi (just call it "Dr. Ahmet neighborhood" :) and the third is Koru neighborhood. Could you pray for us to find ways to love these neighborhoods and meet people to share Jesus with? *Thanks! From Paul*

Prayers and Thoughts: Pray for Nick Butcher and family as they minister to us here in Ladoga.

Pray for the Leonards and their work in Turkey. Pray for our shut-ins. Remember all our mothers and fathers.

Remember our Military the mothers, fathers and families. Pray for our church and leadership.

Think on These Things: Psalm 44:6-8 *I do not trust in my bow; I do not count on my sword to save me. You are the one who gives us victory over our enemies; you disgrace those who hate us. O God, we give glory to you all day long and constantly praise your name. Interlude* Here we are again with an interlude. The Hebrew and King James version use the word Selah here. Some think that Selah could mean think on these things. Very appropriate for this section as we should give God the credit for the victories in our battles and life. Also give glory and praise to our Lord God all day long is something we could certainly think on. Selah

PARABLE OF THE PENCIL

The Pencil Maker took the pencil aside, just before putting him into the box. There are 5 things you need to know, he told the pencil, before I send you out into the world. Always remember them and never forget, and you will become the best pencil you can be.

One: You will be able to do many great things, but only if you allow yourself to be held in Someone's hand.

Two: You will experience a painful sharpening from time to time, but you'll need it to become a better pencil.

Three: You will be able to correct mistakes you will make.

Four: The most important part of you will always be what's inside.

Five: On every surface you are used on, you must leave your mark.

No matter what the condition, you must continue to write.

The pencil understood and promised to remember, and went into the box with purpose in its heart. Now replacing the place of the pencil with you; always remember them and never forget, and you will become the best person you can be.

One: You will be able to do many great things, but only if you allow yourself to be held in God's hand.

And allow other human beings to access you for the many gifts you possess.

Two: You will experience a painful sharpening from time to time, by going through various problems, but you'll need it to become a stronger person.

Three: You will be able to correct mistakes you might make or grow through them.

Four: The most important part of you will always be what's on the inside.

Five: On every surface you walk, you must leave your mark. No matter what the situation, you must continue to serve God in everything.

By understanding and remembering, let us proceed with our life on this earth having a meaningful purpose in our heart and a relationship with God daily. -- *Author Unknown*

MEETING GOD

There once was a little boy who wanted to meet God. He knew it was a long trip to where God lived, so he packed his suitcase with Twinkies and a six-pack of root beer, and he started his journey. When he had gone about three blocks, he met an old woman. She was sitting in the park just staring at some pigeons. The boy sat down next to her and opened his suitcase. He was about to take a drink from his root beer when he noticed that the old lady looked hungry so he offered her a Twinkie.

She gratefully accepted it and smiled at him. Her smile was so pretty that the boy wanted to see it again, so he offered her a root beer. Once again, she smiled at him. The boy was delighted! They sat there all afternoon eating and smiling, but they never said a word. As it grew dark, the boy realized how tired he was and he got up to leave, but before he had gone more than a few steps; he turned around, ran back to the old woman, and gave her a hug. She gave him her biggest smile ever.

When the boy opened the door to his own house a short time later; his mother was surprised by the look of joy on his face. She asked him, "What did you do today that made you so happy?" He replied, "I had lunch with God." But before his mother could respond, he added, "You know what? She's got the most beautiful smile I've ever seen!"

Meanwhile, the old woman, also radiant with joy, returned to her home. Her son was stunned by the look of peace on her face and he asked, "Mother, what did you do today that made you so happy?" She replied, "I ate Twinkies in the park with God." But before her son responded, she added, "You know he's much younger than I expected."

Too often we underestimate the power of a touch, a smile, a kind word, a listening ear, and honest compliment, or the smallest act of caring, all of which have the potential to turn a life around. People come into our lives for a reason, a season, or a lifetime. Embrace all equally! -- *Author Unknown*

Two Little Girls

Two little girls were sitting on the seashore. One little girl said to the other, "Do you see that sailboat out in the ocean? That's my daddy's sailboat, and I've been on it before. And do you see that big house sitting on the hillside? That's my daddy's house; that's where I live with him" Right then she recognized the jet up in the sky so she said, "And that jet up in the sky, that's my daddy's jet I have flown in that before."

The other girls didn't have much money, but she did have wit and she did know God. So she said to the other little girl, "Do you see that sailboat out in the ocean? My Daddy owns the ocean. The hillside where the big house sits-my Daddy owns the hillside. And the jet that flew overhead in the sky? My Daddy owns the sky,"

Do we comprehend Who we are communing with every time we hold a piece of bread and cup of juice to remember Jesus? We are having communion with God, He doesn't just create simple things like sailboats, houses, and jets. He forgives, restores, heals, and makes new.

Communion is a good time for us to consider God, Who said in Isaiah 40:25 "To whom will you compare me to, who is my equal?" May we again be filled with wonder as we hold the cup and juice and recognize the privilege of having communion with our Creator and Savior.

Prayer:

Father, temporary things of earth grow dim in the light of Your glory, who You are, and Your grace, what You have done for us in Jesus. We have no one to compare to You, and that reality leads us to worship You. Thank you for this cup, representing your blood and for this bread that represents your body. We praise you for Your awesomeness! Thank You. In Jesus' name we pray, Amen

Capsule Sermons from The Furrow:

Misfortunes usually come in by a door that has been left open for them.

The greatest of all riches is not desiring ;them.

The true measure of a man is how he treats some one who can do him absolutely no good. S. Johnson 1709-84

Don't judge each day by the harvest you reap but by the seeds that you plant. Robert L. Stevenson 1850-94

A knowledge of the path can not be substituted for putting one foot in front of the other.

Check in with our heavenly Father this week, do some good and disappear. Clay Halsey alhalsey@tds.net

May the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God be with you all. IICorinthians 13:14