

Family

Does God want us, regardless of past?

This is a commentary on Luke 15. Please read that chapter.

After her conversion to Christianity, Eugenia Price, a well-known novelist, wrote a book, "What Is God Like?" She devoted a chapter to the story of the prodigal son, asking, "Is God really like this?"

Can you come to Him, even in a disgusting condition, and does it bring joy to His heart? Is God really like that?

According to Jesus Christ, yes. And according to anyone who has come to God after living an ungodly life, the answer is yes. When anyone comes to Him, the scripture is clear. It brings joy to His heart, regardless of what their life has been.

Jesus came to earth to die for mankind's sins, but also to let us know what God is really like. In the 15th chapter of Luke, Jesus gives us a clear picture of the heart of God.

The first two verses are an introduction. Religious leaders are challenging Jesus to account for His choice of some rather unsavory companions. Jesus responds to the murmuring and complaining with three parables, or stories, illustrating the love of God.

Traditionally, the first parable is called "The Lost Sheep" (verses 3-7). The second is "The Lost Coin" (verses 8-10). The third, "The Prodigal Son," is the story of the Suffering Father (verses 11-32).

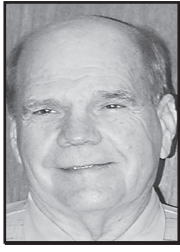
The truth of these three stories, taken together, emphasizes one overwhelming truth about God — that God loves everyone, regardless of their past. He seeks us out and desires that we come to Him. He seeks a relationship with us.

In the parable of the lost sheep, the shepherd represents God. It emphasizes the value of even one lost sheep. The shepherd has 100, but one wanders away and is lost. He searches until he finds it.

"And when he comes home, he calls together his friends and neighbors, saying to them, 'Rejoice with me, for I have found my sheep which was lost!'" Jesus tells us. "I say to you that likewise there will be more joy in heaven over one sinner who repents than over 99 just persons who need no repentance."

By leaving the 99 sheep, the shepherd is not saying that they are unimportant to him; they were safe, but the lost sheep was in danger.

The second parable is the "Lost Coin." When a Jewish girl married, she wore a headband of ten silver coins showing that she was now a wife. It was the Jewish ver-



Wes Barnett

• From the Pulpit

sion of our modern-day wedding ring.

In the parable, a woman loses one of her coins and searches for it all over the house. She finally finds it, then calls for her friends to rejoice with her. Jesus explains in verse 10: "Likewise, I say to you, there is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner who repents."

Then Jesus tells a story we call the "Prodigal Son," the tale of a suffering father and his wayward son. Jesus tells us a father has two sons. The younger one demands his inheritance, saying, "I want it now and I want all of it."

The father gives the inheritance to the younger son, who leaves for a far country. As long as his money lasts, he has friends, but when he has squandered the inheritance, they abandon him. No one will give him food. The only job he can find is feeding pigs, and finally, the young man begins to eat what the pigs are eating.

This was as low down as a person could sink in those days. Jesus said that the young man finally came to his senses: "My father's servants are better off than I am. I am starving and they have enough to eat. I will go home and admit that I have sinned against him and against God" (verses 17-18).

So the son starts for home, ready to confess that he has done wrong, but this father, looking down the road with a broken heart, sees his son returning and hurries out to meet him.

The elder brother would not forgive the younger one, who had wasted his inheritance and disgraced the family name. Neither did he believe his father should forgive him. Even though he knew it made his father happy, the elder brother did not care.

The father did everything he could to get the older son to join the celebration, except violate his free will and force him to come in. In Luke 19:10, Jesus said, "For the Son of Man has come to seek and to save that which was lost."

Wes Barnett is pastor of College View Baptist Church. He can be reached at (361) 459-9348 or wesb@st-tel.net.

Markets

Quotes as of close of previous business day	
Hi-Plains Co-op	
Wheat (bushel)	\$3.80
Corn (bushel)	\$3.03
Milo (hundredweight)	\$4.94
Soybeans (bushel)	\$8.29

Corrections

The Colby Free Press wants to maintain an accurate record of our town. Please report any error or lack of clarity in a news story to us at 462-3963.

MOVIES

NOW SHOWING

Digital/3D Cinema

May 21st - May 27th

SHREK FOREVER AFTER 3D

Genre(s): Animation/Sequel
PG 1 Hour, 35 Minutes
Friday & Saturday 7:00 & 9:00
Sunday -Thursday 7:00

IRON MAN 2

Starring: Robert Downey Jr. & Gwyneth Paltrow
Genre(s): Adventure/Sci Fi/Sequel
PG-13 2 Hours, 5 Minutes
Friday & Saturday 7:00 & 9:15
Sunday - Thursday 7:00

COMING SOON

Letters to Juliet
Toy Story 3
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Prince of Persia (starts May 28th)

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A.J. and Jennifer McMahan

Couple married at home in April

Jennifer McMahan and A.J. Kraemer were married Saturday, April 10, at the bride's parents' home south of Brewster with Judge Rick Ress officiating.

Parents of the bride are John and Susan McMahan of Brewster. Grandparents are Sid and Gayle Six of Penrose, Colo. She graduated from Brewster High School in 2007 and from Colby Community College in 2008 with an associate's degree in criminal justice. She works at Freddie's in Hays.

The groom is the son of Andy and Judy Kraemer of LaCrosse, and the grandson of Theresa Schaffer of Liebenenthal and Helen Kraemer of Hays. He is a 2004 graduate of LaCrosse

High School and received a pharmacy tech certificate from North Central Technical College in 2006. He works for Enersys in Hays.

Bridesmaids were Michelle Hilger; Tandi Lyons of Penrose and Tiffany Vig of Coolidge, cousins of the bride, and Morgan Noone of Hays. The flower girl was Ellie Mae Lyons of Penrose, daughter of the bride's cousin.

Groomsmen were Brandon Schmidt, Jarrod Sanders, Matt Fry and Cameron Moeder, all of LaCrosse. Ring bearer was the bride's brother, A.J. McMahan of Brewster.

The couple plans to live in Liebenenthal.

Deaths

Martha Jean McDaniel

Martha Jean McDaniel, Quinter, 79, died Saturday, May 1, 2010, at Hays Medical Center.

She was born Sept. 13, 1930, in Granite City, Ill., to Floyd and Beulah (Medlin) Cochran.

On Feb. 20, 1954, she married Donald W. McDaniel in Tunica, Miss. He died Dec. 9, 1990.

She was a homemaker, operated the Osmond Cafe in Osmond, Neb., and worked at the Quinter Dairy Queen. She enjoyed reading and attending sporting events for children and grandchildren.

She was preceded in death by her parents, her husband and an infant brother and sister.

Survivors include three sons,

Donald W. McDaniel Jr., Charles City, Iowa; James K. (Connie) McDaniel, Quinter; and Richard L. McDaniel, Overland Park; two sisters, Judith Free, Granite City, and Charlotte Daughthay, Mayfield, Ky.; six grandchildren; and two great-grandchildren.

A memorial service will be at 10 a.m. Saturday, June 5, 2010, at the Schmitt Funeral Home in Quinter with Stan Smith officiating. Inurnment will be in the Osmond Cemetery.

The family suggests memorials to the Jay Johnson Public Library in care of the funeral home, 901 S. Main, Quinter, Kan., 67752.

Nominations sought for health champions

The Governor's Council on Fitness is calling for nominations for the Health Champion Award, due Tuesday, June 15.

One outstanding individual or organization will be honored by Gov. Mark Parkinson at the Kansas State Fair in September.

To help Kansans improve their health, the governor recognizes someone who puts forth an exceptional effort to model, encourage and promote fitness in Kansas.

"Besides recognizing exemplary contributions, the awards program identifies models of effectiveness ... that can be reproduced in other organizations and communities," said Virginia Elliott, awards committee chair and vice president of programs for the United Methodist Health Ministry Fund.

Eligible nominees might include an outstanding volunteer, a school, a local community, a newspaper or individual reporter, a local or state policy maker or an employer, among others. Nominees are expected to have demonstrated work that models, encourages, and promotes fitness, far-reaching impact, and sustainable influence or activity.

Do you know an individual or organization making a difference in improving fitness? Take this opportunity to nominate your favorite health champion.

For information and to submit a nomination, visit www.kansasfitness.org and click on "Health Champion Award" or call Jennifer Church at (785) 296-8060.

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The USD 315 Board of Education and Administration of Colby Public Schools cordially invite you to a retirement reception

Tuesday, May 25, 2010
3:15 - 5:00 p.m.

Colby High School Commons
1890 S. Franklin - Colby, KS
~ HONORING ~

Don Krebs
Administrator - 6 years of service

Shirley Parnell
Bookkeeper - 16 years of service

Joyce Mahin
Media Specialist - 36 years of service

Judy Shull
Teacher - 19 years of service

Mary Schlick
Secretary - 16 years of service

Lois Sumner
Bus Driver & Food Service - 33 years of service

STAFF DEPARTING WITH 10+ YEARS OF SERVICE

Tonjau Brown
Food Service - 18 years of service

Linda Haas
Teacher - 14 years of service

We're Looking for EXECUTIVE MATERIAL!

Are you looking for a good job?

Recent college grads welcome!

The Colby Free Press is looking for a full-time advertising executive to sell advertising for Nor'West Newspapers. The work week would be 40 hours with occasional evening and weekend duties. Computer skills with Excel, Photoshop, InDesign, and Acrobat helpful but not necessary. Must have good communication skills, and excellent customer service skills with attention to detail. Send a letter and resume to Steve Haynes, publisher, at 155 W. Fifth St., Colby, Kansas, 67701 or s.haynes@nwkansas.com. This could be the job you've been looking for.

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LET YOUR VOICE BE HEARD!

Are you 18-26 years of age?

Did you receive services from a Community Mental Health Center in Kansas as a teenager?

If "yes" to both, you may qualify for a study on experiences with mental health services. This is your chance to make your voice heard regarding these services! Your input gathered through a confidential interview may potentially help shape the future of Kansas mental health programs.

If interested, contact KU at: kustudy@ku.edu, (785) 864-5210, or www.socwel.ku.edu/occ/medicaid