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NorthStar
ACADEMY
Any Time. Any Place.



www.northstaracademycanada.org DECEMBER 2013

Walk in the Light

"Come, descendants of Jacob, let us walk in the light of the Lord." Isaiah 2:5



Edson Activity Day!



Principal's Message

I had the opportunity this past week to hear from Dr. Richard Swenson, a futurist who spoke at the ACSI administrator's conference in Canmore. His topic was on contentment. It was fascinating to hear how our cultural perspective has shifted from historically valuing contentment to abandoning it through embracing the craziness of modern life. This viewpoint has certainly penetrated the Christian worldview as we believers have begun to accept being too busy as a part of a life of faith.

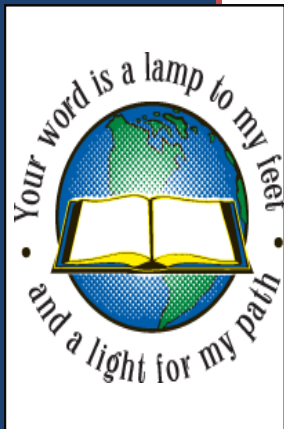
The problem is that if we don't have a margin in our lives, if we don't maintain balance between demands and time, we will not have room in our lives for the most important things in our lives. Dr. Swenson put before us the idea that God's world is built around balance and that we as Christians are called to "counter the escalation of the norm". Sunglasses, weddings, funerals, birthday parties for grade 1 kids – all of them are escalating in cost, both to our pocket books and our calendars. The time and money we use today will not be available for tomorrow so we need to make certain we keep enough resources for what is truly important – our relationship to God and his people.

Dr. Swenson had some practical suggestions to safeguard our time: take a break from TV, seek periodic technical solitude (no cell phone, no Ipad), secure a space for deep consecutive thoughts, choose function over escalation (it does the job without being fancy). He also shared a couple of scriptures that really speak to this issue. Psalm 16:8 "I have set the Lord always before me" and John 16:33 which can be summarized as - In this world, trouble; In me, peace.

How is your peace quotient? Is planning your Christmas holidays diminishing your contentment? Is your shopping list about to send you on the path of escalation of the norm? Let's challenge one another to "set the Lord always before us" so we may know what it is to be truly content. As we remember Christ's birth, God's gift to us, may we do so with Godly contentment. Shalom.

Randy Wood

Bible Memory



December: A Chosen People

Salt and Light, The Glory of Zion

Matthew 5:13-16

13 "You are the salt of the earth. But if the salt loses its saltiness, how can it be made salty again? It is no longer good for anything, except to be thrown out and trampled underfoot. 14 "You are the light of the world. A town built on a hill cannot be hidden. 15 Neither do people light a lamp and put it under a bowl. Instead they put it on its stand, and it gives light to everyone in the house. 16 In the same way, let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven.

Isaiah 60:1-3

1 "Arise, shine, for your light has come, and the glory of the LORD rises upon you. 2 See, darkness covers the earth and thick darkness is over the peoples, but the LORD rises upon you and his glory appears over you. 3 Nations will come to your light, and kings to the brightness of your dawn.



Welcome to December!

We had a bit of confusion last month so the November Bible Memory was sent out separately from the newsletter. If you didn't get it and would like to do it, it is here, along with December's passage.

When you've memorized the passage, recite it to your parent or supervisor and then they can e-mail me (corrie.leismeister@myghsd.ca) to let me know you have completed it. I will post names of the ones that have completed it in the newsletter the following month.

CONGRATULATIONS to all students who have completed their memory!



NOVEMBER: The True Light

John 1:1-14



Activity days

**** REGISTER BY EMAILING OR CALLING THE NORTHSTAR OFFICE ******

Spaces fill up quickly!!!

December 11 –Edson Christmas activity day

- Red Brick School House, Edson

December 13 –Christmas Party — Pioneer Lodge

LEGO Activity Day, November 22, 2013



"It was AWESOME!" "Yes!" and... "It was so much FUN!" are just a few of the responses from students, who were asked if they enjoyed the LEGO classes with Mr. Paul. The younger students participated in a simple machines class. They used step-by-step pictorial instructions to create LEGO cars using a LEGO Mind storm NXT kit. Once they built their self-propelled vehicles, they tested their designs and then made modifications. They could add and experiment with the various sizes of tires and then add a motor to their cars. The older students enjoyed a Lego Robotics class, where they added sensors which would detect light and dark or touch or sound. The robots would react to the students' voices. Mrs. Brown had fun assisting the students, and watching them as their creations could move and obey commands. It was a beautiful day and perfect for sledding. Students enjoyed seeing how far their sleds would take them. Miss Emily was kept busy riding down with the students and pulling LOTS of sleds back up the hill. I lead the students in LEGO group games. We played a "Mystery LEGO" Game where students were each given a paper bag with Random LEGO pieces and a base piece. They had 10 minutes to make a LEGO creation, using all of the pieces. Then the other students took turns guessing what the creations were. For our next game we played

LEGO Scene. Two LEGO bases were passed around. Students chose interesting pieces to add to the bases to make wonderful creations. After about 10 rounds the creations were completed, and the students decided on names for them. Then we did a variation of the game and students shared something about themselves as they added each piece. Students also could enter to win a prize. They had to estimate how many LEGOS were in the jar and write their names and estimates and submit them in the provided box. Congratulations to Jemma Elliott for winning the Estimation Station prize. LEGO brownies were enjoyed by all of the students. These were eaten while the students listened to a devotional, with LEGO as an object lesson. Many of us have stepped on LEGO in the dark. It hurts! Psalm 119:105 says, "Your Word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path." God's Word is a light to our path. If we read and obey His Word, we can avoid making bad decisions where we (or others) get hurt. His Word guides us to make good decisions. Students were inspired to make LEGO creations, at home, to serve as a reminder to read God's Word and pray each morning.

By: Shauna Crotser



Additional Resources~

<http://www.tracpac.ab.ca/>

I love this site to order tons of resources like audio books, DVDs, magazines, downloadable e-books, newspapers, kits, video recordings, digital selections and even hardcopy books from all over Alberta libraries. Your local librarian is an excellent source and provides a means to resources you may not have even considered available through your library! Visit it today!



HISTORY OF CHRISTMAS

I love history, and so of course the history of Christmas is of interest to me. When I was a child I thought that from the time of the birth of Jesus, Christians celebrated the birth of Jesus but that is not true. In fact the early Christians did not think that birthdays were important and so they did not even record the actual birth of Jesus. We know roughly the time when Jesus was born since Luke tells us in Luke 2: *“About that time Emperor Augustus gave orders for the names of all the people to be listed in record books. These first records were made when Quirinius was governor of Syria.”* There are a number of theories about the exact year but the exact date is unknown.

So where did the whole Christmas celebrations come from? About 300 years after the birth of Christ an emperor rose to power and his name was Constantine. Some say he was a Christian but others disagree. His mother however was a Christian and she had a great deal of influence on her son. The emperor decided that everyone in his empire should become a Christian. Many people became Christians but they really had no idea what that meant. Of course there was no TV and not many books so the common people became Christians but they were Christian in name only. They had no idea what Christianity was all about but they knew that if the emperor was a Christian their lives would be better if they were Christians.

In the world at that time there was a huge pagan festival called Saturnalia. It was a festival of lawlessness (a lot of partying and drinking – sounds like a lot of Christmas celebration today) that lasted from Dec 17-25. The church at that time thought if they could include this festival into the church more people would be happy to be Christian. Since it was a pagan festival the church decided to make it a celebration of Jesus’ birthday. It was called a church festival but the people continued to celebrate it in the old way. Over time the church included celebration of the birth of Jesus but the people saw it as a time to party.

In more modern times, Christmas celebrations changed and started to include things like decorations, trees and gift giving. These all came from other pagan festivals that were incorporated as more people became Christians. An example is the tree. In what is now Germany the people celebrated the shortest day of the year by decorating a tree and bringing it indoors. This became part of our Christmas. A Saint in the Catholic Church helped poor people by giving them gifts. His name was Saint Nicholas and the Dutch celebrated December 5 as his day. This was the day that he would bring gifts for the children. That was incorporated into our Christmas but was moved to December 25. It was not until very recently that Santa Claus became a part of Christmas. In 1773 there was an article in a New York newspaper about the Saint but the article changed the name to Santa Claus and that was the first time that name was used. Not much happened for another 100 years or so.

Then in 1809 a story in a book talked about a chubby old man who slid down chimneys into houses. It was meant more as a joke and did not become much more than that. Another poem (Called “The Night Before Christmas” in 1822 added the reindeer but it was still not a big part of Christmas. They were just stories. For the rest of the 1800’s Santa would be dressed in various clothing and sometimes he was tall and skinny and other times he would be a little elf and he had very little to do with the celebration of Christmas.

Finally in 1930, Coca Cola hired an artist named Haddon Sundblom (from Michigan) to create an image of Santa Claus to use in their ads. Of course he would have to be dressed in Coca Cola red and he would be drinking Coke. This is where our modern idea of Santa came from. So we can thank Coca Cola for our modern Santa and he is less than 100 years old. So that is a brief history of our modern Christmas. So is it wrong to celebrate Christmas? I do not think so but I do think that we as Christians need to remember that it is a celebration of Jesus birth. All the other “stuff” is just “stuff” and it really has nothing to do with that celebration. This Christmas my family is going to celebrate Christmas with gifts, food and family time but we will remember it is a time to think about what Jesus did for us by coming to this earth. After He did what he came to do, everything changed and that was the greatest thing that happened in the history of the world. Now we can all have a close relationship with our Father and that is more important than the worldly festivities that we call Christmas.

Rene Hoeksema

If you are interested in other Christmas traditions and where they come from you can go to this web site.
http://www.classbrain.com/artholiday/publish/article_52.shtml

SNOWFLAKES

By Zachary Price



Snowflakes,

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Twirling,

swirling,

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gliding

you

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You

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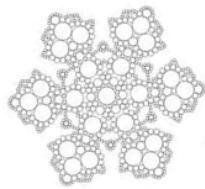
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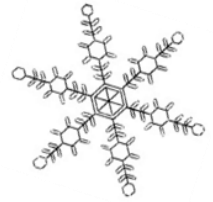
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