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Authentic, the Epilogue

by Tim Tripp

Is that real? I said those words to my friend as he showed me his official looking police badge. “Yep,” he said proudly as he tucked it away in the pocket of his jeans. “I just got it Saturday,” he added.

“So, do you carry a real gun and ride around in a police car?” I asked. “Sure do!” he replied. “In fact, I arrested a bank robber just last week.” “Wow! That is so cool,” I observed.

It seemed so real but when I got home and told my mom about my fourth grade classmate being a real cop, she filled me in on the disappointing truth. Just because someone tells you something is true, does not make it so.

Since then, I have found her words to be very accurate. The world is filled with exaggeration and falsehood. There is counterfeit money, fake hair, fake autographs, fake grass and false eyelashes. There is so much pretense in the world right now that it is difficult to tell the fakes from the genuine article.

Unfortunately, it can also be said that there are fake Christians. I’m not talking about fake in terms of different beliefs, I’m talking about fake in terms of those who proclaim their Christian faith but don’t live it. They might go to church and know the right answers in Bible class but in terms of how they live, its just not real.

Jesus called them hypocrites; people who looked pious and got the ceremony and religious works right but their everyday lives told a different story. They were greedy, arrogant and mean. They treated people with contempt and dared pronounce judgement on those who did not follow their rules. In Matthew 15:8, regarding these fake religious people, Jesus quoted Isaiah the prophet saying, “These people honor me with their lips but their hearts are far from me.” He pointed out that while they looked good on the outside, on the inside they were anything but clean.

I think it should concern me more than it does that we can still see fake Christians in the church today. There are still many who have been baptized and are on the church membership list but are no closer to being like Jesus today than they were years ago. I think that is partly because we have tolerated that for the purpose of higher attendance numbers and more in the collection plate. I think it is also because we have all but abandoned the Biblical principle of discipleship with a focus on leading believers into a mature Christian faith. I could blame a lot of folks but it does no good to blame anyone but myself. I can do better.

This past year, we have been on a journey to authenticity. What does it look like to have not only our lips but all our hearts, souls and beings following Jesus? What does it look like to lead others on the path of a missional faith? What does it look like to have a fellowship that when outsiders visit, they cannot help but realize that “God is really among you?”

Authentic means to be real, to be genuine, without pretense or falsehood. In the Christian walk, it means to live out loud. It means that others know your shortcomings as well as your strengths. It means that you are who you say you are.

Join me in a goal of being more authentic as we move forward, than we ever have. May it never be said of any of us that we serve God with our lips but keep our hearts far from Him.

DIOS LE BENDIGA! (God Bless You!)

by Aris Ortiz

Hello my West Side Family!

Sunday again, and for this one, we will have another special time when we get together to have fellowship with one another at potluck time!! Will be a great time to end this year in fellowship and hope that we can start a new year in the same way. So important to keep our spirit strong in the faith and supporting each other, because as long as we are here on this earth, in this life, it’s urgent to keep us together, doing, working and sharing the love of Christ not only among us, but with others who are in a need for love. God has sent us to go and reach every soul possible not letting Satan win the battle but for us to use the armor of the faith to win out only our soul for salvation but for everyone that we can reach in our daily life. So, let us encourage one another and enjoy the time together in this last potluck of this year 2021!! I hope to see you there my friend!

Blessings.

Gathering Times

Sunday Morning 10 Am Worship
& Kids for Christ
ages 1yr-5th grade

In- Person Adult/Teen Bible Study
Wednesdays 6:30pm - Room 3 & Cornerstone

Friendship Cafe and Conversational Christianity
Sunday Mornings at 8:45

In- person Bible Study for all ages
Sunday Mornings at 9am

West Side News

9am Bible Classes for all ages begin today!!

1 yr. olds - Stephanie Taylor - Nursery area

2&3 yr. olds - Jamie Bates - Room 16

Pre-K/ Kindergarten - Susan Taylor - Room 12

1st & 2nd grade - Vicki Betterton - Creator's Canvas Room

3rd-5th grade - Pat Crosby- Museum Room

**WSYM - Jr. High and High School classes
in the Cornerstone (beginning 12/12)**

Adult Class - Room 3 - Study of Ezra & Nehemiah

Adult Class- KFC Room - Parenting in Today's Culture

Cookbooks for those who ordered will be available to pick up in the foyer immediately following worship!!

We will have a potluck with our hispanic brothers and sisters following worship today!

Bring food for your family and enough to share! Plan to stay and enjoy being together!

Sign up for WS emails at
westsidear.org/subscribe

Week of: 11-28-2021

Weekly Giving: \$ 10,798

Attendance

Weekly Budget: \$ 13,820

Sunday AM - 220

YTD Giving: \$ 629,776

Wednesday PM - 103

YTD Budget: \$ 663,348

Family Illness and Recovery

Margaret Grant continues to improve and undergoing physical therapy once more. Please keep her in your prayers for continued strength and renewed health.

Tami Robinson is currently undergoing chemo treatments. She will be traveling to MD Anderson for an appointment on Dec. 17th. Please keep her in your prayers for strength, both physical and emotional. Continue to also pray for complete healing.

Joel Delgado, infant great-grandson of Kay Larson, is home following recent surgery. Please continue to keep him in your prayers for improved health and strength. Pray for his parents as well to be strengthened and comforted in all areas.

Helen Stephens has been moved to Brookdale and is continuing physical therapy. Please keep her in your prayers as she continues to adjust and recover.

Sympathy:

We extend our sympathy to Brenda and Michelle Branneky and Karen Hicklin and family in the loss of their cousin (Nephew) Charles Hefner of Poplar Bluff Missouri. Please keep the family in your prayers for peace and comfort during this time of another loss.

Ongoing prayer requests:

Jesse Boshears - cousin of Chad Crain

Sofia Juarez

Sid Womack

Helen Stephens

Love. Share. Disciple.