

THE LINK ATLANTIC NCF NEWSLETTER

29 Bedell Ave.

Saint John, NB, E2K 2C1

September 2013

Dear Friends,

Greetings in the name of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ. I hope you have had a good summer with time to relax, and become renewed for the fall and winter seasons. This is the time when students are heading back to their studies and activities are beginning again. What will you be doing this fall? Are you starting some new activities? Do your activities include some special time with God? Are you spending time in scripture study? Perhaps you are studying with a group at your church or in the community. Perhaps you could invite a group of co-workers or neighbours to meet with you for a study. There is an outline for a study in each issue of a link – I know that some individuals and groups are using this resource already. Why not try it? Or – take a book of the Bible and discuss so many verses at each meeting. Whatever you do, God will be there and will honour your efforts and bring a new and deeper understanding of His love in your life.

Betty Hitchcock

Break Thou the bread of life, Dear Lord to me
As Thou did break the loaves beside the sea,
Beyond the sacred page, I seek thee Lord,
My spirit pants for thee. O living Word.

STUDY

Colossians 3: 12 - 17

12: So, as those who have been chosen of God, holy and beloved, put on . a heart of compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness, and patience;

13: bearing with one another, and forgiving each other, whoever has a complaint against anyone; just as the Lord forgave you, so also should you.

14: Beyond all these things, put on love, which is the perfect bond of unity.

15: Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to which to which indeed you were called in one body: and be thankful.

16. Let the word of Christ richly dwell within you, with all wisdom and teaching and admonishing one another with psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with thankfulness in your hearts to God.

17. Whatever you do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks through Him to god the Father.

In this passage, Paul is speaking to the Christians at Colosse – read it as he is also speaking to us today. Marvel at how we are described and what Paul is describing as to how we should be seen and how we should act. Think about how we should appear to others. What difference would there be if we were all able to incorporate these recommendations into our everyday living?

Study on Colossians 3: 12 to 17

12. How are the Christians described? What does it mean to us to have been chosen of God? Does this not give us extreme value? This is truly an amazing thought. The God of all creation has chosen me to be His! Paul describes us as “holy and beloved” - what do those words mean to you? Do you think of yourself as “holy” - set apart for God? And “beloved” - remember John 3:16 “for God so loved.....”

What does Paul tell us to put on? What is Compassion? Kindness? Humility? Gentleness? Patience? How would we know if someone had put on these qualities? Do we show by our actions that we have put on these qualities? Can you think of how each of these would be evident to others?

13. What does it mean to “bear one another”? Can you think of some examples where you have been born by others and where you have been able to bear another? What does Paul teach on forgiveness? How are we to forgive?

14. What else are we to put on? How is “love” described? What difference would it make if we all had put on love?

15. What is to rule in our hearts? What does “rule” mean? Does this peace really rule in your heart? To what were we called? Do others see this when they look at Christians? Paul reminds us that we must be thankful. How do we show thankfulness? Are there times when we should be more thankful? What difference would it make?

16. What does Paul say about the word of God? How does that happen? Is there a difference between “dwelling” and dwelling richly”? Explain. How will this dwelling express itself? How are we to teach and admonish one another? What is to be happening in our hearts?

17. How are we to act? What should be our motivation? What part should thankfulness play in our actions?

Healing

Healing is making whole or fixing something that has gone wrong. We have all experienced healing in so many ways. Do you recall when you were young and you fell or hurt yourself? Perhaps your Mom would kiss it and “make it better”. Perhaps Mom would put on a band aid and the scratch would heal underneath. Other injuries may have required a visit to the doctor or the emergency room and perhaps a splint, a cast or some other assistance in order to allow healing. Perhaps a more serious injury would take a long time to heal and you would be left with a scar – a permanent reminder of the accident and the healing. Some have experienced a serious illness and with the help of treatment and time the body has healed and we have been able to function once again.

In all of the instances above healing has taken place. As members of the health profession, we have been privileged to see healing take place over and over. Have we given much thought to how this happens? The body is a wonderful thing – we are told that we are “fearfully and wonderfully made”. Yes, we have an understanding of the physiology behind healing but there is much more than that. God is at work – in a wonderful and mysterious way – He tenderly holds us in His arms and gently works His miracle of healing- healing of the small child’s scratch or the most serious of cancers.

Sometimes God’s healing work results in a body restored in a physical way and we rejoice in being brought to health once more. Sometimes healing does not result in the body being restored to full physical health. But there are other aspects of healing. We generally think of healing as being a physical thing – but there are other aspects of healing that are as important if not more important than the physical. Emotional healing is so important. If you have experienced being restored to wholeness in an emotional way, you will understand that this is a truly miraculous thing. Think about the person who has spent years burdened with the memories of being abused as a child. Think about the person who has suffered rejection because of some condition or situation. Think about the one who has loved and lost their life partner or their precious child. There are so many wounded souls in our midst.

All of our lives hold wounds of various kinds. The good news is that God is able to heal all our wounds and he wants to do this for us. We live in a fallen world – a world of disease, of hurts, of difficulties and trials of various sorts. Bring them all to Him. He wants to restore us in so many ways. Sometimes the healing is immediate but often it takes time. Often the healing process takes months or years. But be assured – our God hears and answers prayer. He hears our every cry. Often the healing process is a very special time as God brings us closer and closer to Him. Relax and enjoy this special time with God as he binds up our wounds and holds us in those everlasting arms during the healing process. Allow yourself to feel those gentle but strong arms that are holding you and just be quiet in His presence. He will not let you go. When you are ready, he will set you down but will continue to be with you, leading you gently by the hand, and picking you up again when necessary. Finally the day will come when you are able to walk again and then to run in the race of life – but you will never walk or run alone – He will continue to be with you and guide all your steps. Praise be to our most wonderful God!

There are times when healing [as we know it] is not the answer that God gives. That does not mean that He is not there, caring so deeply and still holding us in His arms. We cannot know that plan He has for our lives. He will provide many healings through this life. The greatest of healings is when He brings us to a knowledge of who He is and what He has done for us in the great gift of His Son, Jesus the Christ. When we accept that great gift and place ourselves in His arms, the most marvelous of healings and restorations take place. We become healed in a way which is beyond human understanding. We are restored to a relationship with our God – one that will continue forever – in life, in death, in life beyond death.

One day our God will call us home to be with Him. We will then experience the perfect wholeness for which we were created. Healing will be complete. Never again will there be wounds, suffering or grief. Our restoration will be understood in a new and special way. We will live forever with the One who has given us the gift of perfect healing. Thanks be to our most wonderful God!

SO MANY REASONS TO LOVE THE LORD

A poem by Helen Steiner Rice

Submitted by a reader – Phyllis

Thank you God, for little things that come unexpectedly
To brighten up a dreary day that dawned so dimly.
Thank you God, for sending a happy thought my way
To blot out my depression, on a disappointing day.
Thank you God, for brushing the “dark clouds” from my mind
And leaving only “sunshine” and joy of heart behind....
Oh, God, the list is endless of things to thank You for
But I take them all for granted and unconsciously ignore
That everything I think or do, each movement that I make,
Each measured rhythmic heartbeat,
Each breath of life I take
Is something You have given me
For there is no way for me in all my “smallness”
To in any way repay.



Prayer

This is the time of year that students are starting a new school year. Please pray for those that are entering or returning to nursing studies. Pray that they might adjust easily, make new Christian friends and find meaning and purpose in their chosen career. Remember also, the many nurses who have children starting or returning to a new school year.

Pray for nurses working in hospitals, nursing homes, the community and other areas of employment. Pray that they might bring God's love to those they serve and might find joy in serving and caring for others. Pray for nurses working overseas and away from home and loved ones. Remember those that are moving to new communities to pursue their nursing careers.

Pray for Hope Graham, one of our Atlantic nurses working in the Democratic Republic of the Congo for 6 months.

Pray for retired nurses and those just beginning retirement – pray that they might find ways to reach out to others in their communities and feel fulfilled in what they are doing now.

Pray for those nurses that are experiencing health problems, stress, problems with relationships and any other difficulties in their lives. Pray that God would meet all of their needs.

Pray for those working on the national and regional levels to institute the new national NCF format. Pray for wisdom as they work diligently to transition to the new structure. Pray for financial support for the work of NCF throughout our country.

We know that God is always waiting for us to come to Him in prayer. Let us come before His throne eagerly and boldly. Let us bring praise, thanks, requests, and all of our concerns – He will be there waiting for us. And let us quiet our hearts and centre our minds in Him. He will do great things. Why not spend some time just feeling His presence and resting in those strong and secure arms? There is no better way to begin and end our day than in the presence of our loving God.

Submissions for The Link

You are invited to submit articles, letters, poems, etc. to be included in future issues of the Link. Please send submissions to Betty Hitchcock, 29 Bedell Ave. Saint John, NB, E2K 2C1 or email to betty.hitchcock@rogers.com