

THE LINK ATLANTIC NCF NEWSLETTER

29 Bedell Ave.

Saint John, NB, E2K 2C1

March 2012

Dear Friends,

Greetings in the name of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ. We are now in the season of Lent – a time of preparation for the Easter Season. Lent is a time when we can follow our Saviour as He journeys toward the cross. Let us spend some extra time during this season just being with our Lord, quieting our hearts before Him, and letting Him show us what it meant for Him to prepare for His ultimate sacrifice. He will also show us what He wants for us – what is to be involved in our journey through this life and He will show us how He will be with us each step of the way. I have been thinking a lot about obedience and our January retreat in Saint John was on the topic of “Walking in Obedience” - a perfect topic to consider during the Lenten season. Much of this newsletter will focus on that topic. Blessings to all, as you think about how you can walk in obedience with our Lord.

Betty Hitchcock

When we walk with the Lord In the light of His Word,
What a glory He sheds on our way!
While we do His good will He abides with us still
And with all who will trust and obey.

Trust and obey, for there's no other way
To be happy in Jesus, but to trust and obey.

Walking in Obedience

Obedience is compliance, submission, being guided or controlled by something or someone. Obedience is not a popular concept today as we hear much about ‘doing it my way’ and taking control – being our own person. In actual fact, we all live in obedience to something – it may be our own will or to some desire we have in life. For the Christian, obedience means walking with Christ and submitting our will to His. We know that Christ was obedient – even unto death. Through His death He made it possible for us to have a restored relationship with God. He made it possible for us to “know” God in a personal way – not just “know about” Him. What a wonderful privilege! All we have to do is accept that great gift. We have to ‘trust’ in what has been done by Christ. That is the basis of our salvation. As Christians, we have accepted that gift – but what makes us happy? What gives joy in the Christian life? I believe that it is “walking in obedience” that gives us our joy. It is submitting to the will of God for us that brings true happiness. The secret of true obedience is a close personal relationship with God. Our attempts will fail – it is only God’s presence constantly abiding in us that keeps us from disobeying Him.

We are told that Christ “learned” obedience. We too must learn to be obedient. Christ himself will be our teacher – and He wants to teach us. Jesus said to each of His disciples “Follow me”, and I don’t think He meant just come for a little walk – but rather come with me for the rest of your life. He says the same to us today. Leave the life you are living, walk in submission to God and He will guide you, keep you and give you true happiness – happiness that the world cannot give. We know that Jesus was familiar with the Hebrew scriptures – He must have spent much time in study and preparation for His ministry. Remember where He was

found at 12 years of age and remember how He answered Satan on each of the temptations in the wilderness – His response was always “It is written.....”. How much time do we spend in study of the scriptures? Can we reply to earthly temptations with “It is written.....”? Remember how much time Jesus spent in prayer. Many times we read of how He went somewhere to be alone with the Father. Jesus spent time with His Father before important events; He spent time with His Father after He had ministered to the crowds. He was in constant contact with the Father. We need to follow His example. Our prayer time is so important and we need to learn not just to talk to God but to listen to Him and submit to His leading. At the beginning of each day, do we rejoice in the new day and invite God to share in all of it with us? At the end of each day, do we thank God for being with us and review where He has been especially close? Do we consider any times when we have blocked Him out and ask for forgiveness? During the day, are we constantly aware of His presence with us? Do we realize that it is the Creator of all – the great I AM, the one who formed us in our mother’s womb, the one who gave His own son for us that is offering to spend each moment of every day with us? How could we do otherwise? God Himself will be our teacher in the walk of obedience. What an awesome privilege – to walk hand in hand with God. And what is our response?

We are reminded that whatever we do, should be done heartily, as to the Lord. Obedience is not an act but an attitude of heart. We have to want to follow the Lord in all that we do – we have to submit to Him in all things – we have to allow Him to guide us, to lead us, to show us the right way in all things. Only then will we experience true happiness and grow into that special person that God has willed for us to be.

Walking in Obedience – Study #1

A: The Obedience of Christ

Christ was obedient. His life models obedience for us.

Consider Hebrews 5: 8 and 9

How did Jesus learn obedience?

Think about the things He suffered. Can you give some examples of what He suffered? Think about His childhood, His ministry, the last few days of His earthly life.

What was the result of Jesus' obedience?

What does it mean for us?

B: An example of obedience

Consider Mary, the mother of Jesus – she was a young Jewish girl when the angel told her that she would bear the Messiah.

Read Luke 1: 28 to 38 – the story of the angel's appearance and Luke 1: 46 to 56 – the Song of Mary.

Think about how Mary must have felt in this experience. What might some of her feelings have been?

How did she react? How did she show obedience?

What factors in her life do you think allowed her to show that obedience?

What is her example for us?

Walking in Obedience – Study #2

A: Our Walk of Obedience

Jesus calls each of us to walk in obedience with Him.

What does “walking in obedience” look like for the Christian? Can you think of some specific examples?

Can you tell that someone is walking in obedience with the Lord? How?

What factors might hinder us from “walking in obedience”? [think about the obstacles that were put in the way of Jesus in His walk – what were they and how did He deal with them?

What is the result of “walking in obedience”?

B: our Empowerment for the Life of Obedience

When Jesus calls us, He also empowers us.

How does Jesus empower us? Can you think of some examples in your life where Jesus has empowered you? What about the life of someone you know?

What part does the Holy Spirit play in your walk of obedience?

What part does the study of scripture play in your walk of obedience?

How does your prayer life – your time of Centering on god – empower you?

Look at Jesus’ last commandment and promise to His followers in Matt: 28: 19 to 20. is that promise still valid for us?

Thanks be to God.

INDIA REVISITED

I'm sure you've read about mission trips. I had read about them. They always sounded interesting for someone else, for young people, younger people, from big or bigger churches, people good at fundraising. I never pictured myself in that situation. But, a couple of years ago that all changed, when the small churches in the area where I live worked together to organize a team to spend two [2] weeks in South India working with two seminaries and a couple of other projects. The more I prayed for the event, the more convinced I was that I could handle it and that I should at least offer myself as part of the team to go.

It meant orientation, fund raising, with ups and downs. Sometimes it seemed as if there were more downs than ups. So one day last summer I took my Bible and spent most of the day on the beach praying and reading my Bible. I prayed "Lord if there is any other way, I'm waiting for you to show me." The more I prayed, the more India was before me and everything was very positive. I went home at supper time, content that going on the mission trip was following God's direction.

Many things went through my mind. What would it be like going to where I once worked; the same people won't be there, will the language come to me, what will it be like?

By the second flight in India, I was in familiar territory and we were met by a familiar face. Going in to the city from the airport, I thought "I'm here. I'm here". God was putting it within my reach. I felt the excitement of being there. I was in the city where I once lived for a year of language study! A little later that day, another friend who was dear to me appeared. I last saw her in Canada. Now, what a joy to see her in her own country of India. Getting here meant having courage and a lot of trusting God.

Yes, I saw changes – people I knew were older, roads changed, cities were growing. But the churches continued to reach out to the lost. At every stop, I found people I knew.

Although we were in India as tourists we weren't there just to observe. We were there to serve – to be servants. We spent a day painting at one of the seminaries. There were workshops at two seminaries. Time was spent with children at a Rehabilitation School. They had been the wage earners of the family. Now with education started, they looked forward to being professional people. The other project that touched my heart was an opportunity to meet and talk with people with

HIVAIDS and their volunteers who were known as Guardians of the Hope who help them with everyday living. The people of India are reaching out as servants of God and demonstrate that God is at work there through the Indian people. The church is alive in this way.

Entering into the lives of people was so meaningful. My memories are of how God is acting in people. I heard testimonials, talked and prayed with friends. We shared of family, weddings, family deaths, new babies, people who moved.

This all was only possible by letting God lead me and trusting Him. It was a lesson in totally relying on Him. He was my strength.

Edith Gilman This article was submitted by Edith Gilman – a retired nurse on the Atlantic NCF Committee.

PRAYER REQUESTS

Please pray for

- a heart to walk in obedience daily with our Lord.
- eyes and ears that would see and hear those that are hurting, in need or have never known the love of Jesus and willing hearts and hands to reach out to those in need.
- nursing students in programs across our land and graduates working in Canada and throughout the world that they might experience joy in learning and ministering to others,
- the National NCF Committee meeting in Toronto in May – for wisdom and the leading of the Spirit as they explore the future of National NCF.
- the Atlantic NCF Annual meeting to be held in Moncton April 14

Do remember that our God is always waiting to meet with us – He wants you to come to Him to bring your praise, your thanks, your requests, He wants to answer your prayer – He will give us of His riches in glory – there is nothing we cannot lay before Him in prayer.

ATLANTIC NCF MEETING

The Atlantic NCF Committee will meet on April 14 in Moncton at the home of Faith Stiles – 24 Llangollen Rd. from 10 am to 3 pm. We would love to have interested nurses join us for that meeting as we consider the work of NCF in the Atlantic area. If you are interested in attending as an observer please contact Jan Lockett at 506 847 7629 or Betty Hitchcock at 506 648 9794.

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