

SUNDAY LINE AND WORLD MINISTRIES



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Caring for children around the world

July 2015

WELCOMING NEW PARTNERS

Welcoming Benton and Rebekah Gibbons to Church in the Park: Serving as Community Associate Pastors

“Living life alongside others can change the world for Jesus,” declares Benton. He is excited to be on board with Church in the Park and is looking forward to overseeing the media and technology side of things as well as relating with the sport’s world. With his gift in relationship building and athletics, he will connect with the men’s hockey and rugby leagues in the Lower Mainland. Benton has a passion for young families and young athletes and wants to bring the love of God into the sport’s world.

Benton was born and raised in Brantford, Ontario. After high school he attended Evangel University in Springfield, Missouri on a football scholarship while studying Media Communications and Bible. After University, Benton was invited to a training camp in Alabama and signed a contract to play hockey for the Southern Professional League. When injured, he decided to ‘hang up his skates’. Shortly after he joined Athletes in Action and became a part of campus ministries at the University of Toronto. Benton also had the opportunity to work as a personal trainer until God called he and Rebekah to Church in the Park.



Rebekah was also born and raised in Ontario with the exception of a couple years living in the States. She attended Summit Pacific College in Abbotsford, BC and graduated in 2009 with her Bachelor’s degree in Intercultural Studies. Since then she has worked for several Christian group homes caring for people with mental and physical challenges. She has pastored in Kitchener, Ontario as a youth and young adult’s pastor and has had significant involvement with missions in different parts of the world.

Rebekah has a heart to see the lost found and for the younger generation to know that their identity is found in Christ and not in what the world has to offer. “I am thrilled to be a part of the Church in the Park team. I’m looking forward to being an advocate for Christ in our community by building the bridge from the community to the church.”

WELCOMING SUNDAY LINE'S NEW MISSION PARTNERS:

***Villages of Hope, Africa:
Sergio and Nancy Bersaglio, Directors***



It is the desire of Villages of Hope Africa to see children loved and cared for so that they will ultimately embrace adulthood as independent and contributing members of society.

The children's villages are located in eight regions throughout sub-Saharan Africa in the countries of Burundi, Kenya, Malawi, Tanzania, Zambia (Chongwe, Kitwe, Mongu), and Zimbabwe. Each village provides nutrition, education, healthcare, and shelter.

Critical issues of malnutrition are addressed by supplying food to over 3000 orphaned and vulnerable children every day through school programs. In countries where statistics show a child dying every minute due to malaria, the Villages of Hope provide treated mosquito nets as a first line of prevention and immediate medical care when tested positive for malaria. Free education for 2000 children from preschool to grade 12 allows development of their abilities and offers a more positive future; it makes a difference and brings hope where hope has been lost.

A former student, Bertha, comments: *"Village of Hope has really helped me in many ways: Spiritually, emotionally and physically. I am what I am today because of Village of Hope, through the help that I have been receiving ever since I came."*

***House of Hope, Bethlehem, Israel:
Director Pastor George Awad***



The House of Hope was started in 1963 by a blind lady named Aunty May who had a heart to care for vulnerable young people. There aren't any provisions made for children with special needs in the mainstream school system and so these children would otherwise be excluded. Today, the House of Hope remains a vital ministry to those who are blind or have special needs in Bethlehem and the surrounding areas. All have opportunity to experience the love and compassion of Christ. The desire of the House of Hope is to foster a sense of value through care, to help each person receive an education and to learn life skills that will benefit them, their families and their communities and to introduce each person in their care to a relationship with Jesus

**NOTE: THE NEXT SUNDAY LINE
NEWSLETTER WILL BE MAILED IN
SEPTEMBER.**

GODLY WISDOM

Key Scripture: James 1:5

“If any of you lacks wisdom, he should ask God, who gives generously to all without finding fault, and it will be given to him.”

Everyone will at one time or another make a decision which has life-changing consequences. Which career path is most in line with your unique skill-set and calling? What company should you work for? Should you marry or stay single? Which house should you buy? Which church should you attend that meets your family’s needs?

Often the same decision-making process we use for minor issues is also used for major decisions as well. So the question is: How do we as Christians, make good decisions? What criteria do we use to evaluate, to discern the best course of action? Clearly, it is essential and important to gather as much information as possible and to carefully analyze our options. However, beyond that, we need wisdom and clarity of thought in order to make prudent decisions based upon the facts at hand.

Many bad choices are made simply because we move through the decision-making process too quickly. If people were to be really honest they would admit that a lot of their decisions are based on feelings and emotions.

Emotions aren’t altogether a bad thing. Women in particular have a special inner sense of conviction which we call “women’s intuition”. In short, there has to be some sort of balance when it comes to making decisions.

In our passage today, the apostle James tells us that there are two kinds of wisdom in the world today. There is the wisdom that comes down from heaven above, which is pure, peace-loving, considerate, submissive, full of mercy, full of good fruit, impartial and sincere. And there is the other kind of wisdom which is full of envy, self-ambition and every evil practice which comes from our enemy... the devil.

What James is really alluding to is that we are in a war, with two opposing sides which are vying for our devotion... and the stakes are high ... in fact, whichever way we decide to follow will either lead to death or life.

Many to whom James wrote thought they were wise. They were sure they had understanding. They even felt qualified to teach others. But as James explains, the proof of true wisdom is humility. “Humility” means “meekness that springs from wisdom”.

True wisdom makes us “gentle, kind and mild, not harsh, in dealing with people”. It means that we are “open to reason”. We are willing to give a fair hearing to all sides of the story. We are “full of mercy”, willing to forgive and forget wrongs which have been committed against us because we remember that we too are sinners; we know that God has forgiven us by his grace and wants to forgive others. “Good fruits” means that we do loving deeds for others. “Impartial” means that we act without showing favor to some while ignoring others or mistreating them. “Sincere” means that we act openly and honestly, without hypocrisy or hidden motives.

As a Christian, the starting point for making really difficult decisions is given to us by the apostle James. James 1:5: **“If any of you lacks wisdom, he should ask God.”** The kind of wisdom which James refers to comes from God who gives wisdom to us through four primary avenues:

1. **God’s Word:** To foster great decision-making

habits, we must be consistently renewed by God's Word. Psalm 119:105 **"Thy word is a lamp unto my feet and a light unto my path."**

2. **God's Spirit:** We must walk in step with the Spirit of God, paying attention to his promptings and leadings. Zachariah 4:6 **"Not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit says the Lord."**

3. **God's Providence:** We must watch carefully to see how God works providentially in our circumstances. Romans 8:28 **"In all things God works together for good for those that love Him and are called according to His purpose."**

4. **God's People:** And we must be prepared to seek the counsel of Spirit filled elders. Hebrews 13:17 **"Have confidence in your leaders and submit to their authority, because they keep watch over you as those who must give an account."**

Decision making should be one of a Christian's core competencies. In fact, our decision-making ability is what differentiates a mature Christian from the rest of the world. Being a mature Christian requires obedience and dependence upon God. A mature Christian will always seek the wisdom that comes from above.

Nehemiah was a leader who depended upon God and had a proven track record in the decision-making business. Of all the Bible's leaders, Nehemiah provides a good pattern for making a decision which is recorded in Nehemiah 1:1-11.

Nehemiah was faced with a huge challenge. The walls of Jerusalem were in disrepair, and the returned exiles were vulnerable and disheartened. When Nehemiah got this news, we see his four-step process to approach the problem.

First, he carefully studied the situation (vv. 2-3). He gathered all the information he could gather first hand. Second, he empathized with those who were hurting and humbled himself before God (v. 4). Thirdly, he prayed (vv. 5-11). And what a prayer! Nehemiah adored God (v. 5), confessed his nation's sin to the Lord (vv. 6-7) and he petitioned God for help (vv. 8-11). He sought Godly wisdom!

Nehemiah knew what every great leader knows: All wisdom comes from God, and using his wisdom to make good decisions is something God wants to help us learn to do. Asking God must become a

permanent part of our decision-making process especially when it comes to making important decisions. As fully developing followers of Jesus our calling is to do everything in the name of the Lord (Colossians 3:17). And that includes making decisions.

As Christians we acknowledge our faith in Jesus and do all that we can to impact the growth of God's kingdom, but we try to do it all on our own, and then when our plans don't work out the way we had expected we blame God ... why did you allow this to happen? God's answer is simple: You didn't ask.

In spite of how our world appears to us, God already knows the outcome. God has even incorporated the foolish, sinful decisions of people into his divine scheme. Things that other people had meant for evil and harmful purposes, God can weave into his good to accomplish his will for our good. (Genesis 50:20)

Although God is transcendent and majestic, he is also imminent, attentive and compassionate. Even though God is all-powerful, all-knowing and ever-present, God interacts with his people in earthly time and space so that our prayers make a difference in the outworking of God's purposes.

James is not against making plans. What James warns us about is that our freedom to make plans is not a license to live free from God. To come to that conclusion would be arrogant. In fact, the phrase, "If it is the Lord's will," should be part of our thinking. It should to be a standard part of our vocabulary.

Thank you once again for helping us to make a difference in the lives of many children throughout the world.

Blessings in Christ,

Pastor Roman

& Pat Kozak

