

Los Altos Church of Christ

*"...being of the same mind, maintaining the same love,
united in spirit, intent on one purpose." Philippians 2:2*

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This Sunday...Paranormal or Paranoid

If you had a dollar for every book, TV show, or movie that has been written about the paranormal then...well we don't know exactly but we're pretty sure it would amount to quite a bit of money. The Bible does say that we are in a battle with the spiritual forces of evil. But John in his first epistle assures us that "the one who is in you is greater than the one who is in the world." This week Gene Appel concludes the series by telling about who that one is.



Wednesday Night Fellowship... Dinner at Terrie's 6:30...video 7:00, "God's Heart For You."

PRAYERS *Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus. Philippians 4:6-7*

- Please pray for Joclyn's mom. She's been having leg/thigh/hip pain for a few days now.

Continue to pray for Lu...Christine's mother...the Gordon family...John and Jennifer... Walter Grove...Pancho's brother Don... Tim's recovery... Roger Townsend... Berry... Jeff's mother... Jene's hand... Allen Sawyers...The Britton Family ... Barbara... Gwen and her son Caleb... Emmy Creswick... City of Children... Healing Hands International... Japhet's work in Zimbabwe...and New Hope Uganda.

Thoughts for the week...

The Bible says in Psalms to "Be still." God says, "Be still and know that I am God" (Ps. 46:10). I like this definition of stillness: silence on the outside and surrender on the inside." - Kyle Idleman

Time For a Laugh

Three boys are in the school yard bragging about their fathers. The first boy says, "My Dad scribbles a few words on a piece of paper, he calls it a poem. They give him \$50." The second boy says, "That's nothing. My Dad scribbles a few words on a piece of paper, he calls it a song. They give him \$100." The third boy says, "I got you both beat. My Dad scribbles a few words on a piece of paper, he calls it a sermon, and it takes eight people to collect all the money!"

I Don't Judge People

by Rubel Shelly

Of all places, there is an insightful line about the necessity of passing personal judgment that comes from a new one-act play. As reported in a review carried in the *New York Times*, here is the way a debate goes between the play's two central characters:

"People have to judge you by something," he tells her.

"I don't judge people," she replies.

"Well, I hope you never drown," he replies. "Because if it's you and me and Michael Phelps in the Hamptons and you get a cramp and you call on me because you're not judgmental? I think you'd probably die."

The dialogue takes place between a man with cerebral palsy and his caregiver, and it is meant to be a funny scene in the play. Regardless, it is also a statement of an obvious truth. We all make judgments about people. And it is neither smart nor virtuous to pretend we don't – or shouldn't.

Oh, I can hear the response of someone now. "Okay, you Christians are judgmental. Thanks for admitting it. But your 'Leader' condemned it!"

First, if this response is meant to claim that some Christians are overly judgmental and too quick to censure and condemn those with whom they disagree, it is surely correct. To make headlines by claiming that a Texas flood or a California fire is "God's judgment" against a person or a lifestyle is simply crude and mean-spirited. If Moses was a prophet with a direct link to Yahweh about the plagues of Egypt, today's TV preachers and would be prophets don't.

Second, Jesus – along with Paul and Peter and your common sense – actually requires that we pass judgment on truth and falsehood, right and wrong. "Do not judge by appearances, but judge with right judgment" (John 7:24 NRSV). With this statement, Jesus prohibits racism, sexism, and various other forms of shallow judgment against persons. In the same breath, however, he requires his followers to stay away from drug parties, immoral relationships, or jobs that require employees to exploit clients by lying about a product or service.

To offer Jesus' "Don't judge lest you be judged" as an excuse for some rotten behavior or to defend an obvious falsehood is to be both disingenuous and dishonest. To claim otherwise, is – uh, well – to make a judgment. To judge what I have claimed. To judge me.

Let's face it. Life requires judgments for the sake of intellectual honesty, making good decisions, and saving oneself from drowning!

Follow Jesus' counsel here.