

REDEEMER

R E P O R T

SEPTEMBER 2002

SPIRITUALITY, COMMUNITY, INTEGRITY AND THE LORD'S SUPPER

BY TIM KELLER

... it is also what has been called a 'converting ordinance.'

Most people think of the sacrament of Lord's Supper as an individual spiritual experience of deeper connection to God. It is one of the few times in most Protestant services where people stop talking or listening for a while and have time to reflect. The invisible concept of Christ's substitutionary death for us is translated into a palpable sign—the bread and the cup—that engages the physical senses of sight and touch, taste and smell. All this makes Jesus' sacrifice more 'real' to us and at that moment most participants find that their personal interaction with God is profoundly enhanced and facilitated.

Not only does the Lord's Supper enrich the personal relationships of believers with their Lord, but it is also what has been called a 'converting ordinance.' As attenders at Redeemer know, the minister distributing the elements is careful to invite baptized Christians to partake of the bread and the cup. Over the years I have heard from scores of people that this challenge often forced them to ask themselves: "Well, then, where do I stand? Am I a Christian? Do I really believe the gospel I've been hearing about in a new way here?" The average New Yorker who begins coming to Redeemer has some religious background but

has been spiritually skeptical or at least "drifting" for years. She or he is drawn by friends into a small group and/or worship and this begins an exploration of Christianity in earnest. This may go on for some time. Then, one Sunday the Lord's Supper is served, and the invitation is made and all that searching is brought to a head in a way that would not happen in an ordinary service. That is why we always print a 'prayer of belief' in the bulletin on those Sundays in order to help people take Jesus by faith in a decisive, life-changing way.

However, the practice of the
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MARKETPLACE MINISTRY DIRECTOR HIRED

BY DAVID BISGROVE

...how does one work in a distinctively Christian manner?

One of the core values Redeemer has had for years is to provide support and teaching for Christians in the work place. We have NOT said, "If you are truly committed you will leave your 'secular' jobs and take up the 'sacred ministry.'" Instead, we have encouraged people to be the very best journalists, artists, bankers, and business leaders possible, serving Kingdom priorities in those jobs. Yet how does one work in a distinctively Christian manner?

We are pleased to announce that we have made a major investment in an attempt to assist the Redeemer community

grapple with that question. On September 1st, Katherine Leary will begin her employment as Redeemer's Director of Marketplace Ministries for Business and Professional people. Ms. Leary was a member of Redeemer in the early 90's before moving to Silicon Valley where she served as President and CEO of two technology based companies. Before moving to California, Katherine worked as a Management Consultant in the telecommuni-

cations industry, and as President of a private satellite company. During the past year, she has been the Marketplace Director for Menlo Park Presbyterian Church in California.

Katherine will be a tremendous addition to our staff, and we will find ways in the upcoming months to introduce her to the congregation at large. She can be reached via email at KatherineL@redeemer.com.

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- STEWARDSHIP
- "DEAR VERN"

MORE...



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SPIRITUALITY, COMMUNITY, INTEGRITY AND THE LORD'S SUPPER

Lord's Supper has ramifications beyond the enhancement of our individual relationship with Jesus. In fact, the Lord's Supper unites facets of our lives that fragmented, modern, Western culture famously splits apart.

First, the Lord's Supper builds community because it forces us to link together our individual and corporate lives. Paul says in I Corinthians 11:18, 20, 29 - "I hear that when you come together as a church there are divisions among you...When you come together, it is not the Lord's Supper you eat, for as you eat, each of you goes ahead without waiting for anybody else....Anyone who eats and drinks without recognizing the body of the Lord eats and drinks judgment on himself."

"One bread, One Body, One Lord of all" goes the popular worship song. The Lord's Supper service always starts with one bread and one cup and then it is broken and poured out and distributed to all. This represents how the death of Christ makes us one in him. Paul insists, therefore, that during the Lord's Supper you are not only to think about your relationship with God, but with others. Are your relationships strong? Are you a true member of this Christian community or are you just dropping in for information and inspiration in a (frankly) consumerist manner? The Lord's Supper links your individual relationship to Jesus to your corporate community life with his people.

Second, the Lord's Supper builds integrity because it forces

us to link together our interior and behavioral lives. The old word "Eucharist" means thanksgiving. The bread is to be broken "with thanks" (1 Corinthians 11:24), with awed and joyful gratitude. This of course is the 'gospel dynamic' of the Christian life. We do not anxiously move out into the world with hope that God will accept us provided we live up to standards. Rather, we know we are already accepted in Christ and so we obey God out of joyful gratitude for his grace in Jesus Christ.

But does gospel-gratitude really result in a changed life? Has thanksgiving for his grace really changed you at your center—so that the way you actually live your daily life is different? Paul also insists, "Whoever eats the bread and drinks the cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner will be guilty of sinning...A man ought to examine himself before he eats of the bread and drinks of the cup." (1 Corinthians 11:27-28.) We have already noticed that Paul says, "don't take the Lord's Supper without thinking of 'the Body'—your relationships." But he also says "don't take the Lord's Supper without thinking about yourself—your practice, your actual life patterns." This is a sobering note and it must be kept in balance with the note of

"...the Lord's Supper builds community because it forces us to link together our individual and corporate lives."

gratitude for grace.

Obviously, the Lord's Supper is not for perfect people, but for repentant people. But that is just the point. The Lord's Supper forces us to keep linked our inner experience with our outward, actual behavior. It demands that we ask: "Am I truly living a life of gratitude? Am I obeying God in my life as I would be if I really believed I was saved at the infinite cost of his only Son? Am I loving others sacrificially as I would be if I really believed I was saved by sacrificial love?" The Lord's Supper is concrete—it is Jesus' loving self-donation made visible and palpable to the senses. How are you making Jesus' loving self-donation visible and palpable to others in the way you actually live your life?

Every time you partake of the Lord's Supper you are being called by God to link your heart more deeply into his heart, to link your individual life more deeply into his people, and link your life and practice more deeply into your beliefs about what he has done for you. It builds personal spirituality, the church community, and Christian character and integrity. And we at Redeemer believe that the Lord's Supper is not 'just a

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REDEEMER REPORT

Kathy Keller

Buddy Mungo

Dave Jacobs

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HUNTER COLLEGE AUDITORIUM
EAST 69TH BETWEEN PARK AND LEXINGTON
services at 9:30 • 11:15 • 6:00

CHURCH OF ST. PAUL AND ST. ANDREW
86TH AND WEST END AVENUE
services at 7:00

(continued from page 2)

SPIRITUALITY, ...

symbol' but that Jesus has promised that he is spiritually present at his table in this food. He meets us in a special and real way and helps us uniquely when we seek to make these linkages in the sacrament. It really is, then, 'heavenly food' that quite literally builds us and grows us up. That is why George Herbert could write:

*Thou hast restored us to this ease
By this thy heav'nly blood,
Which I can go to, when I please,
And leave th' earth to their food.*
— "The Holy Communion"

Dear Vern...

Dear Vern,
Unfortunately, I am writing this note from a hospital bed. Last Sunday, I tripped hurdling over the "red crime scene" tape getting to my seat in the back row of Hunter auditorium. My backpack flew off my shoulder sending my coffee and bagel 3 rows ahead of me. My knee bounced off the armrest as my hand just missed the seat cushion on my way towards the pretty red carpet. I woke up in the emergency room. This time I will let it slide but can you please take the tape off the back rows so this accident will not repeat itself.

Warmly, Dan

Dear Dan,
The red tape blocking the back rows of the auditorium has been a controversial subject for years. They put it there for a purpose - to save the back rows for late-arrivers. Since you and I don't let rules slow us down, just keep hurdling, but wear the right equipment next time. Next Sunday, let me recommend a lighter backpack, tennis shoes, wrist guards, and a theatre dinner tray for your food. Get a good running start, too.

Seriously though, don't get caught up in red tape! The better option for you would be to go to a row in the front where there is a better view and less commotion from tape jumpers. Leave the bagel and coffee at home next time since mini muffins and coffee are free in the West building after the service. Hunter College respectfully asks us to not bring breakfast into the auditorium.

No regrets, Vern

HOPE FOR NY HOSTS FALL VOLUNTEER FAIR

Hope for New York will hold its seventh biannual Volunteer Fair on Sunday September 22nd after all Redeemer worship services.

Meet the directors and volunteers from many of our ministries face to face. Find out more about our programs for child-mentoring and opportunities to work with organizations that help the elderly, the homeless, teen mothers and people living with AIDS.

You don't have to come alone either. Consider coming with your Home Fellowship Group to hear first hand about our ministries and find the organization that needs exactly the kind of volunteer skills you or a friend can provide!

HFNY will conduct an orientation session the week prior to the Volunteer Fair on September 15th at Room 505 from 1:00 to 1:45

p.m. to help you and/or your group understand how to better display an outward face of Christian community that is action-oriented, Gospel-based, creative, and compassionate. If you cannot make the orientation session on September 15th, call our office to make an appointment to attend our weekly lunchtime orientation sessions held every Friday at our midtown office from 12:15 to 1:00 p.m. Feel free to bring your lunch! You can contact us to reserve a seat at 212-808-4460 x160.

We are excited to have this opportunity to partner with you as servants working to build a great city. Please come by and visit us after one of the services on September 22nd, or sign up for the orientation on September 15th.

THANK YOU ALL FROM TIM AND KATHY KELLER

In the last many months we have received so many kindnesses from so many people that, to be honest, we have lost track of all the people who have done so much for us. This is bad, and a note in the newsletter is no substitute for a real thank you letter, but it is better than not letting you know how humbled and helped we have been by the meals, the errand running, cleaning help, nursing help in the hospital, the people who have driven us to doctors' appointments, the notes, phone calls and above all the prayers that have kept us afloat.

We have no words to thank you adequately, even if we knew everyone who should be thanked. But you have our deep, deep gratitude.

A word of update is probably in order. I (Kathy) am doing much better. The immunosuppressants I am taking for my Crohn's disease have helped tremendously. I still may be facing some surgery for the fistulae that developed when it was at its worst, but that, I hope will be minor.

Tim will be having the radioactive iodine ablation of the remaining thyroid (and potentially cancerous) cells in his neck at the end of August. By the time this newsletter reaches you, he probably won't be glowing in the dark any more, and, with God's blessing, the cancer will be entirely gone (so the doctors tell us.) It may take a few weeks to get the replacement thyroid hormone dose to the place where his energy level will return to normal, but we hope for a speedy uptick.

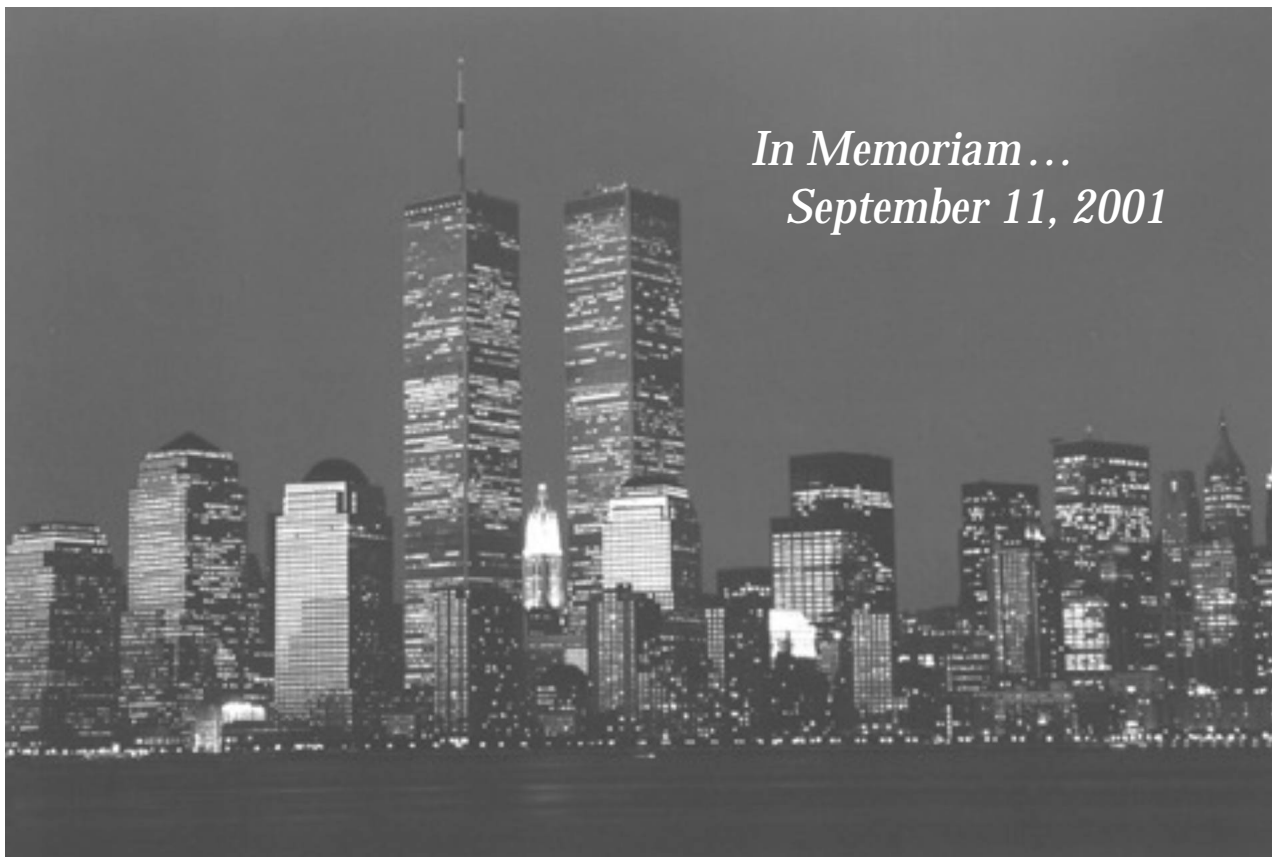
In all of this, we continue to rely on your prayers. We can truly say that we have felt you all praying for us, and hope that all the good news doesn't make you think that you now have permission to stop! Please don't stop! It has been a tiring year, both physically and emotionally, and your prayers are as necessary to us as the air we breathe. Thank you all for your faithfulness, and your many kindnesses towards us.

"SIGNIFICANCE OF J.R.R. TOLKIEN" LECTURE AVAILABLE ON CD



Author J.R.R. Tolkien

Several months ago, Dr. Tim Keller gave a lecture at an IAM fundraiser on "The Significance of J.R.R. Tolkien." In September this lecture will be available on CD at the Redeemer Tape Table and at the www.redeemer.com on-line store. The price is \$20.00 and all proceeds will go to help the International Arts Movement. IAM is a Redeemer sponsored arts organization committed to being a catalyst for cultural renewal. Visit their website at www.iamny.org for more information about IAM and details about their upcoming conference in November.



In Memoriam...
September 11, 2001

The fall is always a busy season at Redeemer, as people are settling back into a routine after the months of travel and weekends away. It is also the time when we plan for 2003. During the summer, the elders and directors begin to put together their "Goals and Objectives" for the coming year. The 2003 Budget process will be well under way by the time you receive this newsletter. In October there will be a special emphasis on how those who consider Redeemer their primary community can invest their resources to support the Vision and Mission put forth by the Session and staff.

To that end, we will make available (among other things):

- A personal devotional on "Money and the Gospel"
- A small group study for those interested in discussing this topic in their Fellowship Groups
- An SOCC Class that will address some of the basic issues about what the Bible has to say about finances

We will provide more information about these and other

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resources in the weeks ahead.

In the meantime, please prayerfully consider how you can assist Redeemer meet its ongoing obligations. We were approximately \$90K below budgeted giving for the three months May-July (August figures not available at the time

of this writing). We are confident that those of you who are committed to Redeemer's Vision will respond generously in the weeks ahead so that we can continue to meet the demands of our growing ministry. Some of the questions you can be prayerfully considering are:

- Do I give consistently and generously in support of the work of God's Kingdom?
- Do I budget my time and money for His Kingdom like I do for other areas of my life (rent, mortgage, vacation, membership dues, etc.)?
- If Redeemer is my 'home church,' do I give consistently to support its ongoing ministry?

You may log on to www.redeemer.com, click on the Stewardship section and use the on-line pledge card to submit your planned giving for the rest of 2002.

For more resources on financial stewardship, check out the other areas of the Stewardship section on our website.

SCHOOL OF CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY

Classes for the 2002-2003 School Of Christian Community begin Sunday, September 8th. For details about classes, teachers and schedules, please refer to the SOCC brochure of Cycle I classes that will be available at AM services Sunday, September 1 and September 8.



LOVE & COMFORT OUT OF TRAGEDY

BY NANCY BARTER

What a year it's been. There's a clear line of demarcation in each of our lives – the pre- versus the post-September 11th reality – and there's nothing we can do to change this. What a strange and overwhelming feeling of powerlessness this realization brings, and yet, having been forced to confront it, our lives go on, in some ways as before and in other ways indelibly altered. I am blessed, for God has shown me His grace and mercy as I never could have imagined in the course of the past 12 months. The mystery of His abundant love has become ever more poignant because I've experienced it as a direct result of the deepest despair and brokenness.

We parted with a kiss on the Union Square Subway platform at around half past eight that morning. Jason was heading to his new job at Cantor Fitzgerald in the World Trade Center; I was heading to my office in SoHo. He must have made it to his desk moments before the plane struck the building.

That June, Jason had moved to

New York to pursue our relationship. A young man who loved God and strove always to emulate Christ in his love for and service of others, he was a prince among men. A lifetime of postulation could never provide me with an answer as to why his life was among the many so tragically lost that morning.

In the aftermath of Jason's death, I have experienced many a dark day, and ironically, God has used this darkness to make real to me His promise to work "all things together for the good of those who love Him." (Rom 8:28) I've been a Christian for a long time, but until all hope of Jason being alive was gone, I had never encountered one of those 'things' that is so intrinsically bad that it forces one to question whether it could be possible for God to work it for good. But through Jason's horribly unjust and untimely death, I've come to know God as my Holy Comforter and Great Healer with an intimacy that before I'd only understood in an abstract way.

For most of my adult life, I have staunchly resisted involving

myself too closely with the body of believers. The reasons for this were misguided and, I now know, destructive. My pride and independence were Satan's greatest tools in keeping me from experiencing, through God's people, the most remarkable glimpses of Him. But this year, too weak to resist it, He has blessed me with a new understanding and appreciation of His body, the church. Through prayers, good counsel, empathy and love acted out, God's character and presence have become very real to me, and my soul has been succored.

Each time the darkness has seemed too great a weight to bear, the showers of His blessing have poured over me – blessings too numerous to list here. And His work is just beginning. My healing is not complete, but His body is alive and well and I am an active part of it: this is the only real antidote to the impotence that threatened to conquer me after September 11th. Coming to know Him intimately is bringing me the best kind of healing, healing in action.