



May 1, 2008

SENIOR PASTOR RETREAT

Well, I certainly missed the Northeast Houston family this past Sunday, but to tell you the truth, Nicole and I were up to our eyeballs in some much needed rejuvenation. Each April, the church Nicole and I attended during college invites to a retreat every former member that is now a Senior Pastor and his wife. Central Baptist Church pays for all of us to stay together at Tapatio Golf Resort and Conference Center in Boerne, Texas, and provides all our meals, snacks, and entertainment.

The weekend is part continuing education, part mentoring, part accountability, part marriage conference, part relaxation and entirely reinvigorating.

There are thirteen couples including the Senior Pastor couple from the host church. Our churches range in size from 100 to 4,000. We range in age from 31 to 56. Our Senior Pastor experience ranges from 18 months to 28 years. Sitting around the circle this past weekend was 70 years of Senior Pastor experience.

There are scheduled three hour sessions during which the Senior Pastors gather with the host pastor, Chris Osborne, and the wives with his wife, Peggy. The men discuss everything from theology to ecclesiology to church conflict to music to marriage to child raising to prayer to personal integrity to church growth to current trends in churches to handling challenges in the local church, just to name a few of the topics.

During group sessions with all the couples, Chris and Peggy lead what amounts to a small marriage conference. Every couple is asked questions about their relationships and parenting. I suppose it is a lot like getting a physical, but for one's marriage. It is sometimes uncomfortable, but always helpful. They also share much with us about marriage and parenting in general.

This particular weekend is probably the event in my life each year that contributes the most to my life, my family and NEHBC.

I cherish the relationships I have with the other Senior Pastors. My life is better for having known them.

LORD'S SUPPER

This coming weekend, we are observing the Lord's Supper in all the Sunday services.

The Lord's Supper is one of only two ordinances of the local church; the other being baptism. Since a believer can only personally experience genuine, New Testament baptism one time, the Lord's Supper is the only reoccurring ordinance that Christ follower can experience.

An observance of the Lord's Supper is rich and meaningful . . . if one is properly prepared. As usual, I'll guide our church family through the experience in the services, but you can go a long way in preparing yourself by taking the time to read 1 Corinthians 11:17-35. I'd encourage you to grab a fresh cup of coffee, find your favorite seat in your home and curl up with your Bible. Give some thought to what you are reading.

If you are a parent of a young child or teenager, prepare them for the Lord's Supper before Sunday. It is a tremendous teaching opportunity and would make a great topic for family devotions.

Here are some helpful talking points:

- The Lord's Supper is one of only two New Testament ordinances.
 - Baptists use the word "ordinance" because Christ made it clear that His followers are expected to participate in both baptism and the Lord's Supper. Neither are optional.
- Jesus organized and led the very first Lord's Supper. (Matthew 26:26-30)
- The juice symbolizes the blood of Jesus that was shed on the cross. (1 Corinthians 11:25)
- The bread symbolizes the body of Jesus that was broken on the cross. (1 Corinthians 11:23-24)
- The Lord's Supper is only for those who have made the decision to become a Christ-follower. (1 Corinthians 11:29)
- While baptism is a Christ-followers initial public ritual declaring his or her allegiance to Jesus Christ, the Lord's Supper is the on-going ritual by which a believer continues to proclaim to the Lord. (1 Corinthians 11:26)
- The Lord's Supper is the fellowship meal of the local church and emphasizes the importance of unity in the congregation. (1 Corinthians 10:16-17)

The Lord's Supper is a declaration of the church's missionary spirit. (1 Corinthians 11:26)

FAST FACTS

- Sportsmen's Day is only 17 days away!
 - Saturday, May 17 from 1-7pm.
 - Time is running out to invite your lost friends, colleagues, family and neighbors.
 - We have sold about 700 of the 1,000 tickets.
 - The remaining 300 tickets can still be purchased on a first come – first served basis. They are \$20/ticket. Tickets can be acquired on-line, on Sundays in the lobby, or from the business office.
- Our Kids on Mission participants will perform a musical on Wednesday night, May 21.
- Team Estonia leaves in 23 days.