

A Sermon to Remember

Time and again, as people leave the Sunday morning service, they say what a great sermon Pastor Mike gave and that “He was talking directly to me about my specific life situations.” Now, we have a very humble pastor who would never think of taking any credit for the messages he delivers. He always says that they come from the Holy Spirit and many times at the beginning of or even in the middle of a message, he is led to do something he hadn’t planned on. As he says, “It was a God thing.” A sudden bolt or revelation.

Sunday, March 5, was one of those days. It was Communion Sunday. It first began with Andorful giving the children’s message. The night before, Andorful was starting to prepare what he thought he would talk about and as he was praying, he suddenly found himself diverted by the Spirit to write a few words on pieces of paper for the children. Each child would pick a piece of paper and keep their eyes closed until called upon to read it. Then they would give a response to what they had read. There were over a dozen children the next Sunday morning. As they closed their eyes and picked a piece of paper, there was total silence. No one peeked and their little eyes were closed tight. One by one they read the words and gave beautiful responses. It took a little longer than the normal Children’s Message. (Remember, this is just the start of a God Thing that Sunday.)

Now it was time for Communion. Pastor Mike stepped off the stage and knelt down to eye level with the children, who were sitting in the front two rows. He explained the basic tenets of Communion. At this point it was anticipated that the children would go to Children’s Church as usual; however, Pastor wanted to share with them what the congregation would be doing.

Now, everything changed. The children would be staying. Something indescribably wonderful began to occur. The presence of the Lord became exceedingly strong and overtook the entire church. Pastor Mike began to explain what happened at the Last Supper and what it meant. He held up a wafer and explained its exact meaning, then held up a little cup of grape juice. He explained in detail the gift of salvation through grace, Jesus’ crucifixion, and how we remember His sacrifice, His broken body and shed blood and His love for us. He explained the meaning of John 3:16.

About half of the children attend AWANA. Thus, it was a mixed group and it was unknown how much some of them already understood. However, they all were glued to what Pastor Mike was saying. There was no squirming, no fidgeting, and no one was distracted. It was as though time stood still, and one could have heard a pin drop.

Pastor then explained that a person needs to understand what Communion is before taking part in it and if someone doesn’t understand or isn’t sure, simply pass it to the next person. However, if someone takes part in it without understanding, he or she will not be in trouble. It simply won’t be meaningful. All the children would be present as Communion was passed, provided this was ok with their parents. No one objected. He explained when we take a wafer, we hold it until everyone has one and Pastor has spoken. Same with the cup.

Becca played soft music as the wafers were passed. “This is my body which has been broken for you. Break, eat and remember me.” Then the grape juice was passed. “This is my blood which was shed for you. Drink in remembrance of me.” As I took a peek at the front two rows, tiny hands held the little cups as Pastor spoke.

Following this, Pastor explained the prayer of salvation. He asked that the children only participate if they understood and were ready to accept Jesus as their Savior. Sentence by sentence he led them. Sweet tiny voices echoed each sentence, as they acknowledged their sins and took Jesus as their Savior.

Needless to say, the original sermon Pastor had prepared was to wait until the following week. He often reminds us that we never know what the day will hold. We can plan all we want, yet it may turn out to be far different. People are still talking about this being “the best service ever, in their whole lives!” Later at home, one of our parishioners asked her granddaughter what she had learned. The wafers, the grape juice, the crucifixion – she hadn’t forgotten even one aspect. Praise to the Lord for this special day.

A man’s heart plans his way: but the LORD directs his steps. Proverbs 16:9.

Submitted by Anne Chapman