



The Prague Christian Fellowship POST

Monthly Newsletter of the Sbor Krestanské spolecenství PCF

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Dan Drapál, Pastor Emeritus Krestanské spolecenství

Hurricane Katrina & Our Quick Judgements

It hasn't been two weeks since the devastating hurricane Katrina and I have already heard and even read several opinions on the factors that provoked this hurricane as God's judgment.

Some say it was because of the occultism that flourished in New Orleans. Some say it was because of the large number of casinos and game rooms. (I am surprised why God did not aim at Las Vegas in that case.) Some say it was because of the removal of the settlers in Gaza. (I am surprised why God did not aim at Washington in that case. Why should the Blacks in New Orleans suffer for that?)

You would probably find many more reasons on the internet. I am asking the question why (some) Christians are so quick at making

judgments? Why do they speak with such confidence?

I would like to refer to one place in the Scriptures that should slow or even stop us our judgment. In Chapter 13 of Luke's Gospel we read a paragraph which may have something to offer us in connection to the times in which we live.

Now there were some present at that time who told Jesus about the Galileans whose blood Pilate had mixed with their sacrifices. Jesus answered, "Do you think that these Galileans were worse sinners than all the other Galileans because they suffered this way? I tell you, no! But unless you repent, you too will all perish. Or these eighteen who died when the tower in Siloam fell on them – do you think they were more guilty than all the others living in

Jerusalem? I tell you, no! But unless you repent, you too will all perish."

I am convinced that Lord Jesus Christ is warning us here not to seek direct connection between political and natural disasters and the fate of those who suffered. He does not even solve the question here *who* is responsible for these disasters – God or Satan? He is telling us absolutely clearly one essential thing:

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Kelsie Mullen, PCF Leadership Team

Hospitality- Room for More & Healing to Many

A friend recently commented about a weekend away she had with her parents in their summer house. She described her mother cooking for her and serving her for a few days, and how nice it was. She said, "**It was so healing.**" I thought about that comment, and realized that the fruit of hospitality is always healing. Healing of our hearts and relationships leads to wholeness. It can even restore our dignity and honor. The ultimate healing is the reconciliation between God and man because there are so many things constantly working against our intimacy with the Father.

Hospitality happens around meals

and overnight stays, in homes and gardens where a host serves and the guest receives. I believe the ministry of hospitality is for every believer. Romans 12:13 says, "Share with God's people who are in need. Practice hospitality." The Greek word for "practice" actually means to "pursue", "run after" or "seek". It is an active, initiative, aggressive approach. It is listed as a qualification for a deacon in I Timothy 3:2 and Titus 1:8.

What is NOT hospitality? It does not mean you have to have a big house or lots of money. It doesn't mean you have to be a gourmet cook (although home-cooked food

is usually a blessing or even healing to others). It doesn't mean you have crystal and china for the table, or that you have been to etiquette school. It only means you have room in your heart and home for one more and that you initiate the meeting.

John and I have people over every week, and our children are used to guests at our table and in our garden. During the week of English camp when we hosted lunch at our place for all the helpers plus two evening gatherings, we counted over 250 visits within 10 days! That added up to 95 liters of bottled

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Member of the Month

Jeff Harding



Well, there's not really much to tell about myself when it comes to my testimony. In a way, the fact that I don't have much of testimony *is* my testimony. I was raised in a Christian home, and strong parenting pretty much kept me out of trouble for most of my life.

Still, in everyone's life there comes a time when that person must make his or her own choice to follow Christ, a point we all must reach when we decide to follow Christ because we desire a relationship with him, not because it's what we're supposed to do. That point came for me in high school. I had reached the end of my own strength and realized that to make anything in this world work, I was going to need to rely completely on God.

Now I can't just say that from that moment on I have walked in a deep, intimate relationship with Christ. But I can most definitely say that since that point I have striven to learn as much about Him as I can, and to seek that secret place of dwelling with Him.

Overall, the last several years have been great times for my growth in the Lord. Though there were periods when I wasn't as devoted as I should have been, I have stayed steady in my search for intimacy with my Creator. In that time I have also served as a youth leader, taken part in various creative arts outreach projects, gone on mission trips to Mexico and Jamaica, have led worship as well as been involved in worship team ministry, and have served in a leadership capacity for the young adults at my home church in Tennessee.



Still, though I have led what appears to be a solid life in Christ thus far, I know he has much bigger plans for my life and for me as a person. In other words, I know God has greater things for me to *do*, but I strongly believe there is also a greater person he wants me to *be*.

Hence, I have ended up in Prague, and I am no longer complacent to be just a *child* of God. I have come here, out of my comfort zone, and have purposed to go into a spiritual wilderness so that I might become a *man* of God.

Most days I'm confused, not fully understanding my purpose here or what I'm accomplishing, wondering if anything will really have changed in me when I return home. But a lady at a worship conference I recently attended spoke a word over me, that God would "give me enough light to make it through each day." And though it's scary and overwhelming, I'm trusting that He's leading me through the wilderness so that I can find his promised land for my life.

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water, 10+ rolls of toilet paper, 5+ bags of garbage (not to mention all the recycling) to take out and floor/toilet cleaning twice a day. People often comment "How do you do it? I couldn't!" Yes, we got tired but we ran on the strength He supplies. Here are some reasons why our family can practice hospitality every day: obedience, authenticity, and modeling.

Obedience

Our example is Jesus. We are all like strangers passing through this world and Jesus came and offered us a cold drink of living water. He told the woman at the well *Everyone who drinks this water will be thirsty again, but whoever drinks the water I give him will never thirst. Indeed the water I give him will become in him a spring of water welling up to eternal life.* (John 4:13, 14). The woman at the well experienced very deep healing in her soul that day, just as each of us have experienced from our encounters with Jesus and the living water. So we follow His example and realize that He wants all of us, even our "stuff". Our house and money and food are His- *even* our seemingly personal space.

Authenticity

It may be easy to act super-spiritual at church on Sundays, but when someone comes over to your house for the day and stays for a week in our guest room, they begin to get the REAL picture of who we are. Are we willing to risk people seeing the real us,... faults and all? We want to be real in our Christian walk, so opening our home to others makes us have to be real. Allowing so much exposure to our lives is a healthy thing, but not always easy. Maybe people would prefer to believe that pastors' families have the perfect kids, a perfectly obedient dog, and that they never argue.

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Info

This is simply not realistic. We argue, we apologize and are reconciled to one another! Our children misbehave sometimes (at very strategic times, of course!), they are disciplined and we are reconciled. Can the church handle seeing their leaders as "real" people? And can leaders risk being "real" and disappointing others in the process?

Modeling

My parents often opened up their home to international students and missionaries. They also "adopted" some of my college friends. I could see what a difference it made in my parents' lives and the ones they adopted. I saw the healing firsthand, and it changed my whole view of homes and possessions... they are ministry tools! We want our children to benefit from their encounters in our home, with sharing their room with guests, with learning how to ask questions over the dinner table. Something deep and spiritual happens at these times that I cannot explain fully. It certainly can be truer fellowship than brief Sunday encounters. This is something we want our kids to learn - Sundays may reflect our commitment to the Lord but home gatherings reflect our commitment to one another.

So as a new season begins and new people are coming into our community, I thought it would be a good time to think about the ministry of hospitality. Let's not ever forget what it felt like to be alone and in need of a healing touch. Let's be a community that always has room for one more!

For more study on the topic read Romans 16: 23, I Timothy 5:10, Hebrews 13:2, I Peter 4:9, 3 John 5:8, Matthew 10:11, Luke 10:7-8, Genesis 18:1-8, Exodus 2:18-21, Judges 13:15,16, and Proverbs 9:1-6.

Ministry to the Refugees

Saturday, October 1, 2005 at 10:45 AM. Once per month we go to the refugee camp in Bela pod Bezdezem on a Saturday to hang out with the people there, serve tea, play with the kids, do sports and generally build relationships and try to make their routine a bit more fun. We will be leaving at 10:45 AM and returning to Prague around 5 PM. If you are interested in joining us or want to make a donation, contact Katka at katka.kounovska@praguefellowship.com.

Pray for the Peace of Jerusalem

Sunday, October 2nd. This will be the 2005 date for praying for peace in Jerusalem. Please put it on your calendar.

International House of Prayer Prague

Thursdays, October 6, 13, 20, 27 at 6:00 PM. Starting in October the meetings will be moved to Jecna 19 (our church building). Worship with us and corporately seek God's will for this city and this nation. October will be a training month! Come and get trained for Moravian (tabernacle of David) worshipping intercession.

The Growth of Islam & Implications for Europe

Thursday & Friday, October 6 & 7. Dr. Christine Schirmacher, the director of the Institute of Islamic Studies of the German Evangelical Alliance, will be speaking Thursday from 8:15 to 21:00 and Friday from 8:15 to 13:00. Cost is 300 Kc or 60 Kc per lecture. Information at 603963278 or info@baterka.net

PCF Leader's Meeting

Thursday, October 13, 2005 at 5:00 PM. We will be meeting at the Methodist church at Jecna 19. We will try to stick to ministry issues and meet separately for business. If you wish to be involved with the business meeting, please contact John Mullen at 608243788.

Darwin and Design

Saturday, October 22, 2005 from 8:30 AM to 19:30. An International science conference will be held to review evidence for intelligent design, drawing upon results in astronomy, physics, mathematics, biochemistry, biology, genetics and paleontology. Registration 350 - 650 kc. www.darwinanddesign.org

Ministry Training Seminar

Saturday, November 05, 2005. We plan to host a seminar to help equip the Body for personal prayer ministry. The seminar will be lead by Martyn and Linda Smith from

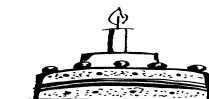
Manchester Vineyard (www.manchestervineyard.co.uk). The title of the seminar is "Practical Ministry Training" and there will be opportunities to receive prayer as well. We want to open this opportunity up to other churches as well. Please contact John Mullen (608243788) for more details.

The Church Feast

Thursday, November 17, 2005 at 10:00 to 22:00. The event will be held to express our joyful waiting for the return of the Lord with music and arts (4 worship bands). Kostel sv. Vojtecha, Praha 6 - Dejvice, Thákurova 3. Please contact Petra Sustrova for more info at petra@angelmountain.net or 776116477.

Church Retreat

November 26th & 27th. Please put the last weekend in November on your calendar for a PCF retreat. The plan is to take the train to Revnice and spend one night in the Hotel Grand (300 kc). We will be offering the choice of 2 seminars Sat afternoon and 2 others Saturday evening at the Common Grounds Community Center in Revnice. Sunday morning we will have a meditative prayer assignment and head back to Prague. Please contact John or Kelsie Mullen for suggestions of seminar topics and more details (PCF@PragueFellowship.cz).



Upcoming Birthdays

The following PCF members past and present will be having birthdays in the next few weeks.

Isaac Bediako	October 1
Marianne Bolton	October 3
Honza Knapěk	October 4
Hana Detková	October 5
HongXia Hu	October 6
Phillip Old	October 7
Courtney Mangina	October 8
Anna Budin	October 8
Sam Ewell	October 12
Brian Young	October 13
Kamila Šuterová	October 15
Jennifer Mog	October 16
James Mehaffy	October 17
Mari Koukliková	October 17
Teresa Arellano	October 19
Ian Crowther	October 20
Blessing Egho	October 20
Amir Taher Zadeh	October 20
Michelle Clark	October 22
Eric Zanger	October 23
Mitchell Mullen	October 23
Gaye Emmerton	October 23
T.J. Caldwell	October 24
Markéta Sedlacková	October 27
Lydia Burda	October 29
Robert Harris	October 29



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We all have to repent or we will die in a similar way.

Our theories why this or that happened may be more connected to our own nosiness and judgmentalism than with real revelation. Let's remember that God gave us authority to forgive - he did not give us authority to judge. If God wants to speak to the Christians in New Orleans through this natural catastrophe, then we can pray that they understand God's voice well. Unless we have a clear direction from God, we should not pronounce any theories. In doing so, we only help real prophetic voices disappear in the noise of supposedly prophetic voices.

Christian judgmentalism has – unfortunately – many faces. A man who spoke to me recently said that he was attempting to solve the question of who is right - the charismatics or anti-charismatics.

First, he sent me some Biblical references, then gossip reports that he had heard about the pentecostal / charismatic Christians. There were even accusations of criminal acts among them, e.g. financial embezzlement/misappropriation. Quite well-known people were mentioned. If only half of these accusations were right, the persons mentioned would have gone to court a long time ago. If they were not convicted, how can Christians afford to spread such rumors about them? The Lord Jesus Christ tells us that our righteousness must be greater than the righteousness of the Pharisees and Sadducees. It should definitely be greater than the righteousness of the world. Slandering of such a caliber could bring about a number of civil lawsuits. However, there are Christians who believe that they can spread such unproved and unchecked ideas freely. What does this then say about the state of God's people? We can discuss the question of the baptism in the Holy Spirit by reading the Scriptures and pondering our own relationship with God – not by collecting gossip about those we disagree with.

There is one simple rule of when to judge and when not to. If you are a part of the problem or the solution, then it may be appropriate to judge yourself; or if you are in a position of authority over the problem, you have a responsibility to ask tough questions. If you are **not** a part of the problem or a part of the solution, then you are in danger of, at minimum, idle talk.

Perhaps it may seem to you that I am connecting two totally different concepts. The common denominators, though, are judgmentalism and a poor understanding of what our calling is. For example, the time we waste discussing theories concerning “for what” and “why” God is judging America, can be much more usefully devoted to **intercession** for the Christians in the given area to be able to do heroic and unselfish acts. We are called to intercede. We have not been given a mandate to judge.

Dan Drápal

CONGRATULATIONS!



Above: Faith Oguk (left) from Kenya has passed her exams and is now a DOCTOR! Her graduation ceremony will be December 6th from the First Faculty of Medicine at



Charles University Prague.

Left: Faith holding Ester Moriah Mullen.

PRAYER ITEMS

- 1) **Church Finances** (generous, joyful givers). **Birthing of “Marketplace Ministry” in Prague** to shift finances into Kingdom of God.
- 2) **Small groups**; for hosts and leaders as well as a commitment in the Body to share their lives together.
- 3) **International House of Prayer Prague (www.ihopp.org)** - For more leaders, finances & new locations for the meetings.
- 4) For the **Peace of Jerusalem**, especially on October 2 (Ps. 122:6).
- 5) **Richard, his family and his ministry** in prison – he has been relocated to a prison in Moravia.
- 6) **More laborers in the harvest field of Prague and at PCF (Matt 9:37,38)**, and more salvations in the Czech Republic
- 7) **Christian International School of Prague (www.cisprague.org)** for more students/ teachers.

PCF Finances

August 2005

23,624.00	Total Income
7,075.40	Internet & Communications
5,000.00	Office Rent & Electricity
8,500.00	Church Rent
300.00	Supplies & Equipment
0.00	Copying & Publishing
15,543.00	Salaries/Employer Tax
4260.00	Evangelism & Teaching
0.00	Church Giving
2,798.13	Fees & Advertising
600.00	Miscellaneous
44,076.53	Total Expenses
-20,452.53	Net Income

All amounts shown are in Czech Crowns.

Should you have a testimony to share please email us. The deadline is October 20, 2005