



The Prague Christian Fellowship POST

Monthly Newsletter of the Sbor Křesťanské společnosti PCF

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John Mullen, PCF Pastor

EMOTIONAL MATURITY

As I approach burn-out once *again*, I have to ask the question, “WHY”? I did keep a slower pace for a while but I could not keep to it. Evangelicals are great at being busy, and they also can be critical of people who they think are not busy enough (I confess that one!). During my periods of burnout in the eighties and nineties I was involved in both secular and Christian counseling. The last time I burned out I even attended a month long intensive spiritual formation training! Now in my forties I am finally ready to look at the issue of burnout in regards to something people don't seem to talk about a lot and that is emotional maturity. I have come to the conclusion that I am emotionally immature... and that is after 15 years of ministry.

I am talking about spiritual maturity as it relates to emotional health. My experience in seminary was that the teaching there focused on biblical and theologi-

cal information rather than on the incarnation of Jesus Christ. However, understanding the truths of his incarnation is what can deeply effect our own emotional development as Christians. I suspect this is not a teaching that is widespread in many churches. Mostly what we find in this area are church discipleship models that focus on teaching steps of *doing* rather than *becoming* an emotionally healthy person.

Yet, even with all the efforts of discipleship models and training, churches are the hotbeds of relational schisms (church splits/people leaving), divorces, scandals, and gossip. I think it was Gandhi who said he would have become a Christian if it were not for Christ's followers. That would be us.

The answer must be in understanding the *person* of Jesus. *The Word became human and lived here on earth among*

us and he modeled emotional health and maturity. *He was full of unfailing love and faithfulness* – not full of answers and programs. Jesus entered people's lives but I am not so sure the church is still doing this. We meet people. We teach people. We call it discipleship. But do we really love people? Do we really listen? Somehow I suspect the key to emotional growth has to do with loving others.

Next month I will have more room to expand on practical steps to grow emotional maturity.
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Kelly Kuest, PCF Leadership Team

HEALTHY COMMUNITIES USE HEALTHY WORDS

Lately I've been reminded over and over how what is in our spirits overflows into the expression of our daily lives. I've been listening to sermon tapes my home church sends me and there was a great teaching on the “Force of our Words”. What we say can bring life or death, happiness or sorrow, encouragement or discouragement. Our words also reveal a lot of what is going on inside of us. Let's look at a few things God's Word has to say about our words.

1. **“For out of the overflow of the heart the mouth speaks.**
The good man brings good things out of the good stored

up in him, and the evil man brings evil things out of the evil stored up in him.” Matthew 12:34b-35. Notice what you talk about, what things come out of your mouth because it will be the reflection of your heart. Are your words thankful, full of light, loving, or are they complaining, negative, or critical? We all have Christ in our hearts and so our words should be an abundance of Christ-filled speech. Too many times our flesh nature interferes and that is what speaks. Over the course of a couple of days, pay attention

to what kinds of words you speak and then ask yourself what it reveals about your heart. Maybe they will show you issues you need to deal with, maybe they will show you worries that you need to take to God, maybe they will show you how Christ is changing you into His glorious Bride. Or, if you are brave enough, ask your spouse, roommate, or a friend to tell you what you talk about most. I used to think that I needed to vent to my roommates in order to get my frustrations out so they would
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Member of the Month

Chris Bauman



I have been asked several times in my life to "profile" myself in order to understand or discover who I was or had become. Let me throw out to you a few of those words and phrases that seem to have stuck, and that I can still claim today. Mind you, none of these are in any particular order. Son. Brother. Christian. American. Texan. Marine. Saint (who sins). Musician. Singer. Entrepreneur. Worship Leader. Longhorn Rancher. Adventurer. Songwriter. Mac User. Introvert. Forgiven. Sarcastic. Lighthearted. Problem Solver. Chef.

And the most important word in the list to me? "Forgiven". During my first year of college, my mother was diagnosed with cancer, and six months later, died. My life, as I knew it, was forever changed. I was filled with confusion, bitterness and hatred. I directed my hatred toward God and began to question his authority. Growing up, I was, and still am, the son of a pastor. It absolutely tore me apart to think that God would do something like that to me and my family.

After three months of experiencing a consuming hatred, I found myself at a church work camp. The night before we were to go home, I was confronted with a challenge. A challenge I had heard before, but had never captured my attention. Confront God. I did. The next morning, my whirlwind of emotions had ceased. God heard me. God won. He won my heart. I had grown up with the stories of



Jesus, Paul, David, Melchizedek, and Israel and had heard the familiar passage, "the peace that surpasses all understanding." Not until that day did I know what being forgiven meant. Despite all of the knowledge I had, my heart was learning it for the first time. God knew that, and was patient and understanding.

I have found myself in some difficult situations over the last few years that would test the hearts and minds of any believer. Being in the Marines alone would test any man's faithfulness. In fact, I learned more about my faith and how to worship during those years than all the rest.

As I continue in my Christian walk, I am not perfect. Daily I mess up. Daily I sin. Daily I fail him. And, daily I am reminded of his commitment to me. Forgiven.

Editor's note: Chris serves as one of the worship leaders at PCF.

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not be bottled up inside. I thought venting was a healthy outlet. But then I realized that I vented to my roommates and not to the Lord. I took my problems and frustrations to my friends first and then if it still bothered me, I would take it to God. But this was wrong thinking. I was harming my friends with poisonous words, influencing them in negative ways. I was not giving God His rightful place in my life. Instead I was relying on people to meet my needs for relief. And I was not dealing with what was in my heart because I rationalized my complaining as "venting" and that meant I didn't change my thinking, attitude, or actions. If you don't give the negative words an outlet, they will die and if you take them to God then they die at the foot of the cross. Amen.

2. **"Reckless words pierce like a sword, but the tongue of the wise brings healing."** Proverbs 12:18. The other day I was thinking about spiritual warfare and was reminded of the passage in Ephesians about our spiritual armor. We are to take up the shield of faith so we will be protected against the fiery darts the enemy assaults us with (6:16). It dawned on me that we often let the enemy use our words as a weapon to attack others. We speak words that hurt, wound, destroy, and tear down. We find the vulnerable spots and send a joking jab. Sarcasm can have its place in humor, but when it is directed at a person, it becomes a fiery dart. The other half of the verse is that our words can bring healing. They can give life. "Pleasant words are a honeycomb, sweet to the soul" (Continued on page 3)

and healing to the bones.” Proverbs 16:24. One of my former roommates, Sylvia, was very generous with compliments. She lavished people with kind words, and you know what? People came to her for encouragement. She spoke hope and joy into people’s lives. Let’s speak words that bring life.

3. **“Speak to one another with psalms, hymns and spiritual songs.”** Ephesians 5:19. We have the responsibility to speak God’s truth into each other’s lives. That means we reaffirm who Christ has made them to be, their place as God’s beloved, and their value in the Body. If you aren’t in the practice of speaking the Word into others’ lives, give it a try and see what can happen. God’s truth is powerful and effective and we need to hear the Word over and over so that it becomes part of the very fiber of our being. When we speak to each other in “God songs” we speak the power of the Living Word into each other’s lives.

So, what do your words say about you? Do they say you are a lover of God? A lover of people? Or do they say you are sarcastic, complaining, or critical? Out of the abundance of our

Vince & Martina’s farewell

After being in Prague for almost three years Martina & I have decided to return to live in the UK. We would like to say how much we have appreciated our fellowship together within the PCF Church. We would like to thank in particular Pastor John for his perseverance with us. So it comes to pass that now we are packing and preparing for a new season. We have enjoyed our time living in the Czech Republic and we pray that the flood gates are opened to Gods will over this beautiful country.

Stay in touch, in Christ, & in Love.

Vince & Martina Reed

IHOOP Worshipping & Prayer

November Schedule-Thursdays at 6:00 PM. Nov. 3 & 10- intercessory worship. Nov. 17- meeting canceled so we can all attend "The Church Feast" organized by Angel Mountain. Nov. 24- Creative Night; prayers are not only spoken...they can be expressed in many ways to God. Come with an open heart. Ječna 19 (where we meet on Sundays), from 6-8 pm www.IHOOP.org

Ministry Training Seminar

Saturday, November 05, 2005, from 10 to 18:00 (prayer ministry afterward) at Majak Cafe (enter on the west side of the Methodist courtyard) we are offering a seminar to help equip the Body for personal prayer ministry. The seminar will be lead by Martyn and Linda Smith. Please RSVP with John Mullen at 608 243 788.

PCF Leader's Meeting

Saturday, November 12, 2005 at 10:00 AM. We will be meeting in Úvaly. Leaders wishing to be involved with the business meeting can stay later and we can discuss after the meeting. Please contact John or Kelsie Mullen for details.

The Church Feast

Thursday, November 17, 2005. Theme: Expressing Joyful Waiting for the Return of the Lord with music and arts (4 worship bands). Time: 10 to 22:00. Place: Kostel sv. Vojtěcha, Praha 6 – Dejvice, Thákurova 3. Contact: Petra Sustrova at petra@angelmountain.net or call 776 116 477.

Ministry to the Refugees

Saturday, November 19, 2005 at 10:45 AM. Once a month we go to the refugee camp in Bela pod Bezdzem to minister to the people there, serve tea, play with the kids, do sports, crafts and generally build relationships and try to make their routine a bit more fun. We meet at 10:45 AM and return to Prague around 5 PM. If you want to know more, are interested in joining us or want to make a donation, please contact Katka at

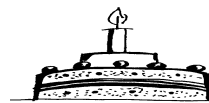
katka.kounovska@praguefellowship.cz

PCF Retreat

Saturday, November 26, 2005. The plan is to take the train to Řevnice and spend one night in the Hotel Grand (300 Kč). We will be offering 2 seminars Sat morning and 2 others Saturday afternoon at The Common Grounds Ministry Center. Sunday morning we will have a meditative prayer assignment and head back to Prague. Please contact John or Kelsie for suggestions of seminar topics and more details at PCF@praguefellowship.cz.

Where will you have your Thanksgiving Meal?

Saturday, November 26, 2005. Come join us on the PCF Retreat. We will share a family Thanksgiving meal together in Řevnic. Let us know if you'll be attending at PCF@praguefellowship.cz.



Upcoming Birthdays

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

Kirsten Chappell	November 2
Bruce Novotný	November 2
Elizabeth Sposaro	November 3
Dawn Custalow	November 3
Jan Overwater	November 4
Chris Morris	November 5
Joshua Fagan	November 8
Alan Crowther	November 12
Tanya Spirier	November 12
Peggy Kareyo	November 14
Steve Gower	November 15
Andrei Spiridonov	November 15
Pauliina Vasko	November 15
Chris Lewis	November 16
Jan Kupidlovský	November 17
Blessing Ndubuka	November 18
Austin Sheffield	November 18
Lambert Asondjo	November 19
Junior Olukayode	November 20
Klára Šedivá	November 23
Vicki Čermáková	November 25
Christy Ellison	November 26
Charles Moloney	November 28
Eliška Landovská	November 29
Tania Razlivkina	November 29



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tionally. This month I would simply like to open the topic and invite you to take a serious look at your own life. I expect the following definitions will be help-

PCF Finances	
September 2005	
33,903.33	Total Income
4,473.50	Internet & Communications
5,000.00	Office Rent & Electricity
8,500.00	Church Rent
4,762.80	Supplies & Equipment
2,220.00	Copying & Publishing
5,291.00	Salaries/Employer Tax
0.00	Evangelism & Teaching
1,050.00	Church Giving
924.00	Fees & Advertising
701.00	Miscellaneous
32,922.30	Total Expenses
981.03	Net Income

All amounts shown are in Czech Crowns.

PRAYER PRAISE

- 1) **Church Finances** – we had positive net income this past month (although salary not paid).
- 2) **Small groups** - we have nine small groups meeting with hosts and leaders recently joining the church community.
- 3) **International House of Prayer Prague (www.ihopp.org)** - we are cooperating with the city of Prague to build a park and community center on the IHOPP land.
- 4) **Peace of Jerusalem** – we have seen more and more interest in ministry to Jews and working together with other like-minded ministries.
- 5) **Richard in prison** – is much more comfortable in Moravia and now has the bible in MP3 plus worship music.
- 6) **More laborers in the harvest / PCF** - there may be some help on the way to Prague so the Mullens can take a break sometime during their 10th year of ministry in Czech Republic.
- 7) **Christian International School of Prague (www.cisprague.org)** - 25 students this year & fi-

ful. If you need more help, you might take a look at the Emotional Inventory on our web page: www.PragueFellowship.cz

Levels of Emotional Maturity

Emotional Infant. Like a physical infant, I look to other people to take care of me more than I look to care for them. I often have difficulty in describing and experiencing my feelings in healthy ways and rarely enter the emotional world of other. I am consistently driven by a need for instant gratification, often using others as objects to meet my needs, and am unaware of how my behavior is effecting/hurting them. People sometimes perceive me as inconsiderate, insensitive, and self-centered.

Emotional children. Like a physical child, when life's going my way and I am receiving all the things I want and need, I am content and seem emotionally well-adjusted. However, as soon as disappointment, stress, tragedy, or anger enter the picture, I quickly unravel inside. I interpret disagreements as a personal offense and am easily hurt by others. When I don't get my way, I often complain, throw an emotional tantrum, withdraw, manipulate, drag my feet, become sarcastic, or take revenge. I have difficulty calmly discussing with others what I want and expect from them in a mature loving way.

Emotional adolescents. Like a physical adolescent, I know the right ways I should behave in order to "fit in" mature, adult society. I can feel

threatened and alarmed inside when I am offered constructive criticism, quickly becoming defensive. I subconsciously keep records on the love I give out, so I can ask for something in return at a later time. When I am in conflict, I might admit some fault in the matter, but I will insist on demonstrating the guilt of the other party, proving they are more to blame. Because of my commitment to self-survival, I have trouble really listening to another person's pain, disappointments, or needs without becoming preoccupied with myself.

Emotional adults. I can respect and love others without having to change them or becoming critical and judgmental. I don't expect anyone to be perfect in meeting my relational needs, whether it be my spouse, parents, friends, boss, or pastor. I love and appreciate people for who they are as whole individuals, the good and the bad, and not for what they can give me or how they behave. I take responsibility for my own thoughts, feelings, goals, and actions, When under stress, I don't fall into a victim mentality or a blame game. I can state my own beliefs and values to those who disagree with me – without becoming adversarial. I am able to accurately self-assess my limits, strengths, and weaknesses and freely discuss them with others. Deeply in tune with my own emotions and feelings, I can move into the emotional worlds of others, meeting them at the place of their feelings, needs, and concerns. I am deeply convinced that I am absolutely loved by Christ, that I have nothing to



Left:
Ester Moriah Mullen with her Aunt Erin in Dallas. She is now eligible for USA citizenship which concludes the adoption process for the Mullen family. Congratulations Ester Moriah!

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