

February 5, 2009

Dear Volunteers for Marketplace,

Lately, the ice and snow, wind storms and power outages across the state, makes it hard to think about *MARKETPLACE*, warm weather and Ruggles Camp. Yet, in just four months we will be in our last days of preparation for the twelfth year of this ministry. We have spent four years in the Old Testament and then last year we went into the New Testament, *The Messiah- His Childhood, His Ministry and His Mission*, as we looked at the life of Christ.

This year, we will continue in the New Testament with our theme, *The Early Church*, beginning at Pentecost with the coming of God's Holy Spirit and going through the imprisonments of Peter and Paul for their faith. (A time frame from about 30 AD -60 AD.) We will also look at the lives of Lydia (Paul's first European convert) and Timothy and the part they played in the spread of the Gospel

On day one, we will focus on "Power to Be A Disciple" as we discover the dramatic change that took place in the life of the disciple Peter after the empowerment of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost. On day two, the focus will be "Growing As A Christian." We will learn about a woman named Lydia who will introduce us to the Apostle Paul and the influence he had in spreading the gospel. On day three, we will meet Timothy and learn about Paul's admonishment to "...run the race with endurance." Therefore, day three will be titled "Run the Race With Endurance."

Family groups will be named after the early churches: Antioch (Syria), Antioch (Pisidia), Athens, Beroea, Caesarea, Corinth, Damascus, Derbe, Ephesus, Jerusalem, Lystra, Miletus, Paphos, Perga, Philippi, Rhodes, Rome, Tarsus, Thessalonica, Troas. As these groups move from Music, the Theatre, Olympic Games, Church/Synagogue and to the *Marketplace* they will learn the "how to's" of power, growth and running the race of the Christian Life. At the Church/Synagogue they will learn that Ephesians 6 tells us about the equipment we need.

In His final words to His disciples before ascending to His Father, Jesus tells them, "...but you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be My witnesses both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and even to the remotest part of the earth." (Acts 1:8)

Your assignment, if you desire to have power, grow as a Christian, and run the race with endurance is to spend time, as the disciples did, in the upper room, devoting yourself to prayer (Acts 1:12-14). *Marketplace* is an awesome task and we must be much in prayer. We must allow God's Holy Spirit to empower and lead us. And as we run the race of the Christian life, Ephesians 6:10-18 tells us we are to put on the armor of God. In essence, we must be equipped! There will be approximately 300 persons on the grounds on JUNE 23, 24, 25, 2009, many who come to us looking for answers, for affirmation and love. We

must lift high the cross of Christ as "...the way, the truth and the life (John 14:6)." Like Peter, Paul, Lydia and Timothy, we too, can be missionaries! (A missionary is one sent out to spread the gospel, the Good News, of Jesus Christ.)

Again we will get out the stockades to remind us that imprisonment, hardships, and danger were also a part of the struggle and triumph that marked the birth of the Christian church. **READING AND REREADING THE BOOK OF ACTS IS A MUST!** Acts gives us a profound understanding of the nature and mission of the church. Two themes underlie the story of the extension of the church from Jerusalem to Rome; the rejection of the Gospel by the Jews and its reception by the Gentiles; and the treatment of the early church by local and Roman officials. (Yes, we will have Roman guards walking through our Marketplace!) Although there is no exact picture or description of Gentile life at the time of the Apostle Paul, each city and location had its own characteristics and cultural flavor. However, there were many similarities of the Roman world at this time in history so we will explore many of the general characteristics of the Roman world at this time in history and try to highlight their influence on the early Christian church

Latin the language of the ancient Romans, became the basis of French, Italian, Spanish and other Romance languages. Roman law, principles of justice and the Roman political system provided the foundation for the legal systems of most of the countries in Western Europe and Latin America.

At our first Organizational Meeting on SUNDAY, APRIL 26 from 2-4 at the Retreat Center at Ruggles you will receive an information booklet about the Greek and Roman History and Culture and the influence it had on the early church. You will also receive more details of what we will be doing this year.

Our second Organizational Meeting will be held on SUNDAY, May 24 from 2-4 at the Retreat Center at Ruggles. I hope to see you at one or both of these meetings. It is important that you be informed of what is being done and the part you are to play in this ministry. This year we are asking that if you cannot attend the April meeting, please contact me by phone, E-mail or letter, so that we can know that you will be planning on attending. This will save much time as there are approximately 125 persons who must be contacted if we do not hear from you! Again, we ask that if you know of someone who has not participated before but is willing to work, please make sure that information is given to Doris Weber, Coordinator, as soon as possible. All adults must register and have a background check in order to work on the grounds.

We will again have Marketplace Work Days on Monday, May 25 and Tuesday, May 26. We will be discussing the specifics of this event at the April meeting.

Please make *Marketplace*, it's leaders and Ruggles Camp a part of your daily prayer concerns.



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