

# HEART-TO-HEART

*We are reminded that Christ is in our hearts and we are in His and that love connects us all in unity.*



## *Freedom*

As we celebrate our country's Independence Day on July 4, we reflect on what the day really signifies. It represents freedom. But what does it mean to have freedom?

God allows us to make our own choices, even if it's against His will. The Bible is full of stories of humans who made decisions against God's wishes. Despite our poor choices, God still loves us and wants a relationship with us. He even sent His Son to earth to make the ultimate sacrifice to

save us from sin. Jesus taught us that we should consider our freedom within the context of loving God and one another. Galatians 5:13 states, "You, my brothers and sisters, were called to be free. But do not use your freedom to indulge the flesh; rather, serve one another humbly in love."

How often do we value our individual freedom and act upon it without consideration of others? As followers of Christ, we are commanded to always have love in our hearts for one another. Let's continue to model what Jesus demonstrated that freedom looks like.

## *IN THIS ISSUE*

The Laundry Room

Listen and Obey

The Parable of the Pencil

# *The Laundry Room*

by Alli Oshiro

When we first moved into our building, one of the things I hated the most was having to go all the way downstairs to wash our clothes in the community laundry room. It was so inconvenient, expensive, and I really, REALLY didn't want to talk to people. Doing laundry is already a chore, but having to be social at the same time made it even worse.

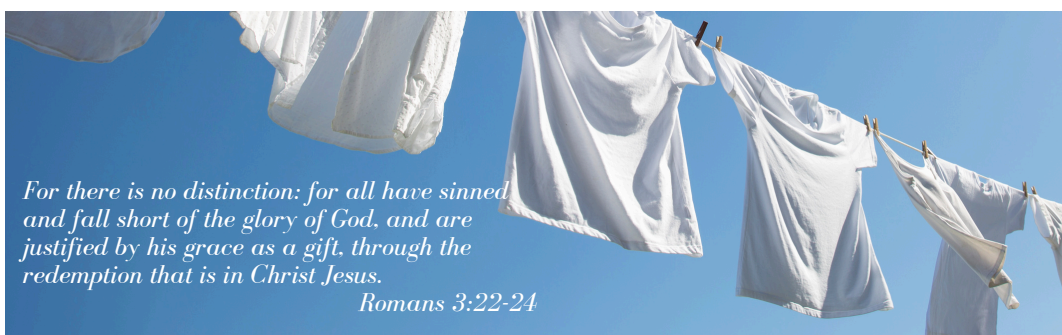
Yet over the years, I've come to see the laundry room in a whole different light. We wash clothes late at night after our kids go to sleep, so we are part of the unofficial "late-night crew". We frequently see the same set of people. There's the man with his dog who always holds the door for me and has the warmest smile. There's the mom with 4 kids who has 4 loads of laundry at minimum every time we see her. There's the local newscaster, friendly and always down to earth. There's the mom who does laundry every single day. She knows the ins and outs of every single machine better than the building staff and is always helpful when people are struggling to get a machine to work. And then there's us, a family of 4, loads of stinky little boy clothes.

After yet another late-night of washing clothes, I was in the elevator going back to our apartment and it struck me, that community can be found anywhere if you know where to look. There's just something about washing your dirty clothes side-by-side with a complete stranger that fosters community. A refreshing and comforting reminder that we are a lot more similar than we are different. The world today seems to highlight our differences more and more, pitting us against each other. But the fact remains, everyone has dirty laundry.

Isn't this also what church is like? Just a bunch of people from different walks of life, age groups, and cultures, bringing in bags, rolling in wagons, or dragging in carts of their metaphoric dirty laundry? Side-by-side we wash what needs to be cleaned. And thank goodness we have something better than detergent or bleach, we have Jesus who will make us white as snow.



When you open your heart to new experiences, you never know who you might meet and how they might change your life.



*For there is no distinction: for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, and are justified by his grace as a gift, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus.*

*Romans 3:22-24*



## *Listen and Obey*

by Jeanne Nagatani

A devotional from Charles F. Stanley caught my attention:

“We ought to obey God rather than men. Acts 1:29

God’s ways don’t always appear to make sense! It didn’t make sense for Gideon to reduce his armies from thousands to three hundred. It didn’t make sense for Joshua to send the Israelites marching silently around the walled city of Jericho as a battle strategy. It didn’t make sense for David to go after the champion warrior of the Philistines armed only with a slingshot and a handful of stones. What God calls us to do may not make sense. We may be able to come up with all sorts of excuses for not obeying. In the end, however, there’s only one wise choice: Obey God.”

One Thanksgiving, we ordered the turkey dinner from Zippy’s. There was no mention of getting the usual pumpkin pie for dessert. I was going to order a custard and a pumpkin pie from Nanding’s Bakery and decided not to. A week later, I was at Zippy’s to order lunch for myself and noticed that they had pumpkin chiffon pies for Thanksgiving. Again, something made me not order pies. I was feeling like we weren’t going to have any dessert for Thanksgiving, so I decided to make broken glass Jello instead of ordering the pies.

Belatedly, I got a text letting me know that 2 pies were included with the Thanksgiving dinner that we ordered. God saved us from having too many pies for Thanksgiving, but we did have the broken glass Jello too. Thank you, God!

Although this experience doesn’t seem like it has anything to do with Charles Stanley’s devotional, I believe that God was speaking to me and influenced my decision not to go with my impulse to get those pies. In thinking about this experience, it brought to mind that sometimes things don’t make sense, but we can hear God speak to us - if we’re listening. And all we have to do is obey.

*We go through life and don't pay attention to God even when he's yelling. Then there are the moments you never expect and can't avoid. It is at those times when you can hear him ever so clearly; even when he's whispering.*

— Benjamin J. Carey



“God’s plans for you are better than any plans you have for yourself. So don’t be afraid of God’s will, even if it’s different from yours.”

— Greg Laurie



# Parable of the Pencil

Author Unknown

"The Pencil Maker took the pencil aside, just before putting him into the box. There are 5 things you need to know, he told the pencil, before I send you out into the world. Always remember them and never forget, and you will become the best pencil you can be.

1. You will be able to do many great things, but only if you allow yourself to be held in Someone's hand.
2. You will experience a painful sharpening from time to time, but you'll need it to become a better pencil.
3. You will be able to correct mistakes you will make.
4. The most important part of you will always be what's inside.
5. On every surface you are used on, you must leave your mark. No matter what the condition, you must continue to write.

The pencil understood and promised to remember and went into the box with purpose in its heart. Now replacing the place of the pencil with you; always remember them and never forget, and you will become the best person you can be.

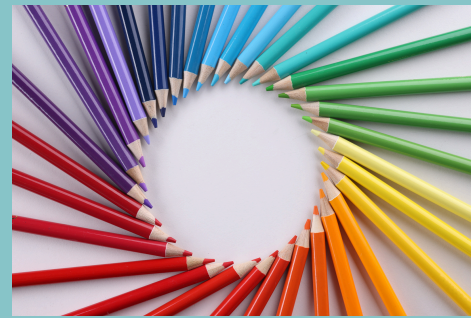
1. You will be able to do many great things, but only if you allow yourself to be held in God's hand and allow others to access you for the many gifts you possess.
2. You will experience a painful sharpening from time to time, by going through various problems, but you'll need it to become a stronger person.
3. You will be able to correct mistakes you might make or grow through them.
4. The most important part of you will always be what's on the inside.
5. On every surface you walk, you must leave your mark.

No matter what the situation, you must continue to serve God in everything. By understanding and remembering, let us proceed with our life on this earth having a meaningful purpose in our heart and a relationship with God daily."



94-420 Farrington Hwy.  
Waipahu, HI 96797  
Office: (808) 671-0699  
Email: [info@westoahuchristian.org](mailto:info@westoahuchristian.org)  
Website: <http://www.westoahuchristian.org>

Pastor - Stan Miyamoto  
Assistant Pastor - Jason Oshiro  
Editorial Staff - Alli Oshiro & Julie Morita



"...For I know the plans I have for you," declares the LORD, "plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future...."

JEREMIAH 29:11

*Please feel free to contact:  
Alli Oshiro or Julie Morita  
about this newsletter or to  
submit an article.*