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To: jodester32@twcny.rr.com
Subject: yesterday's devotion today

40 Days of Community

A Set of Thoughts, Ideas, Questions and Ponderings
Submitted for your Digestion
October 27, 2005 Day 32

Introduction: We are all in "this" 2gether. No one is getting out alive. As we explore what it means to be in community through Rick Warren's [better together](#) it is essential that we tailor make this study to fit our communities. This devotional is meant to be a conversation starter. It is personal musings on the daily readings' subject. If another author is not noted then the opinions expressed are those of Jodi Haier and only reflect her understandings and her journey. If you do not wish to receive a devotional a day for the next 40 days, please respond to this email with a thoughtful "no, thank you" " Instead of just forwarding this *please* send people's email to me. I am not trying to be a control freak but I want to know where God's going with this. People viewing this on the webpage can contact the webmaster with any comments. THANKS! Jodi

Fellowship 2gether: "cultivating a life in common"

(1Cor 1:10) I was surprised when Rick brought up feet again. I thought I was done with that topic. Who washes the feet in your group? Who models the love of Jesus? Who has a servant's heart? I think that Radar from [MASH](#), typifies a true servant's heart. He was always attentive to the needs of others. He sought to anticipate the other person's agenda to the point where he could almost read their mind. He paid attention to detail and routine. He knew everyone's preferences and tried to meet their needs and wants even before they were spoken. But Radar is a character. He may be based on a very efficient real person, but he does not really exist. A servant empties themselves of their desires, their goals, and yes, even their vision in order to follow and serve the master fully. Who are we serving? Who are we following?

Grow 2gether: "accepting, affirming, and advising"

(Rom 15:7, 1Thess 5:11, Col 3:16) I think it is an interesting paradox that Rick Warren starts today's reading with "Remember to be forgetful." Humility is understanding and accepting who you are. Yet in order to be humble you must empty yourself of self. What did God create when you were born? What choices will you make? Those questions are very different. God created the essential you. We've added on over the years. (No, that isn't a fat joke.) Humility is finally admitting what God created and what we tried to turn ourselves into. When I was created, my weaknesses and strengths were designed for a purpose. Throughout my life I have tried to use my strengths to overcome my weaknesses. That however was following my agenda. My life was all about me. Now I am trying, with the help of my group, to be all about God's love. I have accepted God's agenda. That does not mean that I deface what God has created in me. I am happy that there is something about me that can be used for God's purposes. When I name those things, people could see it as pride. I see it as gratitude.

Serve 2gether: "working 2gether with 1 heart & 1 purpose"

(Phil 2:2) You are under God's authority when you choose to serve. God may change your plans radically without the proper notice or paperwork. You might think that your service is about baking or building, only to have God remind you that your service is about people. I can't find it anywhere in the bible where we are directed to bake cookies for someone. Now I am not diminishing what a fine cookie will do. Will a cookie help us bear one another's burdens? Our shared purpose needs to have the kingdom at the center. Our heart needs to be the servant's heart. What have we learned over the course of 32 days that will show us how to change our hearts and how to discern our purpose? Now is a time of reflection. What changes have you allowed? To whom will your service bring glory? Let us pray.

The Covenant Prayer

I am no longer my own, but yours
Put me to what you will, rank me with whom you will
Put me to doing, put me to suffering.
Let me be employed for you or laid aside for you,
Exalted for you or brought low for you.
Let me be full, let me be empty
Let me have all things, let me have nothing
I freely and willingly yield all things to your pleasure and disposal.
And now, O God, you are mine and I am yours.
So be it, and the covenant which I have made on earth,
let it be ratified in heaven.
AMEN

Worship 2gether: “come 2gether in my name”

(Matt 18:20) I have lyrics floating through my brain that I just can't place. “Not to us, but to your name be the glory.” Let the glory and fame and adulation that may come to our lives be given to its rightful owner. Let the praise build the kingdom. There is a bible verse that tells us to store our treasures in heaven. Matthew 6: 19 – 21

¹⁹“Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy, and where thieves break in and steal. ²⁰But store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where moth and rust do not destroy, and where thieves do not break in and steal. ²¹For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.

I want to find a way to give God all that is due to the kingdom. Our worship is that opportunity. It is not about the tools of worship: songs, chalices, bread, signing, dancing, or even bibles, and crosses. Worship is connecting with God in such a way that our daily earthly lives are forever changed. It is an internal process that must bear outward fruit. If ever I have a near death experience, (I'm not looking for one, so don't get any ideas.) I would like to be shown what I have stored in heaven, what has brought a smile to the face of my Lord, and what has made the angels sing. I only hope that I will be able to see it through all my earthly clutter.

Reach Out 2gether: “get others to believe”

(Phil 1:27) How many scientists have to prove an idea before it is accepted? How many experiments must be performed before truth is established? How many possibilities must be explored before an idea is beyond a reasonable doubt? How many times must a life be saved before it is given into the hands of the One who saved it? There is an Elton John song that contains the lyrics: “Someone saved my life tonight, shouldn't ha' been.” We often allow our perspective about the value of our lives to cloud the miracle of our salvation. We need to be shown repeatedly that we are loved and mightily so. We need to feel valued and validated over and over again. We allow one casual comment to undo years of thoughtful prayer.

So why do we think that someone is going to believe us about the power of Jesus' love the first time we mention it. Maybe we think that the first (and maybe only) time we show God's love should be enough to turn a person's life around. We need to be careful that we are not holding the unchurched to a different higher standard than we hold ourselves. Yes, people are turned towards God during an initial encounter. In order for them to walk with God daily, they need a guide. They may think they don't need one or don't deserve one. We need to change the lyrics to: “Someone saved my life tonight. Glad they did.”