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The Bell Tower

The Newsletter of Angier United Methodist Church

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From the Pastor...

The Jesus Question

Some years ago, I attended a youth rally with a group from the church I was serving at that time. We were watching a skit being performed by another youth group that seemed to be getting long and drawn out. Nevertheless, we gave our full attention.

At first the skit seemed to be going nowhere. There were humorous remarks and sight gags. Finally, in a moment of quiet exasperation, one astute young man turned to me and asked, "What does this have to do with Jesus?"

In defense of the youth skit, it did finally come around to having a message about God's love. But that young man's thoughtful question is THE question to be asked not only at a youth rally, but anytime the church gathers. By asking what I now call "The Jesus Question," the church distinguishes itself from the world.

While there are many good, generous, and helpful civic organizations, the church is not simply another benevolent community program. We stand as a beacon for those who need Christ's transforming power in their lives. Nor are we simply here to "make a difference." Rather, we are here to make a difference *through Jesus Christ*.

Jesus is the one factor that makes all the difference between being a group of nice, helpful people and being the Body of Christ for the transformation of the world.

I've served a number of "busy" churches that have a plethora of activity. While we celebrate the many opportunities of fellowship and outreach, let's not mistake "busy-ness" for real life-changing ministry. Let's always keep before us the biblical mandate of making disciples of Jesus Christ.

Never forget that our "doing" comes from our "being" - our being connected to a maturing relationship with God who has been fully revealed to us in Jesus of Nazareth. It is his life, death, and resurrection that empowers us and gives us hope.

So the next time you're in a Sunday School class, or at a Trustees meeting, or a Church Council meeting, or planning a fellowship event or church outing, I dare you to ask..."What does this have to do with Jesus?"

Because of Jesus,

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