

## *“Causing ripples”*

July/August 2008

Hymn           “Come let us sing”   VU 222

Scripture       Matthew 10: 40-42   “He who receives you receives me, and he who receives me receives the one who sent me. Anyone who receives a prophet because he is a prophet will receive a prophet’s reward, and anyone who receives a righteous man because he is a righteous man will receive a righteous man’s reward. And if anyone gives even a cup of cold water to one of these little ones because he is my disciple, I tell you the truth, he will certainly not lose his reward.”

Prayer           Let us pray together – O God of the prophets and our God, we have struggled with you in lonely places and praised you in the company of your people. We have cried out to you and you have shown us your steadfast love. We have resisted you and you have drawn us back into the circle of Christ’s disciples. Pour out your blessing on each one of us. Hear our prayers, and renew our spirits. Amen.

Reflection      To accept, to welcome, to receive are all active verbs. It’s not just a matter of recognizing someone as Messiah, prophet, or righteous person, but what we’re willing to do about them. Are we accepting them, welcoming them, receiving them? For not to receive actively those whom Jesus sends, is to reject Him. And what about the way we engage with a child of God who loves God but is estranged from church or biblical interpretations? We do well to remember that, inside our church structures and our club environs and out in the margins where the accepted or rejected live.

There are three Godcentric ripples here: receiving a Jesus follower means receiving Jesus which means receiving God. Another trinity which includes not only Jesus’ humanity inside it, but ours too; yours and mine; personally and corporately as Jesus’ Body, making us real insiders. Does the life of our club flow through all three ripples? If there are no ripples, maybe our pond is stagnant, rather than living water.

What Jesus says next underlines our responsibility to care for each other as fellow ‘little ones’. But what exactly is ‘the cup of cold water’ needed by those around us. When our neighbour tells us, “No thank you, I don’t need any help”, can we be aware enough to know their real needs and sensitive enough for them to let us give them that ‘cup of cold water’ without infringing their pride or dignity.

Our churches do a good job of setting up some “welfare agencies” to meet some of the needs of people. Our National organization provides assistance for some blind persons, some campers, and some students. But that doesn’t let us off the hook of personal responsibility Jesus calls us to have towards those in need. Maybe we need some low key ‘cups of cold water’ by little people for little people, disciples or not? And then humbly demonstrate with these ‘cups’ to Whom we all belong, across all three ripples.

Discussion     What starting place can we find to begin some such rippling?

Closing prayer            Let us pray –For your abounding grace, we give thanks, O God. For your steadfast love, we pour out our gratitude. May our service to you and to other people provide for those who seek refuge from doubt, from oppression, from ignorance, and from calamity. Through our service in Christ’s name, we seek to grow in the Spirit of One who gave life itself for us. Amen.

Coming events            Kairos 2008 for young adults (18-30) at Five Oaks, Ontario August 25 to 29  
AOTS National Council meeting in Red Deer, Alberta September 13-14