

Feeding the Flock

Proclaiming Christ

Elders

- John Barton
john.barton@acu.edu
- Joe Bell
bellj@acu.edu
- Makolm Coco
cocom@acu.edu
- David Copeland
dcopeland@sipcotx.com
- Ray Ferguson
ray.ferguson@condley.com
- Roger Gee
geerd1812@sbcglobal.net
- Cam Hurst
camhurst@sbcglobal.net
- Robert Marion
rmarton@hendrickhealth.org
- Charles Perkins
clperk4549@gmail.com
- Don Pope
don.pope@coba.acu.edu
- Jack Stewart
abilenepapa@aol.com
- Glenn Tuttle
glennutt@sbcbglobal.net
- Cleddy Varner
varnerc@acu.edu
- Jim Watts
wattsabilene@sbcglobal.net

Contact Elder

- David Copeland
dcopeland@sipcotx.com

Ministers

- Alan Clute, *Involvement/Seniors*
aclute@hillcrestonline.com
- Cynthia Coates, *Children's Education*
cynthia@hillcrestonline.com
- Brian Davis, *Mission and Evangelism*
briandavis@hillcrestonline.com
- Jack Hardcastle, *Family*
familyman@hillcrestonline.com
- Justin Hatfield, *University*
justinhat@gmail.com
- Matt Haynes, *Preaching Minister*
matt@hillcrestonline.com
- Evan Simmons, *Youth*
evan@hillcrestonline.com
- Marshall Wade, *Youth*
marsh@hillcrestonline.com

Contentedness: An American Value?

"And what do you benefit if you gain the whole world but lose your own soul?"
Mark 8:36 (NLT)

I once visited Choluteca, Honduras, a hurricane ravaged city in Central America. The damage was so great that a huge section of the city's homes were re-built using sod in a desert just outside the original city. Together with an adjunct professor from ACU named Ryan we went to a friend's home in the new section of houses.

The friends were a middle-aged couple living with their four children and two orphans, children of recently deceased members of the same church. In the house there were three hammocks, and no beds. The parents and the two youngest children slept in the hammock in the main room, the elementary age boys and teenage son slept in the hammock in a second room, and the elementary age girls and teenage daughter slept in the remaining hammock. As we were talking, the mother sent the children outside to turn on the faucet. The pipes provide water only twice a day, and so this family fills the entire sink at those times to use for cooking, bathing, and drinking throughout the rest of the day. The small sod structure in which this family lived was smaller than any room in the middle-class American house I grew up in. I further noticed the dirt floor, the open windows (i.e., open holes in the wall with no glass) covered by a sheet, perhaps to mimic curtains. I have no recollection of any electricity in this house, certainly no television.

As Ryan and I rode the bus back into town, we stopped at the ice cream store because we were hungry and very hot and thirsty from the dusty roads. Ryan and I discussed how the family we just left would never be able to go and buy ice cream simply because they were hot and dusty. We wondered, however, what it is that makes life better. Does money alone? Riches, opportunity? The abundance of wealth and opportunity in the U.S. does not seem to solve any problems. Ultra-rich entertainers (e.g., athletes, musicians, actors, actresses) all seem to have their share of problems. The abundant provisions of these rich apparently does not make them immune to broken families, broken hearts, and broken lives.

Is it possible that most of these wealthy people would exchange much of their wealth for a trustworthy and stable relationship with someone they loved? And isn't that the sort of thing people truly desire? The rich are able to afford more expensive short-term solutions but they never provide lasting happiness. Our Honduran friends were happy in the midst of their situation, a situation we would regard as dire poverty. But contentedness does not seem to be a core American value.

This week may you combine godliness with contentment and then your gain will be great indeed.

Ryan Jessup