

Devotion from the past ... 2006

Extended reading: [3 John 1:1–4](#)

The Party is Over

“Nothing could make me happier than getting reports that my children continue diligently in the way of Truth” (3 John 1:4 *MSG*).

The Lord be with you.

The party is over.

Party? Are any educators so befuddled by classroom rigors that they equate the departed academic term with a year-long party? Some party!

Where are the streamers when Jose’s lunch-time habits result in milk streaming from his nose? Where are the party hats when Francine’s mother launches her weekly shriek about how everyone in class shuns her daughter just because she exercises her right to bathe only when the moon is full? Where is the fruit punch when class discussion of the Sixth Commandment drains all color from the instructor’s face and causes a rash of phone calls from parents who openly reject teachings that reveal their wanton sinfulness? And where is the cake when mom darts in to tell you that Lily won’t be back next year because they must find a new place to hide out from dad?

No party ever is perfect.

Sin sees to that. Sin is like the party crasher that shows up uninvited, hoarding and wasting the goodies intended for the genuine guests. Sin is like the reveler whose revelry is fueled, rather liberally, by spirits that are anything but holy. Sin ruins our parties much the same as it destroyed the first party—the one in the garden called Eden.

Nevertheless ...

... we have just concluded a party, and it won’t be long until we’re devotedly preparing for the next one. Indeed, many educators in Lutheran ministries are already party hopping! From confirmation or classroom right into VBS. From VBS right into other summer programs. From summer programs into decorating classrooms for another 9-month bash!

Okay, to consider our educational ministry a party remains a hard sell. But consider all the good times you had. Like when Jeremy, suffering from KAC (kindergarten alphabet chaos) defined *melon* as something his mom squeezes on

fish. Or when the sixth graders let down their guard and actually sang “Jesus Loves Me” with the gusto of first graders. Or when that certain walled-in adolescent spoke his baptismal vow. Or ..., well, take some time right now to share or reflect on the high points of your party.

Successful parties depend more upon the party planner and provider than the guests. Here is where we can't go wrong. God, through Jesus Christ, plans our parties. His Word is our refreshment. His Spirit is the Life of the party. He even dresses us in righteousness party attire. And He gives us wonderful memories—the best of which we share with John in today's text: “Nothing could make me happier than getting reports that my children continue diligently in the way of Truth.”

Praise to You, Lord Christ! Keep the party going!

Pray. Thank You, dear Father, for sending us to the party that is our ministry. Thank You for the privilege of working for You to bring success and happiness to the guests we serve. Amen.

Written by Ed Grube

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To our God and Father be glory forever and ever. Amen. (Phil. 4:20)