

“When the Son of Man comes in his glory, and all the angels with him, then he will sit on the throne of his glory. All the nations will be gathered before him, and he will separate people one from another as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats, and he will put the sheep at his right hand and the goats at the left. Then the king will say to those at his right hand, ‘Come, you that are blessed by my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world; for I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, I was naked and you gave me clothing, I was sick and you took care of me, I was in prison and you visited me.’ Then the righteous will answer him, ‘Lord, when was it that we saw you hungry and gave you food, or thirsty and gave you something to drink? And when was it that we saw you a stranger and welcomed you, or naked and gave you clothing? And when was it that we saw you sick or in prison and visited you?’ And the king will answer them, ‘Truly I tell you, just as you did it to one of the least of these who are members of my family, you did it to me.’ Then he will say to those at his left hand, ‘You that are accursed, depart from me into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels; for I was hungry and you gave me no food, I was thirsty and you gave me nothing to drink, I was a stranger and you did not welcome me, naked and you did not give me clothing, sick and in prison and you did not visit me.’ Then they also will answer, ‘Lord, when was it that we saw you hungry or thirsty or a stranger or naked or sick or in prison, and did not take care of you?’ Then he will answer them, ‘Truly I tell you, just as you did not do it to one of the least of these, you did not do it to me.’ And these will go away into eternal punishment, but the righteous into eternal life.”

Do You Care?



I fed the hungry, gave drink to the thirsty, gave clothing to the naked, and shelter to the homeless. I healed the sick and visited the prisoner.

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“Whatever.”

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I was reflecting the other day about what a church is? What is a church to you? \_\_\_\_\_

I'm assuming to that the church is important to you. Why is the church important to you?

Certainly a church is many things, but if I was to define a church I would define it this way. A Church is a community of people who care like Christ cares; cares about other people . . . cares about the world. The Church of Jesus Christ cares. The United Methodist Church of North Chili cares. Indeed, this church is a center of Christ's caring . . . God's love of the world.

You are the Church . . . a community of people that cares about other people and the world in the way Christ cares about people and the world. You are in the Church because others in the Church have cared about you. You mattered to the people of the Church. So many people feel that nobody cares . . . that they don't matter. That's a problem many people experience about the world.



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Isn't that the witness we received last week from Ileana, Alberto, and Jose . . . They are overwhelmed by your care for them. No questions asked, after they were referred to you, the Body of Christ here in North Chili, you embraced them and were extravagant in your care. They hardly understood a word you said them and they felt like they mattered . . . that they were important.

It matters that you care . . . it matters to God . . . it matters to others and to the world . . . and it matters to you . . . The United Methodist Church of North Chili is a center of Christ's care! Wow!

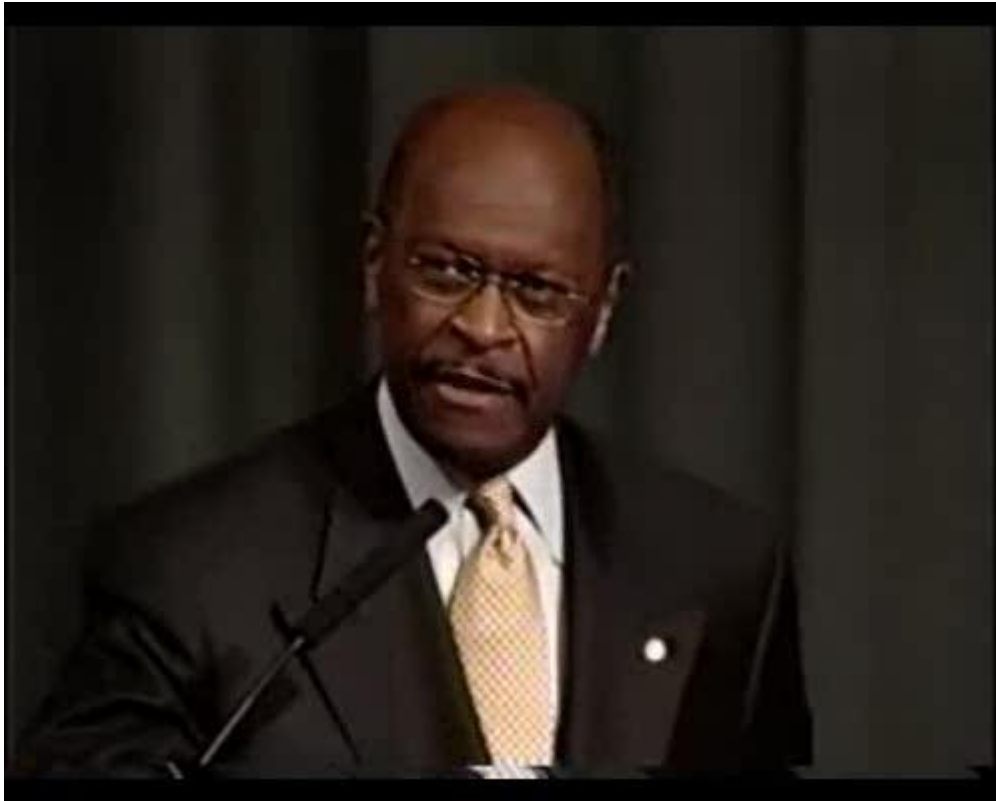
Why do you care? Why, it's a matter of salvation! Indeed we're saved because God cared enough to send his son into the world to save it. We're saved because God thought about us enough to save us rather than condemn us. John Wesley says it this way, "Saved even me, underserving as I am." God doesn't treat us like we're undeserving!

What do you do when you reject or condemn something? You abandon it. You leave it like it is worthless to be destroyed. What do you do when you accept or save something? You invest in it. You treat it like it is worthwhile to be renewed.

God has invested in you through Christ! God has chosen to build you up rather than tear you down! And God has not said "Pull yourself up by the bootstraps" or "here are some resources, save yourself."

Hardly! Here is my Son! Here is my Spirit! You are part of my family now! You are part of me! You matter! You are so important to me that I have sacrificed the life of my son for you! That's our story!

Do you care Church? Let me hear how much you care. Let me hear you say it, "I care!" When you care you make a difference to God, to others, to the world and get this, you matter! Wow!



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Herman Cain has been accused of four counts of sexual harassment. Does it matter? He's running for President of the United States! Did he do it? He claims not. Some like his business acumen and ideas. They say he would be an excellent President. They want him elected. They believe Cain is being set up. They don't want to know whether he harassed those women at all. They don't care!

Some don't like his ideas at all. They don't think he has what it takes to be President. They don't want him in the White House. They don't care if the allegations are true or not. They just want the allegations to stick. What matters to them is not whether Cain is guilty of sexual harassment or not. They just want him to lose. Really, they don't care!

But did Cain harass those four women? Is there fire where there's smoke? Do you care?

Do you know that as many as 70 percent of women and 45 percent of men report experiences of being sexually harassed in their workplaces? I'm not sure how accurate that assessment is, but that's a lot of smoke. Does it matter? Do you care?



[http://a.abcnews.com/images/US/ap\\_Joe\\_Paterno\\_jt\\_111108\\_wg.jpg](http://a.abcnews.com/images/US/ap_Joe_Paterno_jt_111108_wg.jpg)

Graham Spanier, President of Penn State University and Joe Paterno Head Coach of the Penn State Football Team, and a few other prominent persons with the University and football program have been fired over covering up the sexual assault of a boy by an assistant coach in the team locker room, a coach that assaulted 20 boys over a 15 year period. The number of reports has grown as the investigation presses forward. This cover up lasted ten years. Does it matter? Do you care?

29% of women and 14% of men report being sexually abused as children. 78,000 cases of sexual abuse were reported and substantiated in 2006. It is estimated that only 12-30% of cases are reported to authorities, so as many as 260-000-650,000 cases of child sexual abuse occur in the United States per year. Does it matter? Do you care?

That sexual abuse has occurred in homes, in schools, in day care centers, and in churches. Does it matter? Do you care?

Sexual harassment . . . Sexual abuse . . . poverty . . . hunger . . . homelessness . . . immigration issues . . . racial profiling . . . the high rates of incarceration among Blacks, Hispanics, and Native-Americans . . . the lack of educational advancement among Blacks, Hispanics, and Native Americans . . . corruption in American business and American government and covering up that corruption. Does it matter? Do you care? What is the consequence of not caring?

There are obviously a lot of people in our country that don't care. Leave Herman Cain alone. You're only on his case because he's a black man. I hope not. But did he do it? And does it matter that he did, if he did? Do you care? And how about all those other women . . . and men . . . who say were sexually harassed? Do they matter? Do you care? What is the consequence of not caring?

Graham Spanier and Joe Paterno at Penn State . . . Leave these men alone. Look at what they've done for Penn State all these years. They were doing their jobs; looking out for the interests of Penn State . . . the university . . . the football program . . . Did they do what they could do? Does it matter? Did they care? What is the consequence of their not caring?

So the time has come, the Son of Man, the Christ comes in glory, all his angels with him, and he takes his place on his throne. And he looks at everyone gathered before him; people from every nation and every age. And he separates the people, like a Shepherd separates sheep from goats. And he places those who are like sheep to his right, and those who are like goats to his left.



And he sees to those seated at this right, "Come into eternal life with me! You are blessed by God! Receive your inheritance, the Kingdom of God. It has been prepared for you from the beginning, because you cared about me. You fed me when I was hungry, you gave me drink when I was thirsty, you welcomed me when I was a stranger, you gave me clothing when I had none, you cared for me when I was sick, and you visited me when I was incarcerated."

And those, pleased as can be with his words wondered, but "when was it . . . where . . . how . . .? And they searched their minds . . . when did we feed you . . . when did we give you drink . . . when did we welcome you . . . when did we clothe you . . . when did we comfort you . . . and when did we visit you in prison?" And he answered . . . "as you did to for one of the least of these who are members of my family you have done to and for me. You cared about me. I mattered to you. You made a difference!



Then, he turned to those at his left and he said, "Get away from me. You are cursed by God! There is no inheritance for you! You will have no part of me and the Kingdom of God. Yours will be the kingdom prepared for the devil and his angels. For when you saw me hungry, you sent me away with nothing, I was thirsty and you didn't even offer me a glass of water, I was a stranger and you wouldn't talk to me or let me in, I was cold and needed cover and you didn't offer me any clothing, I was sick and you let me suffer, and when I was in prison you left me there alone to rot. You didn't care about me. I didn't matter to you."

And those, agitated by his words demanded, "But Lord, we didn't know it was you! If we had we certainly would have helped!" And Jesus responded, "Just as you did not do to and for one of the least of these, you did not do to or for me. You didn't care. I didn't matter. And now, you expect me to care about you? Now that you haven't made a difference with your lives, you want to matter? I do care. That's why I'm sorry. By failing to help these others you have neglected and denied yourself.

Do you care? And now you know the consequences of caring and not caring. Does it really Matter?

And the righteous shall go to eternal life, and the ignorant to eternal torment.

Herman Cain, if he is innocent, will rise above the accusations made of him. And if he's not will be vilified. There are consequences to his actions. And for those who look the other way and vote for him, if indeed he has harassed women, because there are consequences for not caring. Does it matter? Do you care?

Graham Spanier and Joe Paterno and others at Penn State are paying the price for not caring or not caring enough for the boys who were victimized and their families. And Penn State will be paying that price. The Catholic Church is paying that price. Our schools are paying that price. Our society is paying that price. Does it matter? Do you care?

Do you care that so many of women and men in our society are being sexually harassed? Those are our daughters and son, being brought up in a culture that says "Hush now. Don't tell. And boys will be boys and girls will be girls." A culture that teaches them that sexual harassment is okay.

Do you care that so many people in our society, boys and girls, are sexually abused by people they love and trust and have power over them? Does it matter to you that are ashamed of themselves for what has been done to them, and grow up in a culture that says "Quiet now. Don't make problems for your abuser. You let it happen and no one is going to believe you?" Does it matter that they grow up wanting to feel powerful in an area where they have been made to feel weak, and so become abusers themselves or let their spouses abuse them?

Do you care that so many in our country, Black, Hispanic, Native American and White, are poor, hungry, are failing academically, lack access to health care, and end up in prison rather than college dorms, and living hand to mouth rather than prospering?

Here it is in a nutshell: You make a difference by your caring and by your not caring. You make a difference by what you do and say and by what you don't do or don't say. You make a difference because you do matter! Do you care like Jesus says he cares? Does it matter, like Jesus says it matters? Because there are rewards for caring and consequences for not . . . Do you care?