

## Relationship Building

Some 16,000 communities in the United States and Canada celebrated an event called National Night Out this past week. Kernersville was among those communities that sought to build positive relationships between their citizens and law enforcement officers. A goal of the program both locally and nationally was to build camaraderie and a caring atmosphere. The Kernersville event definitely succeeded in doing that. A large open field was transformed into a festival area with a sound stage, informational tents, food trucks and a chance for children to get a first-hand look at several fire trucks. Fire department station 41's ladder truck was fully extended upward to display a giant American flag. During most of the evening a band provided a variety of music while the evening concluded with a picturesque fireworks show.



A benefit of the evening was for our first responders – police and fire department personnel – to interact with the public they serve. As a town elected official I mingle with police officers often so I know the officers personally as friendly, caring people. They are present at community events providing for our protection. They have

families and go to church in the community. They worship the same God that I do. They exercise at the Y and shop at the same stores that we do. They have a tough job to do, and they do it well, serving the citizens as their primary objective.

Even though intellectually we understand their role to protect us, we often have some apprehensions when we see them on the street. It is our natural instinct to look at the speedometer to be sure we aren't exceeding the speed limit and we think back to the last stop sign, wondering if we made a complete stop. The truth is, most of us do exceed the speed limit at times, occasionally run through intersections after the light has turned red and roll through stop signs. As a result, seeing the police car probably causes us to think first about their law enforcement role and then, secondly, about our relationship with officers.



Spiritually, it is God that provides for your protection. So, how is your relationship with your heavenly Father? God knows your past but is more concerned about your future. He knows you are a sinner but He loves you anyway. *"But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: while we were still sinners, Christ died for us (Romans 5:8).* We speed down the highway of life knowing that we aren't always doing things the way God wants us to, but having a relationship with our Heavenly Father helps us find a meaningful future. Just as the National Night Out is about bringing police and neighbors together under positive circumstances, building a positive relationship with God establishes the foundation of an eternal relationship that will bring us joy.



We may get a warning from a police officer for a minor traffic violation if our attitude and relationship is a good one. God grants us the biggest reward – forgiveness of our sins, if we have a relationship with Him.

When you develop a positive relationship with law enforcement or the Grace of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ you have nothing to fear. *So do not fear, for I am with you; do not be dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you and help you; I will uphold you with my righteous right hand (Isaiah 41:10).*

**Question:** How can you enhance your personal relationship with Jesus Christ?

**Prayer:** Dear Lord. We desire a special relationship with you. It is what gives us direction in how we are to live our lives and the forgiveness we need when we fall short. We thank you, Lord, for being there for us. Amen.