

Children's sermon: June 26, 2011

**"The evolution of Dennis"**

Are you excited about going to church camp with me someday?

Oh, well ...

Hey, I just got back from camp ... lots of fun ... can't wait to take all of you!@!!

One of Fred's friends was at camp this week ----- DENNIS!@!! What a crab ...what a grump!@!!

I'd like to share his story while at camp ---- I call it ... "the evolution of Dennis."

For a while ... he looks like a yo-yo. You know how it is ... life has lots of "ups and downs" ...

(The groans from the audience are beginning already ...)

Actually ... Dennis is a "holy roller" ---- just like this ball with all the holes in it.

Dennis knows all the answers ... he is "right" ... everyone else is "wrong."

So, what happens to Dennis at camp???? ... he becomes an "alien" ... just like this little guy.

Dennis is on his own planet ... in his own world ... and he spends most of his time ALONE!@!!

And ... why not? ----- he isn't any fun to be around.

And ... like this little "slinky" (any of you play with slinkies???) ... all Dennis does is "slink" around

camp .... doesn't talk to anyone ... and complains about everything!@!!

Well ----- Fred has seen and heard enough.

This isn't the way God wants us to live. It's not good for Dennis ... and it's not good for the other

kids in camp!@!!

So, one day ... as Dennis is walking to his next class ... Fred gets his "parachute of goodness" ... leaps out of his

styro-foam cup of goodness ... and covers Dennis with LOVE.

Dennis fusses and fumes ... he grumbles and frowns ... BUT FRED WILL HAVE NONE OF IT!@!!

He tells Dennis in no uncertain terms:

*THIS IS NOT THE WAY GOD WANTS YOU TO LIVE.*

*THIS IS NOT REALLY THE KIND OF PERSON YOU WANT TO BE.*

*SOMETHING IS GOING TO CHANGE ----- RIGHT NOW!!*

It's Friday ... only 2 days of camp left.

Dennis is hurrying up the sidewalk ... he wants to catch-up to the other kids.

Let's take a look at Dennis ... he's in this styro-foam cup.

Look ... and feel ... Dennis is different. The holes are gone ... no more alien-face ...

he is soft ... and ----- HE IS SMILING.

And here he is on Saturday... the last day of camp ----- he is attaching himself to the younger kids ... and teaching them what it means to be happy.

Every time I go to camp ... I meet someone like Dennis.

Amazing ----- when you love and care about others ... it can change their lives.

Look at the altar up here ... it's a "buffet of goodness" ----- balls, and happy faces, parachutes, and aliens, even a few "holy rollers" and yo-yo's. Yes, it's the "evolution of Dennis." Help yourself to this buffet ...

it's always fun telling stories about the "power of love."