


Reflections

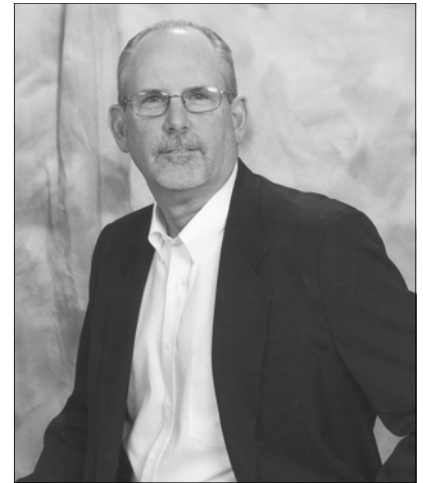
Riverpark Bible Church

December 1, 2010

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Reflections from the Pastor's Heart



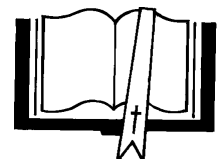

Having just finished our study on the Trellis and the Vine I was blessed beyond measure to see vine work recently take place as several ministered to Beverly Adams. Beverly's husband, Marcus, died in a small plane crash November 17 in Florida. Marcus was 48. Beverly and her three sons, Zach, Ben and Nate (ages 10, 13 & 15) will continue to need others in vine work to help them through the difficult days ahead. But vine work has already been happening.

The vine work I observed began before I arrived at the Adams' home a few hours after word was received about Marcus' death. Three ladies from Riverpark had already arrived and were God's comforters at one of the most difficult times of life. More men and ladies joined in comforting and preparing for Marcus' memorial service. It was one of the easiest services for me to administrate because several stepped up to assist Beverly with the planning. Our Joint Heirs Flock rallied together to get the food for the lunch after the service. I observed some of our High School students being there for Zach, too. What a joy for this pastor.

Marcus retired a few years ago from the Air Force. He was a Lieutenant Colonel and served our country. Most importantly – Marcus was saved at the age of 17. So his destiny was set by God's choice of him before the foundation of the world. Many of us gathered to celebrate his life and to let his testimony and walk with Christ be shared with the many military personnel present at the service. Vine work happened big time in the last few days in our midst.

All this to say ... I'm grateful to God for motivating many to vine work as we say goodbye to a wonderful husband, father and friend.

Blessings,
Pastor George

Just Born

Trey Luther Carlson
November 22, 2010
7 lbs., 11oz.
Eric and Sierra Carlson

Emmanuel Oliver
November 30, 2010
8 lbs., 12 oz.
Daniel and Vera Oliver

James and Sheri Fontes welcome into their family **Natalia Rebekah** (14) and **Anastasia Grace** (13) through the blessing of adoption.

Member Ministries

Pastor Dave Parker

Consider the Cost

If you decide to pick up David Platt's book titled *Radical*, you may get angry, you may disagree, but you will be challenged. Here is an extended quote from chapter 1 in his new book. It reminds me about the kind of people Jesus was looking for who would make disciple-makers and who would turn the world upside-down. Enjoy!

"Contrary to what [we] may have thought about Luke 9...[Jesus] was simply and boldly making it clear from the start that if you follow him, you abandon everything – your needs, your desires, even your family.

"The events of Luke 9 were not isolated incidents in the life of Jesus, either. On another occasion, when surrounded by a crowd of eager followers, Jesus turned to them and remarked, "If anyone comes to me and does not hate his father and mother, his wife and children, his brothers and sisters – yes, even his own life – he cannot be my disciple." Imagine hearing those words from an obscure Jewish teacher in the first century. He just lost most of us at *hello*.

"But then he continued: "Anyone who does not carry his cross and follow me cannot be my disciple." Now this is taking it to another level. *Pick up an instrument of torture and follow me*. This is getting plain weird...and kind of creepy. Imagine a leader coming on the scene today and inviting all who would come after him to pick up an electric chair and become his disciple. Any takers?

"As if this were not enough, Jesus finished his seeker-sensitive plea with a pull-at-your-heartstrings conclusion.

"Any of you who does not give up everything he has cannot be my disciple."

Give up everything you have, carry a cross, and hate your family. This sounds different than "Admit, believe, confess, and pray a prayer after me."

"And that's still not all. Consider Mark 10, another time a potential follower showed up. Here was a guy who was young, rich, intelligent, and influential. He was a prime prospect, to say the least. Not

only that, but he was eager and ready to go. He came running up to Jesus, bowed at his feet, and said, "What must I do to inherit eternal life?"

"If we were in Jesus' shoes, we probably would be thinking this is our chance. A simple "Pray this prayer, sign this card, bow your head, and repeat after me," and this guy is in. Then think about what a guy like this with all his influence and prestige can do. We can get him on the circuit. He can start sharing his testimony, signing books, raising money for the cause. This one is a no-brainer – we have to get him in.

"Unfortunately, Jesus didn't have the personal evangelism books we have today that tell us how to draw the net and close the sale. Instead Jesus told him one thing: "Go, sell everything you have and give to the poor, and you will have treas-

ure in heaven. Then come, follow me."

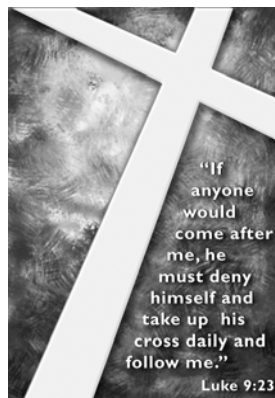
"What was he thinking? Jesus had committed the classic blunder of letting the big fish get away. The cost was too high.

"Yet the kind of abandonment Jesus asked of the rich young man is at the core of Jesus' invitation throughout the Gospels. Even his simple call in Matthew 4 to his disciples – "Follow me" – contained radical implications for their lives. Jesus was calling them to abandon their comforts, all that was familiar to them and natural for them.

"He was calling them to abandon their careers. They were reorienting their entire life's work around discipleship to Jesus. Their plans and dreams were now being swallowed up in his.

"Jesus was calling them to abandon their possessions, their family, their friend and themselves. They were leaving certainty for uncertainty, safety for danger, self-preservation for self-denunciation. In a world that prizes promoting oneself, they were following a teacher who told them to crucify themselves. And history tells us the result. Almost all of them would lose their lives because they responded to his invitation."

What if you were told to...give up everything we had in order to follow Jesus? This is where we come face to face with a dangerous reality. We *do* have to give up everything we have to follow Jesus.



For Your Information

Opportunity Sheet

Attention Riverpark Church Family! We are creating a weekly publication called the "Opportunity Sheet." The goal is to give our church family a place for opportunities to be collected and published weekly, enabling us to match needs throughout our church body. If you would like to submit something to this publication, you may email your request to opportunity@riverpark.org. Items must be received by 3:00 p.m. on Thursdays and will be published for three weeks only. Then they must be re-submitted. Ads will be taken for employment, services available, items needed, or for sale. You may pick it up on Sundays at the Information Center.



High School Ministries

Pastor Kevin Hall

*Mr. and Mrs. David S. Hall
are pleased to announce the
marriage of their son
Kevin David to
Ayemi Htet
on November 20, 2010*

*You are cordially invited to
share in celebrating
Kevin and Ayemi's
marriage at a reception on
Saturday, December 18, 2010
from 2:00 to 4:00 p.m.
Riverpark Bible Church
Family Center*

A New Beginning

In preparing this month's newsletter article I was reflecting on what the Lord has been doing in my life and ministry. I have to say that many things are changing for the better for your high school pastor, and for the ministry that God has privileged me to have here at Riverpark Bible Church. On November 20, I was married to Ayemi Sein in Los Angeles, where Ayemi grew up. We would like to invite you to a reception here at the church in the Family Center. I have been so blessed to be a part of the ministry here at Riverpark and would love to have you come and celebrate with us as we begin this next part of our lives. Many of you have prayed for me over the years, both as a son of Dave and Rose Hall who was struggling with Crohn's disease, to now as your high school pastor. Many of you have also invested in my life in so many other ways, so it would be great to see one and all there.

And if I may, I would like to thank you for the blessing it is to be the high school pastor here, and for your kind reception of Ayemi already. We thank God for the people that He has surrounded us with in ministry.



Music Notes

Pastor Mike Bohr

Why Do We Sing?

By Marlene Thrasher

No other holiday, no other time of year is so filled with music for the season, that not only pleases the ear and makes hearts light, but more importantly, causes our attention to be focused on the single event in history that provided the only One who gives the most precious gift of all—eternal life. It is Christmas, the time for celebrating the birth of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Silent Night, Holy Night, Away in a Manger, O Come All Ye Faithful, Hark the Herald Angels Sing, the list goes on and on. We have heard them and sung them since we were little children, even before we understood what the words meant. Why?

For some it is tradition. You gather together with your family around the Christmas tree, in a home decorated with lights, candles, and holly, with wonderful smells emanating from the kitchen, and you sing carols. Or you're riding in the car, and the radio stations are playing Christmas Car-



ols, and you sing along. But how much attention is paid to the words being sung?

Unfortunately for some, they avoid singing or even listening to anything that speaks of Jesus, or may reflect a story from the Bible. Their "holiday" is filled with Santa Claus, reindeer, snowmen, and elves, with no thought of the Christ child at all, except to run if you hear His name.

But for believers in the Book, for the children of God, for the bride of Christ, it should be different. We not only listen to the words as they are being sung, but we believe what they say. Here are some of the words you will hear during this year's Christmas Concert at Riverpark:

"Look up, fear not," the angel said, "Behold the Messiah's come, the One of whom you've read." **Luke 2:10, 11** says *And the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid; for behold I bring you good news of a great joy which shall be for all the people; for today in the city of David there has been born for you a Savior who is Christ the Lord.*

"King of Glory, hope for all nations, sent to earth to save and redeem. Prince of Peace, behold and adore; the Son of God has come to set us free." **Isaiah 9:6** says *For a child will be born to us, a son will be given to us; and the government will rest on His shoulders; and His name will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Eternal Father, Prince of Peace.*

"Join the joyful song we sing. Come, lift your heart to the King of kings!" **Revelation 17:14** says *These will wage war against the Lamb, and the Lamb will overcome them, because He is Lord of lords and King of kings, and those who are with Him are the called and chosen and faithful.*

Why do we sing? Because it is who we are. Jesus came to earth, was born, lived and died for us! Salvation is through no one else. How could we do anything but sing His praises, sing glory to His Holy Name, lift up to the heavens the name of the One who came to seek and save the lost...us. We cannot hold in the joy He brings.

Come and join us on **Saturday, December 11, at 3:00 p.m. or 6:00 p.m., or Sunday December 12, at 6:00 p.m.** as we celebrate the birthday of the King.

Junior High Ministries

Pastor Joey Hull

The Gift of Biblical Worldview

Christmas is a time of celebration. It is an opportunity to center upon the Gospel and the joyous birth of our Savior. Joy to the world, the Lord has come! However, Christmas has slowly but surely become a reminder of the increasingly post-modern culture that we live in. Rather than rejoicing at all the implications of CHRISTmas, we are called to merely enjoy the “holidays.” Shouldn’t having a couple days off work be enough reason for the season? Thus, “Happy Holidays” instead of “Merry Christmas” is now the politically correct greeting for this time of year. And “Christmas” trees are now to be referred to as “holiday” trees. Yet, it is not the mere change of terminology that catches my attention, but how more and more people understand truth to be relative and self-defined. The idea of the Gospel as absolute truth has become a thing of the past—an old notion that is considered to be arrogant and intolerant. However, what more can we give to the next generation than to pass on a biblical, Christ-centered worldview that permeates their thinking three hundred and sixty-five days a year?

Over the past couple of months, the teaching theme for the Junior High’s Thursday night youth group has been on the importance of viewing all of life through the lenses of a biblical worldview. God does not want His people to merely be conformed to the sinful ways of this fallen world. Whether an issue pertains to church life, marriage, friends, sports, or the latest

technology, God wants His people to see all of life through the truth of who He is and what He desires. In order to accomplish this, we must be those who are transformed by the renewing of our minds through the power of the Holy Spirit and the authority of God’s Word. In a culture where authority and absolute truth are mocked, our students need the generations before them to point them to Gospel-centered living. Unless our young people are enlightened by God’s truth, they will simply be another statistic who leave the church only to blend in with the sin that surrounds them.

In opposition to the thinking of popular culture, God’s people must “See to it that no one takes you captive by philosophy and empty deceit, according to human tradition, according to the elemental spirits of the world, and not according to Christ” (Colossians 2:8). Instead, we must “...destroy arguments and every lofty opinion raised against the knowledge of God, and take every thought captive to obey Christ” (2 Corinthians 10:5). However, the dilemma facing Christians of all ages is that such radical living means we will stand out as



However, what’s more unloving: to allow someone to continue in their

pursuit of foolish living for fear of hurting their feelings or to call them to repent of their sin and turn to Christ out of a reverence for the sovereign Creator of this universe?

“God does not want His people to merely be conformed to the sinful ways of this fallen world.”

Psalm 19:7-11 reads, “The law

of the Lord is perfect, reviving the soul; the testimony of the LORD is sure, making wise the simple; the precepts of the LORD are right, rejoicing the heart; the commandment of the LORD is pure, enlightening the eyes; the fear of the LORD is clean, enduring forever; the rules of the LORD are true, and righteous altogether. More to be desired are they than gold, even much fine gold; sweeter also than honey and drippings of the honeycomb. Moreover, by them is your servant warned; in keeping them there is great reward.”

If we believe that these verses are true then it is just illogical for us to settle for anything less than prayerfully giving our youth a high view of God and His Word. Let’s be intentional about learning and living out a biblical worldview that we are passing on to others. Let’s pray that the Holy Spirit will graciously work in our lives and the lives of our youth, causing us to embrace, love, and walk in truth. Together, let’s delight in God by declaring His glory and the authority of His Word, while making disciples who treasure Christ above all else. And as a result, may you have a Merry CHRISTmas!

“different.” Especially for junior highers, where impressing their peers is tantamount to their self-perception, encouraging a counter-culture lifestyle can seem cruel and unusual.

Women's Ministries

Kristi Barefoot

Counting My Many Blessings



As I write this article, it is not yet Thanksgiving, so my thoughts are on my blessings. I have so much to be thankful for and I know that it is the will of God to be thankful, so here I go.

- I am thankful for God's mercy in my life to save me from my sin and give me His righteousness.
- I am thankful that He called me to be a wife, and to be loved by an unselfish man.
- I am thankful that God blessed me in my infertility with the gift of adoption of two sons. They have brought my life joy.
- I am thankful for a church family that has embraced me as a leader and servant.
- I am thankful God has provided friendships that have sharpened me and caused me to grow in my understanding of the Gospel, caring for me physically and spiritually.
- I am thankful for God's financial provision after a long time of unemployment for my husband.
- I am thankful for parents and family who have invested in my life in so many ways.
- I am thankful for a team of women who serve alongside of me in Kingdom work.

I am a blessed woman, and if this is all there is in life – it is more than I deserve.
Kristi



Girls Gone Wise, in a World Gone Wild

By Mary Kassian

A New Bible Study for young women and even their moms...

You are invited to join us on Friday nights, at 6:45 p.m. beginning January 7, 2011. Kristi will host this very important Bible Study in her home. It is based on Proverbs 7 and contrasts the wild woman and the wise woman. It is a counter-cultural study of Biblical Womanhood. High School ages up through Young Adult women are the target, but any aged woman will be challenged by this study. Junior High girls may attend but must be accompanied by their mom (PG-13 issues). "This information caused me to repent to God for the wrong attitudes I had. I learned how wild I really am and how I need to be a Girl Gone Wise. It is a must for our women to learn."

December Birthday Connection Invitation!



If you are a woman, and have a birthday in the month of DECEMBER, you are invited to celebrate in my home on **Thursday, December 16, 7:00 p.m.** It will be my way of connecting with more women who call Riverpark their church home. RSVP to Kristi on Sunday at the Women's table, call the church office 435-0190 or email kristi@riverpark.org.

Thank you!

To all the hostesses, greeters, cooks, bakers, servers and coordinators who served the Lord and His women at our Holiday Tea, thank you for helping with the details of trellis and vine work. So many were blessed by your servant hearts. Blessings to you in this Season of Hope,



Donna Parker and the Women's Ministry Team

Creative Connection

Want to make your own Christmas gifts? Danette Gillingham will teach an evening class on December 15, at 6:30 p.m. in Classroom #1 (modular building). Make one or more Custom Photo Pendants and/or a Scrabble Tile Necklace. Cost is \$3.00 each. Sign up at the Information Center by December 12.



SURVIVING THE HOLIDAYS!

Help for the divorced and separated during the holidays. If you're separated or divorced, the holidays can be a lonely and stressful time. But there is encouragement and hope. A class will be held December 12, at 10:30 a.m. in the Sanctuary Conference Room. All are welcome.



Missions Report



Brenda Allen

Serving with WorldVenture
Guinea, Africa

Brenda Allen was appointed as a career missionary with WorldVenture in 1992. She served at International Christian Academy for missionary children in Bouake, Cote D'Ivoire for more than a decade. She now lives in the town of Can-can, Upper Guinea, and travels to rural villages where she continues to nurture relationships with friends, and uses her skills as a nurse and educator in teaching rural village people basic health care, as well as sharing stories from the Bible. She continues to learn the Maninka language in order to work and witness well in an oral culture. The Maninka people are one of the least evangelized groups in Africa, with only 100 known Christians among a population of four million.

Recently, during political unrest in Guinea, Brenda has been serving in Cote D'Ivoire. During the past seven months in Guinea, elections have been the focal point of many discussions and demonstrations. Ethnic tensions have been, and continue to be, troubling. In Brenda's area people of one ethnic group fled their homes and towns where they were the ethnic minority. Although Brenda has enjoyed her return to Cote D'Ivoire and her ministry there, she is looking forward to returning to her adopted homeland, Guinea.

Here are her recent prayer requests:

- May the new leadership of Guinea be men/women of justice and peace.
- May this land rich in natural resources develop.
- Most of all may many people know God as Creator and Personal Savior.
- For peace in our hearts, minds and bodies during this time of political transition.
- FK (A believing women with terminal cancer; that I may be able to help relieve the pain with medication).
- AC and his siblings would grow in their faith walks after their dad's early departure for heaven. That their mom would soon be able to receive their dad's pension.

Chapel Service at the Mission

Have you ever been to one of the evening chapel services at the Fresno Rescue Mission? We take a team from Riverpark on the first Friday evening of January, March, July and November. You are welcome to come with us and just observe.

This is what I saw on Friday, November 5: The chapel was full. As James and David led in worship, the "Disciples" (the men in the Academy rehab program) were standing and singing from their hearts, but most of the street people were sitting and looking sad (some dozing), while some stood with hands raised to the Lord.

As Charles spoke the "Disciples" listened intently; some of the street people slept, but many listened carefully. I looked at the people from the street and prayed for them. They were all once adorable newborn crea-

tions of God. He knew the path they would take. Some are in their present situation because of foolish choices; some because of circumstances beyond their control. God loves them all. I prayed that they would understand the word of God.

Thanksgiving Baskets

Thank you to the flocks that contributed Thanksgiving Baskets for families in our community. This year two flocks put together food for five families that would have had little to eat on Thanksgiving. They were blessed because we care, but our message was to tell them that Jesus cares and loves them, and to let them know what His love has accomplished for them (the gospel).

Local Outreach Christmas Project

It is time. The deadline is here. All gifts and food (except perishable) for our Christmas families must be at the church by Sunday morning, December 12.

There is still time to sign up as part of the **Prayer Team**. Here is how it works: Those who are delivering food and gifts will be given the name and phone number of one of the prayer team members. They will then phone that prayer team member and give them the names of the family members to whom they are delivering, and the day and time they will be making the delivery. Signup at the Local Outreach table in the breezeway.

Save the Date

Christmas Eve Service

A Family Friendly Christmas Eve service will be presented, Friday evening, December 24, at 5:00 p.m.



Marriage Conference

Save the date for "The Art of Marriage" Conference coming to Riverpark Bible Church on February 11 & 12, 2011. The cost will be \$35 per couple. More information to come soon!



Israel Tour, 2011

March 28—April 6, 2011

There has been good response to the upcoming trip to Israel in March with Pastor George and Linda. We have room for about six to eight more people. If you are interested call Sue in the Church Office.

Children's Ministries

Sandy Parker

PARENT QUESTION:

When your kids leave home someday, which one of the following would you want most for them?

- a. to be successful academically
- b. to be successful athletically
- c. to be successful socially
- d. to be a person of faith and character

I know, you wanted an e) all of the above, but you can only pick one.

Try this question: Which of the following parenting issues gets the best of your time, effort, money, anxiety and planning?

- a. academics
- b. athletics
- c. social life
- d. faith and character development

Did the thing that you claimed to be the most important to you get priority on your list? (Adapted from God's Grand Vision for the Home by Dr. Rob Rienow.)

Leaving a Legacy: Another question: What do you want to be remembered for when you are no longer around? Maybe you were good, kind, generous, had an infectious laugh, paid bills on time, kept the house clean, provided for your family, hard working, etc. These are all good but here are a few thoughts from Dennis Rainey on Family Legacy.

1. Your legacy is not about you. It should be about God, and should be about honoring God. Your life should reflect Him and show the world what He is like.
2. Every legacy is going to be, unfortunately, marred by sin. But how you handle your sin will demonstrate to your family how to handle their failure.
3. Your legacy will involve steps of faith, and courageous acts, but it also will involve sacrifice. Your kids need to see that the choices you're making can cost you something.

Family Christmas

Shopping, menu planning, decorating, baking, visiting, so much to do - but have you planned how you will speak truth into the lives of your own family and also into your extended family? It might be as simple as reading the Scriptures and sharing a few ideas. (The Swedish Method).



Idea

What shines from the passage? What affects you the most, or gets your attention?



Question

What is something difficult to understand, or a question you would like to ask the writer?



So what?

Share a personal application. What truth can you take away from this Scripture?

Pray for wisdom and creativity. God already knows what you do. The enemy would love to distract you in your busy-ness. Plan now and let the family help.

AWANA

Thank you to our Awana pancake crew, Delinda Hernandez and Kitchen Chef, Samantha Hull for serving over 400 people delicious pancakes and sausage. What a yummy night!

Sticky syrup has nothing on B.A.R.F. Night (Bring A Real Friend) and the end of our Pie in the Face Contest! WHAT a MESSY night! Our Pie in the Face Contest produced 684 sections in three weeks (!), ten leaders getting *pied* and ten kids who had the chance of a lifetime (yes, drama)! And to join in the excitement, we had about 35 friends visit us that night for the fun. Some even braved "the barf" (Mrs. Parker's secret recipe) to try to win a prize. Great night where the Gospel was presented!

Congratulations to our Pie Throwers: Lauren Bailey, Faith Sale, Carter Kemp, Faith Aston, Savannah Kemp, Jessica Lake, Hunter

Kennedy (Joel Crapo got to massacre Bret instead), Samantha Howery, Eraan Hermosilla, and lucky Gavin Roper, who got to throw a pie in Mrs. Parker's face, hair, ears, nostrils, etc. A big hooray to our great leaders: Jackie Rios, Tony Wirsche, Brent Cline, Janie Wilson, Jill Mitchell, Bethany Wilson, Bret Mitchell, Becca Cheney and of course lovable bearded-this-year Pastor Joey. "So I am willing to act like a fool in order to show my joy in the Lord. Yes, and I am willing to look even more foolish than this..." (Really?) 2 Samuel 6:21.



Guess Who?

**So
clean**



**So
messy**



Reflections

George Posthumus, Senior Pastor
 Dave Parker, Associate Pastor
 Mike Bohr, Worship Pastor
 Paul Micu, Young Adult Pastor
 Kevin Hall, High School Pastor
 Joey Hull, Junior High Pastor
 Sandy Parker, Children's Ministries
 Karen Drew, Preschool Ministries
 Kristi Barefoot, Women's Ministries
 George Hansen, Visitation Pastor

Upcoming Events	
Christmas Musicals	December 11 & 12
Women's Birthday Connection	December 16
Preschool Christmas Musical	December 19
Christmas Eve Service	December 24
Church Office Closed (Merry Christmas)	December 27
Church Office Closed (Happy New Year)	January 3
Men's Breakfast	January 15



RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

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