

The Sharing Org

Ministry to the Adult Foster Care Community

DECEMBER 2013

Ministry Moment

So here we are at the end of 2013 and what is it that I have learned since 2003 when we began this ministry?

First, I have learned that the Call of God is horribly good. I cannot express it any differently than that. There are a dozen things that I complain about on a daily basis, but when I am really honest I must admit that there is no other place I actually fit in this world and no other place that I would rather be. Bitter sweet has been my experience. My flesh rebels in many ways against the sacrifices required to fulfill the Call, but my spirit knows that everything is good and exactly as it should be. "Where your treasure is, there will your heart be also."

Second, I have learned that no matter what my study of God tells me is true, the humans Jesus died for on the cross will always make me rethink my best efforts – and the efforts of the Theologians who have come before me. Just when I get settled in what I believe to be true, a human reality causes me to experience the cross afresh and give out the grace that was so freely given to me.

Third, I have learned that I am free – completely free. Before I responded to the Call of God in 2003 I was always trying to "fit in" someplace. In church, in small group, in college, in circles of friends, I was vying for the doctrinal and theological approval of my peers. Now, I realize that I am performing on a stage for an audience of but one. I learned that the pursuit of man's permission and approval will always lead me to being busy but not necessarily busy with what He has called me to.

Fourth, I have learned to always err on the side of grace. There have been a thousand experiences over the last 10 years that cause me to blush, a thousand experiences that have caused me to be ashamed of myself, and a thousand experiences that have caused me to question my own mental stability at times, but the one thing that I have learned that has set everything aright is that Jesus Christ died on the cross for people just like me. He died, yet while I was still a sinner, so that I might be redeemed and His grace might be revealed to the world through me. In every situation I have learned that Jesus died for people just like me, and I need to err on the side of grace. And please, for those who know me well, I know that I am better at saying these words than I am at living them, but every day and every situation I try - or really want to try – to live them out.

And finally, I have learned that I am still growing in my faith and that the many theories that I have learned have yet to fully mature in my life. I have learned that though I might be a microwave-kid, God is patient.

~John

Prayer Letter:

Pop Quiz! I had five main goals for 2013. Do you remember what they were? No? Okay, let me help you out:

1. Stay on mission
2. Print new hymnals
3. Assemble 100 shoeboxes with residents
4. Write & publish 10th year anniversary book
5. Meet the annual budget

Well, we've done well this year I think. We did stay on mission and we even expanded into a new location and started a small group at that location. With your financial help we have created the new hymnals that so badly needed to be replaced. Again, with your financial help we have successfully assembled 100 shoeboxes with the residents. The 10th year book is where we have not yet been successful because I seriously underestimated the time frame for editing. The book has been written but it is still in the editing process. While it is still possible to be published before the year's end, the reality is that it is not likely, so I consider this goal for 2013 to be incomplete. Then with the annual budget, we are likely going to fall some \$3,000 (9%) short this year, but this is not a surprise, and I am extremely pleased with what God has provided. So the annual budget goal is also an incomplete. Thank you all for helping us meet the goals that we have met this year, especially with keeping on task with the mission because the mission is the reason any of this matters.

I have but one prayer request for the coming month. Megan and I will be meeting with a couple who desire to do ministry in adult foster care homes as we are. We are excited and nervous at the same time. There are a bunch of things that will have to be done, but I ask you to pray that as we meet with this couple that all of us are in tune with God's leading for them, for us, and for the residents that would be served. It is easy to just move forward, but it is vitally important that we don't miss the will of God in this, so please pray that God's will be done and the residents would best be served.

Please remember to rejoice this Christmas season as we remember that "The Word became flesh and made His dwelling among us..."

Merry Christmas,



John