

*Continued from front page* Open it and Pray. Open it and let it rain into your life.

What if you did an experiment this month. May is a busy month: end of school, parties and proms, Mother's Day and summer coming. In this busy month, what if you did your best to water your lawn. Not the grass out front of your house, but the heart, mind, will and strength that makes up you. What if you drank in the rain each day, or several solid times each week, asking the Lord to make you flourish. Why not take 4 hours over the course of this week to read and pray. Make 4 appointments with the Lord – just you, His Word, your journal, your prayer list and his Presence. No phone, no facebook, no TV. Listen to the rain falling from heaven into your heart.

- Open it with a journal next to you, and ask questions of what you read, make observations of things.
  - Open it and read 4 chapters a day (that will get you through the bible in a year). Some of you are already reading 5 chapters in the NT per day, to read through it twice in 2 months – GREAT.
  - Open it and dwell in a short section, chewing it over and over again.
- Open it and pray it back to God.

God waters the earth with monsoons, light rains, a good shower and the like. Doesn't matter how you get the rain... just THAT you get it. What do you say?

No wonder Isaiah starts this awesome chapter with "come everyone who thirsts, come to the waters..."

*Father of Creation, water me today. Saturate my mind and will, heart and body with your Word. Then, may I be bread to those who need today's nourishment from you. And, then, may I be seed scattered like so many kernels of Christ in every person I meet today. Water me today with your life-giving, thirst- quenching, soul-reviving Word. In Christ's Name, Amen.*

\_ Jason McKnight

# Grace Matters

Grace Fellowship Church

May, 2009

## Water From Heaven

*As the rain and snow come down from heaven, and do not return to it without watering the earth and making it bud and flourish, so that it yields seed for the sower and bread for the eater,*

*so is my word that goes out from my mouth: it will not return to me empty, but will accomplish what I desire and achieve the purpose for which I sent it.*

Isa 55:10-11

dant pastures grow, on food celestial feedeth." The Word feeds, nourishes, sustains us. But it also is the long-term, behind-the-scenes vehicle of growth that is at the heart of God's plans for this world.

Each devotional reading may not be memorable, each sermon may not be a barn-burner, each "special verse for you" from someone may not stay with us forever... but each of these is an example of the water of God raining down, seeping in, producing growth and lifting upwards.

Together this rhythm of life brings about God's purposes for us: our vibrant growth and our participation in God's sustaining cycle on earth. In fact, Hebrews talks about land that drinks in rain but bears only thorns and thistles (Heb 6:7-8); it is worthy only of being burned.

So, God is sending his rain: his Word. His effective Word, his purposeful Word, his accomplishing Word, his successful Word, his filling Word. He is leading us out in joy and peace. He is replacing the thorn and briars that just grow in our lives with strong Cypresses and beautiful Myrtles (Isa 55:12-13). All because his Word rains down, seeps in, flows out and evaporates up.

So, how do we drink in the rain that is falling? What is it that we can do to get in the Word? I've got one idea: Open it. Open it today. Open it tomorrow. Open it and read. *Continued on back page*

The hydrological cycle is the background music of our lives. I woke up this morning to the sound of the birds chirping just outside our open window. I didn't wake up to the sound of water evaporating. Yet, that water enables the birds to sing and the plants grow, the animals to rummage through our garbage (argh!) and us humans to live. Without the rhythm of rain coming down, seeping in, flowing out, evaporating up, and gathering together in the air, there is simply no life. The cycle of water is the background music of our lives.

So, too, Isaiah tells us, is the Word of God. Its cycle is the background music that enables life. Water goes back to the clouds after causing tremendous growth. As the song based on Psalm 23 says, "by streams where living waters flow my ransomed soul he leadeth, and where the ver-

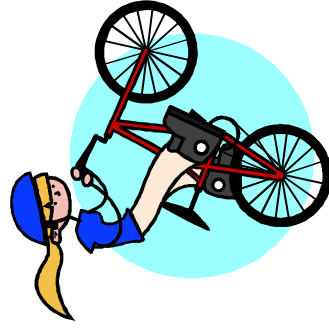


## Summer Mission Trip

- **To:** ALL Grace families (school age children and older)
- **What:** Summer mission trip at the Refuge Camp. An unforgettable week with your family and friends helping to build and prepare the grounds to plant Christian seeds. There will be construction (painting/building, etc), landscaping, and whatever else is needed. **NO** skills required...just an open heart and willingness to pave the way. There will be a “creation day camp” for all elementary kids while the adults and older kids are off doing their mission work around the camp!

When: August 3<sup>rd</sup>-7<sup>th</sup> (Monday-Friday)  
 COST: Estimate of \$300/person (through fundraising, financial assistance will be provided) Creation Camp \$200/person..

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### BMX Show

Sunday May 17, 5pm in the parking lot at Grace. Everyone is invited to come as our very own Kevin Albritton and his team perform amazing bike stunts. Several local youth groups will be gathering with GFC youth for a great time. Invite your friends.

## May Anniversaries

- 15 - Gram & Diane Spear
- 19 - Win & Margaret Edwards

## May Birthdays

- 1 - Anne Albritton
- 3 - Lori McArthur
- 3 - Parker Rudolph
- 5 - Josh Spear
- 7 - Steve Irvin
- 8 - Kaitlyn Allen
- 9 - Margaret Edwards
- 10 - Timmy Haerer
- 10 - Anne Albritton
- 12 - Barbara Patty
- 21 - Paula McArthur
- 23 - Claire Edwards
- 25 - Colin Field
- 27 - Abby Irvin
- 29 - Mark Oglesby
- 30 - Christina Foster

## Coming Events

- May 10 - Mother's Day
- May 15-16 - Worship Conference at Grace
- May 17 - BMX Show at Grace
- May 25 - Memorial Day

## Advanced Planning

- June 7 - Senior Sunday & Fellows Graduation
- June 21 - Father's Day
- June 22-26 - Erasing the Lines
- July 4 - Independence Day
- July 6-10 - GoldRush
- July 20-23 - Vacation Bible School
- Aug 3-7 - Family Mission Trip at The Refuge



### Prepare the Way Update

Give thanks for how God is leading. Please continue to ask God for guidance as the elders discern the next steps. Also ask Him to provide all this and more through our giving.

Total Given to date: \$91,782  
 Total Committed to date: \$627,380

“No man is poor who has had a godly mother.”

Abraham Lincoln.

## Parent Power Points

Light is precious to physical and spiritual growth. God spoke it into existence in Genesis 1, “Let there be light.” We also read, “God saw that the light was good and He separated the light from the darkness.” In John 8:12 Jesus confesses that He is the Light of the World and whoever follows Him will not walk in darkness. In rearing children, we lead them into light by teaching them right choices. The world speaks darkness (sin) that causes them to stumble.

Review Galatians 5:22. God teaches that through His Holy Spirit we will bear fruit of love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control. The Light of the Word in our children fertilizes spiritual seed that over time yields a harvest of “right choices”: Godly character.

Parents: how might you reflect (as a mirror) the light to your children? Try these tidbits to fuel the journey for right choice patterns:

- L** = Listen to God (read Scripture together and pray)
- I** = Instill a love for pleasing God (Adopt a Scripture verse a week to live out e.g. Eph 4:29)
- G** = Give attention to “right choices” (catch children choosing right actions and say so!)
- H** = Help children make right choices (redirect wrong choices in advance to prevent them)
- T** = Train through your spiritually positive actions (show them the way to righteousness in your right choices)

Parents you tend the seed patch which becomes the grove of trees that spreads the Word and seeds another harvest. Children's ministry treasures your child and family of God!

Jo Jackson  
 Children's Pastor