



## ***Growing in Grace...Transforming Communities***

Dear Friends,

August 2010

"Did you have a good summer break?"

"Break? What break? Was that a break?"

Remember when summer was summer? I do. 6<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> grade, summers of 1976-1978, lounging on Eric's lawn, in the shade of stately Elms, across the street from my house. The boys from Golf Circle and Greenwood Dr., nothing to do most of the day from June-August. Eric, Mark, Pete, Bryan, Drew and Dave. Maybe Steve would stop by, or we could get Billy or Bill to even up the teams. "Waddaya wanna do? Dunno. Football? Too hot. Super heroes? Duh. Hot. Ride uptown? Flat tire. Frisbee? Mrs. Brown took it... remember Eric hit her car? Oh yeah...Elimination? Na... Pickle! Ok, pickle. (nobody moves) Get your glove. Billy has it. Go get it! Go get yours! You first. Why? If Billy isn't home, then I won't have to go get mine. Get Bryan's. No, it's plastic. Mark's, then. You get it- besides, it's a lefty, duh! I can use a lefty! Yeah, then you'll throw like a girl. You look like a girl. You look like your mom."

We would play something eventually, most often just Eric vs. Dave- whiffleball in my driveway. White Sox vs. Cubs World Series...as if.

Why do I have such strong pleasant memories of doing...nothing? Do kids do this anymore? I think they do- many kids in my extended neighborhood do this, but many of the other kids we know, including our own, seem to rush from one activity to the next, driving all over town. Rather, being driven...by us parents. Are we missing something? 2010 Sacramento is a different and more complicated world than 1977 Wheaton, IL, sure. But I hope there is something that we can learn from that simpler time.

Today I actually saw a bumper sticker of a phrase that I [thought I] made up for a sermon once. "Don't just do something, sit there!" My point was about prayer and solitude nourishing us for active service of God and neighbor. Lately the same phrase sings to me of God's amazing Gospel of Grace.

All our activity is not bad in itself, but it can lead to a desperate and idolatrous self-salvation enterprise that has us searching for quick spiritual fixes that we control and from which we expect immediate results. This spiritual scrambling for self-justification is naturally human, and characterizes all of the world's religions... except one- True Christianity!- the Gospel of Grace.

***Bridge of Life***

***Pray... Go... Stay... Grow... Listen... Learn... Serve... Teach... Bring... Transform***

Don't just do something, sit there. Sit in the healing pool of God's grace, knowing that you need it, can never deserve it, and yet it's yours- God's great love for you!

Our little church is growing in grace. We are learning to crave it, to thrive on it, to give up our human addiction to our own strength and rest in the arms of our loving creator, arms whose hands were stretched out and pierced for us! As we mature, we are learning how we can follow Jesus as we take up our cross, stretch out our own hands to be pierced, and then, just like Peter, we can love Jesus by feeding his sheep (John 21:15-19). It is always easier to see how some other people are sheep. (Kinda smelly, none too bright, not much to offer, super needy.) Grace helps us see ourselves more clearly. One word- Baaaaaa. The truth of the gospel is that we are all sheep; equally broken, equally needy, equally in need of a shepherd/savior. And we are all equally, and magnificently, loved. We have supreme value that we will never deserve but will enjoy forever!

We Bridge of Life sheep have some deep friendships with each other, and it hurts when we experience loss. We had an amazing intern this summer, Kristen Soule, who became part of our Bridge of Life family, and we sent a part of our heart with her when she returned to college, and a part with several other couples dear to us who moved for new jobs or school. Many others come and go; we are learning that we have a long-term calling to an often transient community, and it is a beautiful privilege and responsibility that we gratefully embrace.

We are praying for God to pour out his grace as he continues to break us of our desire to "dress ourselves and go where we want" and for his direction as we follow him and "stretch out our hands as others dress us and lead us where we do not want to go." (John 21:18) Where is that? The cross.

Thank you for your prayers and support. We are truly grateful to God for you and all his blessings.

Go Well,

Dave

***Gifts to: Bridge of Life P.O. Box 348201 Sacramento, CA 95834***

***916.606.5999***

[dlindner@bridgeoflifechurch.org](mailto:dlindner@bridgeoflifechurch.org)

[www.bridgeoflifechurch.org](http://www.bridgeoflifechurch.org)

<http://bridgeoflifechurch.blogspot.com/>

***Bridge of Life***

***Pray... Go... Stay... Grow... Listen... Learn... Serve... Teach... Bring... Transform***