



SNOWBIRD NEWSLETTER

May 2006

Vaccinated Against The Truth

Dear Folks - It is so good to be able to communicate with you all once in a while. Lately, I have been thinking about a truth that came to me after many years of consternation and wonder. I witnessed the first graduating classes of Christian schools come of age and begin to enter life as "what was thought to be" the "Super Christian Generation." Let me explain . . . many of us thought that the kids graduating from a 100% Christ honoring environment would become the next "champions" of the Faith.

The truth is they were luke-warm, half-hearted, worldly, disinterested in the things of God, mockers, deceitful, sneaky, and just plain hardened to the love of Jesus and the Bible that I knew and understood. Oh, they knew what was right, had all the answers, memorized large portions of Scripture, went to church for years, but upon getting their total freedom of choice at 18 years old, began to manifest their real desires as life played out.



Many of these graduates, ceased to attend any kind of church anywhere. They play on the weekends, drink moderately to heavily, want financial success above all else, and give only a light duty acknowledgement to even the thought of "sacrificing" for Jesus.

I was so upset at this phenomenon, that I asked God to give me a message on it, and explain it to me. In a few years from that time He did, with a sermon entitled "Vaccinated Against the Truth," preached in 1997 and on our web-site, if you want to download or listen to it. God moved that evening service, and when I listened to that message, I realized that the Holy Spirit did something that is not reproducible. I have preached that message since then, once, but it just did not have God's power as that evening.

Do you want to unravel the puzzle of "why Compromised Christian schools turn out "spiritual monsters?"

Watered down truth will "vaccinate" you against the fully potent truth when it comes by your house, as it were. Be so careful, not to settle for "downgraded, or weakened truth," either in your church, school, or whatever, or you will get "vaccinated against the pure truth" and find yourself resisting the Holy Spirit's conviction and moving away from the fundamentals of the Bible.



Share this truth with your friends and it will explain what used to be "unexplainable" to me.

Love you all, Bill Lytell, Senior Pastor

What's Happening . . .

Our first newsletter of 2006 is off. As I sit here and write this article, I am amazed that the 2005-2006 winter season has passed us and we are into the month of May. It certainly is hard to believe. My main focus in this article will be to bring you up to speed on the latest "happenings" at Gospel. I trust this letter will help you to feel like you are right here with us.



The most recent activity was the sunrise service at Bonita Beach. This was our fifth year hosting this service since Bonita Beach Baptist closed its doors and gave us the rights to continue what they had started some 30 years ago. What a great service we had, other than having to get up so early. The service began at 6:30 a.m. with special music, Scripture reading and then a strong message from Pastor Lytell. Our estimates were that the crowd numbered about 800 people.

Pastor Moon, Bill Jackson and Warren Brown did a fabulous job in setting up the eight speakers. The sound was so good that the newspaper reporter who came could hear us from the road. In fact, I have heard stories of people who live nearby in the condo units that opened up their doors and listened from there. We never know how God will use these types of services. I was really encouraged last week about all this when a lady stopped by for services and said she had attended our Easter service last year. Praise the Lord!

The bus ministry has just ended a month-long promotion. There was a special lunch one week for the parents and kids. We, in fact, did have a few bus parents show up for this, of which we were thrilled. That same morning the third through sixth grade children sang a special in the main service. On Easter Sunday, the kids had an egg hunt in the field. These promotions are healthy to do once in a while to help boost attendance and hopefully gain some new children.



"Snow Ball Sunday"

In the last couple of months we have shifted our people around and consolidated everyone to five routes. This has already been a help for the ministry itself. My hat is off to these men and women who week-in and week-out give up their Sundays to pick up boys and girls. It is a hard and often discouraging ministry, but we have seen some tremendous fruit from it.



ALOHA BILL'S HAWAIIAN ADVENTURE:

June 19th - June 23rd

We are going to try to decorate the Fellowship Hall like a beach with sand, surf boards and all sorts of streamers hanging from the ceiling. *(In fact, I have been reminiscing on that fabulous trip that the church gave to Pastor & Mrs. Lytell and Darla and me. What a great time that was and we hope to bring back some wonderful ideas to this big week.)* The kids will all receive leis when they

come and as you can imagine, the adults will all be decked out in their Hawaiian best. I can't wait and I wish some of you could actually see this in person.

Aside from all the fun and glitter, our main focus is to give the gospel. We have several hundred children come throughout the week and each year there are some 50 or so decisions recorded. Please pray with us about this particular week.



If you have access to the internet, I encourage you to look through our website. Kim Chapin has done a tremendous job in putting this together. There are still ministries to be added, but much has been done thus far. One of the greatest features is the fact that you can listen to the sermons. Each week, the previous Sunday messages will be added to the website for you to listen to, if you like. Of course, you can always call or write the office and order any sermon you want.

Please keep us up to date on any things going on with you up there. We want to know of serious illnesses, problems and other things that arise over the summer. We miss you all while you are away and anticipate your return next season. Pray for us as we pray for you. God bless you folks!

John Boutchia, Assistant Pastor

Youth News

It is hard to believe that summer is almost here, and most of the snowbirds have left sunny Florida. As usual, summer time is a busy time for the youth ministry. We have several big events already planned for the youth.

In June, the teens will be helping out with the annual VBS program. The teens help the younger ones on "the bus ride," as well as serving as helpers for the different team leaders. In July, we'll be going back to camp at Bill Rice Ranch in Murfreesboro, TN. Last year we took 29 teens to camp and look forward this year to a good number going. In August, the teens will attend a local three day youth rally. This event is a great encouragement to them right before school starts. So, there is a lot going on this summer in the youth ministry.



Another opportunity that many of our teens have been involved in this school year is a youth program called the *Winner's Circle*. Angie and I started this program last year and, with some modifications, are seeing God use this tool again this year, as well. In this program, teens are challenged to participate in daily devotions, visitation, and teen activities.

Points are assigned to each of these areas with monthly winners that receive prizes, and ultimately first through fourth place winners at the end of the competition activities. Winners of this year's competition will receive scholarship money that will go towards paying for summer camp. More importantly, this program encourages the teens to memorize Scriptures that will help them the rest of their lives.



The longer I work with teens, the more I see the need for teens to make personal decisions for Christ before adulthood. I believe teens today face more temptations than any other generation. Please pray that God will use these opportunities provided for them to speak to the hearts of our teens so that they would come know our great Lord, and serve Him with their lives.

Through Christ, Marty Moon, Youth Pastor

Ministry Spotlight - Reformers Unanimous Addiction Recovery Program

We are currently in our **22nd week** of Reformers Unanimous at GBC. Please congratulate Mr. Chuck Santangelo for achieving the 300 Club for the month of April.

Some statistics about our program:

- We are averaging an attendance of 18 each week
- We have had 21 first time visitors
- Our students have passed over 697 challenges to be closer to God through the program materials
- We have given out over 116 awards.

The following is an excerpt from a letter we received from a young man who came to our program as a visitor whom we are supporting at the Reformers Unanimous Discipleship Rehabilitation Center in Loves Park, IL:

Nick: Hey buddy, God bless you, Jarvis, Chuck and everyone at RU on Friday nights. You have saved my life. I thank you so much for making it possible for me to be here. My walk with God gets stronger everyday. I have hope. I have peace, and I have joy. I am so blessed to have seen Chuck that day at work when I was messed up and he told me about RU; where I met you and Jarvis, Pastor Lytell and Pastor Boutchia. I am indebted to you all and believe me, God shall bless each and every one of you for being so Christ-like to me from the very first day I met you. He has truly worked in your lives and is steadily working in mine. This place is God's prescription for my cure.

I see Steve Curington often and he is an awesome man of God. This place is fantastic. I strongly recommend to anyone in the group who feels that RU is great but still struggles badly with their strongholds, whatever it is, to come here. You will not leave the same person you were when you came here. Please share this letter with the group. I was one of the worst of the worst, with one of the strongest of addictions. THERE IS HOPE. I thank God and pray for you everyday.

Thank you, your brother in Christ.

Thank you for your support of this program. We are making a difference in people's lives by your support.

Michael Chapin, Director