

The World Beyond the Walls

A lot of people ask me why we do our meetings outside. I think most like me have grown up with the concept that church is inside and in a building. When I was a kid I never saw anyone worshipping God outside or preaching on a street corner. My mom used to tell me that religion in her view was a private matter. Something to be hidden our only expressed on Sunday morning behind stained glass windows. To some degree the American Church has bought into this lie to be alive on Sunday and dead on Monday. I heard a Pastor from South America preaching one time years ago here in Houston and he said, "The American Church is the largest POW camp in the world held captive on Sunday by the enemy at his will." While I believe church meetings are essential and the fellowship of believers is a building block of faith, if it never progresses beyond those four walls it is no longer a Church it is something else.

When we first started the Children's Activity Truck in August of 2003 in the Fifth Ward it started out somewhat like an invasion. I was really young and dumb at the time and thought it would be a good idea to drive our truck on the sidewalk of a project called Kelly Village, and between two trees and onto the basketball court of the project to have church for the kids. I thought to myself, "Hey that's where the kids are that's where we will go." What I didn't think of was the fact that this basketball court was also the home turf for drug dealers, street gangs and angry teens as well. I was determined and happy to be there but others weren't so happy and wanted us out. This ignited a series of unhappy skirmishes that actually resulted in a riot in which there were several injuries including an eight year old boy breaking his leg and bizarre fights between women with one woman having her ear rings ripped out of her head in a bloody mess. A lot of things at that time didn't make sense and many wanted to give up including myself but that was seven years ago thank God.

While things have changed the challenges never do. The streets are still tough. Just the other day I had to muster all of my strength to visit a fifteen year old girl whose ten month old baby girl had drowned in the bathtub. What do you say to the kid? There's no say cookie cutter answers. When I got to the door it was crowded with family members. I requested to see her only to be turned away by the police in the middle of their investigation of the incident as they called it. But God is always faithful to add encouragement in difficult times.

About a month ago I was visiting a woman who was pastoring an inner-city church called Spirit of Life. This is small but on fire group of believers whom we have shared our building with on Sunday's for their meetings. One day the Pastor introduced me to her daughter-

in-law Tamika. She introduced me and said, "This is Pastor Scott." With that Tamika's eyes widened and she stood silent for a moment and then replied, "Are you that man?" I thought to myself, "This is strange." Then she asked me if I had a yellow truck and if I had been in the Fifth Ward around 2003. To which I replied, "Yes" and then she went into her testimony which I will recount for you here.

"My sister and I were in Kelly Village one day doing our regular thing you know adult entertainment (prostitution) when we saw a yellow truck pull up with a bunch of happy kids following it. This was kind of crazy given the fact that a bunch of white people got out of it. We thought, "Hey what's up with this?" I told my sister let's go see what's going on there. My sister didn't want to but I did. So at the end of your service I went up beside the truck when you were talking about Jesus dying for me and I prayed for him to forgive me and come into my heart. My life changed that day. My sister went to prison. I ended up marrying a man who is a servant of God and my mother-in-law leads this church today and I help her and minister to others."

You know I never saw Tamika that day and never would have known about her salvation apart from the grace of God. This was during that time of trial on the basketball court. I have thanked God numerous times since hearing this testimony. And the one thing that was impressed upon me by the Spirit of God is this. "What if you hadn't gone where would she be? You need to keep going no matter what." So we go again into a world that God loves and sent his only Son to die for. For better or for worse we go with him where ever he goes only if it is for one lost soul. This is the call.

Jesus tells us in Matthew 18:20, "For where two or three are gathered together in my name, I am there in the midst of them." I think it is time for us to start believing that and go into this world proclaiming the truth. This semester we will be sending missionaries into fourteen different locations across the City of Houston. What started as one location with three or four people and now God has blessed us with a staff of eleven and many full and part time volunteers. Pray for us as we go.

The pictures in this news letter are photos from our original CAT Ministry in Kelly Village in Houston's Fifth Ward in 2003 the world beyond the walls of the church. Most of the kids in the pictures are now young men and women. Some of them are still with us serving Lord today on the CAT Trucks and in their neighborhoods while others have gone to college or married or remain at home. And sadly a few have lost their lives through accidents and as in one case two of the boys were shot to death robbing a local pawn shop. I thank God all of them have heard the Gospel. Love you all.

Pastor Scott



And the God of all grace, who called you to his eternal glory in Christ, after you have suffered a little while, will himself restore you and make you strong, firm and steadfast.

1 Peter 5:10



In Loving Memory

As I was writing this newsletter and looking back over the years I am reminded of the saints here and with the Lord who have made this work possible when in the middle of writing it I received news of death of one of our long time friends and servant of the Lord Allen Norton.

Allen came to us in October of 2003 during one of our Saturday services and said to me, "Let me drive a truck I would like to do anything to help this ministry." At the time we needed a driver and he showed up on Monday morning and served the Lord faithfully until his death last week. He was very helpful and instrumental in helping us set up The Children's Activity Truck Ministry as well as the then Free Store Church by picking up much needed food supplies and clothing for children and families in need on a regular basis using his own vehicle and sacrificing much of his own income. Later he started cooking for our staff we were very well fed! He was a wonderful cook!

In the last two years he had been serving full time in prison ministry with Pastor Jesus Lopez in Last Call Ministry and had been working on a book of Theology. He was ordained at Walking Faith Ministry in 2006.

Allen served in the armed services and leaves behind a daughter, step father and mother and brother and will be missed by all in the Children's Activity Center, Last Call Ministries and Thousand Hills Homeless Mission. Till we meet again on the other side.



Intern Positions Available

If you would like to be trained in one of America's most challenging inner-city ministries then this is the opportunity for you. This is a dynamic way to get street level experience in using the gifts God has given you to reach the lost, the hurting, the homeless and fatherless of America's fourth largest City. We have 5 and 12 month terms available. Housing is provided. If you are interested in learning more about this opportunity, please contact Jessica in our office.



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The GOOD REPORT

FROM THE CHILDREN'S ACTIVITY CENTER

PO Box 2851
Bellaire, TX 77402

"We believe that every child has the right to hear the Gospel of Jesus Christ and to see that Gospel demonstrated in the life of at least one, sincere, born-again believer."

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The Children's Activity Center – Children's Activity Truck, part of Walking Faith Ministry, is a non-profit, faith-based organization dedicated to sharing the love of Jesus Christ to children and their families in Houston's crime and poverty ridden inner-city. We use a number of colorful fourteen-foot storage trucks converted into portable stages to bring weekly presentations of the gospel in skits, dramas, puppetry, and video, right to the very doorstep of the children who most desperately need it. Weekly visitations to the homes of attending children helps us share the life changing message of Jesus with the entire family. Donations matter and are tax deductible. Donations can be made through our website via Pay Pal.

Senior Pastor: Scott Binkley Administrative Director: Gilda Duncan