

## Something Good

I think one of the reasons God called me to this ministry over fourteen years ago, was because, like the children we minister to, I experienced what it was like to grow up in a desperate home situation. When people who are out from under God's authority and outside of a loving committed marriage have children, anything can happen; including murder. In the inner-city, it is almost like the kids are born into zoo enclosures. I'm not saying that they are animals or their parents are animals; the fact of the matter is, that children are having children, with no means of raising them, in an environment full of gross immorality. Therefore, it is a world where it is every man for himself and where the most violent rule by intimidation; verbal assault and fear. It is what the Bible calls, the habitation of cruelty, or the dark places of the earth. (Psalm 74:20)

How do you explain a middle-aged man standing at the door of one of our moms, screaming at the top of his lungs, calling the kids 'mother \_ this' and 'mother \_ that' and every horrible thing imaginable; not just for a minute but for an hour? How do you explain teen boys, in one of our projects, taking doll rods out of their closets and beating sleeping homeless men to death, attacking them in cold blood, even as they sleep under a bridge? How can you explain a little boy tied to a chair, being burned by cigarettes and having his arms pulled out of socket because he cried for help? These things are done by people who do not know God. When Jesus hung on the cross for our sin, he cried out for all of us, "Father, forgive them for they know not what they do!" (Luke 23:34) Folks, this stuff is real. These are not stories we make up. These are things that have happened in the last month in the neighborhoods we minister in; people and children we know. Just last night, a young man came up to me on the street with a tee-shirt that read on the front: "The answer to your question is a.) I don't know b.) I don't care". My answer to him was 'Jesus does know and we do care about you'. He seemed surprised by this. At least now he knows about Jesus. You see folks, when you hang around long enough and show you care by showing up regardless of the obstacles, people begin to listen to you. **I'll say it again; it's been said a million times: "People don't care what you say, until they know that you care."** Kids can tell a phony from a mile away. If you tell a lie or if you are there under false pretenses, they can tell. You won't last long; you might even get hurt.

So here's the thing and this is what God has called us to do: "**We believe that every kid 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.**" To this end we go forth in the power of God; proclaiming his truth. We know the situations these kids are in and we also know that there is an eternal fate worse than that called hell, to those who reject Jesus. God Himself came to earth as a man. Yes, to be a perfect sacrifice for our sins and save us from hell, but just as importantly, to love us and show us the Father. In the same way, as believers, we make sacrifices in our own lives so that God's love may be seen and felt through us. In other words, the life of Christ being lived out again and again in as many who believe again and again. The Bible says, "The Word became flesh and dwelt among us" (John 1:14). You see God himself made a personal contact with us. Kids can hear about the love of God but when they experience that love through one of our staff or volunteers then it begins to make a huge impact on their lives. They are embraced by people that say they love them and really do.

What do we have for the kids? We have a small building painted red on the outside and yellow on the inside. There, on the inside, we sing songs with the kids, play games, let them be kids in a safe and loving environment. Here, in this place, there is rarely, if ever, any fights, as the Spirit of God never fails to show up. We have Bible lessons, dramas and powerful preaching. Every week they have the opportunity to receive Jesus Christ as their personal Lord and Savior and to invite him into their hearts. Every week they are prayed for by staff and volunteers that really love them. It is the best hour of their lives as many of them go home and tell their parents and even their teachers at school what they have seen and heard at CAC. Most importantly, they want to come back every week and can't wait for Saturday Sunday School. I know; I've been their bus driver and Pastor for the past fifteen years; I see every face as they get on the bus. I've seen them get on the buses with snot noses and no shoes or coat in the winter, freezing and happy to be there. During tropical storm Allison some years ago, during heavy street flooding, we were considering canceling our service on Saturday when the phone rang. It was six-thirty in the morning and on the other end was a kid waiting for the bus, wanting to know if we were coming. The service did not start till eleven. Do you get the picture folks? These kids are getting themselves up in the morning and most of their parents remain in bed oblivious to where they are or where they are going. They come on their own, most of them, not all of them, but most. **They want to be here; there is something good here and it contains their life.** The following account underscores what I have just said.

Last week, Vincent and Jessica told me about an African family from Sierra Leone and how their daughter loved coming to the Children's Activity Center. This is their account; "*As we visited the mom she began to relate to us how her daughter looked forward to Saturdays. She said on school days her daughter has trouble getting out of bed and never wants to shower, but on Saturdays, it's different. On Saturdays, she gets up around 6:30 (for a 9:00 am pick up), takes a shower and then sits on the couch and watches the clock, excitedly anticipating the time when she leaves for church. She knocks on her mother's door, but her mother pleads with her to let her sleep a little while longer. Finally, the mom gets up to wait with her, so that she doesn't go to the bus stop alone at 8:50 am. The mother, who lost one of her legs due to a gunshot wound in the war in Africa, is very watchful over her daughter. Today, she is so grateful to God that her daughter has a safe place to be and to learn about God's goodness and God's faithfulness.*"

Thanks so much for supporting this work that means so much to so many, who otherwise, would have no one; also, for allowing me and our staff to share our hearts and faith with you, the reader, and to connect with these desperate kids. As you can see the Children's Activity Center has become the most important hour of their lives on a weekly basis. **The truth is we are in a battle and a race against the enemy for the minds and hearts of these young people.** Since we only have a short time with most of the kids our staff prays and seeks God for every soul. Some of the kids who come to our meetings come only once and then disappear because their families are evicted from their apartments or someone lands in jail among other things. These meetings are the difference between life and death and heaven or hell for these kids. And no matter how many kids we reach today there will always be one more kid out there tomorrow waiting for someone to come into their life.

*Pastor Scott*



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## Another Opportunity

As you know, in 1966, God was kicked out of public schools; prayer was stopped in the classrooms. In our ignorance as a nation, we assumed we could teach and raise our kids in our own wisdom and strength. Boy, were we wrong? This nation remains wrong, as its short and tragic history has proven... but there is hope.



Recently, as I wrote to you last month, the Boy's and Girl's Clubs have shut down in Houston's projects. The organization withdrew its support (which included tutoring for the kids in reading and math) because of low attendance. It seems strange to

me: it's like they blame the kids for not coming and then pull the program from those who do, when all along it was their responsibility to teach and recruit new students. Whatever the matter, it's over and going to stay over.

Here is the rub. Somebody is going to tutor these kids. Whenever there is a program that ends or is pulled away, something takes its place; there is no vacuum. It could be replaced by another secular program; which is better than nothing but, in a sense, still nothing without the Lord. Worse than that, it could be replaced by television, streets gangs, drugs or other destructive things. **Most crimes committed by kids are carried out in after school hours, between 4:00 pm and 7:00 pm; this is the time when kids are most susceptible to negative elements.** I believe the best possible solution as Christians would be to donate an hour of our time, once a week, to help a kid in the inner-city learn to read and do math. At the same time we can share our faith with them. This is what the Kelly Village Apartments has approached us and asked us to do. They would like us to send them tutors, to go along with their after school lunch program. Our staff is currently maximized in helping kids so we are praying for others that might want to tutor a few hours a week, here and there. It's a round-about way for us to get involved in the public school system again, through public housing. Call us if you would be interested in being a tutor for a few kids after school.

*Pastor Scott*

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, street wise and use all the gifts God gave you and more to reach out to 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 would be interested in learning and growing with us please contact Vincent.



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 so most desperately need it. Weekly visitations to the homes of attending children help us to share the life changing message of Jesus with the entire family and help the ministry to identify current needs both spiritual and physical that can be met in a timely fashion.

Come visit! **YOU ARE WELCOME!**

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FROM THE **CHILDREN'S ACTIVITY CENTER**

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