

Work in Progress Update

July 1, 2005

Dear Friends

So here we go. Kids Club, the program for children (ages 4-12) that introduces most people to this ministry, started June 27 for our 19<sup>th</sup> year. You may wonder why we still do outreach. Today we have programs that go deep into hundreds of lives. Helping with life skills and jobs skills development, helping students stay in school, a GED program onsite, parenting skills ... you name it! And we know thousands of people, having traveled for years alongside many. Yet, here we go again, out to the neighborhoods looking for the kids, out to the streets, to gather them all in one more summer.

Here are a few things that came to my mind about why we will continue to do outreach:

### 1. To reach the next ones:

My memory photo file slings picture after picture of hundreds, multiple hundreds of kids who we met for the first time one summer. Junior, Steven, Marissa, Max, Iyanna, Cupa, Angel, Kayla ... once they were unknown to us, an unreached child; lost in their parents' difficulties and wanderings. We know them now, and love them, and hope to know their kids and their kid's kids. The many programs of this ministry are designed around them and their journeys.

But there is a new to us kid, a kid who has never heard about Jesus, His love, His hope and power. And that kid will come this summer, sort of sandwiched in between the 400+ known ones and their cousins. They will have come from a trailer park or back alley apartment, with issues and anger and a "you don't know me!" attitude. And we will pray for that one in the small brief groups every night, hoping they come back.

### 2. To remind ourselves that the church belongs on the streets

There is nothing quite like outreach to remind the church of both God's heart and our mission. I hear the *emergent* church desiring to be "missional", desperate to be where God has designed them to be and what he has designed the church for. I look at our summer team, filled with young leaders in their teens, twenties, and even thirty-somethings. I marvel at their capacity to be poured out for Kingdom purposes. They want to spend it all for what brings eternal dividends. We BELONG out there, out where it matters, out where the Shepherd is searching for the lost, out with Him on His mission. We matter out there. Something in us wakes up when we are out there!

#### Beach Camp Report:

*This new camp for those not quite ready for the Mexico trip took 12 high schoolers (aged 14-19) and 5 leaders for 1 week in San Diego at the beach. Chris Brewster, trip leader, said, "We enjoyed a lot of playful times on the beach, throwing a football, and having fun at Knott's Berry Farm. Most of these kids haven't had much opportunity to just be kids and have fun, so that was a significant part of the trip for leaders and kids together. We also talked about trusting God every day in the midst of frustrations and even hardships. It really surprised me when one of the guys just spoke up and said, 'I need help.' It was a big breakthrough that one of the guys could just ask for some help in front of all the others. His honesty led to many of the others speaking up. **We have to do this again next year.**"*



### 3. To train the next generation

The battle ground for our city and our future is just that, a battle ground. Bloody, piled high with the wounded, scary, noisy and chaotic...desperate for leaders who won't run away and hide. There is a battle for precious lives who are being rescued from the grip of evil. The enemy doesn't surrender after we have filled the van with gas and made our organizational plan. He has time tested methods to beat us at our human efforts, our slick schemes. And in a blink, he can take the most novice warrior down.

So, we teach these new recruits how to pray. How to pray and pray and pray. How to decide not to give up. How to fall on their knees and not expect defeat, but to believe in the victories promised by the God who can send the enemy flailing.

And we teach these young leaders how to love unconditionally, how to keep going even when it feels as if their faith is so small, how to trust God with good theology, how to wait and watch and learn and study and investigate and persevere.

Almost all of this is learned in the furnace called "outreach". Who will train the next generation to reach the cities for Christ? We want our hand in the air for this question.

**4. To keep you and me in the game.** There is a precious 5 year old in our ministry who has been sorely abused. She is beautiful. She showed up in my dreams last night. I took her hand and asked her if she wanted to come along on a trip in my dream. Usually she is very shy and frightened in real life. In my dream she stood strong and ready, and fearless. "I want to go", she said. I told her, "you are not too young".

You and I need this adventure as much as anyone. I need to bang at the doors of hell and cry out to loose the ones in bondage. I need to tell stories of today, not just yesterday. I need the pressures, the sleepless nights, the worries, the demanding days ... they still make me stronger, just like they did when I was younger. So, for the 19<sup>th</sup> year, I will be teaching in Kids Club and we will continue to do outreach at Neighborhood Ministries. What a great privilege!

By the way, our theme for this week is "You can be God's Hero" from Isaiah 63:1 Who is this coming ... Who is this hero marching in his glorious uniform? "It's me, the LORD! I have won the battle, and I can save you!"

Grateful to God,

*Kit Danley*  
Kit Danley  
President

**Junior High Kids Club** – June 13-17  
Our 1-week day camp for Junior High kids.

#### A Workcrew member's experience:

*Let me start by saying that it was absolutely amazing! One of the things that I personally learned is that I don't have much faith but God does things to increase my faith in Him. When we started talking about Jesus and salvation the day before our trip to Sedona, the kids started asking a lot of questions and all I could do was to answer them. Amazingly, all the questions had to do with making Jesus our Hero, Savior, Lord and Father! When I asked the kids who wanted to receive Christ in their hearts I was surprised to see 4 of the 5 lifting their hands. I even asked them if they knew how serious the event was. So 3 kids ended up praying to receive Jesus as Savior and Lord and one said: "I asked Jesus to live in me before but I needed to pray today because I have done some things that Jesus doesn't like."*

