



July 2019

Dear Family and Friends,

*“I have strayed like a lost sheep. Seek your servant, for I have not forgotten your commands.”*

Psalm 119:176

This past month has been a little tough with some of our older boys. One in particular has had a very rough time of late here at our home. One of the many incidents eventually involved him being expelled from school for 10 days.

I had a sit down with the young man. I started off reminding him I loved him but his recent actions and attitude had been very wrong. I told the young man he had made two serious errors. Number one was a choice to be involved with actions that evoke things of the dark nature. I said his decision to disbelieve in God and not follow Christ is the most foolish choice he would ever make. I continued, “Your second error was to involve younger children in your actions.” To me this choice was as grievous, if not more so, because this can greatly affect the life of a younger child. We cannot tolerate this in our home. I continued, “You are living in rebellion, pride, and disobedience. And, this will not be tolerated in our home. You need to repent of your attitude and your active disobedience. You need to admit your sin and rebellion before God. And the difficult thing is there is, almost no way to change this in your heart without God’s help.”

I next asked, “Do you remember the day you returned here after being gone for two years?” He shook his head yes. I said I remember that night. I had been gone to the capital city and had come home that evening. I reminded him what happened that night. I then put my arm around him and again said do you remember, He shook his head yes. Tears slowly began to fall down from his cheeks and wet his dark blue tee shirt.

I asked him, “Do you remember what you thought in that moment?” As his tears dripped down he thought for a moment and answered the question with a single word, “love.” I asked, “Do you remember what I did?” I said, “Let me show you.” I reached out both my arms and drew him close in a strong embrace. I then said, “I remember the look you had on your face. Without you speaking a word it was as if I saw written on your face the words, “will you take me back?” I asked him, “What was my response?” He said, “You took me back.”

I said, “With the same love the night I received you back, I love you now.” I asked, “How old are you?” He responded, “17.” I said, “You are a young man now. As you grow into an adult we have to learn to reason together, man to man. We have to learn to listen and try to understand each other and respond to do what is best and needed. Love commands and requires a response in kind. Love should be responded to with gratitude, respect, and obedience. Love comes with responsibility to respond. I asked “do you understand?” “Yes sir.” he responded. But in that moment I was not speaking with him as sir, I was pleading with him as a father would as his son. I said, “Yes papa.” And he responded, “Si papito.” I believe it was a powerful and defining moment for us.

Unfortunately, in the next few days things would get worse before they got better. More pressure would have to be brought to bear on the young man so that he would know in his heart his need for our love and help. He almost lost his place in our home, but with our staff praying and working together through difficult circumstances, he is still here and now responding in a positive way. Last night I went to the older boys’ room just before lights out. He was reading God’s word. I thought to myself as I said good night, “that won’t hurt.”

As for other news this month we had the opportunity to visit eight public schools in our area and in a creative way present the gospel to students young and old. We were blessed to host Word of Grace Church from Raytown, Missouri. The team, under the leadership of Pastor Jim Scott was in total 28 students and adults. The team had extensively prepared several very powerful dramas set to music, that dealt with the battle of light and darkness and portrayed total victory possible only in Christ. The team also included a crystal clear, scripture-filled presentation of the gospel using the colors of the Wordless Book. Each program also included some fun and a personal testimony given by one of the student team members. Pastor Jim ended each program with an invitation time for one and all to respond and receive Christ. Over the three days of outreach we presented the gospel to over 1,100 students.

Their were a couple of the programs that really stood out to me. At one of the smaller schools we visited, there were about 60 junior high students. The program had a more intimate feel due to the smaller crowd size. As the program progressed the audience was riveted to the action in front of them. With the presentation of each successive drama there was a greater sense the Lord was at work. As Pastor Jim stepped up to give the invitation all eyes were fixed upon him. As he presented the call of God to receive Christ he asked the question, “If you would like to receive Jesus and go to Heaven, please raise your hand.” Hands went up everywhere. But one young man caught my eye. When Jim asked for a show of hands, this particular student raised both hands. When Pastor Jim gave the call to come and pray, this young man immediately stood up both, hands raised, and was the first to come to pray; followed by the entire audience. One of the teachers also responded to receive Christ.



The mission team gathered around the kids as Pastor Jim admonished them once again what the gospel entailed. He then led them together in a prayer of salvation. It was a glorious moment, and I was so blessed by the little guy who was so excited to receive Christ. It was precious. Jim prayed for the group and encouraged them in the next steps they need to take to continue their new journey of faith.

At another school the next town over from ours, we were able to present the gospel there for our first time. The school had 350 children in session at the time of our presentation. The team preformed their drama and gave their presentation, again including a clear definition of sin and the need for repentance and the reality of the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ. At the time of the invitation scores of children responded. Seeing these types of responses, I always think of the words of Jesus, "Let the little children come to me and do not hinder them . . ."

At the final school where we ministered many children responded to the invitation to pray. What was different was the number of kids who stayed after the program to share their burdens and receive prayer from the team members and Pastor Jim. It was very special and a fitting way to end the group's time of ministry.

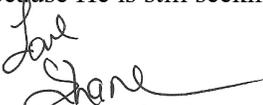
Whether it is a child here at our home who is struggling or the hundreds of children in our community and beyond who have never heard the gospel clearly proclaimed or been given an opportunity to respond, there is a consistent theme, "The little lost sheep." Even though the scenarios are very different, the imagery of a concerned shepherd seeking and pursuing the lost sheep is identical. And, of course, we know the shepherd is the Father seeking and pursuing each of us, the little lost sheep. I am sure glad the Lord found me. And I pray he uses our ministry to help find other "little lost sheep."

On the construction front, the cistern is complete. Praise the Lord. Thankfully our architect is finishing up the plans for the for the remaining structures we will need to build. One of the great burdens I carry, beside the well being of our children, is the funding of our home and ministry. While the needs of our children are overwhelming, the construction of our future home for Casa De Mi Padre is at times even larger. These past several months I have been very thankful we have had the funds to keep the construction team together and move forward, with enough funds to finish phase two. As of yet, we have not had the funds available to begin Phase 3; the construction of the children's living quarters. However, the Lord has been at work.

Due to a series of circumstances, my father, Joe Sanderson, the founder, builder, and pastor of the Oak Grove Bible Church for over 40 years, along with the elders and members of the church, recently made a decision. My father (now 85 years old) along with the remaining congregation, decided to complete the work of the church by bringing the ministry to a close and selling the assets of the ministry. They faithfully decided to invest the proceeds to the unfinished work of advancing the Kingdom of God. As a final act of devotion to Christ, the leadership and congregation of the church proposed to give all of the assets of the church to the gospel ministries the church has supported for decades. Several ministries and missionaries in the United States as well as others serving abroad will be greatly blessed and encouraged by this sacrificial gift. And, of course, Child Rescue, the host ministry of Casa De Mi Padre, is highly honored to be counted among these ministries. This gracious gift we recently received will be enough for us to totally complete our first children's cottage. As Joe Sanderson's son, and as a ministry, we are very honored to receive this gift of sacrificial love to benefit the children the Lord has entrusted to us.

We will be honoring the Oak Grove Bible Church with an inscription on the cornerstone of our first children's cottage with these words, "A gift from the Brothers and Sisters of the Oak Grove Bible Church because Jesus loves the little children."

Because He is still seeking the lost little sheep,

  
Joseph Shane Sanderson

Pray for us  
as we do our best  
to save lives for Him.  
Blessings