

Gratitude

CURRENT

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*Equipping the church to reach the world
for the glory of God through Christ*

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10 Essential Ways to be the Church Together

By Pastor Bob



Continued from October's Current...

1 **Be with other believers in your local church**, physically and cognitively and spiritually, regularly on Sundays, and with other believers at home and other places (Psalm 42:4; Hebrews 10:34-35). Join a Life Group. Serve in a team. Come on Wednesday and serve in the kitchen. Teach preschoolers. Be with other Christians, doing things.

2 **Come together with life to share and give!** Come together astonished with a word from the Word and the Spirit. (1 John 3:1-3; Romans 8:16-17; Malachi 3:16). The “of-course” gospel is killing churches. In Acts 2:42, believers continually devoted themselves to the apostles’ teaching. Listen to it together—sower sows the Word. Don’t be the hard path. Our rationality skills are honed with other people. Our entertainment culture has relegated feeling good to mean being good. That is not so. We must teach our children to think. That is not the teacher’s job. Share around the dinner table.

3 **Be concerned about others’ spiritual welfare** (1 Thessalonians 2-3; 5:14). Be watchful. Bear their burdens, cry with them, laugh with them, support them. Don’t have all the answers and don’t do all the talking. Listen carefully – don’t play bigger and better. Listen humbly: we are here

to let you know when you are off base. What an incredible affection Paul had for the saints. Paul didn’t simply tolerate them. He yearned for them. Had affection for them. He was ablaze with Christ’s love for ALL—not just for some, but for all. He loved young and old, weak and strong, the faint-hearted, the slow to change. Those who were hard to love. Those who weren’t like him. Those who struggled with unbelief. Those who needed lots of encouragement. Those who were lazy. Paul’s burning love for the Philippians was not his own. It was “the affection of Christ Jesus.”

It was Christ’s own love for his blood-bought saints that Jesus had poured into the heart of Paul. Paul didn’t say I yearn for you all with affection LIKE Christ Jesus. He wasn’t trying to copy Christ’s affection. It WAS Christ’s affection. It was supernatural. It came from outside Paul. It came from Jesus himself.

4 **Serve to build.** Do the Spirit’s work. Selflessly serve using your gifts (Acts 2:44-45; 1 Corinthians 12-14). When you see a need, do something; there is probably a corresponding gift. Listen, encourage, pray, help, give--look at the lists of spiritual gifts in 1 cor. 12-14; Eph. 4; Romans 12 and find a place to serve. Don’t play bigger and better. Most significant will be the serving in your Life Group. You cannot get close enough to really serve. Who else is going to say to you, “You are over-reacting”?

5 **Cultivate gratitude and pray for your church-mates;** remember how far they have come (Acts 2:42; 1 Thess. 1:2; 2 Thess. 1:3; Phil 1:3; Romans 1:8; 1 Cor. 1:4; Colossians 1:3). Ask God to give you a grateful heart for the Christians at TACC. Some are harder to love than others. Some talk too much, some complain too much, some never listen but only talk, some don’t like ___ (the music/service times/words on the screen/the length of the sermon). Love them anyway.

6 **Give** (Philippians 4:10-18; 2 Corinthians 8-9). The vested-in ministry shows community. You are not really there without your financial input.

7 **Eat together—in each other’s homes** (Acts 2:42, 46). Jesus ate in homes. The believers shared meals together in Acts 2. Practice hospitality, not entertainment. Eating together fosters discussion. Take the sermon discussion sheet and use it. Christ’s model prayer includes this instruction for prayer, “Give us this day our daily bread.” Basic table manners should be exercised. It shows honor to others: to children, parents, older ...cont. on page 7

**From the Missionary Frontlines:
Mark Williams and Pablo & Martha Garcia**



Mark Williams

Thankfully, the trips to Pennsylvania, Ohio and Mexico were excellent.

PENNSYLVANIA

In Pennsylvania, we trained the new track on Church Planting Movements for a denomination that has embraced DCPI as their training for church planters. Their goal is remarkable-to plant 10,000 new churches by 2030. Over the past year, they have held 23 DCPI training events and trained 439 leaders using our materials.

In just one year!

What does that mean? It means that tens of thousands will be saved through the new churches that start utilizing our training.

OHIO

My niece Chelsea's wedding in Ohio was wonderful-not a cloud in the sky in October in central Ohio, amazing.

CALIFORNIA AND MEXICO

Our DCPI Global Vision Summit was terrific, with over 40 DCPI leaders gathered together from around the world, working and planning for even greater results in the future. Remember, the last part of our vision is ". . . to reach the world for Christ!"

*Gratefully,
Mark (& Carolyn)
www.dcp.org*

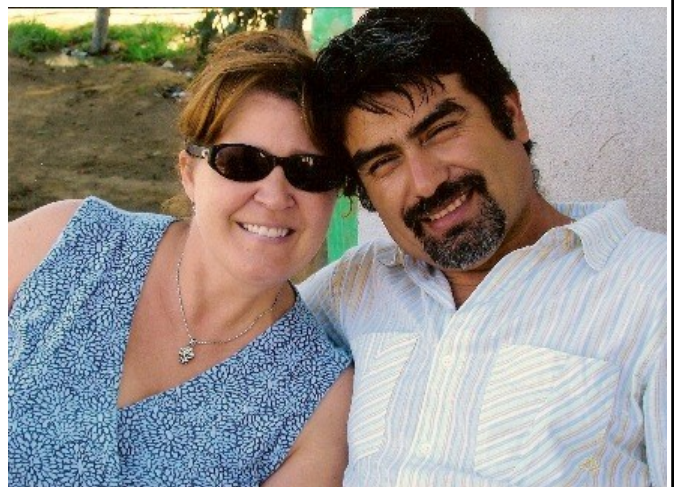
Pablo and Martha Garcia

I (Pablo) was gone from the 13-25 of September and each way of travel took 36 hours. I am so thankful for safety as we traveled each way as well as in country. While in India, much of the time it was as if I was in the south of Mexico! The simplicity of the way that people live, the dirt and animals, the spicy food! What struck me and touched me so deeply was the lack of knowledge of who Jesus is. Countless people who have never heard His name or what He did on the cross for us...

Discipleship training was fantastic. We met in the churches that have been planted and from there divided up into small groups. We taught them how to study the Bible inductively by choosing a text, examining the ideas and words of the text; which then leads to the meanings and interpretations, and then to the conclusions and applications. We took them through several of the parables: the Lost Sheep, the Lost Coin, the Prodigal Son, and the Sower. We also studied in Acts about the early church and what that means for our churches today. In total there were 230 participants in the training.

We also went door to door one of the days sharing about Jesus and giving the salvation message. We were in villages where people were practicing Hindus and Muslims. "The soil was hard." Almost all had never heard of Jesus. They worship so many Gods. They worship nature. We shared with them about the God who created the nature that they worship! 46 people prayed to receive Christ that day and 6 were interested in follow-up to hear more about Jesus. 95% of the people that received Christ were Muslims.

*Love,
Pablo & Martha*



Receiving the Present

By Ingrid Chung

So, here I am, 30 and alive. Did I ask to be 30? Did I ask to be alive? And yet, You have given me this friendship I had never thought to ask for. You have given me this home You knew I needed. Gainful employment, a paycheck, sustenance for today. Manna. Strength for today and hope for tomorrow. A trip to Vancouver, falling on my 30th birthday.

I couldn't receive the present until I received the past—for what it was, nothing more, nothing else. What was Vancouver, those 2.75 years of my life that were so full, and yet, in hindsight, seemed to be just a flash in the night? Was coming to Vancouver the right decision? This haunted me; I needed resolve.

And so, this year, on the 22nd of October, the day I turned 30, I found myself in Vancouver, British Columbia, where I had found myself just five years prior, on October 22, 2007. Then, I was starting graduate school. This year, I found myself asking the same question I was asking in 2007, but with a bit more clarity. What was I doing here? Why was I placed on earth, and this place (Vancouver), of all places? What does it mean to be alive?

For this week of October 21-27, 2012, it meant lots of tea and lots of home-cooked meals with dear Vancouver friends. It meant sitting down at a table, asking the questions of, and listening to the answers to:

“So, what have you been up to in California/Vancouver?”

“Are you talking to any interesting guys?”

“Are you in a period of discernment?”

“How do you know God is leading you to ___?”

“What would I give up everything for?”

“What's next in your life?”

It meant sharing honest conversation about nudgings in vocational paths, about wilderness in the seeking, about frustrations and disappointments in not being where we want to be, yet being grateful for the gifts God has given us (spouse, children, education, jobs, community, etc.). No one's life was perfect; Vancouver isn't perfect. It meant realizing how much I love journeying with people in the everydayness of life, of cherishing the small details, like the sound of the word “nestle” and the juxtapository colours of red and green on the same Vancouver leaf. It gave me confidence and re-inspiration to focus on the things I love doing—building community and writing, among other things.

And so, I find myself, relieved. Relieved and grateful to re-visit (some semblance of) my past by re-acquainting myself with the people from my past—seeing where they are now, cherishing what we had in the past, and recognizing that my life is different now, is here. The past, which seemed to glow with perfection, was never so. The longing for the past is sweeter than the past itself, to paraphrase C.S. Lewis. The past is what it was—good, shaping, imperfect. God was in the past. It has brought me to this moment, the present. I am gripped with the brimming potential of “now” for what can be. This gift, I can now receive, with gratitude. The future, I can now embrace, with hope—hope because I know that the past doesn't condemn me, but frees me—to live in the present. And if God has given me the present, what have I to fear?

My Heart is Filled with Thanksgiving

By Keith Getty and Stuart Townend

{Laura Baxter} Lately I have been enjoying the work of “modern hymn-writers” Keith Getty and Stuart Townend. God has gifted Getty and Townend with the ability to combine powerful lyrics with beautiful melodies. Their songs remind me of the great classic hymns of our faith.

Below are the lyrics to “My Heart Is Filled with Thankfulness,” written by Getty and Townend. This song expresses gratitude to God for Christ’s sacrifice and daily presence. Many times, our thanksgiving focuses on material blessings such as home, health and family. Let’s never forget to thank God for His spiritual gifts, which will last into eternity.

You can listen to this hymn at <http://www.gettymusic.com/hymns-myheart.aspx>.



My heart is filled with thankfulness
To Him who bore my pain;
Who plumbed the depths of my disgrace
And gave me life again;
Who crushed my curse of sinfulness
And clothed me in His light
And wrote His law of righteousness
With pow'r upon my heart.

My heart is filled with thankfulness
To Him who walks beside;
Who floods my weaknesses with strength
And causes fears to fly;
Whose ev'ry promise is enough
For ev'ry step I take,
Sustaining me with arms of love
And crowning me with grace.

My heart is filled with thankfulness
To him who reigns above,
Whose wisdom is my perfect peace,
Whose ev'ry thought is love.
For ev'ry day I have on earth
Is given by the King;
So I will give my life, my all,
To love and follow him.

Community, from page 3

saints. Children should wait for adults. Each should practice basic listening skills. Practice basic thankfulness in the prayer. It's a good idea to practice community with your own family: table manners, listening, etc. This will reap great dividends when others come over. The children can learn to respect their elders by waiting until the adults have served themselves in the buffet line, if this is how you choose to serve. You should also have the children wait to eat until everyone is served and ask to be excused instead of leaving the table unannounced.

8 Attitude! Imitate, as image bearers, the humility, accommodation, unity, submission and fellowship of our triune God (Philippians 2:1-8; John 5:22; Mark 1:12). Put off: comparing (1 Corinthi-

ans 4:5; 10:12), complaining (James 5:9; 1 Peter 4:9), arguing and bickering (Ephesians 4:25-32), blaming, begrudging, rebellion against authority – it's as the sin of witchcraft and idolatry (1 Samuel 15:23). Put on: the Lord Jesus Christ (Romans 13:14).

9 Pray together (Acts 1:14; 2:42; 4:24-31). Involve all ages. Kids are better pray-ers anyway.

10 Spread the Gospel (Matthew 28:16-20; 1 Thesalonians 1:6-8; Philippians 1:27; Colossians 4:5-6). This will give you something to say when you go and when you come back. It is a confidence-builder and joy-bringer. I have yet to meet a truly whiny Christian who shares their faith joyfully.

Part 3, “No Cheap Substitutes,” in *January's Current*. Stay tuned!

**Christmas
@Taft Avenue**

Caroling
Sunday, Dec 16, 6pm &
Thursday, Dec 20, 6pm

**Christmas Eve
Service**
Monday, Dec 24
5pm

**TACCY
(Rooted & Thrive)
Christmas Party**
Tuesday, Dec 18
7-9pm

**“Christ, the Gift at
Christmas”
Women’s Potluck**
*Bring your fave
comfort food.*
Friday, Dec 7, 6:30pm

Invite

your friends and neighbors!



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GOD
WITH
US

Christmas Eve Service
Monday, December 24
5pm
Join us!