



Valley Isle Fellowship
Love God. Love His Church. Love His World
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NEWSLETTER

April 26, 2015 www.vifmaui.com

Where Do You Go From Here? *Pastor Stephen Kaneshiro*

I have heard this question asked many times when people find themselves in deep, dark despair. However, I would like to look at this question from a different perspective. Where do you go from here when you have just reached the mountain top? Many, many people would say that you go down from here. I would like to say that there is another answer and perspective to give. One that I believe is very exciting and full of glory and honor.

First, let me say that I have not gotten there and that I believe it will be a very long time before I will get there, if I ever get there. However, this gets me so excited and motivated to keep on working on getting to “the top of the mountain,” because I also believe that you don’t necessarily have to go “down hill” from there.

As a child growing up on Oahu, I loved sports. I lived to play football and basketball. I think the highlight of those days was having the privilege to play football. My parents allowed me to play Pop Warner Football in both the Pee Wee and Bantam leagues. High School at Hawaii Baptist Academy was a football free zone, except for Flag Football, which is really not the same. Therefore, those days in Pop Warner football were really exciting for me. I remember the first year that I played was a very exciting year for me. I was privileged to have very good coaches and it seemed that all the players’ parents were so supportive. This was the first year that our neighborhood was able to sponsor a team in the league and so expectations were very low.

However, because of the excellent coaches that we had along with the great parental support, it did not end up like a typical inaugural year into the league. The pre-season played out like one would expect in an inaugural year. We lost every game in the pre-season which, I believe, consisted of three games. However, after the last pre-season loss, the coaches got us all together and said something to us that I have never forgotten. They told us to hold our heads up high and don’t be ashamed. They said that now that the pre-season was over, we will all turn the page on a new chapter. Finally, they said that the other teams are no different than us and that we all put our pants on the same way, one leg at a time. The difference will lie in how much we want to win. That difference he said will be seen in how we practice because we will play the game the

same way that we practice. He ended that speech by asking, “Are you ready to practice?” That year, we went on to win every game in the regular season and post season. In fact, we were able to win every game in convincing fashion.

The time between my last game of that first season until the first practice of the next season seemed to be the most down trodden period of my entire life. I had reached a “mountain top” in my life and everything looked like it was going downhill from there. I did not have the emotional and spiritual maturity to understand and know what was happening and I did not have the ability to deal with it.

The same can be said of our lives today. If we were to reach a spiritual high, a “mountain top” experience, with the Lord, does it have to be all “down hill” from there? My resounding answer to all of you is “NO!” It will be “Yes” only if you evaluate and measure your life by worldly standards. The cry of the Bible tells me that we are not citizens of this world but only pilgrims who are just passing through. Therefore, you have to measure yourself according to who you really are, a citizen of Heaven and not of this world. Whatever spiritual mountain tops that you might experience here is so lacking in contrast to what awaits you when you finally get home to Heaven.

So what happens when you feel like you have arrived on that “mountain top?” When you feel like the best of your life is behind you? Too

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Where Do You Go From Here?

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many people will begin to let their relationship with the Lord begin to slide and they will begin to let their “bucket list” take on more importance. A “bucket list” is that list of things that you would want to do before you leave this earth. However, dear people, if you allow your “bucket list” to become a driving force in your life, something is very wrong with this. “For the things of earth will grow strangely dim in the light of His glory and grace.” Those are the words of a hymn writer who is really expressing the sentiments of a pilgrim who is seeing his days on earth to be numbered and he begins to see how close he is to arriving at home, which is Heaven. The things of earth growing strangely dim, is not a negative thought but rather a very positive one. This is because you are beginning to see His glory and grace become clearer and clearer. I would dare say that you would even become increasingly “homesick” as you long to be at home in Heaven with your Heavenly Father.

What I am trying to say is that there is no spiritual “mountain top” here on earth. Our spiritual “mountain top” awaits for us in Heaven. There are spiritual highs that you might experience here on earth but they will serve to only whet your appetite for Heaven.

Therefore, there are two things that I urge you to take away from this article. One is that if those “bucket list” thoughts begin to consume your thoughts, please throw all of your efforts into loving and serving the Lord more. The pursuit of those “bucket list” items will draw you away from the Lord and not to Him.

Secondly, and lastly, imagine what will happen when you hit those spiritual highs and realize how fulfilling they are to you. Imagine what Heaven is going to be like. Look at the words of Bart Millard of Mercy Me when he writes the following:

I can only imagine what it will be like, When I walk by your side. I can only imagine what my eyes will see When your face is before me. I can only imagine

Surrounded by your glory. What will my heart feel. Will I dance for your Jesus Or in awe of you be still. Will I stand in your presence Or to my knees will I fall. Will I sing hallelujah. Will I be able to speak at all. I can only imagine

I can only imagine when that day comes And I find myself standing in the Son. I can only imagine when all I will do Is forever, forever worship you. I can only imagine.

Surrounded by your glory What will my heart feel. Will I dance for your Jesus Or in awe of you be still. Will I stand in your presence Or to my knees will I fall. Will I sing hallelujah. Will I be able to speak at all. I can only imagine.



Are You Weak Enough For God To Use You?

By Pastor J.D. Greear

There aren't many societies that praise weakness. Ours is no different. Whether you're a pastor or a police officer, an on-the-go salesman or a stay-at-home mother, weakness is seen as a liability. Nobody wants to be weak. Strong is the name of the game.

Sadly, our obsession with strength blinds us to a key biblical truth: *God uses the weak*. It's so pervasive that you'd be hard-pressed to find a book of the Bible that *can't* be summarized this way. And yet despite being hard-wired into the very DNA of Scripture, we don't really believe it. We still clamor after strength. But God doesn't need our strength to deliver us. In fact, our strength is actually more of a liability than an asset.

I'll go a step further: God is so single-minded in his preference for weakness, that **when he wants to use us, he often begins by weakening us**. Case in point: the Bible's most courageous coward, Gideon.

Just before heading into battle with the mighty Midianite army, Gideon hears from God: *"The people with you are too many for me to give the Midianites into their hand, lest Israel boast over me, saying, 'My own hand has saved me'"* (Judges 7:2). So God gives Gideon a couple of tests, designed to trim the ranks.

Test 1 is to *send all the fearful people home*. It turns out that's a decent number, and 22,000 of Gideon's 32,000 leave. (I wonder if Gideon tried to sneak off with them?) Now, that might not have been a foolish decision. Fear is contagious, so 10,000 brave soldiers are better than three times that many if 70% of them are wimps.

But if Test 1 was designed to create a braver army, Test 2 was only designed to create a *smaller* and *weaker* one. God tells Gideon to have his men drink from a stream, and all of the men who "lap like dogs" (who does that?) are the ones that should stay. It's an arbitrary test, but an effective one: only 300 men remain.

God was teaching Gideon what he wants to teach us today: **when he wants to use us, he often begins by weakening us**. That doesn't mean God delights in bringing us pain, or that every instance of weakness in our lives is caused directly by God. But periodically, God will step into our lives and reduce the size of our army, because he wants us to trust him—and that's often the only way we will.

So when we hear a tragic diagnosis from our doctor...or when we suddenly find ourselves out of a job...or when our marriage is on the rocks...we should see those as our "army" being reduced. Those are moments of decision: will we rage against God, or lean into him like never before? We are so obsessed with grasping at strength that pain becomes something to avoid, not an opportunity to learn from. But what if dependence is more important than strength? ***If dependence is the objective, then weakness is an advantage.***

I hate learning that lesson. I'm sure you do, too. But weakness forces us to throw ourselves in desperation before God, and that is the only place—and the only posture—in which we can learn the four words that transform our lives: **God is always faithful**. You and I may never know that God is all we need until he is literally all we have.

The Apostle Paul said it this way: *"I will boast all the more gladly about my weaknesses, so that Christ's power may rest on me"* (2 Cor 12:9). You see, if we brag on our strengths, people may look at us and think, "I wish I were more like that ... but I can't be." But if we brag on our *weaknesses*, that makes people think, "Wow, I have access to the same power that guy does!" Christians

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Are You Weak Enough For God To Use You?

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aren't people who boast about their superior morality; they are beggars telling a bunch of other beggars where to find bread.

Beware your strengths. They are far more dangerous to you than your weaknesses, because your strengths keep you from hoping in God's mercy. And boast in your weaknesses. Boast when God lets you fail. Boast when God reduces the size of your army. God isn't withholding good things from you. In fact, he's offering you something priceless. As Hudson Taylor said, *"God wants you to have something far better than riches and gold, and that is helpless dependence on him."*

This article can be found at http://www.jdgreear.com/my_weblog/2015/04/when-god-wants-to-use-us-he-often-begins-by-weakening-us.html

This article was printed by permission by the author. Requested by Pastor Jeremy Kaneshiro

J.D. Greear is the lead pastor of The Summit Church, in Raleigh-Durham, NC and author of Gospel: Recovering the Power that Made Christianity Revolutionary (2011), Stop Asking Jesus into Your Heart: How to Know for Sure You Are Saved (2013), and Jesus, Continued...: Why the Spirit Inside You Is Better Than Jesus Beside You (2014). Two

J.D. completed his Ph.D. in Theology at Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary where he is also a faculty member, writing on the correlations between early church presentations of the gospel and Islamic theology. Having lived and served among Muslims, he has a burden to see them, as well as every nation on earth, come to know and love the salvation of God in Christ.

He and his wife Veronica live in Raleigh and are raising four ridiculously cute kids: Kharis, Alethia, Ryah, and Adon.

GARAGE SALE FUNDRAISER

On **Saturday, May 2, 2015, from 7—11 AM**, Two Thirds World Network will be holding a garage sale for Mission Outreach in South East Asia. It will be held on the front lawn of our High Street campus from 7am to 11am. The mission field has grown from a basketball court in Santa, Ilocos Sur, Philippines, to all over Southeast Asia. This year there is a planned trip in August to scout out mission opportunities in Cambodia. Your generosity in the past has helped spread God's love in real and practical ways. So, if you find yourself ready to do a spring cleaning and wish to donate items to the mission field, please contact **Grace Motonaga 357-4553**. We are so very thankful. God Bless!

PS Don't forget to come shopping too!!



Small Cassette Tape Players Needed

Do you have an old cassette tape player lying around that you no longer use, and need? Bert Drayson is starting a tutoring ministry at Living Way Church in Happy Valley. They are in need of these players for this new ministry. She is asking for small players where ear phones can be plugged into them for independent learning.

If you have any questions, or would like to donate, please contact Bert at 281-8944. MAHALO!

Hello Family and Friends!

As my time as a student at the University of Oregon comes to an end, I have been thinking and praying about life after school. Throughout my time in college I have had my fair share of blessings and trials, and through those experiences, my faith has grown as I continue to experience the love, grace and goodness of God. However, I also see a lost world in need of the Gospel. I recently befriended one of the Navigators Campus Ministries Staff, Phillip Henry, through my intramural flag football team. As we started meeting consistently, my heart has really started to grow for those without the gospel. So when Phillip presented the opportunity to travel with a team of five to the country of Slovakia, I knew God was asking me to take a step of faith.

The Mission

In **Slovakia**, our main objective is to work with the Navigators English Immersion School in Bratislava as conversation partners during a Summer English Camp. Through these conversations we pray and hope to build friendships as we talk about and share cultures, experiences and faith. These students are considered by many to be some of the brightest in Slovakia and are looked upon as future leaders of the country. God calls us to be his witnesses to the ends of the earth and I couldn't think of a better opportunity to strengthen my walk with Him and work towards further building His kingdom here on earth.

My Need

My airfare, food and lodging, preparation, and ministry expenses will total **\$3,920**. Would you prayerfully consider contributing a special gift to this ministry opportunity as part of your giving to the Lord and His work? To reach this goal, gifts of **\$50**, **\$75**, and **\$100** are needed, as well as **\$500** or more. As the Lord leads you, gifts of any size will be gratefully appreciated. Please also keep the team and I in your prayers as we go abroad to share Christ.

In order to give before the **May 31st** deadline:

1. You can give online by going to: www.navigators.org/donate
 - a. Select "Choose staff or projects"
 - b. Type in my navigators ID number in the search bar: **23825939**
 - c. Fill out the donation form that appears
2. You can send a check to me (address below), made payable to **The Navigators**

Thank you for considering this investment in the Lord's work. It's a joy to be a part of what He's doing to advance the gospel of Jesus and His kingdom around the world. Please also keep the team and I in your prayers as we go abroad to share Christ.



Yours in Christ,
Destin Olos



navmissions
living and discipling among the nations

ANNOUNCEMENTS

TWOTHIRDS WORLD NETWORK

MISSIONS DINNER

May 16, 2015 at 6:00 pm
473 S High St, Wailuku (VIF)



First, on behalf of Two Thirds World Network (TTWN) we want to thank you for your support and ardent prayers since the inception of TTWN over 6 years now. TTWN was formed for a simple and profound reason: to share the Good News and the love of Christ in a very practical way. We have been on mission in Southeast Asia and more particularly in the Philippines since 2009 by leading medical and dental missions and assisting in rebuilding villages devastated by natural disasters in order to lift up and encourage the people who were affected by these calamities all the while pointing to the love of God. Because of your support and prayers TTWN and its missionary partners work in villages and communities in order to touch the lives of many people by sharing His mercy and grace. We humbly ask for your continued prayers and support.

On **May 16, 2015 at 6pm**, TTWN will be hosting a free mission dinner at **Valley Isle Fellowship located at 473 S High Street, Wailuku**. The purpose of the dinner is to provide you an update on past and future missions, but more importantly to thank you for your kind and faithful support for the work that God has ordained us to accomplish His will. We pray that this event will encourage and inspire all of us to join God's mission work and be blessed by it. **Tickets are available by contacting Vince Bagoyo 357-3842 or Grace Motonaga 357-4553. We hope to see you at the mission dinner.**

Please feel free to visit our website at www.twothirdsworld.org for more detailed information about our mission. May God bless you always!

PASTOR JEREMY WILL BE ON
vacation FROM
April 28th-May 16th.



PASTOR STEPHEN WILL BE ON
vacation FROM
August 8th-19th

on vacation

ANNOUNCEMENTS

MCBA Youth Camp

Are you in grades 6 to 12?

Join youth from around Maui County for an awesome week at Youth Camp in Keanae from June 8th—12th.

First-time campers registration fee is \$185 until May 1st. Returning campers fee is \$200. We have a limited number of partial scholarships to help offset the registration fee.



MCBA WOMEN'S MISSIONARY UNION MOTHER'S DAY CELEBRATION

Opportunity to serve

Activities:

- Musical Program
- Gift-giving flowers, gift packs and cupcakes (provided by WMU)

Saturday, May 9, 2015

10:00 am—11:30 am

Kula Hospital
5th Floor

SUNDAY SCHEDULE

7:00 am

Set-up

9:00 am

Worship Service (no childcare)

10:30 am

Sunday School (High St Property)

Adult Prayer Time (Cafeteria)

6:00 pm

Evening Service (High St Property)

**“Continue steadfastly in prayer, being watchful in it with thanksgiving”
Colossians 4:2 (ESV)**

Here are opportunities to gather together in prayer
Sunday's at 10:30 am (Cafeteria)

Monday's 10 am, 3 pm & 6:30 pm (High St Sanctuary)

Gather together to pray for God to move within ourselves, our church, community, nation and world. Please join us for these very powerful times with the Lord and our brothers and sisters.



Be in the KNOW. JOIN OUR TEXT ALERTS.

To receive messages via text, text **@mrvif** to **81010**. You can opt-out of messages at anytime by replying, 'unsubscribe @mrvif'.

Trouble using 81010? Try texting **@mrvif** to **(808)670-3442 instead**.

Standard text message rates apply.

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED!



CRISIS CARE MINISTRY
Pastor Stephen Kaneshiro
419-8100



call Church Office
244-0865



Handyman Ministry
Andy Sniffen
264-0529

**YOU CAN MAKE A
DIFFERENCE**

*Malama
Pregnancy
Center
of Maui*

280-5810

Jenn.mpcmaui@gmail.com

Malama Our Youth and Help with Camp

There are some needs for youth camp this year, happening June 8th-12th in Keanae. Below are their needs.

- **Drivers:** to transport youth from church to camp on Monday, June 8th, leaving the church around 12pm. Also, to transport youth from camp back to the church on Friday, June 12th, leaving Keanae by 11:30 am.
- **Female Adult Volunteers:** They can still use one more female counselor (not a team leader) to serve in different capacities, such as with the camp store and with church time.
- **Donation of Supplies:** Paint brushes, painting supplies, and/or acrylic paints that can be used for painting a mural
- **Sponsorships:** There are some youth who may want to go to camp, but are unable to afford the cost.

If you have any questions, would like to help and/or donate supplies, please contact Lyle Irimata at (808) 280-4672.

Valley Isle Fellowship 2015 Calendar

April 2015

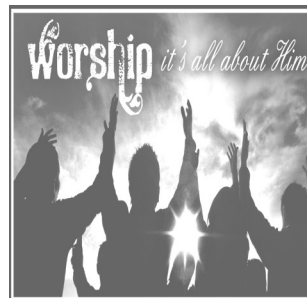
- 26 9 am - Pastor Jeremy
10:30 am - Sunday School at High St Property & Adult Prayer in Cafeteria
6 pm - Pastor Darren
- 27 10 am - Prayer Meeting @ Sanctuary
3 pm - Prayer Meeting @ Sanctuary
6:30 pm - Prayer Meeting @ Sanctuary
- 28 Pastor Jeremy on vacation until May 16
- 29 6:30pm - Youth Group "Fuel" @ Sanctuary

May 2015

- 02 7-11am - TwoThirds World Network Garage Sale
- 03 9 am - Pastor Stephen
10:30 am - Sunday School at High St Property & Adult Prayer in Cafeteria
6 pm - Pastor Stephen
- 04 10 am - Prayer Meeting @ Sanctuary
3 pm - Prayer Meeting @ Sanctuary
6:30 pm - Prayer Meeting @ Sanctuary
- 06 6:30pm - Youth Group "Fuel" @ Sanctuary
- 09 10—11:30 am - WMU Mother's Day Celebration at

Kula Hospital

- 10 9 am - Pastor Stephen
10:30 am - Sunday School at High St Property & Adult Prayer in Cafeteria
6 pm - Pastor Stephen
- 11 10 am - Prayer Meeting @ Sanctuary
3 pm - Prayer Meeting @ Sanctuary
6:30 pm - Prayer Meeting @ Sanctuary
- 13 6:30pm - Youth Group "Fuel" @ Sanctuary
- 16 6 pm - TwoThirds World Network Missions Dinner
- 17 9 am - Pastor Jeremy
10:30 am - Sunday School at High St Property & Adult Prayer in Cafeteria
6 pm - Pastor Darren



Today's Worship Songs

Overtaken

Everyday

Mighty to Save

Valley Isle Fellowship

473 S High St, PO Box 886, Wailuku, HI 96793

ph: (808) 244-0865 • vifoffice@hawaii.rr.com • www.vifmaui.com

SUNDAY MORNING SERVICES

Wailuku Elementary School Cafeteria
355 S High St. Wailuku, HI 96793

Service - 9:00 am

Sunday School - 10:30 am

Children & Youth Sunday School at High Street property

SUNDAY EVENING SERVICE

VIF Church Sanctuary
6:00 pm



www.facebook.com/valleyislefellowship



@VIFMaui

Associate Pastor

Darren Sarmiento

Cell: (808) 757-1651

Email: darrenvif@hawaii.rr.com

Senior Pastor

Stephen Kaneshiro

Cell: (808) 419-8100

Email: icastephen@gmail.com

121 Ho'owaiwai Lp #801

Wailuku, HI 96793

Associate Pastor

Jeremy Kaneshiro

Cell: (808) 280-2780

Email: vifjeremy@gmail.com

Isaiah 6: Holy

Pastor Jeremy Kaneshiro

² Above him stood the seraphim. Each had six wings: with two he covered his face, and with two he covered his feet, and with two he flew. ³ And one called to another and said:

“Holy, holy, holy is the LORD of hosts;
the whole earth is full of his glory!”

⁴ And the foundations of the thresholds shook at the voice of him who called, and the house was filled with smoke. ⁵ And I said: “Woe is me! For I am lost; for I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips; for my eyes have seen the King, the LORD of hosts!”