

This last Sunday John preached at the church where in December he had stepped into the middle of a difficult situation and helped the pastor and congregation understand how to work with the un-churched kids they were bringing in from around the neighborhood. The Pastor started the service with the news that two kids had accepted Jesus into their hearts. He was so excited.

Many of the others in the church shared with us before and after the service how different their behavior was. One lady shared, "All the volunteers were ready to quit. We were tired, frustrated and just done! The kids were out of control!!! We told the pastor we couldn't do this kind of ministry anymore. But then you came and showed us what the kids needed and how we could meet those needs. We are all excited to move forward!"

On Tuesday I got a call from Australia. My nephew had read John's book and asked if we would be willing to come and train leaders how to reach out to at-risk-youth. He said, "Australia really doesn't do much active ministering to that group of people. There are no resources here. We need your help."

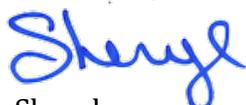
In the middle of Sunday and Tuesday was Monday. John got a call that morning that one of his older brothers had just gone to be with Jesus. To say the least this week has been like a ride on an emotional roller-coaster. As I write this letter we are making arrangements to fly to Portland, Oregon on February 1st to be with family for the funeral on the 4th.

Life is like that sometimes. Good news and bad news. God is faithful to hold us during these times. We sense His presence and feel the love of all of you who have sent condolences via Facebook, e-mail, and phone calls.

The future of Life Is Full Of Choices has always been in God's hands. We will go anywhere and do anything that God wants us to do. Our lives are also in God's hands. He knows our days!

Even in the middle of this turmoil, when it feels like our brain's are not working very well, we appreciate each one of you and covet your prayers as we continue with life and ministry.

God bless you all,



Sheryl
for John and Sheryl Emra

The Rest of the Story

I used the phrase "life is like that sometimes" in the letter.

I would like to explain that from our perspective God seldom works in a straight line.

He took us to Honduras as preparation for us to be in Los Angeles where we worked with kids for 15 years, first with World Gospel Mission then with City Team Ministries. Then He took what we had learned and used us to train churches in Los Angeles how to work with kids for the next 14 years. Seven of those years we worked with Campus Crusade then we started Life Is Full Of Choices. The past five years, with Life is Full Of Choices, He was taken us to different countries around the world as well as continuing to work with local Churches first in Los Angeles and now in Dallas

If all this dates and names are confusing to you I understand - they are confusing to me too. But the point is that if God would have told me in 1980 that I would be traveling around the world teaching leaders how to work with at-risk-kids I think I would have run the other way.

God works in our lives in small steps, often going in different directions in order to get us where He wants us to be!

As we look back over our life of ministry I can see a single thread running through our life that is as straight as an arrow leading to where we are right now.

Through our 38 years of ministry we often thought we had arrived and would be there for the rest of our lives. When we were in Honduras we thought that would be it. When we were running the Community Center in Los Angeles we thought that was it. When we were helping Churches in LA we thought that was it.

We have finally come to the conclusion that our ways are not His ways and our plans are not His plans. Wherever God wants to send us we will go - and whatever He wants us to do we will do it.

Thanks for your part in helping us grow to be more like Jesus in this area of our lives!

Answered Prayer

Last month we talked about the turmoil that is happening in our families. Of those prayer requests, the one concerning my brother has been answered - although not in the way we would have chosen.

Prayer Requests

Please continue praying for both our families in the area of health, communication and understanding.

We have talked about John and Sally Childress. This week Sally will start the process of getting a date for her surgery.

Pray for our future trip to England and the proposed trip to Australia. That God would be glorified in all we do!