



Because He Cares

By Mark Bonham, OHM Executive Director

Billy Graham was once asked if there was a

verse that could sum up the primary message of the Bible. He responded with the verse you see on roadside billboards, waved on placards at sporting events – and the verse, if any, that you memorized as a child. Perhaps no other words express God’s care better than John 3:16:

For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life.

God loved and cared for us so much that He sacrificed what was nearest and dearest to Him – sending Jesus in the form of a helpless babe into this dangerous and dysfunctional world. The miracle of Christmas is that God became flesh and dwelt among us – lived just like we lived, touched by the very things that cause us pain. In this we see God’s glory – full of grace and truth.

It seems like God could have launched His rescue mission with Jesus as an adult and skipped about 30 years of growing up in a difficult place. Jesus Himself could have focused exclusively on His disciples, having adult conversations about spiritual things, but we know that children always had ready access to Him. “Let them come to me and


don’t forbid them,” He passionately instructed His disciples. And He sternly warned those who devalued children what would happen if they caused even one child to stumble.

We understand all this to mean that children and childhood matter. Jesus even goes so far as to say:

Unless you become like little children you cannot inherit the kingdom of God.

Evidently spiritual maturity does not mean becoming like serious old men and women – but like trusting boys and girls. Because He cared so much about childhood that He was willing to experience it, we consider what happens in the formative years to be absolutely critical.

We look back, not only for our own sake, but for the sake of our children. If we do not learn lessons from our experiences, we are doomed to repeat them, doing damage to the next generation. In Grace Groups and SALTS, we carefully unpack the things we have accumulated in life to see what is keeping us from loving as lavishly as God has in Christ. In this newsletter, we invite you to note the many ways we use our own healing to become conduits of love and care for others.

This ministry is a response to God’s care and love for us – so richly evident in this season. 

Merry Christmas!



Because you’ve cared, we have been able to...

- Provide training for over 300 leaders from around the world
- Provide \$7500 in scholarships for 13 people for the October SALTS
 - Provide office support to respond to ministry needs
- Provide resources, materials and mentoring when people need more help
- Provide leadership support so that Grace Groups are launched and succeed
 - Send people around the globe to minister to the wounded

OHM needs your help now to end the year in the black. December is critical in determining how we will end 2009 and start 2010. We are trusting God to provide \$30,000 to enable us to continue to equip people on their journey to wholeness in Christ and multiply life-giving communities around the world.

Please send your gift today in the reply envelope. We’ve learned that there is a poor return on investing in things that soon lose their value. However, investing in God’s work in people leaves a legacy for eternity.



Because We Care

By Amy Anderson, OHM Leader Training Director

Care for the flock that God has entrusted to you.

Watch over it willingly, not grudgingly – not for what you get out of it, but because you are eager to serve God. Don’t lord it over people assigned to your care, but lead them by your own example.

1 Peter 5:2-3 (NLT)

As our ministry continues to grow, we have become aware of an increasing need to stay connected with the men and women who are leading Grace Groups, especially those who are just beginning to lead and feel alone and isolated. We are developing a regional strategy that involves connection at every level. From individual group members, to local leaders, to ministry coordinators, to area coordinators, to regional directors, we want people to experience a sense of community that is life giving.

I recently read in *Living from the Heart Jesus Gave You*, a book which

describes a model for caring for the wounded and gaining maturity, that believers should be looking for 3 people who are “upstream” that give us life and 3 people who are “downstream” who receive life from us. That struck a deep chord in me.

In our support structure, I want people to be able to reach “upstream” for help and encouragement (from experienced leaders) while reaching “downstream” to offer life giving community to people through Grace Groups. The book teaches that this reaching “up” and “down” is a way that we mature as believers and improves our sense of belonging. This was affirmation for me that our regional strategy will meet the tremendous need we have for connection, care, and community.

Please join us in praying for God’s guidance as we continue to develop a structure that will help us to “care for the flock that God has entrusted to us.” 