



August 29, 2018

Dear Friends and Family,

Trusting that everyone has been enjoying their summer! We've been busy going in many directions – here is a summary:

WHAT'S TAKEN PLACE

Ecuador Trip in July

I had a great first trip to Ecuador! Pastor Bobby Leek picked me up at the airport in Guayaquil and we spent the night there since I had arrived late evening. The next day we made the beautiful drive over the Cajas mountains (reaching nearly 14,000 feet above sea level) and then down into the city of Cuenca. Cuenca has an altitude over 8,000 feet and for the first day I could feel it – for those of us that live at sea-level – to give you a better idea of the effect – you need to take 2 or 3 breathes of air to get what you normally get in one. It takes a day or two to acclimate.



During one of the first few days, Bobby took me to meet the leaders of Young Life Cuenca – an engaged couple, Wilson Orellana and Marcela Reyes. We hung around with the youth there for a little bit and I was able to give them the love offering we collected thru your generous donations. This gift paid entirely for 5 young people to go to Young Life's summer camp.

Just before I left for Ecuador, a woman at Celebration Community Church came and testified how she had come to know Christ at a Young Life Camp – Praise Jesus! Let's pray that not only these 5 kids but the entire camp of youth come to Jesus and serve Him their entire lives!

I had the opportunity to share the message on the two Sundays I was there. Bobby and Lori pastor Impact Church and have just recently moved to a new facility. At both services the message was followed by people coming forward for prayer and ministry. On the first Sunday, I preached a message of "letting go."



Many responded to the message and received freedom and healing as evidenced by tears and rejoicing. Sunday evenings were spent sharing with what

Bobby calls his Legacy Group. This is the group of people looking to follow Jesus more seriously. I taught on Romans 12 and “presenting your bodies a living sacrifice.”



We spent our time during the week days traveling with a visiting team from Florida holding 3-day Vacation Bible Schools in area parks.



Many of you saw the picture of me, Bobby and the clown. Each day of VBS was two hours in length – the first hour our clown friend entertained the kids while very clearly teaching them about God and his great love for them – the second hour the team had rotating activities for the kids – sports, crafts, lessons.

We also held a 1-day medical outreach in a remote town. Land has been purchased there to soon plant a church. After the outreach we took time to pray over the land and town. There is only one Christian family living in the town – a pastor and his family.



Lori asked me to minister one evening with the youth group and another evening with the worship team – the picture below is of the worship team.



Bobby and Lori have been long time friends of ours. At one time Lori was one of our worship leaders and Bobby was a deacon at New Jerusalem Christian Church. Since then, they've planted a church in NJ and then later move to Ecuador as missionaries. I was really blessed by them and the church and look forward to going back in the future!

A Special Arrival in Ventspils, Latvia

I shared in a previous newsletter about our friends Mauro and Julia pastoring in Ventspils. Julia had miraculously become pregnant. Their miracle child, Eliza, was born in the beginning of July, healthy and beautiful! Both mom and baby are well.

They sent pictures of Eliza and a picture of the church meeting in their home now. I will be spending time in Ventspils in my upcoming trip to visit them and minister at the church. They have just begun to rent space on Sundays for services – they send a big thank you for your prayers and support!



Off to Union University in Jackson TN

After returning from my trip to Ecuador it was time for another family transition. We packed up our car and made a 1,000-mile drive to Jackson Tennessee. Our daughter, Amy, officially started her freshman year at Union University studying nursing to becoming a Nurse Practitioner. She received a full academic scholarship and was accepted into a program allowing her to move directly to a doctorate from her bachelor's degree – way to go Amy!



History Makers Youth Camp

It was a huge success, with many saying they felt it was the best camp yet! Although I couldn't be there personally this year, we were able to help financially through your donations! Hundreds of young people receive the message of Christ each year through History Makers camps and conferences – your

contributions play a part in that! The whole History Makers leadership send their thank you and appreciation!

WORD OF ENCOURAGEMENT

A man's heart plans his way, but the LORD directs his steps. Prov. 16:9 KJV

Some may read this scripture and have the idea, that no matter what, God will get them where He wants them. I've been thinking about this verse a lot lately and believe there is more for us to understand.

I believe it's true that God has a specific plan for our lives and that we can accomplish his will! But, it's not some haphazard walk through life. The verse above says that God directs our steps which implies that we must be willing to follow direction. 😊

Let me put it this way: God's will for your life is found in your steps of obedience. So, one big question to think about is: How well do you take direction?

God's will is found. As step by step you obediently follow His direction.

Many believers today have a walk in God that's more like aimless wandering. It doesn't have to be.

God is more than happy to give us direction – or, direct our steps – but we need to seek Him. He gives us plenty of direction for life in the Bible, if we read it. He will give us wisdom and understanding to make good decisions – if we seek Him in prayer. It's always worth our time.

This is truth: Non-seekers wander aimlessly through life.

But here's the encouragement: Seekers, although they may wander through deserts, are directed step by step, and accomplish the most worthwhile thing – God's will! Those that seek – find.

As always, we send you our heart-felt thanks and love!

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Doug', written in a cursive style.