

FALL UPDATE 2013

faith^{at}
HOME



*How do you spell
“adventure” in New
Zealand? SKYDIVING
and MULLETS*

THE TOILS OF LIFE

Life is hard...but God is good.

I don't know if I have ever been as personally aware of the results of the fall as I have felt this past year. In particular, I have felt the weight of these words from Genesis 3, "By the sweat of your brow you will eat your food." Yet, I am reminded that in the midst of our toiling, we serve a good God, who is gracious, slow to anger, abounding in lovingkindness, and One who can redeem.

God has been good to us in so many ways. We have a roof over our heads, live in a good community, have great friends and family for which we can be so thankful, and serve in a ministry (Faith at Home) which is having a significant impact.

Our oldest two children are currently in New Zealand at Capernwray Bible

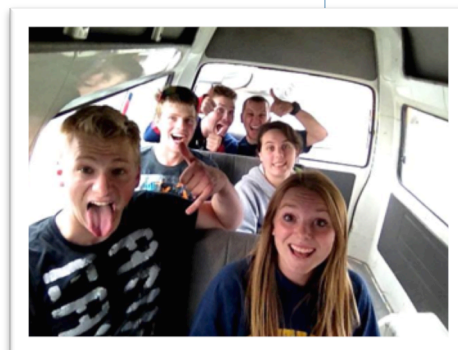
School. They are in the portion of their program called "Adventure Bible School," which Capernwray describes this way: *"Sea, sky, mountains, bush, and caves provide the setting for our classroom."*

Although the communication has been far too infrequent for our liking, Jesse describes the ABS program this way: *"ABS is underway, and it is insane! But we are having a ton of fun. I ran 6km's without stopping the other day! We have been practicing kayaking a lot lately. We have been practicing rolling back over after we flip for when we go white water kayaking."* And when we talk with them they tell us what they are learning about God and even ask us how we are doing spiritually. As a dad, I couldn't be more pleased, but pray continually that what they are learning will fall on rich soil lasting beyond their time in New Zealand.

Our youngest two are starting to adjust to their older siblings being gone and we are having to prepare them for the eventual move back to their own bedrooms and to return all of Jayme's clothing to the appropriate dresser.

Brittany will have to return her sister's iPhone, but before that happens she has to find a replacement phone for the one now broken. These adjustments can be traumatic! ☺

I thought as a father at this point I would feel like I have it all together when it comes to parenting. Increasingly, I feel like God is the only one who really has it all together and I'm more likely to blow things than get them right. I just offer up my feeble attempts at parenting and let Him take the loaves and fishes I offer and do His thing. Thank you Lord for ~~my~~ your children, and the chance to borrow them for awhile.



PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND

Do you know where Canada began? No, it was not Toronto nor Calgary. The birthplace of Confederation was Prince Edward Island. For the first time, Celia and I had the opportunity to go the PEI for a wonderful experience ministering at a Family Camp with the Churches of Christ.

After a visit to Avonlea, we spent three days with some great saints from eastern Canada for the Maritime Christian Fellowship annual Family Camp.

After a weekend of speaking on marriage and family, one lady said, "I felt like I got my husband back." Unbeknownst to us, her husband had been struggling through a serious bout of depression and she feared she would have to have him admitted to the psych ward in order for her to attend the camp. The Lord used the weekend to give her some hope and for them to spend some well-deserved time together.

Did you know that 1 in 10 Canadians will suffer from mood disorders and will feel life is like living in a long-dark tunnel.

Life has its toils from coast to coast.



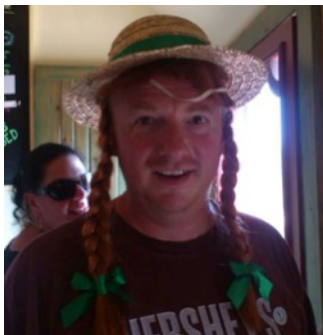
CRANBROOK AND SWIFT CURRENT

September was busy with Faith at Home Weekends in Cranbrook, BC and Swift Current, SK. For these weekends, I provided a full day of leadership training on family ministry on Saturday, followed by speaking Sunday morning and a parent's event Sunday evening called Extreme Family Makeover.

Cranbrook is a church undergoing significant changes in staff, including a new senior pastor. It was a joy to work with Pastor Grant McDowell as he settles in and gives leadership to the other staff members and church leaders. Cranbrook Alliance is a church that God has used in many interesting and powerful ways to impact southern BC and the Kootenays. It is my prayer that the seeds planted to call families to be centred on Christ would bear great fruit in the Kootenays. About 300 people responded Sunday morning to the call to be homes dedicated to serving the Lord.

September concluded with a journey to southern Saskatchewan and East Side Church of God in Swift Current. Now, my wife was born in this fair city, so I can confidently say the best things in life come from Swift Current!

East Side Church was ready for Faith at Home! They had digested a recent study on the state of faith in Canada called "Hemorrhaging Faith" (tgcfcanada.org/hemorrhagingfaith) and were anxious to consider how they could best impact the present and future generations for the cause of Christ. They called me, because they felt a Faith at Home approach offered some answers. I met with the church leadership from East Side and a few other churches on Saturday (about 40), followed by speaking twice on Sunday morning and a well-attended parents' event Sunday evening. One of the most moving parts of the weekend was not the integration of rap music into a worship song (although it really was great!). Rather, it was the response of the men of the church in the second Sunday service. I felt God asking me to issue a special challenge to the men during my message. The worship pastor built on this and after several hundred had already responded to make Christ the centre of their homes, he called on the men of the church to come forward again and commit themselves prayerfully to become the men of God that could lead their homes to be all God had called them to be. It was deeply moving to see about 75 to 100 men come forward and bow to their knees asking God to help them



BRIAN OF GREEN GABLES

become the such men. Praise the Lord, it was so powerful.

I was also deeply blessed to work with Pastor Kevin Snyder and Colleen Curry among others. Colleen is someone who has an incredible story of how God called her from her

husband leaving her, colitis, substance abuse, and near death after the birth of her child, to serving Him powerfully in Children's Ministry today. Colleen is a great example of how we suffer with life's toils, but how God redeems our lives in the midst of it all.

In October, I had the opportunity to participate in the Upswing Kids and Ministry conference in Edmonton. I taught classes on Thriving Families and Marriage and Family Ministry. It is great to see how God is using people all over Western Canada to impact homes for the sake of Christ. A special highlight for me was the opportunity to meet a couple in my class who had been separated for 7 years and were headed for divorce proceedings. Their pastor never gave up on them and the desire to have a positive lasting spiritual impact on their kids spurred them to get back together. It was completely a God thing, as He broke down the walls of hostility, bringing healing to their marriage and home. They renewed their vows and are actively serving the Lord today. Here is some of their story:

UPSWING 2013
CHILDREN'S MINISTRY LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE



OCTOBER 18-19
EDMONTON, ALBERTA

My wife and I were married in 1999 and separated in February of 2005. After many struggles, ups and downs, highs and lows, we were reconciled in March Of 2012. During the seven years apart, we both were in various stages of our faith walk. At first I didn't want my wife to leave; she didn't want to invest in our marriage. A few years later it was my wife that wanted to be reconciled and it was me that didn't want to work on our marriage. Both of us had to learn how to forgive. We both had to learn how to trust in each other and in God. It was a very long road with but worth every bit of the struggles. Our family has truly been blessed and it is amazing to think back and see how God was working in our lives, bringing my wife and I back to Himself first and then to each other. The ripple affect continues as we share our story when given the opportunity.

I am very thankful for Godly men in my life that were praying and walking with me during my times of struggle. It is so important to have people in our lives that can ask us tough questions and hold us accountable. One thing of many that I learned is our enemy is very crafty and emotion can cloud our judgment. It is very difficult to see clearly when we are emotionally involved. I made some mistakes over the last few years that I am not proud of and that my wife and I have had to work through. Because of God's faithfulness and grace, my wife and I are able to continue to work on our marriage. The difference between now and 1999 however, is now we are serving the Lord not ourselves.

My heart is to share our story to honour God by encouraging others. If God did this for us, He will do it for others! We had a chance to share our story a few times in Uganda and it is mind boggling that even across the globe people's struggles are very similar. Marriage is very important to God, therefore a target for our enemy.

I enjoyed your sessions at Upswing and it was very evident that you have a heart for God and for His institution of marriage.



FAITH AT HOME NEW ZEALAND

I will have the great opportunity in November to travel to New Zealand for a couple of weeks to help plant Faith at Home in the land of the Kiwis.

Mark Holmen has travelled twice to speak on Faith at Home to churches in New Zealand. The response has been overwhelming among churches. Willow Creek NZ has decided that Faith at Home needs to be the second major priority of their ministry (Leadership Summit is the first priority). They have hired a part time person to begin building Faith at Home NZ. Willow Creek is a small organization in NZ with only one employee, so adding this second position is a big faith step.

They have asked if I could speak at a conference on Faith at Home 201, train NZ Faith at Home coaches, and speak at a couple of weekend church services. I heartily agreed, looking forward to an opportunity to see the kids while in NZ.

Willow Creek is only able to pay part of my travel expenses (\$1000 of \$2500), so if you can contribute to helping establish Faith at Home in NZ, please contact me at brian@faithathome.ca. Your financial assistance is tax deductible.



I'll be hosting a night for parents with Mark Gregston in Langley November 3. Mark is a great old friend and an incredible voice on parenting the difficult teenage years. Tell someone you know in the area!

For more info:
www.frontofthelineproductions.com

TENTMAKING

This summer and fall kept me busy doing some other things as well: help with harvest on my brother, Stan's farm, and help with some of the flood relief efforts in High River.

My father-in-laws basement was completely destroyed with the flood and I was able to get a good part of it rebuilt. I also went back to my farm roots and worked on my brother's farm. My motive was to work hard and be a help to my brother, which I believe I did. It reminded me of the Genesis 3 verse about "by the sweat of your brow."

The full story is that this has been a very difficult year for our family, as I have endeavored to make the ministry of Faith at Home work. I have taken on additional "jobs" to put food on the table – like Paul did in making tents (though I don't believe it was to provide for his family ☺). I have been away from my family too much, so I am now having to consider what my future involvement will look like in Faith at Home ministries. Finances have been a very large challenge.



FINANCES

It has been such a joy and blessing to have many partners who have helped to make Faith at Home Canada become a viable ministry to homes in Canada and abroad. I find it very difficult to ask for personal financial support, but I am serving the Lord in Christian ministry and want to provide our partners with a realistic picture of Faith at Home in Canada. In these days, I am needing to evaluate where the Lord is leading our ministry in impacting faith in homes for generations to come. Since I no longer receive any salary from Focus on the Family or Willow Creek Canada, any shortfall in funding has come from our personal savings and credit, We presently do not have a cushion on which to fall back. We would like to finish the year off in a positive way, meet all of our obligations, and have a strong future for Faith at Home Canada. If the Lord prompts you to give additionally to the ministry of Faith at Home, we would greatly value your assistance.

Here are our present needs:

New Zealand Travel requirements: \$1440

General ministry expenses and salary shortfall for 2013: \$35,000

PLEASE CONTACT ME IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO DISCUSS OUR MINISTRY OR CAN HELP OUT FURTHER.

Our email address is: brian@faithathome.ca

To give online: www.faithathome.ca/invest

