

## FROM THE STUDENT MINISTRIES PASTOR...

Winter Camp has come and gone and it was fantastic this year. Our theme this year was "Purpose."

AT CAMP WE SPENT TIME UNPACKING THE ANSWERS TO THE QUESTION OF "WHY ARE WE HERE?" NO, NOT WHY ARE WE HERE AT CAMP BUT WHY ARE WE HERE ON EARTH?

ONE REASON WE EXIST IS BECAUSE WE WERE PLANNED FOR GOD'S PLEASURE AND ARE TO WORSHIP GOD WITH OUR LIVES. ANOTHER IS BECAUSE WE'VE BEEN FORMED FOR GOD'S FAMILY. AS WE CONNECT WITH THE BODY OF CHRIST (CHURCH FAMILY) WE'RE TO INDIVIDUALLY SEEK TO BECOME MORE AND MORE LIKE CHRIST. GROWING IN CHRIST WE'LL SEE HOW WE'VE BEEN SHAPED FOR SERVING HIM WITHIN THAT FAMILY. WE EACH HAVE A ROLE TO PLAY WITHIN CHRIST'S BODY (THE CHURCH). PART OF OUR ROLE WITHIN THE FAMILY AND ANOTHER REASON WE'RE HERE, IS TO HELP THE CHURCH FAMILY TO GROW. WE WANT TO REACH OUT TO THOSE WHO DON'T KNOW CHRIST SO THEY CAN BECOME PART OF THE CHURCH AS WELL. THESE ARE OUR PURPOSES AS FOLLOWERS OF JESUS CHRIST. THEY HELP ANSWER THE QUESTION FOR US OF "WHY ARE WE HERE?"

I HAD THE PRIVILEGE OF BEING OUR CAMP SPEAKER THIS YEAR. AS I MENTIONED BACK IN DECEMBER, WE TRIED TO GET A COUPLE OF OTHER GUYS BUT DUE TO OTHER RESPONSIBILITIES AND COMMITMENTS, THEY WERE NOT ABLE TO MAKE IT. OUR YOUTH BAND DID AN OUTSTANDING JOB LEADING US IN WORSHIP. BY THE TIME YOU'VE READ THIS ARTICLE, YOU'LL HAVE JUST HEARD THEM IN WORSHIP AT CHURCH. THEY ARE TRULY A BLESSING TO US.

On February 24-25 we have our 9<sup>th</sup> annual "In-town Retreat." Our theme this year is "Rooted".

The following is an excerpt that describes the material:

"NO MATTER WHAT CHANGES COME ABOUT, SOME THINGS REMAIN CONSTANT. WE NEED OUR ROOTS. IT'S PRETTY CERTAIN THAT NO MATTER HOW MUCH SCIENCE WE COME UP WITH, GRASS AND TREES WILL STILL NEED ROOTS TO GROW. NO MATTER HOW MUCH WE TRY, PARTS OF OUR UPBRINGING AND ROOTS WILL STILL FOLLOW US AROUND. AND NO MATTER HOW MANY NEW TECHNOLOGIES AND STRATEGIES ARE PLACED BEFORE US, THE ROOTS OF CHRISTIANITY THAT CHRIST TAUGHT AND THE EARLY CHURCH LIVED OUT, WILL STILL BE THE BEST WAY TO GROW AND SPREAD OUR FAITH.

ALL THIS IS NOT TO SAY THAT NEW THINGS ARE BAD, BUT THEY ARE WHEN WE FORGET WHERE WE CAME FROM AND WHAT IS MOST IMPORTANT. MANY OF US FORGET THIS SOMETIMES. MANY OF OUR STUDENTS HAVE FORGOTTEN OR MAY NEVER HAVE KNOWN WHAT THEIR ROOTS AS CHRISTIANS ARE. MORE THAN EVER WE, AS CHRISTIANS, NEED TO REMEMBER WHAT OUR ROOTS ARE AND GET BACK TO THEM. WE NEED TO GET ROOTED AGAIN SO WE ARE CONNECTED TO OUR LIFE SOURCE AND ABLE TO WITHSTAND THE STORMS AROUND US."

Please encourage students to join us. We will begin at 7 pm in the Youth Room on the 24<sup>th</sup>.

AFTER SOME TIME TOGETHER HERE WE WILL HEAD TO HOMES OF PEOPLE WITHIN OUR CHURCH TO TALK ABOUT OUR "ROOTS." SATURDAY THE 25<sup>th</sup> THIS DISCUSSION WILL CONTINUE AND WE WILL END HERE AT THE CHURCH WITH LUNCH AND A TIME TALKING ABOUT WHAT WE'VE LEARNED. IF YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS, PLEASE DON'T HESITATE TO ASK.

Blessings, Pastor Greg