

The Journal of Ron Boehme - 2014

Port Orchard, Washington

January 1, 2014 - 21,995 – 8,916

As I begin the year of our Lord, 2014, the numbers above truly reflect that even if I live a long life, I am still clearly in the last third of my life. With that truth staring me in the face every day, Lord Jesus, "Teach me to number my days that I might apply my heart unto wisdom" (Psalm 90:12).

Last year was a year of change--of selling our home, moving across the street--and building an "Ark" for the coming days that I feel are before us. I still believe that the world is about to change in major ways, and last year God asked me to get ready for it.

This year, I feel, there will be a "flood" of things coming--possibly involving great sorrow and pain--and that I need to "wait in the dark as did Noah and his family, trusting, and being cared for and protected by God Himself." That is not a wonderful prediction, but there's joy in facing reality and not living in a whimsical fog.

God is also challenging me to continue to focus on Revelation 3:20 - "to be FULL OF FAITH unto death so that God can give me a crown of life." Faithfulness is not just loyalty or consistency. It is be filled up with trust in God regardless of the circumstances. That is the ground I want to occupy in 2014.

I did enjoy looking back over my journal the other day, starting on December 31, 1973 when I boarded a plane for Germany to join Youth With A Mission. This year marks four decades for me with YWAM and I want to look back and celebrate all that God has done all year long--including our April 11 banquet.

As I read my hand-written notes, it was amazing to think how young, alone, confused, and vulnerable I was forty years ago when I stepped onto that plane--knowing nothing about what the future would hold. Today, as I gaze on the tapestry of ministry, travel, missions, family, education, and accomplishments that have come forth out of those forty years.

I am stunned by the goodness of God and his leadership in my life. He truly has guided me all those years. He had a plan for my life. He wanted to answer my questions. He wanted to grow and mature me. He had relationships to give me and works for me to do.

What a Savior! What a Magnificent God and Friend. I love you my Father and commit to follow you through the troubled waters of 2014 if you will hold my hand and keep walking in front. I know that you will.

January 20, 2014 - 22,014 – 8,897

For about a week I had some very strange physical symptoms that made me think I might be having a heart attack. I felt very sluggish and had a dull pain in my chest while my heart seemed to beat loudly and quickly--and my blood pressure was elevated.

I went to the doctor, and after a week or so, the symptoms disappeared, and my blood pressure has returned to normal at about 135/85. It was a bit of a scare, and I am going to follow through with a cardiologist, but the best guess now is that it was stress or sorrow related. I have had a lot of things on my mind recently and that could be true. Lord - thank you for the health that you give. I don't take it for granted. Every breath I take comes from you and I ask you to bless my health only that I might serve you to the end.

Shirley and I also updated our will recently because it is out of date. Good to get it current. We have chosen Megan to be our Representative/Trustee who will handle all the financial aspects of the dividing of the estate after our death. Jason will get the house and the other kids will divide any monies that are left. This is simply another aspect of "numbering my days" and having my affairs in order. Thank you, Father, for the nudge.

February 5, 2014 - 22,030 – 8,881

It seems like many things are happening in my life right now. I will mention some of the highlights here:

- I have begun teaching a five-week course at First Christian on "Missional Living" which is being videoed by Ron Finney so that it can be used for on-line courses at Faith Seminary. I'm excited about this new possibility of getting out God's truth in the university domain. I would love to develop about 25 courses over the next few years.
- On a lighter note, the Seattle Seahawks won their first Superbowl last Sunday by the convincing score of 43-8. Many of the Seahawk players and coaches are Christians and I
- I have canceled a couple of trips due to dad's health and that may be a pattern this year. But Shirley and I have been having many quality times with both of our parents and that is a gift and a privilege. They have given so much to us. The least we can do is enjoy these final days with them to the max.
- During this my fortieth year in YWAM, I have been using some of my evenings to go over my old notes from Hurlach taken in 1974. What a precious and life-changing season that was for me. What rich teaching God gave to help place my life on a firm foundation. We really received a rich treasure trove of truth during that time.

Thank you, my Savior, for **guiding me every day of my life.**

March 9, 2014 - 22,062 – 8,849

My dear father passed from this life into eternity this morning. I have been preparing for it for many years, but you are never ready when it comes. I will miss him dearly but am so excited that he has seen Jesus face to face and been united with so many that have gone before.

Here is my blog on his passing.

In Memoriam: Robert Eugene Boehme - March 4, 1920 - March 9, 2014

Last Tuesday evening our family celebrated Dad Boehme's 94th birthday at a local restaurant. Afterwards, he said it was the best party he had ever had.

Twenty-four hours later he was whisked to the hospital by ambulance. My mother, brother and I spent the next three days non-stop with him in the ICU--watching him improve, sink, struggle, rally-- while laughing, talking, crying, praying and enjoying the closest fellowship human beings can share.

We were there at his side, loving on him, and encouraging him during the final hours as his earthly body ended its heroic pilgrimage. I will never forget seeing him take his last "breath of life."

At 6 am, on Sunday morning March 9, he passed into eternity--seeing his Savior face-to-face for the first glorious time and being welcomed by many others into his everlasting home.

Dad always said that life contained "many mountains to climb." No more. He has reached the summit. We will miss him deeply, but have blessed assurance through the words of Jesus:

"I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in Me will never die" (John 11:25).

He left me a personal letter in his file which means a great deal to me. Two paragraphs really stand out:

"I couldn't be prouder of the career pathway you have chosen. And I am in awe of your personal disciplines. patience, and devotion to the Lord's work. It's been a real privilege for me to enjoy your writings, and I'm constantly amazed at the depth of your understanding of the Bible, and the beauty and skill of your writing talent. And you have climaxed it with your brilliant "The Fourth Wave."

Dad came a long distance to say those words. He was greatly troubled in the beginning when I chose a non-salaried job in missions. But over the years, he saw the hand of God on my life and became my biggest supporter--for which I will always be grateful. But here's the paragraph that both breaks my heart and means the most:

"Finally, I can't tell you how much remorse I have lived with over the years for the impact of yours and Greg's life that the two trials and my imprisonment imposed upon you and that I have left you with no family legacy that you can be proud of. I have tried as best I can to make amends for that. God bless you for the wonderful son that you are and have been and for blessing us with such a wonderful daughter-in-law and grandchildren. **You've always been number one in my eyes. And as I look over my entire lifetime, I can honestly say that you have been my greatest blessing.**"

Tears flowed freely and I dropped my head to my desk when I first read those words. First, I was heart-broken that dad had never forgiven himself for the sins of the 60s. They impacted us--but nowhere near the level that he spoke of. He left us a wonderful legacy of love, support, care, and friendship that I would trade for no other. He knows that now. I wish I could have convinced him of it in this life. Some things are left to the comforts of eternity.

I will never receive a greater compliment than the final sentence in his letter above. I did want to bless him with my life and point him to Christ--from 1968 to his final breath a few days ago. To whatever degree I succeeded, the Lord receive the glory.

I love you dad and want to follow your example. Thanks for your magnificent life and legacy.

Here's the second of three blogs that I published to honor the memory of my dad.

Lessons from Death: The life is in the Blood

It was a special privilege to be with my 94-year old father when he left this world on March 9th, 2014. The experience of death is a sobering one, especially when it involves someone you love very much.

I would like to dedicate the next two blogs to the memory of my dad--Dr. Robert Boehme. Though fluid on the lungs and a serious septic inflection were the problems that led to his final trip to the hospital, it was a failing heart that eventually took his life.

As I watched it all transpire, I was reminded of a profound truth: "The life is in the blood." That is true in more ways than one.

The Bible is not a medical book, but when it speaks on various subjects, it always states the truth--even if that reality is not understood by people for thousands of years.

In Leviticus 17:11, Moses declared a truism to the ancient people of Israel that doctors did not understand until modern times: "The life is in the blood" (Leviticus 17:11). We might expand that to say that the flow of blood in the body is the means of nourishing, regulating, and protecting the life of every human being.

Without the flow of blood there is no "life" in the human body. And the key to that blood flow is an amazing muscle we call the "heart."

My father had been thinking about his heart, and the vital blood that flowed through it, ever since he underwent five-bypass surgery in 1989 at the age of 70. Repairs to heart circulation such as bypass surgery usually last for 10-15 years.

Once dad reached 85, he knew he was living on "borrowed time." He was the most prepared-for-death individual I have ever known. He set all his earthly affairs in order, left detailed instructions typed out as to what to do after his passing, and wrote personal letters to those he loved. Dad lived for over twenty years knowing he was a heartbeat away from eternity.

When he was rushed to the hospital in the early morning hours of March 6 and placed in the Intensive Care Unit (ICU), I knew they would be administering large doses of medicine into his system to deal with the septic infection and other problems.

But I kept my eyes glued to the large monitor about six feet in the air to the left of his bed. It recorded many vital signs from his temperature to oxygen levels and other data. But the most important part was the continuous graph of his *beating heart*. His "life" was tied to those lines on the screen.

The Heart

Here are a few facts about the human heart that may be helpful to understand:

- Over the course of an average lifetime, the heart will pump one million *barrels* of blood. That's enough blood to fill two oil super tankers (large ships).
- An average man's heart weighs 10 ounces, and a woman's heart weighs 8 ounces. Women's hearts make up for their smaller size by beating a little faster. The average heart rate of a man is 70 beats/minute, and that of a woman is 78 beats/minute.
- The heart really isn't "red," but is more the color of a colonial brick house. Furthermore, the surface of the heart has large deposits of fat which make its surface look yellow.
- Although most of us place our right hand on our left chest when we pledge allegiance to the flag, the heart is really in middle of the chest in between the right and left lung. It is, however, tilted slightly to the left.
- The heart has its own electrical system that causes it to beat. As long as the heart continues to receive oxygen, it will continue to beat, even if it's separated from the rest of the body.

- The human heart begins beating four weeks after conception and doesn't stop beating until death. It beats 100,000 times a day, and almost one million times a week. In my father's long life, his heartbeat nearly *5 billion times*.
- The heart has incredible endurance. As a muscle, it never gets fatigued. But it does wear out with age.

During dad's stay in the ICU, I constantly glanced at his heartbeat on the monitor. At one point, a technician did a full-color ultrasound of his heart to see where it might have been damaged. He scanned every region, valve, and main artery of dad's still-pounding heart.

I could have been impressed with the technology. I wasn't. I was amazed by the sight of this miracle heart, designed by God, which kept my father alive. The theory of evolution has never appeared so ridiculous to me. Only a Great God could create and sustain something like the human heart.

The Blood

Then I began thinking about the blood--the life-giving serum of this amazing system. The nurses would give dad injections through various "ports" in his body during the day. The carefully chosen medicines would immediately enter his bloodstream and flow throughout his body bringing help and healing.

Blood has a variety of functions. Red blood cells take oxygen from the lungs to the cells of the body and remove carbon dioxide from the body's cells to the lungs where it is breathed out. Blood carries nutrients, hormones and waste products around the body.

As a fluid composed of plasma and cells, blood regulates the acid-alkali balance of the body. It also plays a part in regulating body temperature by increasing the amount of blood flowing close to the skin--helping the body to lose heat.

White blood cells attack and destroy invading bacteria and other pathogens. Blood clots are an amazing creation that protects the body from losing too much blood after injury.

Every person to whom God gives "life" has 20-30 trillion red blood cells (see the photo above). Every day about 1% of these are changed. New red blood cells take about 7 days to form in the bone marrow, and are produced at the staggering rate of about 2 to 3 million per second.

Each of these life-giving cells lasts about 120 days before its components are recycled to form new ones. During its 4-month lifetime, each red cell travels some 300 miles around the body, passing through the heart about 14,000 times per day.

Most of our blood vessels are microscopic capillaries. God designed each red blood cells

to leave the bone marrow without a nucleus--allowing it to bend and alter shape as it squeezes through the capillaries. If the blood vessels in one person were laid end to end, they would be about 100,000 miles in length—enough to circle the earth at the equator about four times.

During the three days in ICU, the doctors did everything in their power to regulate dad's blood flow. Some medications would raise his blood pressure. Other treatments would lower it.

As we sat by his bedside, talking to him, praying for him, and loving on him during his final hours on earth, we were aware that his heart was weakening, and his blood pressure was going down. For the final hour or so, we turned off the monitor because we didn't want to focus there.

We desired to be with him as his amazing heartbeat neared 5 billion times. When it stopped--the life of the body of the one we loved was gone. But that was not the end. It was only the beginning of *real life* for my dear father. Here is an even greater truth: "Without the shedding of blood there is no forgiveness of sin (Hebrews 9:22)."

What brings a person eternal life is the *shed blood of Jesus on the Cross of Calvary*, cleansing away the defilement of sin. God has always required blood sacrifice to atone for sin. It's the only just expression of both his hatred for evil and his desire to reconcile himself to fallen human beings. "The life is in the blood."

When my dad's physical life was over--when his heart ceased beating and his blood stopped flowing--another form of blood took over: the precious blood of Jesus Christ! As he left his dying body, we looked up and blew him kisses as he crossed the veil into eternity to be united with his Savior and many others that had gone before him.

Physical blood gave him 94 years of human life. Christ's shed blood had bought him eternal life. That is what I learned about death as I helped my father move from one world to the next. Blood flowing sustained him in one; blood shed cleansed away his sins in the other. I know which blood is most important.

I am glad my dad did also.

March 29, 2014 - 22, 082 - 8829

Today was the memorial service for my wonderful father held at Christ the Rock Community Church. Hundreds came out to show their respects and love for this great man and it was a very moving time.

Dad had planned most of the service himself, and we honored his wishes. We sang four of his favorite hymns and Pastor Dwight Kennedy read the eulogy. Then we watched an amazing 10-minute photo tribute that Greg had put together, followed by our six grandchildren

"Remembering Grandpa." They did a superb job and I was very proud of their words, poems, Ryan's piano piece (The Lord's Prayer), tears, and expressions of appreciation.

Then I had my opportunity to "Honor Dad" and share the message he asked me to give many years ago--"What It Means to Believe." There was a hush in the audience as I gave it, and I led people in prayer at the end to get their lives right with God. In eternity we will find out if any of them used that time to be "born from above."

Afterwards there was a nice reception in the church foyer where we greeted all those that came, and then a few hours at mom's over dinner where the Boehme family met once again to honor his life.

It is now up to us who are living--and I accept the challenge of picking up the family torch--to carry on the faith and relationship that God has given us. I commit to be a major player in that quest. That is one other thing that dad would be pleased with. He loved his family. I ask for a "double portion" of that spirit to be upon me to accomplish the task in the coming years.

Following is the message that I shared at the memorial--minus the comments on "What It Means to Believe." I felt a tremendous anointing upon my sharing and an ease of delivery, despite the tears and emotions that flooded my heart during that time. I am so grateful for people that were praying for me that day--and all that came to say goodbye to dad.

My Dad, My Best Friend

"The glory of children is their fathers" (Proverbs 17:6)

On Saturday, March 29 at 1pm at Christ the Rock Community Church in Port Orchard, I will be joining our extended family and many others to pay our respects to my dad--Robert Eugene Boehme--at his memorial service.

This past week, mom and I were sorting out things in his den and found a 94-year old baptismal certificate. It is recorded on beautiful, multi-color parchment paper (from another era) and in relatively good shape for being almost a century old.

We were amazed to see that he was baptized on March 29, 1920--*ninety-four years to the day when we will celebrate his "graduation" to heaven.* Following is a preview of some of the remarks I will share at the service They will center around a simple truth:

My dad was my best friend. First, let me share the basic life story of Robert Boehme.

He was born on March 4, 1920 to Herman and Lucille Boehme in Akron, Ohio. His German grandmother had migrated to the Midwest with her small children following the death of her husband in a fishing accident in Galveston, Texas in the late 1890s.

Dad was the oldest of six children who lived with their parents in a small farmhouse near Akron which had no indoor plumbing until he had graduated from high school. No wonder he never liked camping--he had "camped out" his entire childhood.

His father, Otto Herman, managed a mercantile store and worked in the rubber factories that were a major industry in the area. Dad graduated from Copley High in 1938--during the heart of the Depression. He worked as a bank teller, then decided to attend the University of Akron. and Western Reserve Medical School to become a medical doctor.

He was the first in his family to graduate from college. Some of those years were spent working all night in a tire factory, attending classes during the day, studying in the evening, and *living on two hours sleep a day*. During World War II he joined the Army Medical Corps at Crile Army Hospital in Cleveland and where he served the war effort.

Dad's younger brother Richard was an Air Force B-24 bomber pilot during the war who was shot down three times in Europe. He lost his life just months before WWII ended when his squadron was hit by German artillery and crashed into the Italian Alps.

(The details of Richard's death were not known for fifty years until a son of one of the squadron members published two books--which he sent to dad ten years ago. He learned from them that a member of Richard's doomed plane had fallen 8,000 feet without a parachute--landing in deep snow on top of a mountain--and survived. To this day, members of a nearby village climb the mountain each year to pay their respects to the brave Americans who gave their lives that day.)

After graduating from medical school, dad was faced with deciding where to complete his residency. He wrote two hospitals--one in Bethesda, Maryland which was his first choice--and a second one, Good Samaritan Hospital in Portland, Oregon. "Good Sam," as he always called it, accepted him, and when he failed to hear from Bethesda, he signed the letter to go to Portland.

Soon after he made the commitment, he received a phone call from Bethesda asking him why he hadn't responded to their approval letter. He told them he hadn't received it and needed to honor his commitment to go to Portland.

Thus a "lost letter" altered the destiny of the entire Boehme family as dad moved west and eventually brought his Ohio clan with him where his siblings married, and had children, and grandchildren.

After finishing his residency in Oregon, he started a private practice in Port Orchard, WA (near Seattle) in 1949 when the local Chamber of Commerce invited him to come north. He arrived on a sunny day in winter and thought this must be the weather pattern all year round! He spent the next fourteen years delivering over 2000 babies, performing thousands of minor

surgeries, and becoming a favorite physician to many. The last twenty-four years of his 42 years in practice were spent as a federal medical officer.

In 1951, dad married a Swedish girl named Dorothy Johanson who worked as a secretary at South Kitsap High School. My older brother, Greg, and I were born of that marriage. Following Dorothy's death in 1962, he later married Wyoming native Mary Neal who had moved west with her parents to Seattle, and then Port Orchard. Mary was a registered nurse who became his partner in life and service, and faithful caregiver in his later years. In 1981, Dad and Mom served together as members of a World Vision medical team in Thailand that ministered to refugees fleeing the Cambodian killing fields.

Dad learned to play piano during the big band era and used his musical gift all his life including playing piano and organ at numerous churches. He loved the local Port Orchard community and served on the South Kitsap School board for a number of years., In 1966 he and mom were the sole donors of a new high school football field complete with a track and grandstand. (I happened to be the 9th grade quarterback that year!)

Serving others through medicine was his calling. Dad was known as a master diagnostician during the era when family doctors gladly made house calls, answering machines hadn't been invented, and Mom Boehme was forced to serve "two minute dinners" because the phone rang off the hook every evening because people knew they could reach the "good doctor" at home.

On retiring from medicine in 1998, he was awarded the Meritorious Civilian Medal for Distinguished Service by the Secretary of the Navy.

But Dad's first love was his immediate and extended family which he supported and encouraged his life. The Boehme clan is alive and blessed today because he made the courageous decision to "go west" in 1948 and bloom where God planted him.

Remembering Dad, My Best Friend

God has designed that children look up to and admire their fathers more than any other person on earth. In turn, fathers are meant to point their sons and daughters to our Heavenly Father--the most important Person in all our lives. I admired and looked up to my earthly dad. And I learned a long time ago that *the greatest form of admiration is imitation*. You don't really admire someone you aren't willing to emulate.

Memorable Words

Following someone's example begins with remembering their words and applying them. Here are some of dad's favorite "quotes" that I will never forget.

Quote One - "*Another triumph of man over the forces of nature.*" As a science guy, he loved to complete projects or diagnoses with these words. Dad was a finisher, a completer. I, too, want to change the world for good--and finish well.

Quote Two - "*Never up, never in.*" This is a famous saying for wannabe golfers. You'll never sink the putt unless you hit it far enough. A good "life" translation? Aim high and shoot long. Don't be timid and come up short of God's plan.

Quote Three - "*Measure twice and saw once.*" Dad and I built many things together over the past three decades. In fact, the week after his death I constructed a few shelves in my office to honor his memory. Dad was a planner who learned from his mistakes. Don't be careless and in too much of a hurry. Haste makes waste.

Quote Four - "*Life is a series of mountains to climb.*" Dad said this regularly as he faced problems and challenges. Behind the statement was a commitment to persevere that seemed to be a default in his makeup. **As he took his last breath on March 9, I had the privilege of whispering in his ear: "This is the last mountain, dad. It's okay to go home. You've reached the summit."**

Quote Five - "*Most people lead lives of quiet desperation.*" Dad was a philosophic individual who understood human pain and suffering. He knew that people could appear one thing on the outside but be dying on the inside. He dedicated his doctor's practice to helping them overcome their diseases and fears. I want to do the same--as a "doctor of the soul."

Quote Six: "*I cried because I had no shoes until I met a man who had no feet.*" Dad was grateful for his life and did not gripe about circumstances. As he faced the ravages of old age, he kept perspective on how blessed he was. He knew it was a matter of comparison. That's an important "view" to maintain. Count your blessings and have empathy for others.

Quote Seven - "*Never complain, never explain.*" During the last 24 hours of his life, dad looked at me from his hospital bed, said those words, and mischievously asked if I knew their source. I didn't--so he replied, "Lord Acton." Then he smiled and went back to sleep. That quote typified his life. He was a quiet man. He was not a whiner. He had learned the secret of self-control. In my latter stage of life, I want to follow his lead.

Memorable Actions

Jesus said that people are most known by their actions--not by their words (Matthew 7:16). Words can be cheap. For dad, words were few--but that was okay because he did his loudest talking through what he *did*, not what he said. I only have space to share three stories. The first one relates to his *work ethic*.

When we were building our home in 1989, dad was recovering from five-bypass heart surgery at the age of seventy. Despite his rehab, he came by the house almost every day and put

us younger bucks to shame with his drive and discipline that led to us label him "the hard-working German."

One weekend he and I were siding the house. He was doing the saw cuts and I was nailing up the boards. We were nearing the finish when the skill saw accidentally slipped and sliced a deep gash in his thigh. As the blood spurted through his pants, I shouted, "We need to get you to a doctor!"

But dad wanted to finish. We began to argue. I said, "Dad you need to go to Emergency." He barked back, "I'm the doctor here!" At that, he picked up a roll of duct tape, pinched the cut closed and wrapped the tape around his bleeding thigh. After finishing the job he went home and sewed up himself in the bathroom.

A second character trait that I admired was his *honesty*--his willingness to change when presented with the truth. Dad was deeply concerned when I walked away from a full-ride university scholarship to become an unpaid missionary. To his generation, education was the ticket out of poverty. Though he supported my decision, he kept hinting that "maybe I should go back to school and get a real job." But I knew God had called me, and I needed to obey--despite my father's angst.

Ten years into a missions career, Shirley and I visited the Northwest and I preached at a local church. Dad hadn't heard me speak for quite a while and came to the service. God wonderfully blessed the ministry time as many came forward to commit their lives to Christ.

After praying with many people, I looked up and noticed that dad was waiting for me. He walked up and declared: "I was wrong about your education. You were right. It's obvious you are called to be a preacher of the Gospel. From this moment, I will be your greatest supporter."

He was for the rest of his life. Dad's humility and honesty were the true mark of a man of science which teaches, "Go where the facts lead you." When dad learned the truth, he embraced it. (As to the "rest of the story," it was a joy and delight 35 years later to complete my BA, Masters, and doctorate and see my beaming 90-year-old father in the audience!)

A third action that dad demonstrated was his incredible *generosity*--to Greg and me, his extended family, the community, and God's work around the world.

Dad lived to give. That is why he was a doctor and why he gave thousands of dollars to help other people and advance Christ's cause. In fact, he is one of only two men I've ever known who clearly possessed the biblical gift of giving (Romans 12:8).

Three weeks ago, when I tried to quietly pay the restaurant bill at his 94th birthday party, Greg turned to me and said, "You know he'll never let you do it." He was right. Dad got mad and insisted on paying! He saw it as his ministry--his calling. He was a giver--like no other person I have ever known.

Memorable Father & Best Friend

Dad had three best friends in life. First was his wonderful wife, Mary--our mother. He and mom were soul mates for fifty years--and got closer as the years progressed. Dad was also a best friend to Greg--and also to me. Family was at the center of all his friendships.

Best friends enjoy being together. They share their hearts, struggles and cares. They ask each other for advice. They give counsel and encouragement. They pray for each other and believe in one another. I shared all those experiences with my dear father.

Dad almost died three times in the past few years. On two of those occasions, we said our goodbyes and enjoyed some tender moments. I won't tell you all that he said to me, but just one sentence he uttered means everything:

"Ronnie, I'm very proud of what you've become." I knew he wasn't talking about my travels, messages, books, or degrees. He was talking about my *faith in Christ*. I know because he said so.

The greatest thing I had been able to help give *him*--when he was in his fifties--was a personal, abiding faith. What I had become through a born-again experience, he too became through the power of Jesus.

Thank you, dad, for everything. You were my best friend and I will miss you dearly. I am very proud of what you did on earth and *what you've become in Christ's heavenly kingdom*.

I learned one thing through the service: who my *real* friends are. Many faces there came out of the woodwork to stand with our family and share our grief and joy. Others did not come. It was very instructive to me. I will not name names here, because there is no indictment of anyone--just an understanding of what really makes a true friendship.

Lord, help me to be a good and true friend to those you have given me. Thanks again for those who are friends of the Boehme family. I cherish them and thank you for the gift they are to my life.

In Memoriam: Robert Eugene Boehme

Tuesday, March 11, 2014



My Dad, My Best Friend

Tuesday, March 25, 2014



"The glory of children is their fathers" (Proverbs 17:6)

May 9, 2014 - 22,123 – 8,829

Just finished a wonderful four state, twelve-day trip that took me to Washington, D.C., Virginia, California and Montana. Every step was meaningful. and I saw God's provision at every turn. First, I traveled on a free ticket with United which probably saved me a thousand dollars. Then I stayed at Mary McQueen's place behind the Supreme Court that also saved me a grand--and in total, I probably spent about \$100 on the entire excursion. How's that for God taking care of those that are in his will?

DC highlights:

Washington, D.C.

Spent a day with the National Prayer Committee meeting at Homewood Suites. Nice to be re-united with Nancy Wilson of Cru and many other friends.

My busiest day was the National Day of Prayer. Started with praying with some pastors on the steps of the Supreme Court; Then I spoke at Tony Perkins' Family Research Council Chapel on "Thoughts from Jeremiah." Powerful time and response. Then I made my way up to the Cannon Building to catch the end of the NDP. Anne Graham Lotz gave a strong prophetic word.

It was great to be re-united with Christ Kirk who worked with us with the "America You're Too Young to Die" WA state tour in '93. Chris and I shared lunch together. Then I went to the Israeli Embassy for a Christian Solidarity meeting with Franklin Graham. Got to meet the new Israeli ambassador (Ron Dermer). Then finished off with meeting with Corinthia Boone on the Capitol steps following the city rally.

Wonderful day of prayer.

On Friday I spent some valuable time with Jason Hershey and toured the new YWAM DC base at Embassy Church. Also had a stimulating lunch with Doug Burleigh at the Cedars. Would love to take Shirley and the Morrises back there next year.

I met with Dick Simmons at his place on Saturday and spent the evening, as is customary, with the Cresswells in Manassas. Then I saw Inece Bryant on Sunday morning and spoke on "Navigating the Transitions of life" at the King's Chapel in Oakton. Great response to God's Word. The I flew on my way back to the west coast.

Los Angeles, California

California Dreamin':

David picked me up at LAX and we had a nice dinner together, after which he took me to the hotel in Costa Mesa. Had lunch with Nathan the next day--which was also good.

Spent a day at the 25th anniversary of YMEC--a wonderful group of youth leaders that I have thoroughly enjoyed over the years. Felt God used me to speak into the gathering on the last day related to the world we live in and preparing for difficulties.

I enjoyed rooming with Paul Fleischmann--great friend and leader. One afternoon, I took a walk outside and accidentally stumbled onto the international headquarters of TBN. I spent a couple hours on the elegant and elaborate campus--even watching a video on the life of Paul. The entire time I was there, I was the only visitor. Since Paul Crouch died recently, I wonder if TBN's days are numbered. But God has used them.

On the final day of YMEC a young and very bitter Native American leader shared an unusual presentation with a very bad spirit. It was definitely anti-white and anti-missions. Glad I know many Native folks who don't carry that chip on their shoulders. This will probably be my last time at YMEC. Sensed that my time was over with this group. Lord - bless them as new leaders step in to evangelize and disciple the youth of this nation.

Then I caught a plane up to Kalispell, Montana.

Kalispell, Montana

Montana happenings:

I had not been to Lakeside in a while and it was nice to visit the base in my new role as Northwest District director. Dr. Jay Diller joined me for two days there and we shared the vision for YWAMers to get accredited degrees at Faith Seminary. Good time of fellowship with Dr. Jay.

One morning I traveled around Flathead Lake to Polson to visit the Tribal Waves ministry. They have a very committed and diverse team led by Sika Ulatoa from Samoa. I am very impressed with his leadership. God is using them among the Native peoples of the area.

In the afternoon I met with the Lakeside base Council and shared some prophetic words with them. In the evening, I spoke of "The Fourth Wave" at the weekly Community Night Meeting. There was a great response from a very solid YWAM base and its multiple ministries. It is a privilege to serve them.

Then I came home after a great trip. Thank you, Lord Jesus, for your constant faithfulness to allow me to travel the nation and world for your Kingdom purposes.

Port Orchard, Washington

May 18, 2014 - 22,132 – 8,779

I have spent the last week or so finished up some key projects around our new 6831 Arlington Place home. We have now restored the front yard to rhododendrons and some beautiful Hinoki Cypress trees, and this weekend we dug up and hauled four yards of dirt into the new garden on the property. The last back-breaking job of my life (I think) is now complete.

The only thing left on my "property list" now is a greenhouse to complement the garden, and to spend my later years tending the soil and communing with God and his creation. It is my last "home vision" and I'm sure that the faithful God will bring it to pass.

Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia

July 1, 2014 - 22,176 – 8,735

What a wonderful trip to Mongolia this year. I was not able to come last year due to dad's health, but now that he is in heaven, I have been able to continue my commitment to the youth of this nation. Thank you, Jesus, for the privilege of the call to this special nation in my heart.

I landed at 10:30 pm on June 18th and Sodoo and Aldaraa picked me up and took me to their winter apartment in the south-central part of the city. It's really a "prophet's chamber" place that is one small room not bigger than 15 feet by ten feet with a separate bathroom. It's actually in the attic of the apartment building where the elevator and regular stairs end at the 10th floor, and then you climb a special stairway to the penthouse. They lived here during the winter to keep warm and tend to Aldaraa after her miscarriage.

The room has a fold out couch, nice rug on the floor, wifi access and a big screen TV on the wall. In a corner of the room is a little kitchenette with sink and all the necessary stuff. The bathroom has a toilet and shower—which also houses a small washing machine. I have stayed here the entire time I have been in UB and really grown to enjoy it—and feel at home when I'm away from home.

On Thursday I spent some time with Pastor Sodoo and Aldaraa, then attended a meeting with some of the leaders and helpers for the Mongolia Gateway Camp. Johan, the Frenchman

who works in Hong Kong, was also here and will help with Mongolia's first Gateway. It is nice to have him here.

On Friday I met for the first time with the staff and students at YWAM UB. They are in the northern part of the city near the ger villages (the poorest area of town). They have a nice building that they are developing. The leader's name is Bold and his wife was one of the first Korean missionaries. We hit it off well.

They had me speak to their DTS in the morning and afternoon. During lunch, Bold Yadamdorg came with a few of his kids, and we met Dorchand and had a great Korean lunch together. They are wonderful friends and I am committed to working with them long-term on God's projects in this country.

After lunch, I spent some more time with the YWAM UB staff, answering questions and encouraging them in their work. Apparently, there are about fifty full-time YWAMers in the nation now on four different bases. I really want to work with them more closely in the future.

We talked about the translation of the Fourth Wave book into Mongolian and I think that they can do it. I would like to publish it through them to keep it in the family and advertise the YWAM ministry in it. That was an easy decision to make and I feel good about it. I am excited about seeing it come into print in the next few months.

On Sunday I spoke at two churches on "The Uniqueness of Jesus Christ" and I believe God blessed the word. After the two services, Sodoo and I had dinner with the two pastors. One of them is Pastor Javklan who is on Sodoo's YFC board and is also a professor at the Union Bible College where Sodoo just completed his degree in May. They have a good friendship, and I am pleased to now be a part of it. Pastor Javklan is very supportive of the Gateway vision—in fact, he is going to the Hong Kong Gateway in a few weeks to see how they do it there. That will be a good experience for him.

On Monday we took the bumpy and muddy one hour's drive out to the beautiful Korean Camp on the Tuul River where Sodoo's staff had been busily preparing the decorations and preparations for Mongolia's first Gateway Camp. What a wonderful accomplishment after all these years—to begin to train and send Mongol young people into missions. It's really a fulfillment of a heart's desire for me and a promise that I made to Coach Battulga some fourteen years ago.

The weather this year was on and off. As they say, "you can experience all four seasons in one day in Mongolia." It's been sunny and nicely warm, also many clouds, and also some driving rainstorms and hail. But this is a picturesque setting on a side of the mountain that looks down upon the river with the green Mongolian mountains looming behind it all. I've been to this camp a few times and appreciate the sacrifices that many made to bring it to Mongolia.

The camp began on Monday afternoon with about 220 youth and adults from eight different churches that are broken up into eighteen different teams. They've been training and preparing since January for Mongolia's first-ever missions camp. The worship/lecture hall is beautiful and I have so enjoyed seeing the Mongol youth rise up and praise their God. Brings tears to my eyes knowing where this nation has come from and how little they had just fifteen short years ago. A nation is being changed by the power and worship of God.

I spoke the first evening on "The Father's Heart Toward You" and many were impacted. Throughout the week they came up to me and thanked me for helping them know the heart of their Heavenly Father. I prayed with a few of them during the week, and on the first night, had them get down on their knees and receive a revelation of God's great love for them.

On Tuesday I spoke morning and evening on the history of modern missions and the Fourth Wave. They were excited about these messages. Also speaking during the conference was a wonderful prayer leader from Malaysia named Jean Lim. She has authored many books and tapes and has set up 24-hour prayer houses in a few nations. It was good getting to know here this summer—a wise and committed woman of God. She reminds me a lot of Joy Dawson.

Tuesday night we had the privilege of hearing from a pastor in Kyrgyzstan named Sasha by way of SKYPE, and from Dale Kauffman from Norway. Dale gave a great word on how God develops our life like a key that is destined to be used the open specific doors of ministry that he has planned for us. It is a wonderful analogy of our uniqueness and the purpose of it.

At the end of the evening, the youth lifted their voices and declared with conviction: "We are the Fourth Wave." That was a special moment that I believe sent some chills through the demonic ranks. The Mongols are coming again to Central Asia—and this time in the power of God's love and the Holy Spirit.

Each day the kids rotated among six different missions workshops and they also manned a 24-hour prayer room for the nations during the duration of the camp. There was also time for sports and fellowship together. There was a very special bond between this group of young people and a commitment to go into all the world.

Wednesday was a great day of talking and praying with many of them and then giving a final message in the evening on "Partnering the Generations" to fulfill the Great Commission. This was followed by a large bonfire on the hillside and then two more hours of worship in the meeting room. This generation loves to worship! After that, many of the kids stayed up all night, praying for each other and enjoying their new friendships.

On the final morning we had a powerful commissioning service that sealed the deal on this first generation of young missionaries. They are now out on teams ministering around the nation and a few of them are going this year into Kyrgyzstan and Kazakhstan. I believe hundreds will follow in the next seven years. That is their destiny. That is why God saved them,

My final weekend in Mongolia was spent seeing friends including Sasha, a missionary from Germany, Zaya and her kids, and **speaking in a couple more churches**. One day, I went with the Malaysian Team to Terezi where we enjoyed visiting the Chinggis Khan Monument and the kids rode horses and camels at Turtle Rock.

I am really praying for my friends, Sodoo and Aldaraa, and asking God how I can support them in the coming years. **Sodoo is one of my "Timothys" and I want to be faithful to pass the torch to him and support fully God's work in his life and ministry**. Guide me, Lord.

Seoul, South Korea

Late Monday night I boarded my plane and flew on to Korea (had a great meeting there with Kangmoo Choi) and then back to the US.

The Mongolia Gateway is now history—and the hordes of young disciples of Jesus will soon begin showing up on the shores of the world. Thank you, Lord Jesus, for the glorious privilege of taking the message of your love to every people on earth. May the Mongols be faithful and take their intended territory. Use them for your glory. Make them a great missionary-sending nation on earth.

Port Orchard, Washington

August 21, 2014 - 22,226 – 8,685

I usually don't let fifty days go by between journal entries, but the uniqueness of this summer allowed it to happen. **For weeks I've been saying to Shirley and 2014 was our new kind of "Summer of Service."** That has especially involved serving both my mom and her needs as she adjusts to life without dad (I've been helping her with all the practical things as well as going over every day to provide some emotional friendship), and also helping Shirley's parents as **Margaret Irene recovers from her broken leg**.

I also did not take any trips--which was unusual for me. But it allowed me to enjoy a beautiful Northwest summer, plant our first 6831 garden, and be around to "serve."

Two practical tasks we took on were finishing my final "property dream" of **building a greenhouse**. As usual, Rich Riedesel was my main worker and procurer of boards, windows and other items that allowed to build a 8x12 \$5,000 greenhouse for under \$1000. It is beautiful, right near the garden, and I excited about developing it in the coming years.

Rich and I also built a new landing and railed staircase for the Cookson's apartment downtown. We debated putting in a stair lift and even enclosing it to protect from the weather, but in the end, they decided it was enough to put some nice rails on a much sturdier staircase to help them climb the seventeen steps at the ages of 87 and 88. Just finished it today. I didn't think 2014 would be a summer of these kinds of projects, but they were at the center of the will of God for me.

One thing God spoke to me about during the summer was doing a final YWAM banquet here in Port Orchard to thank Him and others for my forty years with YWAM. Wow, has the time gone quickly. I still remember stepping onto that airplane on January 1, 1974 and flying to Germany for a discipleship experience that would alter my entire life.

On October 25, we will celebrate those forty years with one final banquet here in town-- focusing on thanking God and many people for making it all possible. It is never easy to do, but I have two godly motivations for doing one more:

- To *thank many people* for making my missions career possible while I'm still able to do so. We will have the event at First Christian to bring it back to my home church, allow it to be a little more intimate, and walk down memory lane together. I also want to use the evening of "thankfulness" to teach other folks to see God's hand upon their own lives-- and to thank others for it.
- We will also take an offering for God's work in Mongolia, and I hope it will allow me to help Sodoo and Aldaraa to get an apartment and to fund the camps for the next few years. I want to pass the torch to Sodoo and continue to back his life and ministry. That seems to be a fitting thing to do at our final missions banquet.

I have also enjoyed visiting the various YWAM bases in the Northwest during this summer season and also gearing up to do more teaching at Faith Seminary. Our new campus building will be completed in the next few weeks. It's simply another way to train others to serve God in missions all over the world.

Lord, I am very grateful to you for the life you have given me. The world is a very dark place right now with war in the Middle East, riots in St. Louis, a dearth of leadership on the American scene and a church in need of revival. I remain committed to be a voice of renewal and do all that I can with the little life you have given me to glorify your name in all the earth.

To God be the glory.

Hood Canal, Washington

October 10, 2014 - 22,276 – 8,635

Today is Shirley and my 38th anniversary. What a blessing to love a wonderful woman for life! We had a very relaxing and intimate weekend at Selah Inn which has become a special place for us. And today we were at home and were able to plant three Hinoki Cypress trees in the front yard. Watching them grow will now parallel our love and commitment to one another.

The banquet preparations continue, and I praise God for His grace in putting it together. It is always a lot of work, but with this being the last one, I'm excited about finishing well.

Battleground, Washington

Just returned from speaking at our first Battleground DTS which was held at the Canby Grove Christian Center in OR. Had a great week with the students and had dinner with Pastor Steve who lives in that very town.

Lord - sustain me during this busy stretch and continue your reviving work in me. The world is in turmoil and a dearth of leadership. Come Lord Jesus and reign as King.

Salem, Oregon

October 26, 2014 - 22,292 - 8619

I went to Salem for a few days this week and really enjoyed speaking the Leadership School, the entire staff, and spending time with many of the leaders. They are a great training base with some good young leaders that it is a privilege to serve. As YWAM changes its structure to a stronger relational orientation, enlarging the circles of leadership, and moving from 27 regions to focusing on 64 targeted areas of the world, I hope that my role as the "NW Elder" still allows me to have a role in settings like this.

Port Orchard, Washington

Then last night we had our final YWAM Port Orchard banquet celebrating and thanking many people for my forty years in YWAM – 1974 to 2014.

Yesterday I took out my journal from that time and read what God was doing in my life at that time—a lifetime ago. I was 21, single, had just returned from Germany, and was focusing on launching my life into missions and “preparing” to study and establish myself in my calling to America.

It is very nostalgic reading your writings from many decades ago. I sounded so emotional, struggling with various things, yet passionate about my new direction to give my life to God and his work. Your mind-set as a young single man is certainly different from my current stage in life. Yet it was wonderful to glimpse on the pages God’s continuous work in my life and how he was reading me for the future.

The only real constant in life is God’s presence in our lives. Everything else changes but He remains the steady hand that is maturing us, molding us, doing a deep work to present us faultless before Him one day.

Reading my journal made me very grateful for his good work in my life.

Then we celebrated the banquet last night. It was a very windy, rainy night in the area, but about two hundred people still showed up at **what turned out to be a very powerful affair filled with worship, memories and testimonies, my words of thanks to the audience for “making my life possible,” and many hugs and tears.**

In my message near the end, I eclectically shared my story, what I’ve learned about God, my failures and mistakes, gave thanks to many people, and then ended the evening playing Andre Crouch’s “My Tribute” while encouraging all my YWAM friends to give God the glory for everything in their lives. It was a special moment, and a wonderful way to bring closure to this chapter in my life.

Of course, I am not retiring or ailing, just felt it was the right moment to thank many people for investing in my life—and then never having in Port Orchard another banquet like this one. This is the end—celebrating God’s goodness. I will continue to serve Youth With A Mission in the Northwest and around the world **and also step into a larger role at Faith Seminary in Tacoma.**

Lord Jesus – “how CAN I say thanks for all the things that you’ve done for me? Things so undeserved, yet you did to give your life for me. The voices of a million angels cannot express my gratitude. All that I am or ever hope to be, I owe it all to Thee.”

Here's what I wrote in my Journal"

Thanking God for 40 Years with YWAM

I learned many years ago that the language of heaven is praise, thanksgiving, and a spirit of gratefulness. The fountain of those emotions is the undeserved blessings of God in the lives of

the redeemed. This fall I am celebrating forty years in Youth With A Mission—a four decade milestone that’s hard to believe.

On Saturday night, October 25, we celebrated that occasion with **two hundred wonderful friends at a lovely dessert banquet at my home church in Port Orchard, Washington.** My primary goal was to thank them and give glory to God *for making my life possible*. If you missed the banquet, here is my story of thanks.

Billy Graham, when he was in his eighties, was asked the following question: “Rev. Graham, what is the greatest thing you’ve learned about life?” Without a moment’s hesitation, the famous evangelist replied, “How short it is.” How short it is indeed.

I can’t believe that four decades have gone by since I joined YWAM. At that time, I was a confused 21-year old that did not have the foggiest idea what to do with my life.

At the October 25, 2014 banquet, I and many others told the story of God’s goodness from 1974 to 2014. First came the history, followed by the thanks.

Here are the highlights:

Young Life

My conversion and first missions experience came through Young Life when my junior high basketball coach and local Young Life leader led me to faith in Jesus in 1968.

BANQUET HIGHLIGHT: *Doug Burleigh*, former president of Young Life, greeted the crowd by video and spoke about my YL years. Doug now works which leaders in the former Soviet Union (including Ukraine). After Doug, we watched a video from ***Craig Ing* who was my first convert. He now serves as the youth pastor at a Chinese church in the Bay Area.**

How I Became a YWAMer

It all started at a Denny’s restaurant in the spring of 1972 when I and a friend looked at each other and said, “We need to leave college and get to know God.” That revelation caused me to give up a full-ride scholarship to a private university (where the profs had been teaching me that God is dead) and travel to the nation of New Zealand with three other guys.

BANQUET HIGHLIGHT: One of my fellow travelers was best friend, David Saavedra. He and his wife Ellen were introduced at the banquet.

Our spiritual quest did not begin well. To our surprise, the church that had invited us Down Under turned out to be a cult. After three or four exasperating days, we escaped the cult’s “Boys House” by secretly taking a taxi after midnight to the home of the only other family we knew in the country.

Roly and Claire Houghton managed the Christian bookstore on Queen Street in downtown Auckland. Just weeks after we boarded down with them and their four kids, they took us to a meeting at the Auckland YWCA where we heard Loren Cunningham, Don Stephens and Brother Andrew share about YWAM's first outreach at the Munich Olympics. At the close, I was one of the first ones to respond to the missionary altar call and go backstage.

The missions seed had been planted, and I ended up in Germany in January 1974 at a Bavarian castle near Munich where the YWAM training school completely changed the trajectory of my life. In Germany, land of my ancestors, God called me to be a full-time missionary with a heart for revival in America.

In the fall of '74 I returned home for a few months, met my future wife, Shirley, in a mini-revival, and took a team back to Europe in 1975 for a summer of service in Belgium, England and Scotland.

BANQUET HIGHLIGHT: Many of the '75 team were in the audience and were introduced. They were the first of thousands of YWAMers to go out from west Puget Sound.

Renewal Team and Washington for Jesus

In the late seventies we launched a YWAM mobile unit called the Renewal Team which did revival crusades on the east coast while pulling travel trailers thousands of miles. The team helped to coordinate the Washington for Jesus Rally on April 29, 1980—the first large prayer meeting in American history which drew 700,000 believers to the nation's capital. WFJ was the spiritual precursor of the Reagan Revolution which swept into DC with the fall elections and provided a time of "Morning in America" that lasted a few decades.

BANQUET HIGHLIGHT: Renewal Team member *Mike Davison* shared a personal testimony about the Renewal Team days complete with salvations, revival, trailer crashes! *Jason Hershey*, current YWAM DC director and *Dr. Corinthia Boone* shared a video greeting of memories from the D.C. years.

Kings Kids Era

After serving YWAM in Washington D.C. for seven years, Shirley and I moved our growing family to Washington State to help launch YWAM's first national headquarters in the US. Soon after, we started a division of King's Kids which grew to become one of the largest in the world and sent thousands of young missionaries and their families into twenty nations.

BANQUET HIGHLIGHT: *Tag and Deidra Larson* told their personal story of redemption of a blended family, their call into missions, and how two of their sons are now serving as pastors.

Discovery Bay Camp

In 2001, Miles Musick and I visited a rundown, 13-acre Holiness Camp perched on a bluff overlooking Discovery Bay, WA. Miles saw rubble. I saw a beautiful training center (after years of hard work!). Today, Discovery Bay Camp and Missions Center is running their eleventh DTS and sending many missionaries to the nation of China and beyond.

BANQUET HIGHLIGHT: Board member *Ed Madden* shared the story of God's faithfulness in rescuing the Discovery Bay Camp from a hostile takeover and embezzlement to become a dynamic missions training center.

What the Future Holds

The history portion of the banquet concluded with a discussion of my role as the Northwest director of YWAM (I'm not retiring, just re-firing) and also teaching missions courses to a global audience through Faith Evangelical College and Seminary in Tacoma, WA.

BANQUET HIGHLIGHT: *Dr. Mark Wagner* welcomed me to "Faith" and presented me with an embossed leather notebook. (YWAM did not give me a gold watch) We also played a video of one of our Hispanic disciples—Larry Centeno—who is a church planter in the Philippines, and Paul Fleischmann, the founder of the National Network of Youth Ministries. I have served the youth leader movement in America for over twenty years.

Statistics

Before I rose to speak, a few statistics were shared about my missionary career. I have:

- Traveled 1.3 million miles - enough to circle the globe fifty-four times.
- Ministered in 62 nations and 45 American states.
- Given 6500 talks or messages.
- Sucked on 6500 throat lozenges!
- Slept on the floor 420 times and eaten 22,000 packs of peanuts on planes (all pre-9-11).
- Led summer missions teams 35 out of 40 years.
- Been away from home for sixteen years. (Later I asked my wife Shirley if she was glad or sad that I had been away so long. She just smiled.)

Giving Thanks

Then it was the time I had been waiting for. It began with a few reflections of what I have learned over the past forty years:

Greatest thing I have learned about God—he is *humble*, has nothing to prove, and allows the meek to find and know Him (maybe this was an antidote to my pride).

Favorite YWAM theological truth: “Even a dumb dog doesn’t kiss a hot stove twice” (Harry Conn). In other words, don’t be stupid enough to commit the same sin twice.

I am no different from anybody else--but needed God's grace and deliverance. I told a couple of stories about contemplating suicide once after a leadership failure and a seven-year period when my throat was on fire. God carried me through both and numerous other "dangers, toils, and snares."

I also talked about passing the torch to a new generation while interviewing Haeley Dyr Dahl who saw people healed this summer in India. She wants to do health care on a YWAM ship in the Amazon. We also watched a video from my friend Sodoo who is the Youth for Christ leader in Mongolia. (Later in the evening, we took a “Heap Offering” for God’s work in his nation.)

But the most important moments for me were giving thanks to God and many friends. I started with a sermon title from Joy Dawson: “What I Have and Am Today was Given to Me by Others.”

How true. All that we have comes from others who have loved us and believed in us.

- I thanked all the people who had prayed for me for 40 years.
- I thanked all our supporters for entrusting their hard-earned money to us for God’s global work.
- I told stories of gifts of property, free professional services, and many other provisions that allowed us to serve as volunteer missionaries—never receiving a salary.
- I thanked my home church for being our anchor donor for 34 of the 40 years.
- I thanked my mom (and dad who is in heaven) for standing by me all my life.
- I thanked my wonderful wife Shirley whose love and sacrifices made my life doable.

We finished off the evening by having everyone in the room meditate on the awesome hand of God in their own life, and played Andre Crouch's beloved song, "My Tribute."

“How can I give thanks for the things that You have done for me? Things so undeserved that You gave to show your love to me. The voices of a million angels cannot express my gratitude. All that I am or ever hope to be--I owe it all to Thee.” “To God be the glory. To God be the glory. To God be the glory. For the things He has done.” “With his blood he has saved me. With His power He has raised me. “To God be the glory—for the things He has done.”

If praise and thanks are truly the language of heaven, then we received a sneak preview of it on Saturday, October 25. For those who were not there, I want to *thank you* as well for contributing to my life. It takes more than a “village” to bless a life. It takes God and his people. Thanks for being my friend. Thanks for making my life possible.

To God be the glory.

November 4, 2014 - 22,301 – 8,610

Was an amazing election wave yesterday in the 2014 mid-terms, repudiating the disastrous policies of Barack Obama and sending some new blood to Washington, D.C. Here is what I wrote in this week's blog to put this great victory in perspective:

Political and Spiritual Repentance Bring Twin Rays of Hope

A political tidal wave washed ashore in the United States last night, bringing some hope to a struggling and fearful nation. A few weeks prior, another important but quieter riptide was set in motion in parts of the American nation. One of these waves was political and the other was spiritual. At the center of both stands the re-emergence of a very important theological truth:

Repentance. Political and spiritual repentance brought twin rays of hope to America today. How so?

In my early years as a follower of Christ I wasn't taught much about the concept of repentance. In fact, in some early discipleship classes, I was told that repentance was an Old Testament concept (primarily) and that it had been superseded in the New Testament by grace and faith.

Then I began to read the Bible for myself and found the word and concept of repentance all over the New Testament. For example:

- The first words that Jesus said when he began his earthly ministry are found in Mark 1:15, "The time is fulfilled, the kingdom of God is at hand. *Repent* and believe in the Good News."
- Thirty-three times the word *repent or repentance* is mentioned in the NT books and letters (e.g. Matthew 4:17, Acts 20:21, Romans 2:4, 2 Corinthians 7:9,10 and Revelation 2:5).
- In the first recorded sermon of the Early Church era (Acts 3:19), Peter does not mention the word "faith." To be saved he tells people: "Therefore *repent* and return, so that your sins may be wiped away, in order that times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord."

My early teachers must have been confused about the concept of repentance. Repenting from sin and error seems to be at the center of both the Old and New Testament teachings.

During my early missions training, I read Mother Basilea Schlink's excellent book *Repentance: The Joy-Filled Life* which was required reading in our YWAM schools. That, and my continued reading of Scripture settled me in the truth that repentance was a critical character quality for both individuals and nations. Repentance is necessary and it brings both joy and hope! So, what does this old theological word really mean?

Our English word *repentance* comes from the Greek equivalent *metanoia* which simply means to "re-think," "change your mind," or do a U-turn in thinking which, in turn, changes your life.

Sometimes we associate this change of mind with tears, regret, and an emotional experience that we call "repenting." But the feelings are not the critical element. Change of thinking is the key.

Changing your mind and life is a vital concept. We come into right relationship with God by re-thinking or changing our minds about our sin and rebellion against God. We are wrong. God is right. Our change of mind leads to a change of direction--we stop living for ourselves and start living for God and His glory.

That U-turn--from self-centered living to a God-honoring lifestyle--brings great joy and hope, not just on this earth but a promise of eternal life. It might be true to say that nothing brings more joy and hope than the fruits of repentance. Enter the 2014 election.

A Political Tidal Wave

Though I was expecting some change in direction in the American nation through last night's election, the tidal wave of results truly amazed me and stunned most political pundits.

Politically, America repented last night. Some significant majorities "re-thought" their position on the way the nation was going and changed their votes to point us in another direction. To state it in negative form, they repudiated the growth of incompetent Big Government and decided to give the Republican Party a chance to take us back to smaller government, economic growth, moral values, and national strength.

This was nothing less than political repentance. Call it what you want--buyer's remorse, seeing the consequences of bad policies, or feeling the pain of domestic and foreign upheavals--the American people went to the polls last night and RE-THOUGHT the direction they wanted America to go.

Their change of mind--repentance--gave birth to a historic change in voting:

- *US Senate:* The American people gave the Republicans majority control of the Senate with 8-9 pickups (Louisiana needs to go to a run-off). That was big deal, throwing out Majority Leader Harry Reid and bringing in Mitch McConnell and a new slate of leaders.
- *US House of Representatives:* Added 14 seats to the House of Representatives--the highest total Republicans have had since 1946. The House stands at 247-183, well beyond what analysts expected. A few races in Arizona and California were not called on Tuesday night.
- *Governors:* Grew Republican governorships to 31 versus 17 Democrats, with Vermont headed into a run-off and Alaska still being counted (if Republican Sean Parnell loses, it will be to independent Bill Walker.) That is a net gain of four governorships for the GOP. This leaves Democrats at their weakest point in state legislatures since the 1920s.
- *State Governments:* Republicans seized new majorities in the West Virginia House, Nevada Assembly and Senate, New Hampshire House, Minnesota House and New York Senate, The West Virginia Senate is now tied. (Control of several legislative chambers was still up in the air early Wednesday as counting continued in several tight races that will determine control of the Colorado Senate, New Mexico House and Maine Senate.)
- The lone bright spot for Democrats was holding majorities in the Iowa Senate and Kentucky House.

I remember being in Washington, D.C. during the days of the Reagan Revolution which brought a conservative president into the Oval Office and threw many liberal bureaucrats out of town. They called that era "Morning in America." We're not there yet, but I see this morning a shining ray of political hope. All because a majority repented (re-thought and changed their votes).

A Spiritual Riptide

The Church's "repentance"--re-thinking their need to be the salt and light in this nation while facing outright persecution--caused them to rise up nation-wide to send Bibles to Mayor Parker's office, start a cascade of prayer for revival, and led to the scheduling of "I Stand" Sunday on November 2 where thousands gathered in a Houston Church to speak up for freedom.

We can especially thank Tony Perkins and the Family Research Council for leading the "I Stand" charge. One observer described "I Stand" this way:

"With more than 7,000 looking on within the sanctuary, there was no mistaking the energy and enthusiasm in the auditorium, as people stood and cheered for nine minutes as dozens and dozens of the area's pastors marched into the sanctuary for the "I Stand Sunday" kick off. As Dr. Ronnie Floyd, President of the Southern Baptist Convention, told listeners, 'it is time to

wake up from our slumber. While Mayor Parker may have overstepped her bounds, that was only possible because the church had fallen asleep at the gate."

"Our greatest problem,' Dr. Floyd said, 'is not in the White House, but God's house!' If you're wondering why things like this are happening in cities like Houston, Fayetteville, and San Antonio, look in the mirror. The blame for this doesn't rest with Annise Parker or the city -- but every Christian, who has quietly stepped into the shadows on tough truths."

"It's because a lot of people in our churches have said, 'I just don't want to get involved,'" former Governor Mike Huckabee explained. 'My dear friends, when the government comes to your pastor and says, 'Cough up all of the sermons, sermon notes and correspondence that the pastor has had with his own parishioners,' you are already involved.'" "It's time', Dr. Floyd and others pointed out, 'to get right with God.'"

Just prior to the "I Stand" event, hundreds of pastors had participated in Pulpit Freedom Sunday--an opportunity to resist some unconstitutional edicts of the IRS regarding free speech in the churches. In 2008, 33 churches participated in the thrust. In 2014, 1600 churches joined the movement.

Numerous prayer thrusts, Pulpit Freedom Sunday, and the "I Stand" movement all galvanized this fall to call the Church in America to *repentance*--to change our minds and actions--to see people come to Christ in our nation and resist the advance of evil. A spiritual riptide is beginning in this nation that brings a shining ray of spiritual light to the horizon. In summary, God is moving in the Church and in our nation that could bring positive affects to our nation and the world in the coming years. Repentance--continuing and deepening repentance--is the key to both and can bring back *hope that comes through change*.

Cascade, Idaho

November 8, 2014 - 22,305 – 8,606

Had a great week last week in Cascade Idaho with the YWAMers there. We got stuck in snow on the way up, but after that, my week at the camp with great with the students and with the staff. Marty Meyer is a great leader, and I enjoyed some hours with him on the trip back to Boise.

Now after a few days of "banquet clean-up" (we raised about \$12,000 for the work in Mongolia), I am beginning to seek God about what the future holds.

Cody, Wyoming

November 22, 2014 - 22,319 – 8,592

I'm on my way home from Cody, Wyoming where I just spent a great with Cowboys With A Mission (Meeteetse) on their ranch. They have a wonderful, Western spread of about forty areas that includes cows, nineteen horses, some nice buildings, a corral, and ring, and all the other things that go with horsemanship and animal husbandry.

Kevin and Sherri Lynn Cooley are re-birthing this base after some tough years of death of a vision and numerous problems. They are doing a great job and seem to be building a solid staff of people committed to Jesus, the lands, animals, and world missions.

I spoke to their DTS and it went well. They are going on outreach to Azerbaijan—which is a nation that also has many people involved in ranching and so forth. They also send teams to Mongolia—which I happy about.

I used this week to take some good long walks, think about the future, pray, and look to God for the next “Section” of my life. In one prayer time he showed me it wasn't a “chapter” that I'm heading into but rather **the third section of my life**—just like a number of books that I've written. **I am excited about obeying and following my Lord in this final section of my life and looking to Him for every detail. YWAM's leadership changes put me in the unusual position of laying “everything on the table” and having an openness to whatever God may say.**

When I arrived in Cody it was cold—about 15 degrees below zero—with powdery snow on the ground and hills. Cody is about 6000 feet above sea level and was a typical western town started by Buffalo Bill Cody back in the late 1800's. On evening I also spoke to a Cowboy Church—which had its meeting in a mechanical shop! My message on the Fourth Wave (Fourth Stampede?) was well received by all.

I have been traveling and teaching now for about six weeks this fall and am looking forward to some time at home to tie up some loose ends and seek God about the future. Lord, thank you that you have been the guide of every section of my life. I love you and commit myself to the future call—wherever it might lead.

Port Orchard, Washington

December 17, 2014 - 22,344 – 8,567

It has been nice to be home for these weeks during the Christmas season. I love the beauty of this time of year including the lights, music, and warmth of the holiday season which goes back to the wonder of Christ. This is also a hard time of year for me due to the

disappointments of family and their need to return to the Lord. I guess in the middle of those two tensions, I need God to fill me with His Spirit to respond properly.

I have been seeking God quite a bit about this new "section" in my life that is before me. Change is not easy, but when God is the conductor of your train, it makes the ride a lot smoother.

I met with Doug Burleigh and am not sure if I "fit" in the future with a role in the Fellowship. I appear to be too "prophetic" for them and would probably have to stop writing my blog. I'm willing to do anything, but really want to do what's right.

Still don't know how the YWAM changes from district leader to elder will shake out. I sense that I might have to back away from some bases (Oregon and Montana?) but continue to work closely with others in the region? Hopefully, the Chico conference will shed some light.

I should have an office at Faith Seminary after Christmas, but still don't feel a strong part there and need to be patient and see how things go.

Lynden, Washington

Had a good trip up to Lynden to look at the possibility of a new base there. Met some great businessmen who want YWAM to use some nice, historical space right on Main Street. Lord - we need your guidance! [This eventually became YWAM North Cascades, a thriving youth-oriented base.]

Bottom line is I need to hear from you, Jesus, as I chart my course during this new season of life. Revive me again! Fill me with your Spirit again! Direct my paths as You've always done so that my life will be lived for the glory of Your Name and Kingdom.

Port Orchard, Washington

December 26, 2014 - 22,353 – 8,558

Christmas has been a hard season as it normally is--carrying the burden for our children and having the home packed with people--and trying to enjoy every moment to focus on Jesus and His Advent.

One thing the Lord has been reminding me is the need to absolutely establish my life on the four following principles: 1) Living a life style of repentance (humility), 2) Choosing faith (holding on to God) as an act of will, 3) Clinging to hope via a renewed and focused mind, and 4) Filling my emotions with love toward those around me, especially in my family. These four

qualities are clearly foundational to a wise and godly life. I will pursue them with all my heart this year.