

“Let It Go”

By Claudia Barlea

That was the theme of this year’s *Spring Youth Conference in Alhambra, CA*. Many of us extended our trip beyond just the weekend conference, and therefore had the opportunity to visit many beautiful places. Some of the spots included Santa Monica, Laguna Beach, Hollywood, and even San Diego, where we had the pleasure of meeting a “Story Teller” who captivated our attention with his story.



The Story Teller

Since this was my first time in California, I was in awe of almost everything around me: the palm trees, the ocean, the houses built into the side of the mountains, and even the orange trees and lemon trees. What a treat it was to have freshly squeezed lemons in my tea!

In addition to all the beautiful places we visited, the weekend was also filled with many spiritual blessings.

Pastor Novak invited a guest speaker, Pablo Tovar, to come and speak during the weekend. Because the theme was “Let It Go,” Pablo spoke of the “old self” vs. the “new self.” Before we come to know God, we are still the old self, which we have to fight against once we are re-born in Christ. However, even our new self struggles with letting things go. That is why Pablo emphasized that once God shows us what we’re supposed to let go, we have to let it go. We can’t fight God. After all, who knows better? Us or God?

By letting go of ungodly things, God breaks the identity we’ve built for ourselves and instead molds us into what He wants us to become.

Pablo also shared an analogy, which I think perfectly encompasses our Christian life: once a caterpillar becomes a butterfly, it spreads its wings and flies; it never walks again. So as Christians, why would we go back to “walking” when we can “fly”? In other words, once we have a new life in Christ, why would we go back to our old lives? Although this sounds pretty simple, it’s much harder to put into practice but completely worth it in the end.

Pablo’s message really spoke to me and encouraged me to let go of things in my life which prevent me from getting closer to God.

All in all, I am very grateful to have had the opportunity to not only attend the Youth Conference, but to have spent an entire week in California. It was an amazing trip filled with many great memories and spiritual blessings!



Pablo & Zsolti

FOOD 4 THESOU.

“God is not one to show partiality, but in every nation the man who fears Him and does what is right, is welcome to Him” (Acts 10,34-35).

The whole of humanity is in need of redemption. There is no race or culture that is more prone to holiness than the other. On the other hand, according to the teaching of Scripture, people anywhere can gain enough knowledge about God to realize their need of Him.

It is obvious from the reading of the Biblical stories about the expansions of the Church to new territories, that when the message of the Cross reached the above mentioned human condition, pagans proved to be more receptive to it than the nation of Israel. Peter’s remarks testify to the same. Witnessing the salvation of the Roman centurion, Cornelius, he realized the mistaken stand Israel had taken regarding her call to the nations. “I most certainly understand now that God is not one to show partiality” – joyfully he exclaimed.

The sinful pride in Israel’s religiosity is a temptation the Church is too familiar with. Self-righteousness blocks the spiritual growth of the individual and is an impairment to missions.

Lord, I do not want to forget my need of your mercies. Help me to view and serve others inspired by your love toward all mankind. Amen

Pastor Novak

A FATHER’S PLEDGE

I pledge allegiance to my home... to my wife... to my sons and daughters. I will honor my home and consider my trust in supporting it a sacred one. I will do more than this. I will take time to cultivate friendship between my family and myself. I will not be too busy when they need me... even though it is only to catch a football or mend a doll’s broken leg. I will complement their mother’s hours of care and concern. I will introduce my children to Christ and share with them joys of Christian values in a Christian home.

HAPPY FATHER’S DAY!

Billy Graham library dedicated

A crowd of 1,500 people, including three former presidents, gathered in Charlotte, N.C., May 31 to dedicate the Billy Graham Library, something the evangelist called “just a building” and an instrument to share the Gospel.



Three former presidents with the two Grahams at the opening ceremony

Graham had asked former President George H.W. Bush to deliver the 12-minute keynote address for the dedication, while former Presidents Bill Clinton and Jimmy Carter spoke for about five minutes each.

“I feel like I’ve been attending my own funeral with all these speeches,” Graham, 88, said during the dedication. “I know they all meant it. But I feel terribly small and humbled by it all, and I feel I don’t deserve it because it’s been a whole team of people that have worked together,

prayed together, traveled together, believed God was going to do wonderful things together.”

A tour of the library begins in a barn representing Graham's humble beginnings and expands into exhibits covering the eight-week tent revival in Los Angeles in 1949 that catapulted his ministry; his trips to Asia, Africa and communist Eastern Europe; and his sermons offering hope in troubled times of American history.

Towering above the six exhibits, four galleries of more than 350 photographs and two theaters is a 24-by-40-foot cross-shaped glass window embedded in the front of the barn-shaped building.

“This library is not about Billy Graham, but it's about the message that Billy Graham has preached for the last 60-plus years,” Franklin Graham said at the dedication. “And that is the message of the cross. And if you look at the library, what you see is a cross. My father's name is not on the building, but the cross. The only way that you can come into the library is through the foot of the cross.”

Paptist Press

We are all missionaries

By Ray E. Sanders

The journey to the mission field had been taxing. Even with modern transportation, it took us several days to arrive at our final destination. Cancelled flights, ticket errors and equipment failures contributed to our frustration. Despite the challenges, we were excited to team up with International Mission Board missionaries for a short-term mission assignment.

Once the jet lag wore off, we were ready to do our best assisting the missionaries. The difficulties we faced getting to the mission field paled in comparison to the challenges these heroes of the faith faced on a daily basis. Their calling kept them in the fray. They learned long ago there is no guarantee of comfort in a calling.

Their enthusiasm for sharing the Gospel was contagious. No circumstance was taken for granted. Interaction was not considered an accident. Their sensitivity to God at work in the lives of people was obvious. They were there to make a difference. Every minute of every day was an opportunity to plant gospel seeds into the lives of those who came their way.

Our role was simple — use the novelty of our skin color and nationality to engage the locals into discussion, and if the Spirit led, provide them with a Gospel of John, present the Gospel through an interpreter and invite them to a weekly Bible study.

The experience was exhilarating. The power of the Holy Spirit was with us wherever we went. Opportunities to share our faith were plentiful. The hunger for truth and the life-changing message of Jesus demonstrated the need for more messengers of the Good News. The response to His story was refreshing to our faith.

Within a matter of days, the Gospel had been shared with hundreds of people. The potential for new Bible studies and churches was huge. We walked among the fields white unto harvest. We were given the privilege of reaping the benefits of those who had gone before us planting the seeds and fertilizing the soil of souls in search of God and the meaning of life. We planted a few seeds of our own, but without question, the labor of those who had gone before us resulted in a harvest with eternal rewards — rewards that for those who planted may never be recognized until the beneficiary and the planter meet in Heaven.

Our journey was successful. But satisfaction was not our motivation. Thousands of Southern Baptist missionaries throughout the world wake up every morning with a calling on their lives. They realize the day may not bring comfort or satisfaction, but it brings an opportunity for planting seeds and reaping a harvest.

As Christians, we are all missionaries. God has put us in a unique setting to be about our Father's business. Our calling is never more fulfilled than when we engage people with the life-changing message of Christ. Whether we interact with a neighbor over our backyard fence, ride a bus with a complete stranger or speak through an interpreter in a foreign country, our calling is the same. We are messengers with news certain to changes lives, forever.

SBC, Baptist Press



Őt szeretitek, pedig nem láttátok, őbenne hisztek, bár most sem látjátok, és kimondhatatlan, dicsőült örömmel örvendeztek. 1Péter 1: 8.

(agapao + pisteuo = agalliao)

A fenti szöveg úgy néz ki első látásra, mint egy titkos képlet, vagy varázsmondat. A mai igénk tartalmaz három szót, és ez a három összetartozik, mint ahogy hozzátartozik a naphoz a fény és a hőség vagy, mint a rózsa, amelytől nem lehet elválasztani az illatát és szépsége látványát. Szeretet + Hit = Öröm. Pontosabban, Őt szeretni, és Őbenne hinni, egyenlő, kimondhatatlan, dicsőült öröm-

mel örvendezni. Vegyük sorra e három fogalmat. Mit jelentenek egyenként?

Őt szeretni. Az Újszövetség nyelvén, a szeretet szónak legalább négy kifejezési formája ismeretes. Ezek közül a legismertebb az agapé, amely az Isten irántunk megmutatott szeretetéről beszél. Isten úgy szeretett minket, hogy amikor még ellenségei voltunk, kereszthalált halt értünk, mert csak így tudott rajtunk segíteni. Mi hátat fordítottunk az Istennek, megszenteltelítettük az Ő szent nevét beszédünkkel, gondolatainkkal és tetteinkkel. Mi elfordultunk az Istentől és nem érdekelt az Ő akarata. Mi választottuk a bűnt és a halál útján jártunk. A szívünk keménysége miatt kerültünk a kárhozát lejtőjére és már nem tudtunk megállni. És ekkor, a megbántott és megsértett Isten, látva reménytelen állapotunkat, utánunk jött, mert szükségünk volt az Ő segítségére. Nem az érdemeinkre tekintett, nem az Ő érdekeit vette figyelembe, hanem a mi életünket mentette. Az agapét nem az érdemek és az érdekek motiválják, hanem a rászoruló szüksége, egyedül csak az. Nos így szeretett és szeret minket Isten Krisztus Jézusban. Péter apostol azonban ugyanezt a szót használja a mai igénkben, amikor a mi szeretetünket említi, amellyel mi kellene, hogy szeressük Istent. Előbb Ő tett meg mindent értünk, Ő kezdeményezett. Most rajtunk a sor. Isten szívesen veszi, ha átadod neki mindenedet és alárendeled neki az életed. Örül az Úr, ha talál olyan embert, aki szíve szerinti és végrehajtja minden akaratát. Mert az szereti Őt, aki cselekszi a Mennyei Atya akaratát. Ami engedelmisségünkkel szerethetjük Őt agape módon. Emellett, természetesen, kifejezhetjük az Őiránta érzett szeretetünket szóban és érzelmekben is.

Őbenne hinni. A hit nem valamiféle játék a gondolatokkal: most hiszek, majd később nem hiszek. A bibliai hit az, amely számol Istennel az élet gyakorlati helyzeteiben. Hinni azt jelenti, hogy rábízom magam arra, amit Isten mond az Ő igéjében. Bár nem látom Őt, mégis az Ő jelenléte, szavai és ereje valóságosabban a krízis helyzetben, mint a szemmel látható és kitapintható problémák, amelyek éppen körülvesznek. Aki hisz, nem olyan ember, aki nem vesz tudomást a valóságról, hanem olyan, aki látja hit által a mindenható Istent, aki teljes kontrol alatt tarja a hívő problémáit, bármiről is legyen szó.

Aki így szereti Őt és így bízik Őbenne, meg fogja tapasztalni azt az **örömet**, amely teljesen betölti a hívőt, amit nem lehet elhallgatni vagy elrejtetni, mert önkéntelenül is kitör a szívből és láthatóvá válik a hívő életében, úgy a családban, mint a gyülekezetben és mindenütt. Legyen ez a bibliai öröm, mindnyájunk áldott tapasztalata!

Lukács János