

Introduction

The purpose of this book is to build the faith of those who serve the living and almighty God. The same God who created the universe, who created man in His image, who sent His only begotten Son to die for the redemption of sins, and who ordained the establishment of Camp His Way. God uses ordinary people to work with Him to accomplish extraordinary feats as David said to Saul in I Samuel 17:46b "...that all the earth may know that there is a God." He's the same God **now** as He was back then.

Every event, occurrence, accomplishment, act or deed done on our part was done for the Glory of God. We acknowledge and give Him the Honor due for allowing us to participate with Him in this joint venture to spread His word and teach His Way.

The birth of the camp began in the fall of 1995 with a vision to establish a place for children and adults to retreat from the everyday pressures: to unwind, regroup, and refuel. The main purpose of the camp is to provide a camp experience for children throughout the summer. Our goal is to offer a program that will develop a child physically, mentally, emotionally, socially, and spiritually. Our desire is to see children come to know the Lord in a very special way. We desire that they develop a relationship with Christ that will be a life changing experience. Our prayer is that God will touch each and every child's life in such a way that they will leave camp on fire for the Lord. Our mission will be to invest in the lives of these children valuable Biblical principles that will develop them into Christian leaders.

Camp His Way is a non-profit camp and retreat facility for children, youth and adult groups, located on the shore of Lake Sam Rayburn. Our desire is to see everyone draw closer to God and enjoy His creation. This book is written with each miraculous event given in order, showing how God's master plan for our lives is carried out on a day-to-day basis. If we will submit each day to Him, He will guide and direct our paths to fulfill His purpose.

The first half of the book will be the 92 weeks from the vision of the camp until the doors of our first summer camp opened in the summer of '96. The second half of the book shows how God continues to open numerous doors. We are in the 92nd week of operations and it is beyond comprehension what has happened in such a short time. I trust God will encourage you to step out in faith as we share the Journey of Camp His Way.

This journey is entirely a journey of faith. As on any trip, when times are difficult it is often unpleasant. I began keeping a journal from the beginning of this journey, and at about mid-way through, I found myself repeating a familiar pattern. For years I found myself looking forward to the 'end' of a program, or the 'end' of a project. Until one day I felt the Lord gently instruct me to change my thinking. I was missing the whole project. I spent time waiting for the 'end' and was not enjoying the journey. I began to make a conscious effort to reevaluate my thinking. Join me in this new thought process and together we can **Enjoy the Journey** one day at a time.

Week 1

For the past 20 years, my husband Rick and I have been involved in children's ministry. Before we were married we would spend many Saturday evenings putting together a children's church program. Every job-related move opened a new door of opportunity at a church, and as anyone in the ministry knows, children's workers are always needed.

For the past 6 years, we have been children's pastors at Community Church in Orange, Texas. Rick is an instructor at Lamar University in Port Arthur. We both have bachelor of science degrees; we have two children, Dustin 12 and Risa 8. We own a lovely home, have two vehicles, a miniature schnauzer, and a neat tree house. We live close to grandparents; I work for my dad(he's the pastor), what more could one ask for?

Things are going great at the church. The children's programs are running smoothly. We just got back from camp a couple of weeks ago. Every year it's the same question, where do we take the kids to camp? There is no doubt in my mind about the value of Christian camping. All my childhood through teen years, I went to camp. It is the one time a child can break away from the norm and evaluate their relationship with God.

Several years prior at staff meetings, it was suggested I do a camp for the kids. I always scoffed at that; there is no way I could do anything that large scale. Besides there are plenty of good camping programs out there. Well, this year after camp, I have such a burden about camp. Yet it is over and no need to worry about that till next summer.

Week 2

Well, that nagging camp thing is still bothering me. Maybe it's just me. Maybe I'm doing something wrong. Maybe I'm not where I'm suppose to be. Oh well, I'll push this to the back of my mind. I'm sure I'll forget about it soon.

Week 3

This week I'll try a new approach, God, if this burden about building a camp is from You, then show me a direction to go, but if it is not, please take this desire to pursue this away. Change my heart oh God.

Week 4

This week something scary happened. I began to see the whole plan. The land, the cabins, the dining hall, the chapel, a lake, a tree house, the activities, even a waterslide. This is getting out of hand, I've got to share this with Ricky, he'll tell me I'm crazy and I can forget about the whole thing. Okay, God, I've got to tell or I'm gonna bust. I'll wait for just the right moment. Well, so much for my plan. Ricky was so receptive and supportive. He has so many ideas; he'll be great at building a camp. We talked about all the possibilities and then we finalized the deal. I asked him, "Okay, so what do we do now?" In his infinite patience and wisdom he said, "When the land is given to us we will put the plan in action." That's okay, my faith is extremely high. I know that somewhere out there; there is someone who wants to give us lots of land.

Week 5

I ventured out again and told someone else, this week I told my mother. She was very supportive. She began to help me see all the ways my life has led toward this. This is so exciting to see the whole picture come together. Besides working with children for over 20 years, I have a degree in Business Administration; I have run a day camp for 5 years; I have trained counselors; I have years of camping experience. About a year ago I began to pursue the process of ordination with the Assemblies of God.

Then looking at Ricky, he has a degree in Wildlife Biology, and loves all that outdoor stuff. He is able to fix **anything**, and has a wonderful inventive mind. This is starting to look like a puzzle that has numerous pieces. But just about the time it looks like there is something to all this madness, the doubts begin to move in. This was a big one, what if we do all this, who will come? Then one day I overheard a commercial and was reminded by the Lord, "Build it and they will come." So I will begin to do what I can. To prepare myself I will begin the ordination process. We will begin to look for a pop-up camper so we can scout out some land. My biggest problem...Is it me or is it God?

Week 6

What great timing on God's part, He always works that way. I was scheduled to go to a children's workers conference in Florida, this was time I would spend concentrating on hearing from God. You know, looking for that confirmation. Several times during the conference, I knew God was speaking to me. The whole essence was, we need a "whatever it takes" attitude to reach this generation of kids. And if people don't know what your passion is, then you don't have one! The speaker spoke on I Corinthians

16:9 *“For a great door and effectual is opened unto me and there are many adversaries.”* Well, that pretty much summed up the confirmation part.

That night God laid a burden upon my heart for children like I’ve never had before. I have always been burdened for the church children, no matter what church I was in. These were the kids I had a burden for, but now it was larger. This was beyond the doors of the church to a world of children who are being spiritually molested by the enemy every day. The most frightening part of it all is that they do not recognize the enemy. The parents do not recognize the enemy. They expect him to come in an ugly devil costume and he is deceiving a whole generation. I knew that night I had a mission that was bigger than me, but not bigger than my God. Burdens like these are heavy and take lots of prayer.

Week 7

Took the week to absorb all that I had heard, spent time processing and looking for ways to implement what I had heard.

Week 8

Decided to read something that fit this mission, read **Think Big**, by Ben Carson. That will give me something to think on for the time.

Week 9

This was the week I decided to tell my dad. He didn’t laugh, or scoff, but he did think it was too big! Glad I read that book last week. Brought up a lot of good practical points for me to ponder on. Left me a wee bit discouraged, but today’s scripture is found in II Corinthians 5:7 *“For we walk by faith, not by sight:”*

Week 10

Learned about an organization for guidelines for camps. Made a phone call just to inquire about the credentials required to run a camp program. The director needs a degree in the business field, and experience in running a camp. I asked if a day camp qualified, it did. Well, that pretty much explains a few things in my life, like why I ended up with a business degree; it sure did not match my personality. I ordered our first information about camping, **1995 Guide to Accredited Camps.** I want to learn about the market and who is out there. Since the conception of the camp vision, we have both been compelled to the lakes area. We know nothing about the area, yet that seems to be the area we should investigate. I sent off for information on the Jasper area. Also ordered my first set of books to begin correspondence courses toward my ordination. This is a four year commitment of studies-- that should keep me from getting bored.

Week 11

This was a neat week. We sat in bed one night talking about if we had a camp, what would the name be. I wanted it to begin with camp. After tossing out a few silly names, Ricky said Camp His Way! It seemed perfect from the start, after all, our whole purpose is to do it His Way. Then we put Dustin busy drawing a logo with a cross in it. Risa will color it. Then the next day, God gave me the jingle. This would be our theme song, sung to the Burger King commercial jingle:

His Way

If you're feeling hurt inside,
and your heart is full of pride
All we ask is that you let Him have His way.
Hold the anger, hold the fears,
Hold your tongue and hold your tears,
All we ask is that you let Him have His way.
Have it His way, have it His way.
Have it His way at camp today.
Have it His way, have it His way,
Have it His way in your life today.
If you let Him have His way,
He will fill you when you pray,
Joy and happiness will flood your heart today.
Have His peace and love and joy,
It's for every girl and boy.
You will have this when you let Him have His way.

Week 12

Mother gave me three scriptures this week:

Zechariah 4:10 "For who hath despised the day of small things."

Job 8:7 "Though thy beginning was small, yet thy latter end should greatly increase."

Proverb 16:1 & 3 "The preparations of the heart in man, and the answer of the tongue, is from the Lord. Commit thy works unto the Lord, and thy thoughts shall be established."

NIV "Commit to the Lord, whatever you do, and your plans will succeed."

I have now begun the book **Experiencing God**. This is a great study for making decisions in life. It deals with the most important thing in life...my relationship with God.

Philippians 2:13 "For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of His good pleasure."

I have decided to mail a request to a few paper mills for some land. I was given advice that they have been known to donate land to certain organizations. I have shared this with a few close friends, trusting they will pray with us about this.

Now, is the time to sit and wait on God's direction and His timing.

Isaiah 55:8 "For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the Lord." If we are really going to do this His way, then we are going to have to be willing to step aside.

Weeks 13-18

Waiting, yet nothing! So while I wait I will stand upon the Word!

II Samuel 7:27-29 "For thou, O Lord of hosts, God of Israel, hast revealed to thy servant (Lisa), saying I will build thee a house (camp); therefore hath thy servant found in 'her' heart to pray this prayer unto thee. And now O Lord God, thou art that God, and thy words be true, and thou hast promised this goodness unto thy servant: Therefore now let it please thee to bless the 'camp' of thy servant, that it may continue forever before thee; for thou O Lord God, hast spoken it: and with thy blessing let the house of thy servant be blessed forever."

Ephesians 1:8-9 "Wherein He hath abounded toward us in all wisdom and understanding. Having made known unto us the mystery of His will according to His good pleasure which He hath purposed in Himself."

This is probably the hardest thing in all the world for me to do. Wait. It is not easy, yet this is the time to pray for truth and wisdom and that His ways be revealed. This brings to a close the year 1995. What will happen in 1996? Is all this for nothing? Only time will tell. I just want to be obedient.

Week 19

I am feeling a sense of urgency in my spirit. A feeling that this matter is important and children need this place. We found an old pop-up camper we could afford and headed up to Lake Sam Rayburn. We have heard a lot of people camp at Mill Creek, so that is where we went. Not many people there; it was very cold. Drove around the lake all day. I was looking for a flashing neon sign that would tell us where to build the camp. So much land, we don't know where to start. This would be worse than looking for a needle in the haystack.

Week 20

Today Barbara and I went to meet her friend. I shared my vision for the camp with her. She then shared her vision that she and her prayer group had been praying about. They had already been praying for a children's camp on Lake Sam Rayburn. She saw a place where music was flowing across the water and fishermen would be ministered to as they heard. She saw rustic cabins and a big cross that could be seen across the Lake. There was a beautiful chapel and she said there was an **urgency**.

Week 21

About a year ago, someone had prophesied that 'God had a new area of ministry for me.' Sometimes these are hard to receive when we aren't ready or don't see an area that we can understand. But God has a way of preparing us slowly for changes that will affect our lives. I am certain that if I know what lies ahead, I will be scared and full of fear. This slow process is allowing me to work through areas of doubt and fear in my life that could later inhibit the process. One day while up at the lake, I decided to go to the dam; I had never been. As I headed down the road, there were no other cars around. I came to a bad area of road construction. There were barrels everywhere; it was a mess. No one was around to direct me. I couldn't see around the corner... I thought about turning back. I pulled over to turn around and a car came passing me from the opposite direction. I knew the road must be opened, so I gathered myself and headed on. Just around the corner, the construction mess stopped and the sight that lay before me was breath taking. There was this big beautiful lake, the sun glistening on it just perfect. As I drove across the dam, I realized what a wonderful moment I would have missed if I had turned back. How many times do we miss something beautiful from God, because we are afraid to go on?

Week 22

A slow week. I was discouraged by a Realtor this week. As I shared my vision with him, he was quick to point out that the majority (80%) of land on the lake was either

owned by the forest or paper mill. He let me know very quickly that the other 20% was too expensive for the project I wanted. Well, this reminded me of the road construction, I must not give up, keep on. It seems the more people that find out about something the more discouragement comes. This was pointed out in my latest book to read, John Maxwell's, **Be all You Can Be.** A local preacher informed me there are camps everywhere. I was not aware of this.

Week 23

I finished my first correspondence course, took my test and mailed it in.

At this point I am having my doubts. Who do I think I am to try to do this. We have NO MONEY to put towards this. We have no one to come up and back this. We don't have a plan; all we have is a dream. This is just a test of our faith. If God has called us to do this, He will provide everything we need. It is so hard to sit back and wait.

Week 24

It is alarming to listen to the world. They are reaching out to our children like never before. Never before do I recall such a thrust to 'protect' our children and to put them first. The world is not concerned with a Biblical view or the morals of a family. They have their own plan and agenda. The church has got to wake up before it is too late and claim back their responsibility!

Ricky and I talked a lot this week about funding options.

The logo is finished; it looks great. Now we need an address.

Got a post office box.

Week 25

It is time to get some legal advice. Wednesday night, I talked with Steve Howard about our dream and what to do next. He was very interested in being a part of the vision. The first thing he said, was we needed to clear the name. Then he asked if we had any other choices. That was not an option we had considered. He made the call and we now have 120 days to incorporate with our chosen name.

Things are starting to become real. We received our first donation of \$100 toward the filing fees. We went to a friend who is a printer and ordered business cards, letterhead and envelopes. We are putting our faith into action. Actually it is a very exciting feeling to see something physical with our name and the process start solidifying.

Week 26

This week Barbara and I went to Jasper. She visited, while I just hung out looking around and scouting out. As I was driving back into town, I noticed a simple door that read 'Jasper News Boy.' I felt compelled to go back and walk in. I learned it was their local paper that runs on Wednesdays and Sundays. I decided to place a small want ad about the camp:

Wanted: 250 acres lake front property to build

Christian kids camp, Camp His Way. call Lisa.

Such a small ad, asking for so much. We will wait and see!

Barbara gave me Habakkuk 2:3 *"For the vision is yet for an appointed time, but at the end it shall speak, and not lie: though it tarry, wait for it; because it will surely come, it will not tarry."*

Week 27

Received an invitation to do a 'kid's crusade' this summer. This is a confirmation that we need to get out and tell people of our plans. It will take a long time to get the word around about the camp. Of course right now there doesn't seem like much to tell.

Week 28

I don't believe it, somebody actually found that ad and read it. There was a message on the machine. This guy had 27 acres for sale! Well, I returned his call, but was very interested in what the ad had read. He said, it read 250 acres, but his 27 acre hay meadow was in the middle of 18,000 acres of forest land with wildlife management. An added bonus, he will owner finance. I am beside myself, this is so exciting.

Thursday, Barbara and I went and met the man in Zavalla. He took us to the property, I'm not sure we could have ever found it on our own. It is five miles back in the woods. The man was very encouraging and willing to work with us. He encouraged us to seek matching grant money from a foundation.

Friday, Ricky and the kids went with me to see the 'meadow'. It really is a beautiful place. We have two other leads on some property for sale. One is 247 acres for \$1,200 an acre. It had been clear cut, was ugly, and was not on the lake. We knew right away that was not the place.

Saturday, we went back to the meadow and took pictures. It feels good; the kids love it. Then we went to check on a piece of property in Woodville. This was 76 acres with a 12 acre lake on it. There were woods, a house, trailers etc. Everything was there, just needed to fix it; but it was not the right place.

Week 29

Next week is spring break for Ricky and the kids. I am taking a week vacation. We are going around to as many camps as possible, to investigate what is going on in the camping industry. We have scheduled to meet with numerous camp directors to get a feel for the area from Houston to Dallas and all East Texas.

Week 30

Camp hopped all week : Went to 14 different camps. We were encouraged the whole week. All the camps are year round retreat facilities. That is a confirmation on what we want to do. The cabin styles are changing to small group facilities. We learned all the camps are full each summer and campers are turned away every year. Money does not seem to be the big issue. They are all growing and expanding. All of them are either denominationally backed or funded by large money backers. Some are non-profit; several were for profit. The general census of the camp directors was very encouraging. We felt like this was all a confirmation that we are headed in the right direction. It would have been very easy to get discouraged. Some of the camps have so much high dollar items. Everything is very costly, but not too big for God.

The neatest thing happened this week. One morning I woke up and knew that the hay meadow was the place we should pursue to set up a camp. On the way home, we stopped by and measured the land. It is a mile around. Most of the camps built on just a couple of acres and used the rest for trails or later development. The problem with the land is that of the 27 acres only four acres can have permanent building structures. We will press on cautiously.

Week 31

Yesterday, Ricky talked to the Forest people, the waste management people, and the Army Corps of Engineers. So many people involved—it is one big paper war. No set guidelines, yet you have to have a permit to do anything! Is this too risky? Or is it a chance for God to be God?

Week 32

All our printing was donated. What a blessing!
Still dealing with the Forest people about permits to use the forest. Next step is for Ricky to draw up some plans to submit to Foundations for some grant money.

Week 33

Learned from some of the camps about an organization called Christian Camping International (CCI). I called them this week; they were so encouraging and supportive. They are sending me information.

I Chronicles 17:2 *“Do all that is in thine heart; for God is with thee.”*

Psalms 119:133 *“Order my steps in thy word and let not any iniquity have dominion over me.”*

Week 34

Though the vision carries, wait for it!

Articles of incorporation are still pending.

I am trying to do the paperwork for our 501 (c) 3. This is what shows we are non-profit and allows people to give and get a tax deduction. We have asked help from people, but the rules have changed recently and no one seems to have gone through this.

Week 35

Spent time this week researching about foundations. Copied numerous pages of information to go through. I am looking for similar interests that would join us in our venture.

Week 36

We are officially incorporated! I have also found 68 possible foundations from which to request funds. I am putting together letters of interest. In the meantime, Day Camp is just around the corner. There is so much to be done; it is overwhelming at times.

A strange thing happened this past Sunday, right during the middle of children's church, the burden I had carried as the Children's Pastor was not there. All of a sudden, it was a JOB—not a ministry! That was a very alarming feeling.

Week 37

Sent out 65 letters to foundations; already they must have proof of our 501 (c) 3. I must make this a matter of priority. Have a heavy decision weighing on me to resign as Children's Pastor. I don't want to. It just seems to be the direction I am suppose to go. We began to pray as a family; this will affect us all.

It is as though I see the hand of God holding on to a rope. At the end of the rope is me, hanging on. I can not see what is below me, but I know I do not want to let go. I know God is saying "Let Go! Trust Me!" This is a tough one.

Well, the hay meadow opportunity has gotten better. He offered to lease the meadow to us for \$50 a month, so we could cut and bale the hay and make some money. Sounds great. I took my dad with me to put our lock on the gate, paid our first lease, and got a soil sample.

I tried to let him know of my intentions to resign. He did not think I needed to quit completely, just pull back and work 3 days a week. It sounds very logical, yet in my heart, it does not feel like the right decision.

Ezra 10:4 "Arise; For this matter belongeth unto thee: we also will be with thee: be of good courage, and do it."

Week 38

Held our first official board meeting. It was wonderful! We have just gotten green T-shirts with our camp logo. We gave all the board members a shirt and a bag of dirt from the camp. It was great.

Finally, mailed our 501(c) 3 application today! They say this can take six months or longer. Another waiting period.

Week 39

Talked to dad again! He still doesn't see any problem—just keep working.

Week 40

Have told everyone concerned now about our plans. I told the church staff. Dad told the board. We told the children's workers. The response has been very favorable and super supportive. Had day camp orientation, told them. It is thrilling to share something that is so alive and exciting.

Week 41

Took Ricky's parents to look at the hay. They liked the place. Hay will be ready to cut soon.

Yesterday - May 31st I felt a strong urgency to obey God. I have felt for quite some time I was to resign in May—I just could not do it. It does not seem logical. All month I have had such internal conflict, to the point I felt I was disobeying God. I made an appointment with the Pastor, my dad, and shared how I was feeling. He said God does not work this way, but if I felt it was God, I should obey. I had a great peace, as if a burden had been lifted. Now, I have new feelings to deal with. What will the church kids feel? Although I resigned, I will stay through the summer to complete Day Camp, and help with Kidz Church. By then maybe they will have a replacement. It's hard to leave, yet be there, so many emotions involved. This is going to be tougher than I thought.

Week 42

Put together a brochure for Kids Crusades, with information about us and our plans to establish a camp.

Week 43

Purchased the materials to make a back-drop and put together a theme for the crusade. The idea was so obvious, camping!

My mother called and said I have ten minutes both services to share our camp vision. The people were wonderfully receptive. Several gave us money to help. We were given \$3500 to purchase a sound system for traveling.

Isaiah 6:8-9 *"I heard the voice of the Lord saying, whom shall I send, and who will go for us? Then said I, Here am I; send me. And He said, Go and tell this people, Hear ye indeed, but understand not; see ye indeed, but perceive not?"*

Week 44

Opened up a checking account for the camp. Busy painting the backdrop. Kelly Scarborough and Dorothy Brown are so very talented. It is so exciting when people join you in your vision and are willing to help.

Week 45

We got our brochures and our promotional posters.

Week 46

Ordered our sound system.

Baled our first round of hay-93 bales.

Week 47

Our first crusade was held in Silsbee, Texas. It had a shaky beginning. We thought we would never get all our stuff there. We borrowed a camper and set it up at the church. The first night was very rough, but by the end of the week, we were in full swing. We were supported by the board members attendance. The people blessed us as well. Many children made commitments to the Lord.

Week 48

Came straight from the crusade and took the church kids to camp. It was good, lots of lives touched. I have a strong stirring to have Camp His Way going by next summer! I know that seems impossible, but with God all things are possible.

While we were at camp, the kids bicycles were stolen. It seems, like the enemy tries to come at you from all angles!

Weeks 49 & 50

After that busy month, we were greeted with a letter from the IRS, rejecting our request for a non-profit status. This was a discouraging blow. They gave a long list of requirements and demands. I worked all week to meet their deadline. We will wait and see.

Week 51

Community was in revival all week. I took this time to seek the Lord. I want to be in His perfect will. I want more of Him in my life.

A miracle happened. One week after mailing back our 501(c) 3 we received our answer. We have our non-profit status. It is impossible for any kind of paperwork application to be approved that quickly. I know this definitely was an act of God. Now we can get back to filling out the information for the foundations.

Week 52

It has been one year since the birth of the dream. A whole lot has happened, but we are a long way from having camp.

Week 53

This week I was interviewed on PTL Beaumont. It is very hard for me to go on television. I have always despised cameras and pictures. But it was exciting to share our vision from our one year anniversary.

Week 54

Sold hay, worked on grant proposals.

Started home schooling. Since we don't know what this year holds, we feel we should be ready for whatever happens.

Held another crusade. It was much easier this time.

Week 55

Ricky bid on 2 farm trailers and a ladder and got all three for \$120. We have the hay and the hay wagon; now we can start hay rides.

Week 56

Things are discouraging at the moment. We are trying to sell our house...no bites. Since we are one paycheck short, that is making everything a little tight. We had a moving sale and made \$1200. That was a big help. God is good. He always supplies just the right amount at the right time. My one true desire is to learn to trust God and just relax and enjoy God all the time. I want to feel His presence—continually, daily. God is so awesome and so faithful—and so God.

Yesterday I spent several hours on the phone trying to contact people for crusades. No one committed! It would appear that no one wants us or the camp. No one has money or wants to give it to the camp. I do not enjoy asking for money and begging for meetings. What are we doing wrong? I know we have something to give. I know God uses us to reach children. Sometimes the loneliness is overwhelming.

This is the part I was waiting to be over. I was having devotions and God showed me in everything I do, I rush through just to get to the end and start something over again. How can I enjoy God, His presence, His joy, or anything—when all I do is work my whole life just waiting for something to finish. Examples: I can't wait till the musical is over. I can't wait till I finish this course. I can't wait till this diet is over. I can't wait till summer is here. I can't wait till summer is over. This is a picture of total frustration. What a revelation for me—I want to learn to enjoy the journey.

Webster's dictionary defines *enjoy* as: *have the benefit of*. I want to have the benefit of all God has for me to learn on this journey. What a difference this can make in my

whole outlook on life—it is a journey, a process. Life is not just an unending series of events and accomplishments.

II Samuel 22:31 *“As for God, His way is perfect; the word of the Lord is tried: He is a shield for all who take refuge in Him.”* What a week of spiritual growth.

Week 57

After every growth spell, there seems to come a test. Everything seems to be falling apart this week. All I get in the mail are rejections from the foundations. Feel all alone out here waiting. Saw a sign: **Faith is not knowing that God can, But believing He will.**

Week 58

Psalms 37:23 *“The steps of a good man are ordered by the Lord and he delights in HIS WAY.”* Right now all the circumstances seem so glum—it seems as though we missed God. Yet once I put aside ‘feelings’, ‘thoughts’, ‘emotions’—my spirit strongly tells me this is the way. God has spoken to us too much for us to question Him now.

Went to Florida for Rick’s work. Went to the Brownsville church. They had a preacher from India share his burden for His people. You could feel his passion as he spoke. That is what I want for the children, a stronger passion than ever before to reach them. I want that passion to be contagious. I want others to want to carry the burden.

Week 59

It is time! You know when something is about to happen. The time is now.

Ezekiel 12:28 *“Therefore say unto them, Thus saith the Lord God; There shall none of my words be prolonged any more, but the word which I have spoken shall be done, saith the Lord God.”*

This weekend we set up a booth to promote the camp at the fall festival in Jasper. Our booth is always full of kids and we enjoy visiting with people about the camp.

Week 60

Another grant rejection. I take these so hard. I thought about our options. We can quit right now, stay here and live happily ever after. But I don't want to do that. God has called us to build a camp, and a camp we are going to build. When God says 'no camp' then we will stop. I have such a strong force on the inside saying "Do It!" It will happen, so press on.

Psalm 37:34 *"Wait on the Lord, and keep His Way, and he shall exalt thee to inherit the land: when the wicked are cut off, thou shalt see it."*

On the road traveling the other day, I glanced in the mirror and saw the most awesome sunset behind me. It was as if God were saying, "The sun is setting on this chapter of life. But just as the sun is setting here, it is rising some place else." It is time to completely release the old, so our ministry can see the new dawn.

Ephesians 3:20 *"Surely the Lord will do exceeding abundantly, above all you can ask or think according to His power that is at work in you."*

Week 61

Have started sharing with civic clubs during their lunch meetings. This is at least getting the word out more and more.

Week 62

Held another crusade. There were about 90 kids; at least 30 came up for salvation.

Week 63

When the camp is built, everyone will know God did it!
We have to trust God to do what He said He would do!
Only God has the right to tell us what to do next!

Week 64

Another crusade week.

Week 65

A new twist of events. We met with Benny Thomas. He wants us to speak to his church about working with children. Beyond that, he has been given 3 acres of lakefront property just a few miles from the hay meadow. His place has a double wide, a 3 bedroom trailer, an open building, a shop and a shed. He doesn't want the property; he wants to sell it so he can build a church. He offered us the use of the property at no charge, just cover the liability insurance, and utilities. He feels it takes a while to build a camp and we could use the facilities until they sold. We are in awe—this is such a neat twist. God has made a way in the wilderness. I want to jump up and down and be totally excited—yet I want it to be God's plan. I don't want anything that is not His Way. This would make it possible to begin having retreats and could definitely have a couple of camps next summer.

Week 66

We couldn't wait any longer. We had to go see this new place. It was awesome! It is like a whole camp just sitting there. We took videos. This is not the size of camp we had planned. But maybe it is the size God has in mind. Maybe there is potential growth around it. I still like the meadow, but this can happen now! I'm not sure what God wants in the end, but right now this looks like an open door to walk through. Only insurance and utilities, this has to be a blessing from God!

Micah 4:2 *"...He will teach us His Ways, and we will walk in His paths."*

Week 67

Held another service in Houston.

Talked with Steve. He wanted to know how we would fund the 'temp camp'. Don't have a clue. But I said God would provide. Then doubt began to consume me! I keep saying that and yet no money! Just our faith being tested.

One of the couples at the church this week mentioned something about me writing a book, because it would be a real encouragement. I trust so.

Week 68

I was on PTL Beaumont again. When I got to the station, there was no electricity. We waited and just as the show was to air, it came on. Pretty cool. I had a great host. Without knowing our needs he began to request all the stuff we would need donated. Then he gave his testimony about being called into the ministry at youth camp. I was even given two sessions. It was really great, the Holy Spirit coordinated it all.

From there we went to Jasper to build a float for the Christmas Parade, more public relations.

We met the board members and took them to see the camp. Everyone was excited, just get a lease and go.

The other property, the hay meadow was offered for \$15,000 down, 9 1/2% interest for 25 years. There was not a consensus on this offer. We went back to measure the buildings.

Week 69

What a week! We gathered with friends at the camp. They brought tractors and mowed; we cut down dead trees. We began the initial clean up in the buildings. It looks great. When we got home, we had a message on the machine. Someone had seen me on television and had commercial kitchen equipment valued at \$30,000 if bought new. He had a 10-burner gas stove, vent-a-hoods, waitress stations, fry stands, bun warmers, etc. He wants to donate it to the camp.

The man with the kitchen equipment called at 7 am and asked us if we could come pick up the kitchen equipment by 9am. He was 45 minutes away. He told me I would need about four strong guys and a big truck. Within an hour, I had four guys and a U-haul truck had been donated for the haul. So much excitement. When we got there we were so disappointed. It was dirty, full of mud and had really been neglected. It is stainless steel and surely it can be cleaned up. I trust we can use it and it will all work. The guys had to haul it to the camp and winterize the facility.

We met with Benny to work on the lease—went well. We have agreed to lease with option to buy. \$10 a month plus utilities with the agreed purchase price of \$100,000. We also have an option to buy the hay meadow. Just going to have to commit this to God.

Week 70

After the holidays, we left straight for the camp. We had two families come to help. We basically moved in. We worked for a full week getting our home in order. We cleaned forever! It had been a deserted fish camp and it really showed. The guys mowed and pressure washed the buildings. New years eve we had a big party. Invited all those involved that had been helping, mainly children's workers. Had a great time. New Years day we all took a hay ride to the meadow and prayed and dedicated it to the Lord. It was a wonderful beginning.

Week 71

Ricky's parents came and brought mattresses, sheets, towels, and a ping pong table. We started painting the house. All the paint was donated. Both weeks we had services at the camp. It was really special. Ricky's parents were really touched by all the support. Benny came up and was really pleased at all the work that had been accomplished. The fence was painted, we had a go-cart track, volleyball, archery, and the roofs were swept. We winterized and packed up to head back to Orange. Ricky had to start teaching. It was sad. We really like the place all of us, which is saying a lot. If I could just get past the spiders, snakes, and bug fears.

This has been a miracle for Risa. The first time we drove up to the place, she crawled back into the van crying and did not want to come out. She was scared and she literally hated the woods. This is a hard decision when this is to be your lifestyle. She loved the idea about the camp, and she was great with the hay meadow, but there was something about the woods. We prayed and I asked Barbara to pray with me. One day Barbara asked her what it would take to make her like the place. She said a horse! But after spending the past two weeks there, she is beginning to come around.

Week 72

This week God gave me the theme for summer camp. C-A-M-P

C-call of God

A-attitude

M-mission possible

P-prayer

Now to get all this out in brochures and get some camps scheduled.

We started a crusade in Beaumont Sunday morning that was to go through Wednesday. But an ice storm hit, freezing roads and knocking out electricity everywhere, so the crusade along with most everything else was canceled. The worst part is all our camping stuff is up at the camp. We will really have to rough it.

Week 73

Our first CCI (Christian Camping International) event. This is our Texas sectional. We have joined and are now members. The President of CCI spoke and met with us for a personal session. He encouraged us in our venture to move forward. We learned a great amount from the conference. We feel we are headed in the right direction. God has led us to do all that we should have done. We have done them properly. This is a confirmation that God was most definitely leading the way. We need to work on a 'donor base', an operating manual, and head toward accreditation.

At our board meeting, we voted unanimously to purchase the hay meadow for \$70,000. \$7,000 down, 9% for 25 years, semi-annual payments. All terms were accepted; we will close in March.

Week 74

Friends joined us again this weekend at the camp. We fixed the dorm floor, fixed the porch, cleaned that stove. It turned out great. Designed the bunk bed for the dorm and laid out our brochure. Was given a free standing stove for the dining hall.

Week 75

This week had lots of help at camp. The plumbers came and spent twelve hours on plumbing repairs. That would have cost a pretty penny on a Saturday. Thank God for friends. We were given an office full of furniture, desks, chairs, tables. We now have the office set up.

Week 76

Money for the beds and picnic tables for the dining hall was given this week. We were able to make ten bunk beds this weekend.

Week 77

This weekend's project was to complete the beds. They built 21 bunks for a total of 31. We are now officially a 62 bed camp. The ladies cleaned some more of the big kitchen pieces. The kitchen is really looking great.

Week 78

This weekend we were speakers for a district retreat in Sweeny. It went very well. They want to book a week of camp this summer. Big issue to face. We can't get a clear title on the hay meadow. The strange part is I have no emotion over this at all. Barbara called and told me that is peace. That is kind of a weird feeling, when you know you should be feeling something but you don't. An overwhelming calmness, I guess I have not had much peace in my life.

Week 79

We can not purchase the hay meadow. No clear title! But the owner came back and will allow us to carry a 10 year lease at \$200 a month, \$100 going to the purchase. In the meantime we are to research and determine if the title can be cleared.

Week 80

Held a crusade for Community. Had trouble selling hay. Had another interview for PTL Beaumont.

Spent the week of spring break at the camp. Started working on the shower house for the girls dorm. Begin cleaning out the dump spot. It was like a cesspool. I have never seen anything so disgusting in all my life. Cleaned windows, put up curtains. The playground is painted; the kennels are cleaned.

Week 81

The children at Community Church have taken up can good offerings and have sent us several batches of all varieties of can goods. On the worker weekends, I take numerous cans of different varieties, dump them all together, add lots of seasonings and make some of the best tasting soup. Each weekend, it is different but still delicious. God has shown me this is how our work weekends are. All sorts of different people come. When we all work together all weekend, we accomplish great things for the kingdom of God.

Week 82

This week is dedicated as landscape week. Laurie Lona asked me if we had landscaped the camp; I just laughed. The thought had not even crossed my mind. She decided that it needed to be done before our ribbon cutting. She canceled her appointments for the week and began the big project. She got plants donated from Wal-mart, the camp was given some money from a care group, so she bought some with that. Then a couple of chairs were purchased for outdoor sitting. Next we stopped by a nursery and were pricing bird baths. The owner was so thrilled to hear about the camp that she donated the bird bath, several flats of flowers, and some landscape items. It was so much fun. By the end of the week, the place looked totally different. Thanks 'mother nature.'

Week 83

This week we had an official ribbon cutting with the Jasper Camber of Commerce. We had a terrible storm the night before, but there was still a good turnout.

Week 84

Started our first capital fund raiser for the camp. We need some cash to purchase supplies and start preparing for summer. I mailed out brown paper bags stamped "Let's do lunch." Inside was a letter explaining our needs. There are different levels of contributions. A unique wood mosaic tree will be engraved with donors names.

Week 85

This week was the Assemblies of God District council. I went and set up a booth to promote the camp for retreats and also to promote the Kidz Crusades.

Week 86

Had our first practice run for a retreat. Planned on twenty men; only seven showed. I trust this is not a trend. I don't want to worry. I know God is our source, but we have insurance bills. We need breaker boxes for electricity; we have bills to pay. My God shall supply all our needs.

Week 87

Every time we go to the camp, we don't want to leave. It has become home in our heart. Our house in Orange is just a structure we live in between visits to the camp. This weekend, our second practice group canceled due to bad weather. It did storm bad Friday night, and we lost electricity all night. When it is dark out there, it is really dark.

Week 88

First real retreat to practice on. Had thirty women. It was really great. I had to do all the cooking; that was scary. God was faithful; everything turned out wonderful.

Week 89

Had our first annual board meeting. These meetings are just wonderful. We have a great board to work with. Lots of team support. We are packing and preparing for the big move up to camp.

Week 90

This is the night before our first group of kids arrive. As we are walking up from the lake, I remark how nice it would be if we had bikes here. When I got to the house, there was a message: a friend was bringing a trailer full of bikes! He got there at 11pm with 20 bikes. Isn't it neat how God works?- We had our first kids retreat last weekend. We had 41 kids and 9 adults. This has got to be the most perfect weekend a retreat could ever have. The kids arrived about 8:30, and boy were they ever keyed up. We got them to their dorms. Then we had our first camp meeting. It was really good—10 kids came forward for salvation. Praise the Lord. Then we ate s'mores and went to bed. I got up early and fixed 200 pigs in a blanket. We had a morning service about attitude. Morning activities went smooth. The reinforcements arrived. My sister and her family came to do the cooking for the weekend. What a blessing. The afternoon activities wore everyone out. We canoed, fished, and hiked. The evening service began with a scavenger hunt—God's presence was really felt. About twenty came up for prayer. It was a very sweet time. While the girls went on a hayride, the boys stayed and prayed. Sunday morning service had a sweet spirit. They packed and headed home. If this is what summer camp is like, I can hardly wait.

Week 91

This week is our moving week. We sold almost all our furniture. Everything we could sell had to be sold. It was very sobering to downsize till everything you owned fit in one U-haul truck. The house still has not sold. But it is time for us to move to our new home, and start a new chapter in our life. God is faithful and He will provide.

Week 92

Everything we brought fit! We are here in our new home. Our old home with 3400 square feet sits vacant tonight. While we are all settled in a 750 square foot mobile home, 30 miles from the nearest Wal-mart, in the middle of the woods. And the funny part is we are as happy as can be! That's the way it is with God. Wherever He wants you is going to be the happiest place to be. What marvelous things have happened in 92 weeks. The first week of camp starts next week. Are we ready?
