



January 10, 2020

Having so fond an affection for you, we were well-pleased to impart to you not only the gospel of God but also our own lives, because you had become very dear to us.

1 Thessalonians 2:8

An update on what has happened recently (Sept, Oct, Nov, and Dec):

First of all, a BIG thank you goes to Countryside Bible Church that helped with gifts for various youth and young men I work with for Christmas. I could have NEVER been able to do this myself. (Even got a youth from Countryside to help, as I have no taste in clothes!) The youth and young men were VERY appreciative of their gifts. Over 77 new dress shirts were purchased, a new laptop, and a lot of outdoor sporting equipment. Again, thanks to the elders of Countryside for supporting us again this year! At McFadden, every time I go there, at least some of the youth have their dress shirts on! They LOVE them!

McFadden Ranch (TJJD):

- It is with great sadness that a partner for about 12 years, Chuck Grice, has decided to end his weekly Bible Study with McFadden. Hopefully, he can re-join later. He has meant so much to me over these 12 if not 13 years! I really appreciate him, his guidance, and faithfulness! I really cannot blame him. Things have been going downhill for right at one year.
- Please remain in prayer for McFadden Ranch. The whole agency has turned upside down – which is NOT good. I have STILL been prayerfully considering my next move and future involvement with them. So please continue to pray with me that I will know if it is time to move on, or if my part in this would continue. My heart is for the youth, but they have taken a direction that is not good for the youth in the long run. My goal is to honor God in this decision. I am not very observant, so please pray for *crystal clear* direction!

Gainesville State School (TJJD):

- Still going to Gainesville State School. Still working with several people on Thursdays and most Sundays.
- One youth I work with got his GED and another youth received his NCCER certification for welding! Congratulations to both!
- Ended up having to go to court and testify for one young man whom I have been working with. Glad the judge let me testify, because they were trying to send him to prison – early. By God's grace he was given another chance. I get to see him at least once a week and sometimes twice. He has become more interested in the Bible. I am wondering why!

After Care:

- Edward – Still at Sam Houston State. He almost has 70 hours of college and is doing well so far. He has found a good church and has attended several Bible studies during the semester.
- Jared – has continued to keep in touch since he got out in July. He just signed up at an institute that will teach him a trade: HVAC. He made a profession of faith back at McFadden. Please pray that he continues to live for the Lord!
- Roger – a brother of a youth that is locked up. Been working with him so he doesn't get locked up. Met him in court. Please pray for his salvation and that he will keep in touch.

Hope Inn Christ (Decatur, TX):

- Still no youth at this time.
- Still looking for NEW house parents.

TDCJ (Adult Prisons, all over TX):

- After being re-instated (!!) I have made a couple of trips to see a youth in the TDCJ adult prison system. It has gone well so far, and I really do think he has made a turn for the better. He has given his life to the Lord after several years. Praise God for the progress he has made so far. Please pray that it will continue – not only in prison, but also once he is released.

Teen Life Challenge (Desoto, TX):

- Been working with Teen Life Challenge for over 3 ½ years now! I have done more Bible studies with them as I am a substitute teacher.
- Andrew still attends UTA. He is majoring in Electrical Engineering! He is doing well and is walking with the Lord.
- James is still doing well. He got a good job and is saving money. He also is walking with the Lord.
- I am currently working closely with several of the young men and trying to be an encouragement to them. A couple more have graduated the first part of the program and are now in the re-entry phase. This is the real test for them. Please pray they will continue walking with the Lord.

Cooke County Jail (Gainesville, TX):

- Been working with a youth from Teen Life Challenge. Looks like he will be in there for at least 6 months. Please pray for his salvation.

And again, THANK YOU for your continued prayers and support. On the next page are some areas of prayer needs that are on my heart at this time. Some requests you may have seen before as they still apply!

ONLY in HIS strength,

Ernie Black

P.S. Please note the new Grace to Youth email address: gracetoyouth@yahoo.com

Prayer Requests:

- Pray that when we share the gospel that it would be accurate and with the love of God, that we would speak clearly, and that the hearts of the young men would be open to hear and respond to God's Word.
- Please pray for the young men at McFadden, Gainesville, Teen Life Challenge, and those in prison, for their hearts to be open and for them to come to know Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior.
- That the Lord continues to use me to speak and work with these youth and young men.
- For Edward as I try to help him stay on track with God and college. At least he is going to a church and some Bible studies while at college.
- Pray for Justin, Fabian, Daniel, and Roger's salvation.
- Please pray that I may be a real blessing to these young men.
- Please pray for the staff, youth, and administrators at TJJD (McFadden and Gainesville). The culture has changed and not for the better.
- Please pray that I will use the opportunities that God gives me for His glory and I don't mess it up.
- I am trying to get into Tarrant County Juvenile Detention Center. Just need one more training that they now offer only once a quarter. Hopefully it will be soon!

Praises:

- Just for the opportunity to work with and encourage these youth and young men!
- For Teen Life Challenge letting me work with the young men in their care.
- Continuing to work with youth at Gainesville State School and McFadden Ranch.
- Praise for the protection God has afforded me over many miles while traveling to these places.
- Praise for the opportunity to return to TDCJ.
- Also a praise that I can get in Cooke County Jail. These county jails are getting harder and harder to get into to see the people I need to see.