

Sabbath Rest

Getting Real About Jesus!

by Rob Jones (Member Board of Directors)

"Man, get real." I don't hear that expression very often. Not anymore! I used to hear it frequently when I served as a police investigator in Texas! It was usually associated with a look of surprise and disbelief whenever I was arresting someone for a crime. I would often reply "This is about as real as it gets!"

As I reflect back over the years, I realize that I have expressed the same sentiment in my own life, although for different reasons. For me, it has often been expressed in an attitude of surprise with a reverent "Lord, get real." Yes, the Lord's response was usually quite familiar to me! "Son, this is about as real as it gets!"

Getting real about Jesus is an expression that is more than mere words. It should be a reflection of our daily lives. As ministers of the gospel, are we so caught up in administration, church growth and the daily nuances of leadership that we lose sight of what is real. I wonder how many times ministers of the gospel get caught in the spotlight and exclaim "Lord, get real!" and then hear His reply, "Son, this is about as real as it gets!"

I think that expression is applicable to many aspects of our lives. A very real response to a wide spectrum of spiritual and emotional attitudes and events. In times of joy and happiness, as well as sorrow, frustration or burnout! As Christians, we usually know what is scripturally relevant to most circumstances, but is it real for us! How many of us in church leadership live our lives in such a way that we find ourselves surprised when reality catches up with us.

I was joyfully surprised the other day when I received an email regarding a Senior Pastor from Africa. This pastor was a guest at Shepherds Refuge this last November. The pastor ministers on behalf of forty-four churches, two orphanages and an HIV/AIDS Combat Program Ministry. During a casual conversation, Ruedi Mettler and the pastor were discussing the daily routines of home life. Ruedi learned that they had no running water in their home. He learned that they had four of their own children as well as a number of children that could not be accommodated by the orphanages. The children would walk several kilometers every day to fill water containers and sometimes would return empty handed. We requested financial help from various individuals and arranged the purchase of a portable water tank that would be filled from the rainwater running off their roof.

When I opened my email, I was greeted by a letter and a wonderful picture filled with the beaming smiles of the pastor and his wife in front of the water tank we had purchased. Immediately, I felt excitement and joy filled my heart. Wow, what a blessing to touch someone's life in a special way! We got real about Jesus and the joy that we received in return is "about as real as it gets!"

I ask each of you, as pastors, church leaders, missionaries, friends and family members, to look at your own lives and ask yourselves if your life, your attitude and your relationship with Jesus reflects the reality of who you really are and who God really is! I have to admit to my own struggles and say that I sometimes want to look at God and say "God, get real!" and in my joy or sadness, successes or failures, God always seems to lovingly respond to me and say "My son, this is as real as it gets!"

"The LORD himself goes before you and will be with you; he will never leave you nor forsake you. Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged."
Deuteronomy 31:8 NIV

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Headlines

You have helped
to make a
difference!





The purpose of Shepherd's Refuge is:
To strengthen His church in fulfilling its Great Commission
by caring for its leadership!

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A non-profit ministry
recognized as a 501 (c) 3
organization.

Caring for those who care.

Mat 11:28-30

"Come to Me, all who are weary and heavy-laden, and I will give you rest. Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For My yoke is easy and My burden is light."



Progress Report

- ◇ First two and a half months of this year have brought more pastors and missionaries to Shepherd's Refuge than during the beginning of any previous year.
- ◇ Although funds have been coming in slower than before, we are able to continue to serve the guests the Lord sends our way with excellence and grateful hearts.
- ◇ The postcard reminders sent to previous guests seemed to have been very timely and response has been very positive.
- ◇ Word of mouth is spreading too, with many requests coming in from people that have heard about Shepherd's Refuge from those who had been here.



Words of Wisdom

Look around and be distressed.

Look inside and be depressed.

Look at Jesus and be at rest.

Corrie ten Boom
(Clippings from My Notebook)

Seasons of Life

Spring is definitely in the air! The fruit trees have been pruned (see respective article in our Winter 2004-05 newsletter available at www.shepherdsrefuge.org), and now they are in various stages of blooming. Some branches are full of knobs, not showing any color yet, others have knobs with a pink hue. And then there are those which are ready to just burst forth, developing into beautiful blossoms. The bees are busy doing their jobs, and we are praying that we will be spared a hard freeze.

Looking at the various stages of nature's display reminded us of how faithful our Heavenly Father is, the Creator of Heaven and Earth. The One who watches not only over the seasonal cycles, and the daily rising of the sun, but also over us as we heed His invitation to come to Him with our weariness and burdens. The yoke seems to get heavier and heavier in these times of uncertainty, and it is very easy to lose sight of Who called us and what He called us to do. Proverbs 29:18 reminds us: "If people can't see what God is doing, they stumble all over themselves; but when they attend to what He reveals, they are most blessed." (MSG)

More than once, but especially recently, we have had pastors here who told us upon leaving that their vision, their calling, had been renewed during their quiet time before the Lord. Before coming here they had been busy putting out fires, as one said "killing cockroaches", and by doing this lost sight of their vision and calling.

Thanks to your support visions are renewed!