



# New Name Ministries

P.O. Box 11694 Fort Worth, Texas 76110



## Seek First

### Lessons From Left Field

By Chuck Bittrick

#### Forgetting What Is Behind

I am amazed at the number of men who come to New Name Ministries after declaring a desire for change in their application, yet resist the process for change once they arrive. Since change comes from repentance, the process of change usually comes from looking at events in our past that we need to repent of whether it be how we have hurt others, our ungodly beliefs, the sins of our ancestors, or even how we have framed the hurtful

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**Please join us in welcoming our newest arrivals:**

- Jeff Brooks Apr 15, 2016
- Kevin McKoy Apr 25, 2016
- J.D. Parsley Apr 27, 2016
- Johnny Flowers Apr 29, 2016
- Scott Bremkamp May 25, 2016
- John Garster Jun 6, 2016

**Pray that our recent graduates will walk in their God-given talents for His glory:**

- Chris Ross Apr 10, 2016
- Ken Rix May 1, 2016
- Ed Ondrej May 5, 2016



Matthew 6:33 states, "But seek first His kingdom and His righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well."

It is surprising to find the number of ways to find application for this verse. Usually, we believe when instruction is needed, teaching must be given. When decisions need to be made, discussions must follow. And when property is required to add much needed bed space, we must search the real estate listings. It just seems logical. Well, sometimes, the Kingdom does not operate in what we would define as logical.

Recently, we held one of our Team Advances, usually a time of instruction

## From the Father's Heart

By Pastor Jon Cordeiro

### Shooting Straight

Careful what you aim for, you just might hit it; only to find out it was the wrong target. So often I see men come to New Name with their sights on achieving things in their own strength and abilities based on a snapshot of God's vision for their life. Forgetting that He is the author and the finisher of their faith.

"The greater danger for most of us lies not in setting our aim to high and falling short; but in setting our aim too low, and achieving our mark."

- Michelangelo

Coming out of a "system" that breeds self-preservation into a world system that promotes a twisted sense of self-reliance, it's only natural that those created in God's image would want to run their race. Emphasis added to "their" to illustrate that it's not God's race for them, with Jesus running beside them and the Holy Spirit empowering them; but their unguided race heading for the wrong finish line.

While incarcerated, inmates are in a dependence driven system that strips

related to the current issues of the ministry. Instead, we spent this time in praise and worship, allowing our men to play video DJ. No agenda on tap.

This yielded much welcome peace and refreshing and somehow a reduction in the so called "issues" that normally need addressing.

In this season of our search for the bed space mentioned earlier, we invite you to join us in some extra time in praise and worship, seeking first His kingdom, His righteousness, His presence, knowing that every needed thing will be given. Instead of focusing on the need, let's focus on the provider of needs.

them of their identity and fosters a natural desire for independence. Their focus is on finishing a race to release, rather than running the race of righteousness right

### Winning the Race to the Wrong Finish Line

where they are. This can create an insidious disconnect from our true calling as Christian believers. We are called to be in relationship with God, our Father through the Son by His Spirit in community. Our American society today has, for the most part, lost its interactive and relational community identity. We've traded our inter-dependence (community) for largely impersonal feel good "communities." Sort of like doing Bible studies where knowledge is valued more than understanding, and discussions are focused on circumstances, not His promises. God is looking for us to experience community through unity with Him (commune + unity = community :-).

Recently I went to an Alzheimer's conference and heard that keeping those impacted by this disorder active in their

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events in our own lives. The excuse most often given comes from Scripture, as any good, self-respecting, Christian will do.

The verse offered comes from Philippians 3:13 (NIV), "Brothers and sisters, I do not consider myself yet to have taken hold of it. But one thing I do: Forgetting what is behind and straining toward what is ahead." I believe we miss out on much of its meaning as we isolate these words from the rest of the chapter and from the Bible as a whole. Let's start by looking at the context of these words.

Earlier in the chapter, Paul writes about things he could boast about in his own past and how he now sees these things as "refuse" or



"garbage," that he might "gain Christ." He saw the need to take an inventory of his past, see it for what it was (repent of the thinking that made those things valuable to him), in order to grow in his relationship with the Lord. We have a problem doing this when we fail to recognize the nature of sin and the nature of the Father.

The best definition of sin I have ever heard is, "sin is that which destroys God's creation, namely us." With that definition, God becomes a loving Father in whose love we can trust (1 John 4:16) rather than a petty dictator giving us a bunch of rules to follow to keep us from desirable things. (See Genesis 3:5-6.) Sin is much

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### From The Father's Heart continued

community keeps the disease from progressing. Essentially it helps keep them aware of their identity. We shouldn't need to be diagnosed with an identity robbing disease to recognize



the value of supporting our identity through Christ-centered community.

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less of a temptation under this definition and bondage to sin loses its grip on us.

So, when Paul admonished us to forget what is behind, what was he talking about? The story of Lot's wife gives us a clue. While escaping the destruction of a wicked and sinful city and after being warned not to look back, Lot's wife still longed for something she was leaving behind. Another example is when the children of Israel were traveling in the desert under God's provision began to complain saying, "We remember the fish we ate in Egypt at no cost—also the cucumbers,



melons, leeks, onions and garlic." (Somehow, I don't remember hearing about all of this good stuff while they were crying out to God in their bondage.) Rather than "straining toward what is ahead" (gaining Christ), they were looking at the good things in their past that never really existed.

Fear robs us of the opportunity to look back on those hurtful events that keep us bound to their poison. These hurtful events have taught us not to trust, to protect ourselves from the very

### From The Father's Heart continued

And yet, there are those who will run away from this principle of community believing that they are heading off into their Godly vision only to find a mirage.

The Word tells us to not forsake the gathering of the saints (that would be us; commune + unity) and to pursue the Kingdom of God first, THEN all these things (visions and dreams) will be added to us. We're to do this with the mind of Christ (which yields to Godly wisdom and counsel) with the joy of the Lord as our strength while not leaning on our own understanding but acknowledging (trusting) Him in all our ways, so that He can make our paths straight.

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relationships our loving Father wants to bless us with, to see life itself as a perversion of God's good intentions for us. But perfect love casts out fear (1 John 4:18) and gives us the courage to face



these hurtful events and reframe them from the heart of our Lord who promises us "that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose." (Romans 8:28) Then we can take inventory of and reframe these events just as Paul had to do with his former way of thinking. Through this process, we replace the hurt with hope, the violation with victory, and pain with promise. The scales will fall from our eyes so we can see our world as He sees it, no longer filtered by fears of our past.

Let's forget (repent of) all of those pleasant sounding, and SELF-protecting, lies we've grown accustomed to so that we can press forward for what is ahead.

### As always...

We appreciate your continued prayers and financial encouragement for this ministry. Our current needs include financial support for administrative staff, gainful employment for our men, and more bed space & staff for expansion. Please join us in declaring supernatural debt cancellation and for a mighty move of the Spirit's freeing work in the lives of His precious ones.