



Above: Hemet Camp, CA



Above: Lake Arrowhead, CA



Below: Rocky Mountain Calvary, CO



Below: Mountain Springs Church, CO

SUMMER BASKETBALL CAMPS

What a great summer of camps! We did seven weeks of basketball camp in Colorado Springs, Lake Arrowhead and Hemet, CA with about 600 people involved with them and numerous kids came to Christ! It was neat for me personally because Seth helped me with six weeks of camp. Nearly every week was outside but the Lord showed His strength because we didn't miss any days because of rain. On the last day of camp for the summer with one hour to go, I thought we were going to get rain for sure. The skies were darkening and it was looking bad but we all came together to pray and the Lord held off the rain. It was really inspiring! The Lord truly holds the universe in His hands and is able to control all things!

One of the highlights of the summer was going to Calicinto Ranch in Hemet, CA. Check out their web site at www.calicintoranch.com. This is a family owned ranch that has become a summer camp for kids. Many weeks they host prisoner's children from inner city Los Angeles. Steve Rutz, Seth, Levi and I were able to do a show for them. What a blessing that was. These kids were taken out of a very tough environment for a week and were able to hear about the love of Jesus. Be in prayer for them and for the Pirelli family that run the camp.

September 4th is my 13th anniversary and I am truly blessed to have Dina as my wife. She is an awesome wife, mother, friend and the love of my life! That day is also the big 4-0 for me. I know, I know it is all downhill from here but 40 is the new 30. At least that is what I keep telling myself. Because Dina is such a good wife she has helped change my diet. She has probably added twenty years to my life. In North Carolina where I grew up fried foods and sweets are a birthright! (The South is going to rise again!). I mean my favorite Southern dessert is Sugar Cake (the name should be a clue). It is basically flat bread with a sugar glaze baked on it. My hometown is the place where a famous treat I like to call it "a little taste of heaven" was invented. You call it Krispy Kreme. We also invented an event called the "Covered Dish". Perhaps you are familiar with it. Everybody comes to church and all the mothers and grandmothers cook their best recipes. Then they lay it all out on a table or three. The congregation goes at it like pigs in a trough. It is a sight to see, ahhh the memories. Meals are a social event there and it is a huge part of Southern culture. I love the 4 C's carbs, candies, cakes and cookies. As the famous Drew Carey said, "What do I want on my salad?... PIE!"



Above: Springs Community Church, CO



Above: Village 7, CO



It's Fun to be a Fuqua!

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This leads me with a little bit of a problem and this reminds me of the late, great John Candy who said, *"I don't know if you've noticed, but I got a slight weight problem. My therapist says I swallow a lot of aggression...along with a lot of pizzas."* I've had a problem with food being too important for too long. Food often became an idol because it comforts me and it is easy to turn to. The Lord has been convicting me but I just thought about a change or I'd try for a little bit but then give up. I mean it is much easier to just reach for a Swiss Cake Roll but with the birthday around the corner and mortality staring me right in the face, I decided to do something drastic. Dina and I went on an eight day cleanse. It included fruits, vegetables and tons of water along with a great deal of exercise. It flushes out your system of all the toxins. I was a coward so by the sixth night I had to reintroduce myself to some protein. This started out as a physical change but I quickly realized that it was more about a spiritual change. God began to stir my heart and deal with issues like raising my voice in anger at my kids or arguing on the basketball court. It was like a light went on and it is so awesome. It is one of the hardest things I have ever done and I've climbed Machu Picchu! It just goes to show you that if you follow God's leading, even if it is painful, there is a blessing on the other side. So is God challenging you in this area? If so, it is a spiritual battle and my encouragement would be to start a program and have accountability. Having Dina help me has been tremendous and if you need someone to talk to, I am here!

Prayer Request

- To fill Hoops of Hope's fall and spring schedule especially with Upward Basketball and church show
- For strong marriages and for recovery for those that have been broken
- Brent's cousin Chris who remains incarcerated
- Seth as he starts first grade
- The Fuqua family to grow in grace and truth
- Those struggling with their finances
- Setting the prison schedule and for our team to grow in unity

God's Word

Galatians 2:16 *Know that a man is not justified on the basis of the works of the Law, but on the basis of the faithfulness of Jesus Christ. So we, too, have put our faith in Christ Jesus that we may be justified on the basis of Christ's faithfulness, and not on the basis of the works of the Law—for no flesh will be justified on the basis of the works of the Law.*

Galatians 5:6 *For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision nor uncircumcision has any value. The only thing that counts is faith expressing itself through love.*

Galatians 5:13 *You, my brothers, were called to be free. But do not use your freedom to indulge the sinful nature; rather, serve one another in love. 14The entire law is summed up in a single command: "Love your neighbor as yourself.*

Galatians 5:16-18 *So I say, live by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the sinful nature. For the sinful nature desires what is contrary to the Spirit, and the Spirit what is contrary to the sinful nature. They are in conflict with each other, so that you do not do what you want. But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under law.*

Galatians 6:1-3 *Brothers, if someone is caught in a sin, you who are spiritual should restore him gently. But watch yourself, or you also may be tempted. Carry each other's burdens, and in this way you will fulfill the law of Christ. If anyone thinks he is something when he is nothing, he deceives himself.*

Galatians 6:7- 9, 15 *Do not be deceived: God cannot be mocked. A man reaps what he sows. The one who sows to please his sinful nature, from that nature will reap destruction; the one who sows to please the Spirit, from the Spirit will reap eternal life. Let us not become weary in doing good, for at the proper time we will reap a harvest if we do not give up. 15Neither circumcision nor uncircumcision means anything; what counts is a new creation.*

(All scripture taken from the NIV)

Now for our theology lesson for the day! The biggest argument in all of religion is faith vs. works. Do I earn my salvation through good works or do I depend on Christ to save me from my sins and give me eternal life? Do I work my way to heaven or do I trust in the finished work of Christ? Every false religion and cult has at its core the works theology. Some may try and do a combination of the two but they still don't rely on what Christ has done. The apostle Paul in his letter to the Galatian church is very upset that the Christian believers have gone back to serving the Law. Judiazers had infiltrated the church and taught that the believers must return to the Law and be circumcised. (oww!) Not only would

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Above: Calicinto Ranch - Hemet, CA

Below: Seth & Levi at Calicinto Ranch





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Hoops of Hope is a Basketball Ministry that focuses on spreading the gospel through basketball camps, speaking at school assemblies and 'Upward' award banquets, and through running basketball tournaments. Hoops of Hope has visited schools, prisons and churches throughout the Philippines, Malaysia, India, Krygyzstan, Kazakhstan, China, Mongolia, Singapore, Trinidad and Tobago, the Bahamas, Mexico, Kenya, Namibia, South Africa and across the U.S. Literally thousands of people young and old alike learn from Hopes of Hope's expertise each year, while being exposed to the good news and hope that they have in Jesus Christ.

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IMPACTING ETERNITY THROUGH BASKETBALL



Thank you for continuing to stand behind Hoops of Hope. God has answered many prayers about our support and we are doing much better financially. Please continue to pray for more events to be booked and for the finances to continue to be positive. If you would like to contribute, your checks can be made to Hoops of Hope.

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that be very painful but it is also not trusting in what Christ has done for us. Paul argues that the only thing that counts is *"faith expressing itself through love"*. It is not about working your way to heaven but rather faith in Christ that motivates us to love our neighbors. If we live by the Spirit then we will not run after the things of the world and we are not under the law! Paul goes on to say that we are to love other believers and pick them up when they fall but to be humble about it as we could be tempted as well. We fulfill the law of Christ by carrying each other's burdens. Sin and good works have this in common, they follow the rules of the harvest. First, you always reap what you sow. If you sow righteousness you will reap righteousness, if you sow sin you will reap the consequences. Second, you will reap later than you sow and third, you will reap more than you sow, whether good or bad!

So what is it? Can we work our way to heaven or is Christ the only way. Since God said our righteous acts are like filthy rags (compared to God's holiness) then there is only one way to salvation: faith in Jesus Christ alone and His finished work on Calvary. That is the only way to be forgiven of our sins and to spend eternity with Him. So it is your choice, do you want to be free in Christ or bound by the Law that can't save us! Paul sums it up, *"Neither circumcision nor uncircumcision means anything; what counts is a new creation."*