

## Journal ARCHIVE 2014

### **JANUARY 2014:**

**01/06** - *Today I spent the evening picking up leftover promotional material from Harvesters "Check- Out Hunger" event. This yearly event, which ran from Nov 2nd thru Jan 6th, is sponsored by the Retail Grocers Association in collaboration with Harvester's Community Food Network and utilizes scanable coupons at check-out lines to help raise awareness and money to help feed the hungry throughout our community. My responsibility today was to pickup any left over coupons and promotional posters from the two local grocery stores which I was assigned to, and thank the store managers for their commitment. It was truly a blessing for me to be able to play a small part in this effort and to share the blessings I've been given, with others. I can't wait to see if we exceeded the money raised from last year!*

**01/17** - *After a long week of work, today was a much needed day off, a day of rest and a time of reflection and giving back.*

*You see, my heavenly father has blessed me recently with an opportunity that has allowed me and my family to prosper abundantly, and although the opportunity that I have been given has brought back many of the pressures and tiring days that had once brought me to my knees, it has also brought forth days like today, when I am able to share the blessings for which I have been given with those who are weak in spirit, oppressed or feeling hopeless because of the difficulties they are facing. A special day of opportunity to exemplify faith in its simplest form, by reaching out in compassion, mercy and love to those in need.*

*The day began with a trip to visit my dad. Normally I would have picked him up from his apartment, where together, we would make our weekly trip to the store to pickup groceries and supplies. But today was a little different. Today my dad decided he wasn't quite up to making the long trip, and instead, I would bring him what he needed to make it through the coming week. Service with a smile as I visited him at the Don Bosco Senior center to bring him the groceries he needed and to visit with him a while to catch up on our lives.*

*But the day of giving did not end there, as I remembered a special person from my previous visits to Don Bosco. A homeless man who was a friend of Mrs Perez, who attends Don Bosco regularly. And so before this day began, I decide to also bring along a new blanket and can goods as a gift to this man, whom I've never met, but was compelled to help without hesitation.*

*As my day with with my dad came to a close, we would jump in my car for the trip back home, and on our way, we would stop by the local Salvation Army to drop-off some used clothes that my son had gathered as a donation. It was a special gesture that came from my son, who faces his own demons and difficulties, but found a moment in his life to express the goodness and compassion that dwells in each of us.*

*Thank you Jesus for showing me the path back to my heavenly father, and for teaching me how*

*the power of faith can change our lives, and the lives of others.*

**01/31** - *And here I sit, at the end of yet another long work week, releasing the pressure of a work environment where value and production are measured by how much revenue can be generated ...*

*Yet I find strength in the promise of hope that comes from the loving grace of my heavenly father, who is calling upon me now to show patience and endurance, and to use this opportunity for which He has given me as a stepping stone towards the path that leads to His glory.*

*And so today, I once again find solace by sharing the abundance of my harvest with those who have made a difference in my life and growth in Faith, a special donation to 2 very special organizations; The [Phoenix Family Housing](#) organization, for allowing me to share in the compassionate care of the senior residents at the Palestine Housing Complex, and the [Christian Broadcasting Network](#), whose Bible reading program "Bible in a year", has led me to deeper understanding of Faith through God's Word.*

*May God continue to bless those who are making a difference in this world by spreading the message of the Kingdom of heaven through their words and actions.*

#### **FEBRUARY 2014:**

**02/16** - *For it has been said, that "it is better to give than to receive". But the reality is, this statement actually falls short of the true meaning and blessings of giving and receiving. For what is the reward of giving if we don't also receive? and in the same sense, what is the the reward of receiving if we don't also give?*

*The truest example of this is when we choose to receive the loving grace of our heavenly father, which comes with it, the expectation that we will return His love for us and share His gifts of mercy, kindness, compassion, forgiveness and love with others, through our words and actions.*

*But the expectation does not end there, for when we give back to others that which has been given to us, we should also expect to receive...and the reward we should expect to receive is not one of a worldly sense, but one of a spiritual sense, where we know in our hearts that the gifts and blessings we are sharing will in turn bring a sense of hope for those who may be weak in spirit, are feeling hopeless or simply need a little encouragement to get them through another day. But most importantly, comes a sense of joy and peace in knowing that we are doing what's expected of us by bringing glory to our heavenly father.*

*And so it is, that this lesson of giving and receiving was brought to light for me these last few days, a lesson that was brought about by sharing the gifts and abundant harvest for which I have been given with those I love; my dad, my wife, son and strangers whom I've never met, who are struggling to put food on the table.*

*Thank You LORD Jesus for your sacrifice, which has shown me the path back to the loving arms of our heavenly father and allowed me to understand the true meaning of giving and receiving!.*

**02/27** - Today I was reminded that I am an imperfect man who needs the forgiveness of a loving God.

*It all began with a culmination of a week of hard work, where the pressure and stress of long days and nights turned to frustration, negativity and eventually a lashing out of emotions towards those I love.*

*A place we have all been before, when we allow ourselves to become self-absorbed in our perceived sacrifices to make a better life for ourselves and families. A place where we isolate ourselves, thinking no one understands what we are going through or the pressures we are dealing with.*

*However, when we step back a moment and truly focus on what it means to live a life in Faith, we begin to understand that the perceived burdens and sacrifices we endure are nothing compared to the burdens and sacrifice our LORD and Savior - Jesus Christ carried with Him on the cross.*

*For it is through His ultimate sacrifice that we are forgiven for our imperfections, and it is through our Faith in Him that opens the door to a relationship with our heavenly father, who through His grace, allows us to have a life that is filled with joy and peace if we just trust in Him.*

*And so it was that by the end of the day I realized, that this journey called life that we all must travel through will always be filled with trials and tribulations, and all of us at some point will succumb to the pressures, temptations and desires of this world. But when we take the time to humble ourselves before God, and release our burdens through prayer and Faith, we are given the forgiveness that we all need, and begin to see hope once again. Thank You LORD for your sacrifice, for it makes our burdens and difficulties seem so small.*

**02/28** - Today was a day of giving, a day to exemplify the true meaning of what it means to be Christ-like; by showing compassion, mercy, forgiveness and love to those in need, a day of tithing to share the blessings of hard working days with those less fortunate, so that they too can know the promise of hope given to us from God's word.

*And so it is today that I share the blessings God has given me, with these wonderful organizations who are doing great works in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ; The Christian Broadcasting Network, Salesian Missions, Samaritans Purse and the Leukemia Society. May you continue to exemplify Faith in your words and actions!*

### **MARCH 2014:**

**03/16** - My life has changed since returning back to the corporate workforce. And although this new path that God has chosen for me has been sprinkled with some difficult and trying times, I know in my heart that if I just have Trust and Faith in Him and lean not on my own understanding, He will continue to bless me with the patients to endure, and fulfill His purpose through me.

*One of the things that I miss the most since returning back to the corporate workforce are the*

*days I was able to spend in complete focus on my personal relationship with God, reading, writing and learning about Faith, building new relationships with those who share in this truth, and personally reaching out to those who are struggling with hopelessness and despair (the poor, the old, the hungry, the sick and those who are weak in spirit). The opportunities to personally affect peoples lives by exemplifying Faith in my actions and words.*

*However, today I have come to realize that my journey in Faith is not about me, it is about my personal relationship with God and bringing glory to His name by humbly submitting my life to Him. For God uses us in ways that we may not always understand, and He will not always give us what we want, but will always provide us with what we need.*

*And so it is that today, I reflect on the opportunities of the past few days, and even though these opportunities are not in the forefront for all to see, they are the opportunities that are seen by my heavenly father that mean the most...*

*A special visit with my 82 year old Dad, to bring him groceries, take him to lunch and offer a listening ear to his life's difficulties.*

*A special moment spent handing out food to strangers in need.*

*A weekend spent with my wife and son, sharing quality time and memorable moments.*

*Sometimes it's the smallest acts of Faith that matter the most. But no matter how big or small our acts of Faith may be, the important thing to remember is that living a life in Faith is about expressing our Faith with acts of tenderhearted mercy, kindness, humility, gentleness, patience and forgiveness. And above all, with LOVE, and by doing so we bring glory to our heavenly father. And that is what living a life in Faith is all about!*

*Along my journey in Faith, my heavenly father has allowed me to personally worked with many of this amazing organizations, and I have personally seen the wonderful work they have done in bringing hope to the poor, hungry and the homeless.*

**03/28** - *And so it is that today I am compelled to use the blessings and abundance that my heavenly father has given me, by offering tithing to the great people and organizations who are expressing their love and faith in Christ with their actions.*

[Harvesters Community Food Network](#) - *a regional food bank, centralized food collection and distribution facility that provides food and household products to hundreds of agencies serving people in need in our local communities. Their mission is to feed hungry people today and work to end hunger tomorrow.*

[The American Red Cross](#) - *is comprised of several area chapters, and together these chapters serve over 2.7 million people living in the greater Kansas City metropolitan counties, offering humanitarian services to victims of disasters, life saving medical training, educational courses and services to help feed the homeless.*

[Samaritans Purse](#) - *founded in 1970 by Bob Pierce whose mission was "to meet emergency*

*needs in crisis areas through existing evangelical mission agencies and national churches.” This organization offers more than help. They offer hope to suffering people around the world by sharing the news of the only One who can bring true peace—Jesus Christ.*

*Salesian Missions - based on a dream of its founder - St. John "Don" Bosco, which called him to dedicate his life to the education of poor and disadvantaged young people, began a movement grounded in bringing the Gospel and the teaching of the Church to life. To be at the service of the people, and particularly of the young worker, was Don Bosco's aim, that he might win all to Christ. Since its humble beginnings, the Salesians have expanded into regions of the world where the need is greatest, and today, they are located in more than 130 countries and touch the lives of millions of children and families by breaking the terrible cycle of poverty and ignorance that destroys so many young lives.*

*Along my journey in Faith, my heavenly father has allowed me to personally work with many of these amazing organizations, and I have been blessed to be able to see and participate in the wonderful work they have done in bringing hope to the poor, hungry and the homeless.*

*As I humble myself before God on this day, I am reminded that "to those who are given much, much is expected", and when we put our complete trust in the hands of our heavenly father through our faith in Christ, we need not worry about our own personal needs, but through our love for others, our needs will be satisfied when we bring glory to His name!*

#### **APRIL 2014:**

**04/04** - *Today was a day of rest, a day to enjoy with family and friends, a day to reflect on the many blessings that my family and I have been given, and to share the special moments, good times and abundance with family, close friends and even strangers.*

*The day began anew, just before dawn, and as usual my wife and I had rose out of bed to begin our day....*

*Mornings are a special time for me, as it reflects the newness of a brand new day, a time when my mind is fresh, and the anticipation of what God has in store for me is brewing. It is the time of the day when I am able to shut out the worries of the coming day and focus on my relationship with God as I make time to sit in silence and prayer, taking in the wisdom of God's word and looking ahead to the opportunities to fulfill His purpose through me.*

*But this morning was a special morning, one of those moments in your life when you just feel connected with God and those you love. On this special morning, our son just happened to be up preparing for the work day ahead, and together with my wife and I, we had time to just talk and connect with each other. Something that does not always happen in our active lives.*

*As my day progressed, this connection and oneness with my heavenly father would continue, and as I set out to visit with old friends to share in conversation, lunch and even a hockey game, it occurred to me just how important it is in life to enjoy these moments.*

*By the end of the day I was reminded once again of the presence of my heavenly father as he*

*opened the door of opportunity to give a helping hand to a stranger who was need gas money (a young man by the name of David), and fulfill a future opportunity ( offered by my good friend John) to help others in need.*

*In a world full of pain and strife, I feel so blessed to be able to see how God's grace is working in my life, and to recognize, enjoy and give thanks to every special moment of this life!*

**04/18** - *As I walk this journey of Faith, I am constantly reminded of just how difficult it is sometimes to maintain a life that is pleasing to God.*

*You see, we are all born sinners, and because of this, we all succumb to our own selfish desires, self doubts and the temptations of a fallen world.*

*And no matter how hard we try, we always seem to find ourselves at some point in our lives, getting caught up in the world around us, allowing ourselves to become focused on worldly goals, material or financial gain. We become impatient in waiting for our needs and purpose to be met, allow doubt to set in when we see bad things happen to good people and senseless acts of suffering and pain in the world around us, and we allow our frustrations and selfish desires to somehow justify our sinful actions.*

*There seems to be a constant battle going on inside all of us as we seek to find purpose and meaning to our lives.*

*Case in point.*

*In my daily walk in Faith, I make time everyday to connect and build my relationship with my heavenly father through prayer, reflection and the study of His word. I also make it a point to humble myself before God everyday, giving thanks and praise for everything that He has given me, and I try to recognize God's hand in everything around me.*

*This new found mind set has brought great joy and peace into my life, and allows me to get through each day with great hope for the future.*

*However, recently I've began to notice how Ive been letting myself succumb to the pressures of overwhelming deadlines and commitments in a corporate career that requires long and stressful workweeks, and rather than trusting in God for relief and comfort, Ive found myself trying to take this burden on my own, causing me to see things from a worldly point of view and momentarily loosing sight of His promise and purpose for me.*

*But today, I am able to recognize my ways, and once again turn to God in trust and faith, knowing that no matter what difficulties I face, He will never give me more that I can handle, and will always be there to give me what I need.*

**04/19** - *Today was a special day of sharing God's gifts of compassion, kindness and love for those who have little.*

*For it is on this day that God has opened the door of opportunity for me to help prepare a*

*garden for the wonderful residents of the Palestine Apartment complex; a low-income senior citizen complex located in the urban core, where together with my good friend Karen (the resident coordinator) and the backing of the [Kansas City Community Gardens](#) and my good friend John, we were able to provide the seeds, plants and soil to begin a community garden for the beloved residents at Palestine.*

*There was no fan fair or need to boast of the accomplishment, but only the reward of knowing that we have made a difference in the lives of these very special and often times forgotten people of our society. The senior citizens, who feel lost and alone, struggle each day to make ends meet and have little access to the nutritious foods and fresh vegetables that are so important to a balanced and healthy life.*

*May God continue to bless all who were involved in this effort, and most of all, may we all recognize how the power of Faith can change our lives and the lives of others!*

### **MAY 2014:**

**05/02** - *Today is a day of rest, reflection and giving back that which God has so richly blessed me with. Today I honor and bless two amazing organizations with a contribution in His name, organizations which I have personally been involved with during my journey in Faith and whose mission and vision I share.*

[Harvesters Community Food Network](#) - *Who's mission and vision is to feed hungry people today and work to end hunger tomorrow.*

[American Red Cross](#) - *Who's mission is to prevent and relieve suffering, here at home and around the world, through Disaster Relief services, Blood drives and Educational programs.*

*As I sit here today, I am honored to be able to play a small part in bringing hope to those less fortunate; the poor, the hungry and the homeless. And although I miss the days when I could contribute my time and share in the personal experiences that brings such joy to the hearts of all involved, I know that God has a purpose for me, and for now I must continue down the path for which He has given me with a grateful heart and a loving spirit.*

**05/09** - *Today, as I make my weekly trip to visit my dad at the [Don Bosco Senior Center](#), I feel compelled to give honor and recognition to this wonderful organization by offering them a small donation in the name of my Lord and Savior - Jesus Christ.*

*For over 20 years, the Don Bosco Senior Center has been helping seniors age 60 and over and adults with disabilities continue leading vibrant, independent lives by providing meals, transportation, fellowship, and activities that promote health, education, and recreation. And for several years now, they have been the backbone of my dad's life, providing a way for him to stay active, build new relationships and have a normal healthy life. May God continue to bless this organization for all they do in His name!*

**05/18** - *As I travel down this path to discovering the true meaning of Faith, I have found myself having less and less time to do the things that brought me such joy in seasons past; the opportunities to personally work with organizations and those affected by their compassion and*

*kindness, the writing and discovery of new things that brought insight and knowledge into my life, and the joyful recognition of lives being changed.*

*However, I have come to learn that God is in control, and He has a season and a purpose for everything. And I as I walk down the path that leads to my salvation and purpose in Him, I have discovered a new sense of joy and peace that has come with the new opportunities for which I have been given... You see, I have come to recognize and cherish His loving grace in everything I see and hear, and in every moment of my life here on earth. I see the opportunities that I have to spend with my family and friends as moments in time that are to be cherished, I see God's hand in nature, as I take my daily walks, and most of all, I see everyday as an opportunity to bring Glory to His name, and for that I am grateful. May the light and spirit of God continue to shine from me, so that others may know and understand that we are not alone, and no matter what, He will always be there to give us what we need if we just have trust and Faith in the One who has opened the door to our salvation; our Lord and savior - Jesus Christ!*

**05/22** - *Today I was compelled to volunteer for a summer campaign called "No School=No Lunch". This program is a community-wide scannable coupon promotion, sponsored by Price Chopper (our local grocery store chain), to help provide food for those who have the least in our community; the school children who rely on free and reduced-price school lunches for their one nutritious meal of the day.*

*This opportunity was presented to me from my friends at Harvesters Community Food Network; a non-profit organization whose mission is to feed hungry people today and work to end hunger tomorrow. An organization of which I have worked with many times in the past, and one in which I share in their mission and vision.*

*My role in this campaign is to make sure that the promotional supplies have been set up and to check on the store throughout the campaign to encourage and provide support for any questions or concerns they may have throughout the campaign. But more importantly, this is an opportunity to share some kindness and compassion towards those in our community who struggle each day to get a meal, and it is what we are called to do when we live our lives in Faith!*

**05/23** - *Today was yet another opportunity to share the blessings for which I have been given with those in need. It was a day to express the kindness, mercy and love that has been shown to me by my heavenly father, with others, and to receive the reward of joy that comes from knowing that my actions are bringing glory to my Lord and Savior - Jesus Christ.*

*One of the acts of today was actually precipitated by a story on the local news, a story about a stolen van and its contents from the Don Bosco Senior Community center. When I heard this news, it saddened me, as I am very familiar with this organization, and in fact had plans to take my weekly trip there to visit my dad, who relies so much on the services this organization provides.*

*Upon my arrival at Don Bosco, I spent some time with my dad, giving him the groceries and supplies he has gotten use to receiving from me on a weekly basis, catching up on the news of the*



day and handing out candy bars to some of the residents. Eventually I made my way to "Ann"; the director of the center, and friend. I shared with her my sadness with the recent incident and gave her a generous donation to help with replacing the equipment that was lost with the recent theft. After sharing a hug, I asked her if there was anything that the center needed (as I have a friend (John) who has been waiting to share his love of Christ with others as well). As we spoke, she shared with me that there was a need for a new weed eater for the Center, And by the end of the day, she had the weed eater she needed, courtesy of my friend John.

As believers and followers of Christ we are called to share our blessings and love with one another, and when we do so, it allows the light of God's spirit that lives within us to shine for others to see, bringing glory to His name and joy, peace and hope to all.

As the day comes to an end, I am compelled to give praise, recognition and tithing to the [Christian Broadcast Network](#). Although I do not agree with many of their conservative views (both theologically and politically), they were instrumental in bringing the core message of the Gospels to me in my time of need, and the work they do, both here and abroad has brought the message of hope through Faith to so many. And for that I am grateful and forever in debt.

**05/30** - Today I received information that this years "Check- Out Hunger" campaign was able to raise \$498,342, exceeding our goal by over \$60,000!

This yearly event was held from November 2nd - January 5th, 2014 and was sponsored by the Retail Grocers Association in collaboration with Harvester's Community Food Network, and utilizes scannable coupons at each check-out line to help raise awareness and money to feed the hungry throughout the community. And although I played only a small part by delivering and setting up promotional material at several local grocery stores, I am honored and thankful to be able to have shared my time helping fight hunger in our community.

What makes this effort even more special is that with the money raised, Harvesters will be able to provide over 598,000 meals to those in our community who struggle each day to have enough food to get through another day.

As I reflect back on this wonderful opportunity that God has allowed me to be a part of, I feel blessed to be able to express my Faith in Christ and exemplify His example of how we should live our lives; with compassion, kindness and love for those who are in need. **THANK YOU LORD** for all you have given me, and for allowing me to share your message of hope through my words and actions so that others may understand how the power of Faith can change their lives.

## **JUNE 2014:**

**06/13** - As I travel down this journey of Faith I am finding it more and more challenging to find enough time to express my Faith in the ways I've become accustom...for the days are long and filled with the demands of work, chores around the house, and the constant expectations of being a good father, son, husband, provider and friend.

And so it is that I've learned to seize these fleeting moments in time to freely and willingly give of myself the blessings and abundance for which I have been given.

*My day began with my weekly trip to visit with my 83 year old dad, who lives his life alone in an apartment in the urban core. Everyday he makes his routine trip to the Don Bosco senior center to eat and find companionship as he winds down his final days here on earth. Feeling alone and regretful for the sins of his past, he struggles each day to find reason and purpose for his life, and I am compelled to be there for him to lift his spirits and provide for his basic needs. Today I brought items from his weekly grocery list, helped him clean out some old boxes from his apartment and re-taught him how to use his VCR/DVD player so he could play the old movies he loves so much. Afterwards, we went together to the local Wendy's restaurant to grab a hamburger and fries, while sharing conversation and memories about "the old days", when life for him was pleasant and joyful, all the while trying to encourage him to stay strong in his Faith and trust in God.*

*Before the day would end, I would again be compelled to give back, by sharing my abundance with some of the great organizations I've come to know during this walk in Faith. Organizations whose missions reflect Christ's teachings of mercy, kindness, compassion and love for one another. Organizations who are spreading the good news of hope through Faith in parts of the world where a simple drink of water is a daily chore, or having the comfort of parents to love and care for them has been taken away from them by the evilness that exist in this world.*

*As my day comes to a close, I feel comfort in knowing that I've been able to make a difference in someones life by reflecting and exemplifying the ways of my Lord and Savior - Jesus Christ, and for me, there is no greater joy than that!*

**06/14** - *Everyday I make it a point to count my blessings and be thankful for all that God has given me. But like most of us there are times in our lives when we get caught up in the routines of life and fail to see the wonder and glory of God that is all around us. But like so many times before, today I was humbled as I learned that God speaks to us in many ways if we just take the time to listen...*

*Case in point - Today, I set out to cut the grass. A routine that I've come to recognize as a blessing and opportunity to tend to the land for which my heavenly father has created and given to me. But today was a little different, today it seemed like a chore, yet another item on the ever growing checklist to get done.*

*After completing the task at hand, I began to contemplate how I was going to be able to get the remaining items on my list done before the days end, then suddenly I noticed the birds beginning to gather on the lawn. As I began to look a little closer it dawned on me that they were there to feast on the underlying insects that had been exposed after the grass was cut, and immediately I was reminded of the words of our Lord and Savior - Jesus Christ, who said;*

*"Look at the birds of the air; they do not sow or reap or store away in barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. "Are you not much more valuable than they?"*

*As I sat there humbled by this lesson of Faith, I realized that God was speaking to me and reminding me that He was there, and somehow the remaining "chores" of the day seemed a little*

*less important.*

**6/25** - *Sharing the gifts and blessings that have been given to us by God is the essence of true Faith. For if we are truly a believer in the one and only God, then our Faith all be exemplified not only by our words, but in our actions...*

*Today I find myself reaching out to a lost soul; a brother in law, whose life has been stricken by an ongoing series of bad choices. Someone who has given his family much pain, grief and sorrow, and whose life has been filled with many regrets and broken promises. Yet through it all, he has expressed his willingness to finally change...and so here I sit, praying that his words will turn into actions, and he will finally realize how power of faith can change his life.*

*Forgiveness has been given, and mercy is to follow, and today a gift of food from my harvest and a letter of encouragement I hope will open his eyes to how our trust in God and the power of love for one another can conquer any difficulties we may have in this life!*

**06/27** - *Today was my special day of tithing. A day to give back to the organizations that I've come to know and love during my journey to discovery the true meaning of Faith...this weeks recipient - The Christian Broadcasting Network, whose Bible in a Year program and daily devotionals have been instrumental in bringing God's word into my daily life, and has allowed me to receive the wisdom and understanding that I need to stay strong in my Faith.*

### **JULY 2014:**

**7/11** - *For it has been written; " To every thing there is a season, and a time to every purpose under the heavens"*

*As I travel this journey of Faith, I have come to recognize that I have entered a "new season" in my spiritual walk.... For it has been 9 months since God answered my prayers and opened the door of opportunity for me to return to the corporate world to retain my role as a provider for my family, giving me the confidence in knowing that He will always be there to provide for my needs.*

*And although, this "new season" of opportunity has not been without it's difficulties, it has allowed me to share the blessings and abundance of my harvest with those less fortunate...an honor that I cherish with humility and gratitude.*

*Today was one of those days...it began with a visit with my 83 year old dad, bringing him groceries, a helping hand, an ear to listen, and words of spiritual comfort to get him through his day.*

*It was also my day of tithing, to share my abundance with some of my favorite organizations who are out there doing the "work" that I cannot... Organizations like Smile Train; an international children's charity that provides free cleft palate surgery to children around the world who suffer the health issues and shame that comes from being born with this deformity. And Harvesters Community Food Network; whose mission is to feed hungry people today and work to end hunger tomorrow.*

*You see, everyday is an opportunity to bring glory to God, and to allow our Faith in Christ to shine through us for all to see, and by doing so, we bring forth an opportunity for others to recognize that there is truth to the message of God's word, and through Him, all things are possible!*

**07/18** - Today I am inspired to share a lesson in Faith...

*"Ask and you will receive" - One of the most quotable verses in the Bible.*

*But what happens when we ask and don't receive? Do we begin to doubt our faith and loose sight of the message of hope that our creator promises us?*

*For those of little faith, the answer is yes...*

*But to those who have come to know our creator and have surrendered ourselves completely to His will, we understand that when we humble ourselves before Him and commit ourselves in trust and faith, God will always give us what we need!*

*You see God has a plan for each us, and too often in life we get caught up in ourselves and our needs. But God knows whats in our hearts, and often times when we ask and do not receive, it is because we are asking with the wrong motives; so that we may spend what we get on your own pleasures, or what we are asking does not fit in with His plan for us.*

*But we must understand that everything we have is because of Him, and for every gift and blessing He has given us, we are to use it in such a way that will bring glory to His name...*

*This is difficult to understand some times, even for the most faithful, But when we come near to God, through trust and faith, He will come near to us, and through our faith we will come to know that no matter what, He always give us what we need to fulfill His purpose for us. This is what Faith is meant to be!*

**07/22** - Today I heard a familiar voice. The voice of [Issac Strong](#), a young man whose struggles to overcome childhood leukemia I've been following since day 1, and whose journey of countless surgeries and treatments have created a young man of wisdom and courage beyond his years.

*But Issac is not the end of the story here, it is the beginning. You see Issac decided that through his own personal journey to overcoming cancer that he would find a way to bring attention and hope to others, and today he shared with me this story...*

*His name is "[Danny](#)", a 5 year old whose been diagnosed with inoperable brain cancer. Danny will be turning 6 on July 25th, and his parents say he gets lonely from time to time and loves to get cards.*

*After hearing this story I was compelled to share a gift of kindness and compassion with this little guy; a birthday card with words of encouragement and prayers for healing. As a parent, I can only imagine the difficulty it must be having to go through a situation like this with your*

*child, but through the support of others and our Faith, we can find comfort and peace even in the most difficult times.*

*Ironically, the birthday card I've sent is one that I received as a gift from one of the charitable organizations that I often contribute to, which was to be used for such an occasion as this, proving once again, that our heavenly father has a purpose and reason for everything under the sun.*

*Get well soon Danny! Our thoughts and prayers are with you and your family*

### **AUGUST 2014:**

**08/02** - *As I travel this journey in Faith, I have come to realize that I have reached a plateau in my spiritual walk, a place of comfort and peace that comes from knowing that everything I have and everything I am is because of God.*

*God's loving Grace has opened my eyes and allowed me to see things more clearly. It has taught me to cherish each fleeting moment of my life, and receive every difficulty, blessing and gift with humility and gratitude...*

*As I sit here soaking up the wisdom of God's word and the wonders of God's creations all around me, I cannot help but feel blessed for the life He has given me, and I am compelled to share this wonderful message of truth with those I love and those who may be feeling hopeless and in despair.*

*For what is faith if we cannot also share with others the message of hope that comes from accepting God's grace so that everyone can hear and share in this wonderful gift...*

*And so it is, that today I share this message of Faith from our Lord and Savior - Jesus Christ..."Ask, and you will receive. Search, and you will find. Knock, and the door will be opened for you", and you too will find the peace and joy you were meant to have!*

**08/15** - *And so it is today, I share this important message of Faith for all to know...the message of LOVE.*

*LOVE is the heart of the Christian Faith...for God so loved the world, that he gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life!*

*So you see, it is God's LOVE bestowed on us through His grace, and realized through Faith that we are given life, but not the kind of life we see here in the physical world, but a spiritual life, one that promises a oneness with our creator, a life filled with the richness and glory of the presence our heavenly father where there is no sorrow or pain, but only joy and peace.*

*And just as God loves us, we are called to LOVE one another...for it is our LOVE for God and one another that allows us to live in harmony and realize the fullness of Faith, and it is LOVE that allows us to express the kindness, mercy, compassion and forgiveness that God has shown us with others.*

*So today I pray that we all take the time to share this gift of LOVE with someone in our lives; a loved one, a stranger or someone in need. And when you do, you too will find that joy and peace will fill your lives!*

**08/24** - *Today's lesson in Faith..."For the Kingdom of God is not just a lot of talk; it is living by God's power"*

*And so it is today that I reflect back and share the results of two opportunities that I have been blessed to participate in recently. Opportunities that have allowed me to share the spirit and power of Faith that dwells within me with those in need and to bring glory to His name...*

*The "No School=No Lunch" summer campaign, which raised over \$34,000 that will be used to provide approximately 170,000 meals for those who battle hunger each day through Childhood Hunger Initiatives, such as Kids Café and the Back Snack programs.*

*The "Hunger Study 2014", an extensive, nationwide study of hunger which helped to capture detailed information about those in need of emergency food assistance and their circumstances. The information collected has been compiled and will be an invaluable resource for developing programs that help support the people in need of food assistance programs throughout the US.*

### **SEPTEMBER 2014:**

**09/12** - *In the past few weeks I have been reminded in so many ways how the power of God's loving grace realized through Faith continues to impact my life...*

*I have experienced the joys of serving others; honoring my dad and being there for him on a daily basis as he struggles with the onset of memory loss and loneliness. Showing love, mercy and forgiveness for a brother-in-law who continues to battle the demons of his past as he struggles to realize his purpose for today, and sharing my blessings and abundance with strangers who are weak in spirit, suffering in poverty and illness, and struggling each day with the pains of hunger.*

*But this journey in Faith has not been without its difficulties, as each day presents a new challenge to overcome, a constant battle from within. But through each difficulty I face there has never been a time when my trust and faith in God has wavered, and without fail each difficulty has brought me closer to my heavenly father. And that is why I never give up, because I know that in the end it will bring more glory to HIM, and through His spirit (that dwells in me), I will become more and more like Him as His glorious image is reflected in me.*

**09/22** - *Today I heard a familiar voice from my friends at Harvesters Community Food Network asking me to once again participate in this year's upcoming "Check- Out Hunger" event. This yearly event is sponsored by the Retail Grocers Association in collaboration with Harvester's Community Food Network, and utilizes scannable coupons at each check-out line to help raise*

*awareness and money to feed the hungry throughout our community.*

*This will be my third year participating in this very special event, and I am honored and blessed to be able to play a small part in this effort by volunteering my time to help those in my community who struggle each day to put food on the table for their families.*

**09/28** - *Today I want to share a lesson in Faith that will give testimony to how the divine power of our heavenly father works in our lives when we put our complete trust and Faith in Him...*

*It was a Thursday, and the pressures and difficulties of the week were starting to pile up, making me feel overwhelmed, frustrated and impatient. And the more I pondered the more convinced I became that this life we live seemed so meaningless...no matter which way we turn we see death and destruction, people killing one another, wars, famine and disease. We live and die in a blink of eye, with nothing left but memories, and no matter what we do we cannot seem to distance ourselves from the difficulties in our lives or our selfish ways.*

*Ironically, at the same time, my daily Bible Study program had just finished up trying to teach me the wisdom of Solomon (in the book of Ecclesiastes) and the teachings of Paul (in book of Corinthians) But somehow the message and lessons were just not sinking in as I became distracted by my own personal burdens.*

*Suddenly, I got the call..my dad's neighbor had called to say that my dad had fallen and was unable to get up. At first my heart sinks as I flashed back to the loss of my mom and begin to feel the shock of potentially losing my dad, but in my heart I knew that God was at work here and that He had a purpose..*

*Fast forward. It is now Saturday and I'm making a visit with my dad, who at this point is recovering from hip surgery. As he lay there resting a man in the next bed strikes up a conversation..He tells me what a good man my dad is and how he has shared some good conversation with him while sharing the room with him. We talk some more, and I learn that he is a Vietnam vet, who has served in both the Marines and Army, he tells me he is Somaoan and has a very large family, we share our lives, our families and our faith together, and he begins to give me some words of encouragement about faith and honoring our parents.*

*I asked him his name, and ironically he tells me his name is Jedidiah (the "blessing" name given by God through prophet Nathan, to the infant King Solomon), a pastor at a local church, and suddenly I began to feel all my burdens lift, and my spirit begin to shine from within as I realize that God was working in my life, showing me his divine intervention and teaching me the lessons I failed to grasp earlier in the week....*

*The lessons and meaning of the book of Ecclesiastes; that earthly goals apart from God will never bring us happiness, nor will money, fame or accomplishments, and our earthly ambitions will continually frustrate and disappoint us if we seek them as a means to an end. However, when we seek to bring glory to our heavenly father, we will recognize there is a time and season for everything under the sun, and we need to enjoy life even though at times we will experience troubles and difficulties...the closer we walk with God, the more we become aware of His*

*blessings in our lives.*

*As I left the hospital I was also reminded of one the lessons of Paul (in book of Corinthians); that God will never let us be tempted beyond what our limits can endure, and as believers in Christ we must always reach out to one another with love and encouragement.*

*Thank you Lord for showing me the way and allowing the lessons of your Word to come into my life!*

## **OCTOBER 2014:** \_

**10/12** - *As I travel this journey of Faith I am beginning to see how my life is being changed before my eyes...*

*Everyday God continues to work in my life in ways that cannot be expressed in words... as I share the wisdom, gifts and blessings that He has given me with others, I am beginning to reap the benefits of a life that is full of hope and promise. And as I become more dependent on Him, I am beginning to see how each difficulty I face in this life seems to dissolve away, leaving me standing in awe over the love our heavenly father has for us.*

*Today I am faced with the challenge of comforting and honoring my dad who sits in the hospital recovering from a failing body, a son who continues to battle the demons of alcohol abuse and anxiety, and a brother in-law who seeks forgiveness and purpose in his life.*

*But as difficult as these challenges may seem, I know in my heart that no matter what, God will always be there for me, guiding me, teaching me, and allowing the light and love of His spirit to shine through so that those I love will recognize how the love of our heavenly father can overcome any difficulty that we may have.*

*And so today I humbly give thanks and praise to my Lord and savior Jesus Christ, whose ultimate sacrifice has brought salvation and purpose into my life and has opened the path to the loving arms of our heavenly father. And although I know not what today will bring, I do know that through trust and Faith I can overcome any difficulty that this world presents me.*

**10/26** - *Today I give thanks and praise to my heavenly father for blessing me and my family with abundance..*

*For it was not long ago that my journey in faith had brought me to a crossroad in my life, a point where the pressure of being able to provide for my family was beginning to weigh heavily on my mind... But through trust and unwavering faith I have been given a new life.*

*As so it is today that I am able to share my abundance with those in need, a natural expression of my faith, and a practice that brings honor and glory to my heavenly father.*



*For it has been written that we must be careful how we practice our righteousness in front of others so as not to be seen with the purpose of being honored by men. And when we give to the needy we should do so in secret so that our heaven father, who sees all that is done in secret, will reward us*

*But my purpose in sharing my journey in faith has, and always will be to bring honor and glory to our creator and His message of hope through faith in Christ, and my purpose in sharing my acts of faith is to encourage others and to recognize others for their actions in bringing glory to God.*

*With that in mind, I want to take a moment to recognize the following people/organizations for their work in bringing help and hope to those who are weak in spirit, poor, sick and hungry...for as followers of Christ we are called to live our lives with acts of love for one another if we are to truly receive the fullness and spirit of our FAITH...*

*Christian Broadcast Network - Whose Bible reading program "Bible in a year", has lead many to a deeper understanding of God's Word.*

*Salesian Missions - Whose mission to provide inspiration and hope to poor, hurting youth around the world has opened my eyes to how blessed I truly am*

*Leukemia Foundation - Whose dedication to finding a cure for blood cancer patients has given them a chance to live better, longer lives.*

*Harvester's Community Food Network - For allowing me the opportunity to participate in this years CHECK-OUT HUNGER EVENT, where together we will be helping to raise awareness and money to feed the hungry throughout our local communities.*

*Thank you Lord Jesus for showing me the narrow path back to my heavenly father so that I can share the blessings and gifts you've given to me with those in need!*

## **NOVEMBER 2014:**

**11/07** - *Today marks a very special anniversary. For it was on this day 3 years ago that I witnessed the passing and loss of my beloved mother to cancer.*

*I will never forget the sadness, pain and anguish of that day 3 years ago. But from my pain and despair I have re-discovered the true meaning of Faith, and have found peace and joy from a journey that continues to be revealed by a loving God who has held my hand through it all.*

*As I sit here with the vision of my mom's face in my hands and re-living the fond memories of my childhood and her unconditional love for me, I am compelled to give thanks and praise to my heavenly father for blessing me with such a wonderful mother whose memories and spirit lives on.*

*I miss you Mom.*

**11/26** - As we approach the Thanksgiving Holiday, I am reminded that this very special holiday was meant to share our God given harvest with family and friends, and to take a moment from our busy lives to recognize and give back to those who are less fortunate...

And so it is that today I give thanks, praise and tithing to the [Christian Broadcasting Network](#); whose dedication to spreading the message of God's word around the world has made a tremendous impact on the lives of millions, and to the [Phoenix Family Organization](#); whose dedicated volunteers continue to empower those less fortunate by providing the resources necessary to achieve God's purpose for them.

**11/30** - What is FAITH?

*FAITH is the confidence that what we hope for will actually happen; it gives us assurance about things we cannot see.*

*FAITH is the cornerstone of SALVATION that leads us down the narrow path back to the the loving arms of our creator.*

*FAITH brings hope and purpose, and allows ordinary people to achieve and live extraordinary lives*

*But FAITH does not promise that your life here on earth will be without difficulty or suffering...*

*Throughout the Bible we are given many examples of those who exhibited great FAITH, ordinary people; such as Abraham, Issac, Jacob, Joseph, Moses, Gideon, Samson, David and all the prophets, who were able to receive what God had promised them and achieve great things through their FAITH.*

*Yet there were others, who through their FAITH suffered greatly. Some died by stoning, some were sawed in half, and others were killed with the sword or left destitute and oppressed during their life here on earth.*

*This is a challenge that we all must face as we travel this journey in FAITH. We never know what God has planned for us, and accepting these difficulties and hardships is often a hard pill to swallow.*

*But if you understand God's plan revealed to us in His Word, you will realize that all God has ever wanted from us was our love and obedience. God created us for this reason. And through our FAITH, God is protecting us by His power until you receive this salvation, which is ready to be revealed on the day when He returns.*

*So you see, there is wonderful joy ahead, even though you have to endure many trials for a little while, these trials will show that your FAITH is genuine. It is being tested as fire tests and purifies gold, and when your FAITH remains strong through these many trials, it will bring you much praise and glory and honor on the day when Jesus Christ is revealed to the whole world.*

*Therefore, let us offer through Jesus a continual sacrifice of praise to God, proclaiming our allegiance to his name. And never forget to do good and to share with those in need, for these are the sacrifices that please God.*

*For it is through our FAITH that we have been born again, but not to a life that will quickly end, but a new life will last forever because it comes from the eternal, living word of God.*

*As the Scriptures say,*

*"People are like grass; their beauty is like a flower in the field. The grass withers and the flower fades. But the Word of the Lord remains forever."\**

*And that Word is the Good News that has just been preached to you.*

### **DECEMBER 2014:**

**12/13** - *Today was a memorable day spent with my wife. We spent the day shopping for gifts for those we love and share our lives with, while enjoying each others company. A time of peace and togetherness as a husband and wife, something that too often gets lost in the hustle and bustle of our daily lives and personal struggles.*

*During our day out, we came upon a man standing on the street corner asking for help to get him through the day, and we shared with him a gift of fruits and a Bible (items I keep in my car for just such an opportunity)... Although this act of personal kindness and giving seems to be a little less frequent these days as I struggle to meet the demands of work and taking care of my ailing dad, it felt good (as always) to receive the gift of joy in knowing that I might have just made a difference in someones life.*

*Later in the day I made my regular trip to visit with my dad at the nursing facility, bringing along some root beer for my dad, and cheese for some of the residents whom I've come to know and love during this very difficult journey. I don't know what tomorrow will bring for my dad, but to watch his mental state slowly diminish and his body breakdown has been a difficult thing to watch. I only wish that his remaining days here on earth will be made comfortable, his journey a little less difficult and that he knows that someone still cares.*

**12/14** - *A personal Psalm written in Faith;*

*The last few weeks have been a trial of my Faith, as the struggles of this world seem difficult to face.*

*But today brings new hope as I woke up in bed, with a vision of Christ with His arms wide spread.*

*Those of this world may say I'm a fool, because I don't follow the things that seem cool  
But this life is a journey that test us each day, and to make the right choices we must kneel down*

*and pray*

*There is a personal revival that's coming ahead, one that will silence the doubt and the dreads  
For a new day is dawning with a promise of hope, one that will offer the tools to cope*

*If only I understood the the plans that lie ahead, then maybe it would be easier to stay on the  
path I'm being lead*

*But faith is a promise of things not yet seen, so I must continue each day with the highest esteem,  
for a God that loves me like no one can, and will not allow me to suffer more than I can  
withstand.*

*So I open my heart to the message of the cross, a message of hope for those of us who are lost.*

*For the days ahead will bring honor and glory, to a merciful God who holds the last chapter of  
this love story.*

**12/25** - *Lest us remember on this day, the words of the gospels as written by Luke...*

*"And the angel said unto them, Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which  
shall be to all people.*

*For unto you is born on this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord. And this  
shall be a sign unto you; Ye shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger.*

*And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God, and  
saying, Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men"*

*For it is on this day, that we recognize the fulfillment of a promise foretold by our heavenly  
father; a promise of a Savior who would come into this world to sacrifice himself for the sins of  
all humankind so that we could be born again as children of God, regain a personal, loving  
relationship with our heavenly father, and be filled with His spirit to live a life for His glory.*

*Thank you LORD for your sacrifice!*

**12/26** - *Today I visited my Dad and the residents and staff at the [Holmesdale Healthcare and  
Rehabilitation Center](#), where my Dad now resides, and will likely live out the remaining days of  
his life...*

*Although I am deeply saddened to be a witness to my dad's struggles in his last days here in this  
world, I am once again humbled by the recognition that our life in this world is short; for we are  
all like blades of grass that wither and fade away, a single breath away from being just a  
memory in the lives of the people we've left behind...for this is the life we have inherited.*

*My dad has lived a long life, a life that has been filled with many bad choices and sins. But lest  
us remember, we are ALL sinners, and it is not our purpose to live our lives in judgement of*

*others, but to live our lives through example by the way we conduct ourselves as believers; For if we truly are faithful followers of Jesus Christ, then our Faith will be expressed with acts of tenderhearted mercy, kindness, humility, gentleness, patience and forgiveness. And above all, with LOVE. For it is LOVE which binds us all together in perfect harmony, and it is only when our Faith is expressed in acts of LOVE for one another that we truly exemplify the fullness and spirit of FAITH.*

*And so it is today that I recognize and accept the fact that our bodies will eventually crumble and decay, However, I know in my heart that our spirit can live on through Faith in our Lord and Savior - Jesus Christ...a message of hope that I share with my dad in his last days, and a message that I hope he will choose to carry with him on the other side.*

### **END OF YEAR SUMMARY**

*As I reflect back on this year I see a year that was filled with new opportunities and choices that would bring about spiritual growth and a renewed sense of hope for the future.*

*The year began with a new start, an opportunity to return back to the corporate world where a harvest of abundance would allow me to bring financial stability to my family and gifts of tithing to those who are less fortunate.*

*The year also brought about many lessons of faith; gratitude for my family and friends, humility and dealing with personal difficulties. And in the end these lessons allowed me to grow in my faith and recognize God's hand working in my life.*

*As I sit here today, I understand now that Faith is a growing process and the difficulties we all face in this world are meant to refine us into the image of Lord and Savior - Jesus Christ. Each day brings new challenges and forces us to choose the path for which we want to take.*

*As I look forward to the new year, I feel a personal revival coming, one that will grow to fill the world with renewed hope, blessings and gifts of joy that can only come from our personal relationship with our heavenly father. May the grace of God fill the lives of those who hear my testimony of Faith, and may the awesome glory and power of God be recognized by all!*