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**Winter 2015**

Dear Friends:

Bob turned to me one evening in the first part of August 2014, when I was standing in the kitchen, and said, “I believe the secret to knowing the heart of God is meditation, not just reading and studying the Scriptures but really meditating on them.”

In that moment I pondered his discovery but remained quiet, buried in my thoughts. The expression on his face told that he had experienced something life changing, one of those moments when the Holy Spirit is heard so clearly that a message is engraved on your heart. I have often reflected on our short conversation since that time, wondering how well I understand this secret of which he so passionately spoke.

In addition, Bob left me a precious gift of a stack of tiny fifteen-cent spiral notebooks filled with hand-written Bible verses. Early in his Christian pilgrimage he began using these small pads of paper to record Bible verses on which he would meditate wherever he might be. He’d keep them in his shirt or jeans’ pocket, take them out and flip through them while disking the soil on his tractor in the evening, standing in line at Wal-Mart or wherever he had a few minutes that might otherwise have been idle. For Bob idle moments were an opportunity to Velcro truth to his mind.

Bob often quoted,

*“Oh how I love your law. It is my meditation all the day.”* Psalm 119.

For myself, I have come to a greater understanding of the need to really think and concentrate on things, which are true, honorable, right and pure like Paul urges us in Philippians 4:8:

*Finally, brethren, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is of good repute, if there is any excellence and if anything worthy of praise, let your mind dwell on these things.* (Philippians 4:8)

Meditation is like a slow steady, soaking rain in early summer. The Holy Spirit acts in our souls just as that slow rain allows water to trickle deep into the earth, soon after the fields have been planted in the spring, and find its way into the root of the plant so God can cause growth. The thoughtful, repetitive pondering and consideration of God’s Holy Scripture creates a change deep within us. The Holy Spirit takes over this process and we come to a greater understanding, a revealed understanding of God’s thoughts and his heart.

I frequently stand in my kitchen washing dishes concentrating on verses I have copied onto multi-colored index cards and placed above the sink as well as other spots in the house. While my hands wash pans, plates, glasses, and silverware my mind rests in quiet reflection. I have to choose to be still, fighting the pull of the phone in my pocket, my iPad on the table, and the demands of this season. But when I do and I hear the whispers of the Holy Spirit I am reminded how “He redeems my life from the pit and crowns me with love and compassion.”

I have come to crave these seemingly ordinary moments when I repeat short pieces of Scriptures that I love. I chew on those individual words and say them over again and again to myself, mulling over them, and deep within me I experience a calming sense of communion and

nearness to Jesus.

This past year, a time of change and growth unparalleled by any other in my life, I have asked God daily to help me think correctly. The study of God's word has become more valuable with each passing day. It offers hope and clarity about who we are as His children, and foretells the future for those of us who believe and trust in Jesus. It also reveals the loving nature of an all-powerful mighty God who has placed us in Christ and desires a relationship with us above all else.

I pray for you and I pray for myself that we may enter into the place of which the Psalmist so beautifully wrote,

*How blessed is the one who does not walk in the council of the wicked, or stand in the path of sinners, or sit in the seat of scoffers, but his delight is in the law of the Lord and in his law he meditates day and night, he will be like a tree firmly planted by streams of water, which yields its fruit in its season and its leaf does not wither and in whatever he does he prospers. (Psalm 1:1-3)*

Wishing you a Merry Christmas and a peaceful, joyful, and content New Year,  
Kim

### ***Ministry News***

We love sharing with others all that the Lord is doing at The Hill. In everything that happens here, our goal remains to always point others to Jesus, His finished work on the cross, and the grace and life that's only found in Him. We are so thankful for each of you who participate with us through your faithful prayers, generous financial support, and by volunteering your precious



*Some of the wonderful college students who attended our Christmas gathering*

time for retreats and camps. Sharing a common vision and serving with you is the ultimate privilege. Our hearts are full of gratitude for all of you and your commitment to the life-in-Christ message. Please continue to pray as we begin a new year of ministry and a schedule overflowing with exciting things.

In our last newsletter we told you about the Roman's study being translated into Arabic. We are equally excited to let you know we also

have a Spanish translation project headed by long time friend Sara Cunningham. Our desire is to make this message available in many languages so believers around the world can know the life

changing truth of their identity in Christ. If you or someone you know would be interested in helping with a translation project, please give us a call, we would love to talk with you.

In other news, Bob's updated *Ephesians Commentary* is now available as well as Jhonda Johnston's book, *The Argument—A Conversation with Bob Warren*. Both are a pleasure to read and full of truth, as you would expect. A short excerpt from *The Argument* is below.

We recently began offering audio recordings (MP3 format) on a USB drive for those of you who like to listen to Bob's teaching on your computer or load them from your computer onto your smartphone or tablet. A number of late model vehicles equipped with USB compatible stereos will also play them. You can get one series or everything Bob recorded in that format.

The benefits are enormous: you receive audio files that can be loaded onto your computer much quicker than individual CDs, the cost is greatly reduced, and you can replace a whole stack of CDs with a USB drive the size of your pinky. And, you can still make your own set of CDs from your computer to use in other devices if you so choose. You can find those available on our website.

### *Upcoming Events*

Upcoming events at The Hill: **Winter College Retreat** (January 8-10) for any college student or post-high school individual 18-25, **Winter Youth Retreat** (January 15-17) for middle and high school students 13-18, **Men's Retreat** (April 29-May 1), and **Summer Leadership Camp** (June 12-18 & July 10-16). More information on these events and speakers can be found on our website.

### *From The Argument—A Conversation with Bob Warren*

About two months into the class Anjelica and Jason told me about a young man, a friend of theirs.

"He is such a great guy and he has a brilliant mind," Jason said. "He was valedictorian of our senior class in high school and now he is studying biology at the University of Kentucky."

"But," Anjelica said, "he is of a different persuasion than you when it comes to foreknowledge, predestination, election, believer's chosenness, depravity, sovereignty, free will, security of the believer, limited or unlimited atonement, and the hardening of Pharaoh's heart." She listed many of the things we had now managed to cover in class.

"I would love to meet him," I told them. I was thinking I would love to sit down and reason with him.

Not long after, one Friday afternoon, when I was preparing to leave my office, to go home for supper, I heard a knock on the door. When I opened the door, there on the front of our farm, the sun resting on the horizon in a brilliant display of orange and pink like it's known to do in Western Kentucky about suppertime, I found Jason, Anjelica, and a young man I didn't know. He was a broad shouldered husky fellow with a head full of Albert Einstein hair. He looked to be the same age as the other two; I guessed him to be their friend, the valedictorian of their class, the one studying biology, who has an excellent mind. I knew Anjelica and Jason agreed with me on the subjects of our class, and then there he was; it was three against one. I admired his courage from the minute he stepped over the threshold.

My mind raced through some of the things God has shown me over the years about how to approach such a situation. I would have handled it much differently thirty years ago. I'll be honest, before God gave me a throttle, I'd have sat him down and tried to stomp the ignorance out of him. Right off the bat we had him dead to center.

You should have seen me when I played ball. Two years into my walk with the Lord, every time I sat down on a plane I had a captive audience. I was never going to see that person again. So I laid out the whole nine yards, with very little love.

I'd have my Bible with me and I'd pull it out and start reading and that made everybody normally pretty uncomfortable. Or I would ask flat out: "Do you know Jesus?" And even if they didn't want to talk about it, I'd make sure I got out something to read that they'd notice. I just didn't have a whole lot of sensitivity to people because I was so hurt and so mad at the system I'd been raised in, and I knew they'd been living in it and I knew it was going to kill them so if they hated me as a result of the conversation they were going to be no worse off than they already were, so why not. With sweet-looking, older women I restrained myself a bit but with men I didn't hold back, because I guessed they probably didn't know the Lord so I was going to stomp the ignorance out of them. The Lord had to temper that mindset.

He said, "Reason, big guy, reason. I'm going to show you how that was supposed to work. You don't have a clue."

So here stands this kid in my office, all of these years later.

"Bob Warren," I told him, holding out my hand.

He shook my hand.

"John Smith," he answered.

"Would you like to sit down?" I asked, and I'm looking at him, this brilliant kid, thinking God, I would have run out of the room twenty years ago, scared to death of his intellectual abilities.

He sat down and I sat beside him. Jason and Anjelica also took seats.

I briefly considered starting with: "What do you think of Ephesians 1:4, Romans 8:29, Romans 8:30, Ephesians 1:5, and Romans 8:23? Tell me, just what do you think about them?" But, I held back.

Instead I said: "When the bullets fly, young man, can I jump in your fox hole? You've got a lot of guts. You walk in here, you don't know me, but you know I'm teaching two of your best friends and you know they're in agreement with what I teach. Even so, you walk in here cold turkey and I know what you're here to talk about. I'm telling you, you are a man's man, and I'm for you. Regardless of what you leave that door believing, you're one of those critters who I want to hang out with."

He looked at me like a train had just run through him. I thought I was going to have to pick him up off of the floor.