

Thanks for your prayers...



BENCHMARK
Adventure Ministries, Inc.

I am slow in passing along this update. Here's the 6-point outline. I'll be brief.

2 Corinthians 1:3-9

My Utmost for His Highest, April 24th

Genesis Retreat Update

The Donelson Fellowship Youth

Big Bus vs. Small Car

Country Music Marathon

For all of you who pray with us about the ministry events of BENCHMARK, I am thankful. For those of you who pray that God will be at work in my life and that of my family, I am grateful.

Over the past few months, **2 Corinthians 1:3-9** has given me pause. I stop at verse 9 because verse nine stops me. It says, "But this happened that we might not rely on ourselves but on God, who raises the dead." I encourage you to read the passage in the box to the right and remember what had happened.

Most recently the good words of Oswald Chambers from **My Utmost for His Highest** have guided my thoughts. Take a look at **April 24th**. <http://www.rbc.org/devotionals/my-utmost-for-his-highest/04/24/devotion.aspx?year=2008>

2 Corinthians 1

³Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of compassion and the God of all comfort, ⁴who comforts us in all our troubles, so that we can comfort those in any trouble with the comfort we ourselves have received from God. ⁵For just as the sufferings of Christ flow over into our lives, so also through Christ our comfort overflows. ⁶If we are distressed, it is for your comfort and salvation; if we are comforted, it is for your comfort, which produces in you patient endurance of the same sufferings we suffer. ⁷And our hope for you is firm, because we know that just as you share in our sufferings, so also you share in our comfort.

⁸We do not want you to be uninformed, brothers, about the hardships we suffered in the province of Asia. We were under great pressure, far beyond our ability to endure, so that we despaired even of life. ⁹Indeed, in our hearts we felt the sentence of death. **But this happened that we might not rely on ourselves but on God, who raises the dead.**



Wonderfully Simple: Water and a Bible

These two Spirit guided impressions challenge me to continue on.

Since we work mostly in discipleship, often there are not monumental results to share. For in each event involved we, along with the groups' leadership, develop goals that guide all we do. In providing these kinds of customized educational opportunities I have found that people often learn far more and sometimes far less than I plan. Sometimes their application of the activity to their life is far less or much grander than I could have ever hoped.

In consideration of the ideas from Chambers, I pass along these updates on the next page.

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April 18th & 19th - Genesis Retreat with Trinity and Morgan, NC Junior High Youth

I, James, was in western North Carolina to meet a dozen junior high students and several adult leaders for a retreat. Friday afternoon and all day on Saturday, the students learned the very practical Ten Essentials for outdoor exploration. As a parallel idea, we also explored some essential Biblical principles that are important to guide our everyday life. Much thanks to youth pastor David Mizelle, the adult leadership, and the students who allowed themselves to be guided along together for a very active weekend.

The students developed these ideas as themes:

focus, effort, working together, doesn't cheat – be truthful and honest.

April 19th - The Donelson Fellowship Youth

On Saturday afternoon 27 teenagers from The Donelson Fellowship spent three hours in activities that they could not do by themselves. Our hope was to help them connect to the idea that life, like these activities, shouldn't be attempted alone. Matt Mitchell is the youth pastor at The Donelson Fellowship. The staff was Amy Taylor, Lyle Williams and Kinley Winchester and they did an excellent job planning and implementing.

More personal than organizational

Last Thursday, April 24th when picking up our oldest son and 3 classmates from middle school, my Corolla was rear ended by an MTA Bus. Translation: **big bus vs. small car**. Bus won. All of us are OK. The body shop's prelim unofficial report is that it is "way totaled". We'll see what the official reports says. Ahhh,....just livin' life takes time.



No peaking!!



Hand on and lean back.

On Saturday April 26th I completed my 9th 26.2-mile **Country Music Marathon**. My third fastest. My wife Barbara finished her 7th though she didn't do as well as she had hoped due to shin splints. It was a good day to run.

Makes me grateful all over again to be healthy enough and blessed to be able to use my body in this way and in an active ministry.