



**October 4th, 2007**

## **On a Personal Note . . .**

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This past Tuesday night, our family attended the volleyball game of the Houston area's # 11 Atascocita High School Eagles. When it comes to the entertainment arena, we can only be described by one word, spontaneous. The way we ended up at the game is a perfect example. It was 5:30pm, and I had just walked in the door and we were all at the table eating dinner. Our two-week-old daughter, Cassidy, was crying in the pack 'n play, our three-year-old son, Colton, and two-year-old daughter, Campbell, were showing each other the food in their mouths (we have one set of rules for eating at home—daddy's rules and another for when we eat out—mommy's rules), and I was doing my best to "out gross" both of them. In the midst of the madness, Nicole said, "AHS volleyball has a game tonight, and I'd like to go." Between Nicole's request, Colton's immediate and repeated chant of "go Eagles", and Campbell's "look" with which she gets anything she wants from me, I had no chance to object if I had wanted to. Nicole informed us she had already checked and the festivities had already started. At 5:55pm, Nicole had herself and the three kids dressed, the baby supply bag loaded, and all four of them in the van. Ten minutes later we were sitting in the bleachers at AHS watching the conclusion of the JV game and preparing to watch the Varsity team play.

Sitting in the bleachers I felt so content. It was one of those moments when everything in our world just felt right. The moment was us in a nutshell. We really like high school sports of any kind. Colton was so happy just to be there. He was on sensory overload with all the sights and sounds, and there was nowhere else he would rather have been at that moment. Campbell was in the aisle dancing to the music blaring over the sound system. Our two-week-old was sleeping in the sling close to her mother's chest. Nicole had a big smile on her face as she watched the game. It was one of those moments we were all together as a family doing what we like to do.

We love our family unit. We love spontaneity. Nicole's love for sports rivals mine—if it involves a ball of any kind she will enjoy watching it. When it comes to sports we are "purists", and so we especially enjoy sports at the high school level. Nicole looked over at me at the game last night with a big smile and just said, "this is so us." I couldn't have agreed more.

I want to encourage you to spend more time together as a family. You don't have to work as long as you do. You don't have to be involved in so many different clubs and organizations. Those things are all a choice, just like deciding to spend time together as a family. The Lord Jesus values the family unit. It is the very fabric of what makes a healthy society. When you get to the end of your life, almost all your regrets will be tied to your family—that you didn't spend enough time together, that you didn't laugh

enough, that you didn't play together enough, that you didn't forgive one another, that you didn't enjoy just being together, and I could go on and on. It will be too late to fix all those things at the end of your life. It is not too late to fix them now. It is time to recommit to being a family. When was the last time you were spontaneous? Cancel everything you and your family have on tonight and just be together as a family. Yes . . . you can.

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## 8:45am Service

I am quite excited about what the Lord is doing in our 8:45am service on Sunday mornings. Our 8:45am service is quite different from the 10am and 11:10am services. There are only two elements of all three services that are the same each Sunday: the Missions Moment and the sermon. Everything else is different. The song selection, the music leader, the singers, and the musicians. While the songs we sing at 10am and 11:10am are what one hears on the local Christian radio station, the 8:45am music set is a blend of the great hymns of the faith and praise songs. Over the years we have experienced some instability in the 8:45am service with regard to the music leader, some of the musicians, and some of the singers. The instability has at times led to a standard that is not good enough for NEHBC. For a long time I have been praying for the Lord to bring stability to the service and to raise the level of excellence. I'm happy to tell you that the Lord is answering that prayer. Ben Murray is the new music leader for the 8:45am service. Ben has been leading the service for about eight weeks now, and he has brought some much needed energy, passion, and leadership to the service. The musicians and singers are beginning to stabilize under Ben, and the service has become much more worshipful and moving. Word is out that the 8:45am service is getting on track. Attendance is growing. I'd like to encourage you to visit the service one week and see what is going on in our early service. Of course, it goes without saying that a huge advantage to worshipping in the 8:45am service is that one can go to Bible Study during the 10am hour and be driving off our campus at 11:00am having already been to a corporate worship service AND a Bible Study class.

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**Sunday Nights at NEHBC** Make no mistake about it; there is a buzz at NEHBC on Sunday evenings. So many children are enrolled in AWANA, an impressive number of teenagers are participating in Round Tables, and there is a solid group of adults attending the topical CLU classes. And where there is much studying of Scripture, there is much joy. So, by the time the evening ends, people are loitering in the lobby not wanting to leave. Sounds of laughter, greetings, and conversation fill the air. People are enjoying each others' company and encouraging one another heading into the new week. And in the midst of all the people in the lobby between 6:40pm and 7:00pm, there are tremendous opportunities for evangelism. I bet this past Sunday evening I spoke with five to six different sets of unchurched parents whose children are AWANA clubbers. Between 6:40 and 7:00pm, they are just standing in the lobby feeling awkward while they wait for their kids to be dismissed. The opportunities for evangelism are right there in the lobby for anyone who wants to see them. There is so much life on Sunday evenings at NEHBC. From preschoolers to adults, people of all ages are growing in the grace and knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. Sunday evenings are really a great time at NEHBC, and I'm thankful for our church staff who worked so hard to plan Sunday evenings for the fall of 2007.

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## A word about the Word

This past Sunday I preached Romans 12:6-7 on the topic of spiritual gifts in general and the gift of service in particular. How clearly the text reminds us that we must exercise our spiritual gift(s) in proportion to our faith. If a believer is not careful, he or she can find themselves having grown in the faith

over the years and yet still exercising their spiritual giftedness as one who is young in faith.

Last night I preached 1 Samuel 21:1-15. One of the most frustrating times in personal evangelism is when a lost person declares their sin to be so great that even the Lord can't forgive them. Similarly, one of the most frustrating times of discipling a growing believer is when they declare their sin to be so great that the Lord can't use them. The truth is that if you have been redeemed by the blood of the Lamb, He wants to use you. He has forgiven your sin. What does it say about your pride that the Lord is willing to forgive you, but you aren't willing to forgive yourself? When did you promote yourself to a higher position than that of the Lord Jesus? Take the time to listen to this text. You won't regret it.

Sermons are available on cd for purchase at the sermon booth in the church lobby. You can also find my sermons in MP3 format on our church website [here](#) or via podcast at [www.itunes.com](http://www.itunes.com). Simply search for "Nathan Lino" in the search box of the iTunes store.

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## Oregon Mission Trip

Well, our team leaves on Saturday morning for Creswell, Oregon, a bedroom community to the south of Eugene. Please pray for us as we go. Your prayer support is crucial to our team being used by the Lord to win the lost and disciple the saved. So that you can better pray for us, here are some specifics about our trip.

Participants:

- Myself
- Scott Harper
- Dwayne Smith
- Stacy Harrelson
- Heather Orton
- Mickey Roden
- Dick and Debra Polk
- Randy and Donnie Parr

Please pray that we would have strong unity, kindness toward one another when we are tired, initiative and drive to distribute 4,500 fliers, strength, courage, and wisdom. Please pray that we would have great chemistry with our host church, New Hope Baptist Church, and that we would offer them tremendous love, support, and encouragement. Please pray that the Lord would surround our team with His angels and protect us from the spiritual warfare that Satan will intend for us.

Important parts of the trip to remember in prayer: (though we will be on PST, all below times are CST)

- Saturday 3-5pm: the team will be making the two-hour drive from Portland down to Eugene. Please pray for safety for the team as we travel by car.
- Saturday 7-11pm: set up and sound check of sound system, instruments, cables, computers, microphones, etc. Please pray that all the instruments and equipment we rented will be ready and of good quality. Please pray for our band as they assemble the set.
- Sunday 1pm: the first of five worship services. Please pray for the band as they lead the music and myself as I preach. Please pray for many lives to be changed.
- Sunday 4-6pm: flier distribution. Please pray for good weather. Please pray that we get 3,000 of the fliers distributed as we go door-to-door. Please pray for safety for the team as we are out and about on the streets.
- Sunday 8pm: the second of five worship services. Please pray for the band as they lead the music

and me as I preach. Please pray for many lives to be changed.

- Monday 12pm: the first of three women's gatherings to try and draw women from the community and encourage women at New Hope Baptist Church. This is being hosted and taught by Debra Polk, Donnie Parr, Stacy Harrelson, and Heather Orton.
- Monday 3-5pm: flier distribution. Please pray for good weather. Please pray that we get the last 1,500 fliers distributed as we go door-to-door. Please pray for safety for the team as we are out and about on the streets.
- Monday 9pm: the third of five worship services. Please pray for the band as they lead the music and me as I preach. Please pray for many lives to be changed.
- Tuesday 12pm: the second of three women's gatherings to try and draw women from the community and encourage women at New Hope Baptist Church. This is being hosted and taught by Debra Polk, Donnie Parr, Stacy Harrelson, and Heather Orton.
- Tuesday 3-5pm: I and a few others will go to the campus of the University of Oregon to do campus evangelism. We will hang out in the student center and seek to initiate conversations with college students for the purpose of sharing Christ with them.
- Tuesday 8pm: the fourth of five worship services. Please pray for the band as they lead the music and me as I preach. Please pray for many lives to be changed.
- Wednesday 12pm: the third of three women's gatherings to try and draw women from the community and encourage women at New Hope Baptist Church. This is being hosted and taught by Debra Polk, Donnie Parr, Stacy Harrelson, and Heather Orton.
- Wednesday 8pm: the fifth and final worship service. Please pray for the band as they lead the music and me as I preach. Please pray for many lives to be changed.
- Thursday morning: please pray for safety for our team as we make the two-hour drive from Eugene back to Portland to catch our flight home.