



In The River

October 1, 2010



*Followers of Jesus Christ –
Impacting our community one
person at a time!*

Celebrate! God is at Work — by John Smid



*Dear John,
In light of all you have been
saying about grace, do you
think that people who say
they are Christians, yet
claim to be homosexuals
are going to go to heaven? If Christians
struggle and have to fight the temptation
to rebel against the Lord, doesn't that
mean that those rebellious things would
also include money, kids, perfectionism,
job, any kind of sexual acting out, etc? I
find I struggle wanting to place
homosexuality outside of "other" things
that I think are wrong.*

Gay + Christian =

*I have a good friend whom I think is a
Christian, yet he claims to be gay. I
know that his life is his own, but I've felt
led to really pray earnestly for him
recently.*

Perplexed

Dear Perplexed,
Regarding those whom you might
not relate to, I believe with all my
heart they can truly be Christians. I
want to celebrate that God is
working within the deepest part of
their being. We all know of people
who appear to not be connected to
God in a way that we may not
understand. However, if the Holy
Spirit is at work in their lives, I want
to join Him. I want to encourage the
life that is indwelling them. I need
only to listen to their words and
validate what they say. If someone
says they are a Christian, they speak
of the gospel correctly, I take them at

face value and treat them
accordingly.

I have most recently come to a
place to embrace homosexual people
with the love of Christ. I want to
listen to their hearts and to stop
trying to change them. In this newer
place I have found some wonderful
Christian men and women who
really do love Jesus. I have met
many new friends that have a great
burden to share the gospel of Jesus



with their friends
and loved ones. I
see spiritual
growth in them
that can humble
me. I've met
missionaries,
servants, leaders,
pastoral hearts that
profound my

former position of keeping them at
arms length. I want to encourage
anyone who calls himself a brother
in Christ. I want to lovingly embrace
anyone who is my sister in the Lord.

*That if you confess with your mouth,
"Jesus is Lord," and believe in your
heart that God raised him from the dead,
you will be saved. Romans 10:9*

This is not intended to be a
message of "approval" or a
permissive gospel. But when we are
responding to other people's lives
we must accept that "it is what it is"
and there is nothing I may be called
to do about it other than to love
people right where they are and
celebrate the good things that God
may be doing in them.

I have turned a lot of tables over in
the last couple of years and found
(See "Celebrate page 2)

Recent Blogs:

**We have many very
interesting blogs
written by John Smid
and Sue DeRaad!**

**Go to our website
and check them out!
www.gracerivers.com**

Comforted for Others

I don't like you right now!

Life is an adventure

Miracle of Miracles!

Free— But still afraid

Prayer Requests

- Pray for those who have lost hope
- Pray for us to see those Jesus is calling to Him
- Pray for those trapped in lies
- Pray for those who are lonely
- Pray for family and friends that we can touch with our hearts



Upcoming Event

Higher Ground Family Retreat with John Smid

“Come, let us go up to the mountain of the Lord. He will teach us His ways, so that we may walk in His paths.” Micah 4:2

October 22-24, 2010

LOCATION: Living Stones Ministries Offices, 510 South Grand, Ste. 210, Glendora, CA 91741, (626) 963-6683

www.livingstonesministry.org

Weblog Comments

Comments from the article “Miracle of Miracles”

John,

Well Done, Good and Faithful Servant. This is probably my favorite “Doctrine”. Our pastor taught on the deceitful heart. I talked to him about the New Heart... He didn’t buy it. I sent him your writing. We’ll see.

Love, HIS Friend, Jack

John,

John I am thankful for this message! As I looked at the picture of the guy with this hands up toward heaven I was reminded that we are able to give an act of sacrificial praise because of our new hearts. Why are we (so many Christians, self included) “plagued” with self-pity, self-hatred, etc. etc.... when we have our new heavenly heart? We’ve got to quit looking for the grandiose, earthly things and live as the upside down people we’ve been called to be—joyous over ALL THE “little” things!! Again, I’m grateful for your post!

Peg

To read the article referenced above go to our weblog

www.gracerivers.com/articles

Celebrate! Con’t.

that I see more clearly than ever that God has spoken through Jesus to us regarding His commands. His most prevalent message to us is to love Him, and to love each other. In these commandments we will find the sum of all of His desires.

I’d rather love others than to put them into my own judgmental box and get in the way of God’s grace with them. I don’t want to barge into a fleshly interruption of His touch on their lives unless I believe I am truly called to do so. There are times for loving confrontation for sure. He has led me to do that on occasion but normally, I am learning to leave it all up to Him and just keep loving people. I have fortunately had the privilege to fertilize the new “God heart” in many people. I find that this breathes life into them that helps to move them forward and closer to Him.

How about it, can you trust God to do the work? All you have to do is to be a part of the gifts of His love

dropped into their lives. In time, maybe someone will grow to trust you more and see that you aren’t so bad because you trust in the Ultimate One!

Maybe what your friend needs the very most right now is just for you to be a friend without conditions. If God wants other things to happen, I trust He will lead you in that too.

I have written a more comprehensive article on this subject. You can find it on our website by going to our resources link then click on “Articles by John Smid”.

www.gracerivers.com/articles

Go to our Website!
www.gracerivers.com

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Currently there are 45

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