



# News from the Mountain

Mountain Ministries Ranch  
353 Maranatha Rd.  
Kelso, WA 98626

April 2010



Front view of the proposed new women's housing facility  
(an old junior high building in Rainier)

## Doors Open to Rainier

The conditional-use hearing for the Rainier building for the new women's facility and life-skills training center was a success. The 3+ hr. meeting held on February 23<sup>rd</sup> at the Rainier City Hall ended with unanimous votes in our favor after a short period of deliberation. The testimonies and support speeches could have gone on even further into the night if the commissioners hadn't drawn the evening to a close. We thank all of you who showed up and made an effort to convey the heart of this program; to see those bound by addiction set free, families restored, and the children involved safe. Many questions about the program itself and how it operates were also answered to put anxious minds at ease.

The subsequent hearing for an appeal held recently

on April 19 also ended in our favor, with a vote of 3 to 2.

The battle belongs to the Lord and we know He has definitely going before us on this. We thank you for your prayers; the battle is always won in the spiritual realm before it ever is in the physical. In the Bible God even reduced the size of His army so that when the victory was won people would know for sure it was Him that was behind them.

We thank you all who spoke on our behalf, showing your support with your personal testimony of how the Mountain has impacted your life or the life of someone close to you. We especially thank Pastor Jeff Dumke, who made it clear that our main objective is to see people saved by Jesus Christ, no matter what walk of life they come from. He argued that we are a Church by definition, just not necessarily a traditional one.

We will now be able to move forward towards getting the women and children into a much-needed bigger space. There still remains maintenance and much work that needs to be done to get the building in compliance with city codes before this can happen. Since God is the one orchestrating this, we're trusting Him to supply the finances.

## Success Rate

There are over 100 people, including the men and women in the program, children, graduates, and volunteer staff. We track how the people who have completed the full-year program are doing. Here's the data as of 8 months ago for our success rate and how our graduates are doing:

for the **Men:**

70% doing well

14% relapsed

16% unable to obtain status

for the **Women:**

81% doing well

19% relapsed

## Calendar of Events:

\***Men's breakfast and Bible study:** 1<sup>st</sup> Saturday of every month; held at Rose Valley Friends Church, starts at 8 am.

\***Every Monday:** Men's breakfast and Bible Study held on site here at the Ranch, 8 am.

\* **Pancake Feed Sep. 25, 8-11:30 am Tickets will soon be available for \$1.** Please contact Connie Kruse at (360) 355-4567 (All proceeds will benefit Mountain Ministries Ranch).

\*Possession: what used to refer to the charge you'd end up with if the cops were to search you, now refers to an extreme state of spiritual bondage.

\*Deliverance & Salvation: Something that now only comes from God alone.<sup>2</sup>

Behold, He makes all things new, so there's a couple other indicators that you might be a Mountain Man...

\*If you used to steal and now work with your hands (yep, it's a Proverb).

\*If you find yourself hating the things you used to love and loving the things you used to hate.

## Current Needs

**Appliances: washers, dryers, stoves, refrigerators**

**Dishwasher (the women's went out)**

**Vacuum cleaners**

(If you happen to upgrade anything around the house and your old version is still in good working condition, please feel free to send it our way.)

**Hygiene products (for men, women, & children)**

**Dressers for clothing storage**

**Vehicles: any make or model (even for scrap)**

**Notebooks, pens, & Bibles (for Bible study)**

**Pillows and twin sheet sets**

**Towels and wash cloths**

**a fixed sky-light (square or rectangle) for installation**

**Tools and equipment of any kind**

**Lawn mowers & lawn equipment**

**Trees or logs for firewood or the sawmill**

## You Might Be a Mountain Man if...

Certain terms you used to be familiar with have suddenly taken on completely new meanings, such as follows:

\*Conviction: a term that used to refer to all those charges on your record, now refers to the working power of the Holy Spirit to bring conviction for wrong actions or emotions.

## A Renewing of the Mind

When a viewer takes in a steady diet of violent and sexual-oriented content, the result is what we call desensitization.

Here at the Mountain, with a full-year without television or secular media, one can actually become re-sensitized. If one were to try to view the same material they enjoyed prior to spending a year in the program without it and being constantly in the word of God, they would see it in a completely different light.

I know personally that the music I used to enjoy just doesn't mesh with my Spirit anymore. Even Christian music that has the same sound basically rubs me the wrong way. And my eyes are open to just how spiritually dark a lot of the lyrics are. I was shocked to recognize scripture from rock song lyrics as I got into the word (just in mocking angst.)

The enemy has knowledge of the word of God; just look at how Satan came at Jesus when he was trying to tempt him. He used scripture. That's why we need to know *every* word that proceeds from the mouth of God. Jesus was able to combat the devil with knowledge of scripture, saying what else the scriptures said on the topic. Some of the names of the bands speak for themselves, such as GodSmack, Dope, and Slipknot (what one would use to hang themselves can be done just by listening to the music. It led me down a dark path, and it all starts in the mind.) One of their songs even entreats, "Enemy, show me what you wanna be, I can handle anything even if I can't handle you." Well-said. Tool (which have a song asking Jesus to get down off his cross so the space can be used to nail the next fool martyr) makes it pretty obvious who they're being used by. Korn, a band that is very popular with

teenagers, has even stated that they just want to give hurting teens something to identify with. Guess what they used for the cover art of one of their albums; a little girl playing hopscotch off a cliff. Yikes; that is the influence they're having on youth who feed on what they dish out.

Apostle Paul even instructs us to focus on good things: "whatever is true, noble, right, pure, lovely, and admirable- if anything is excellent or praiseworthy- think about such things. Where the mind leads, the man will follow, as the saying goes. If you feed on life, you'll have life flowing out. If you feed on death, it too will come out. The answer for all of us, not just teens struggling with inner pain, is to fix our eyes on Jesus, not to listen to music that reiterates the same hurt and anger we're feeling; it only exacerbates our negative emotions.

"The good man brings good things out of the good stored up in his heart and the evil man brings evil things out of the evil stored up in his heart (Luke 6:45)." Here, we store up on the good. It's 24/7 in the word of God. Week days start with devotions at 6:45 am, followed by morning worship and Bible study. After a work day here or in the community, there is another evening Bible study. Saturday is a day of rest, and Sundays are filled with a morning service at Shiloh and an evening service at the Salvage Yard.

## Spirit-Led

Jesus says, "**If a man remains in me and I in him, he will bear much fruit** (John 15:5)." So when we find ourselves doing things that don't benefit us personally at all or that don't appeal to our flesh, we can be sure that we're just following the leading of the Holy Spirit. Jesus also says, "This is to my father's glory that you bear much fruit, **showing yourselves to be my disciples** (John 15:8)."

"For who has known the mind of the Lord, that he may instruct him? But **we have the mind of Christ** (1 Corinthians 2:16)." This means we're able to see things from a kingdom perspective. Ask him to see situations and people through his eyes: "Lord, your thoughts are higher than mine. What are your thoughts on this?" Jesus says to us, "I no longer call you servants, because a servant does not know his master's business. Instead, I have called you friends, for everything that I have learned I have made known to you (John 15:15)." Isn't it exciting that the Creator of the universe lets us in on the business he is about? And He wants us to let him into every area of our life, even what we wear and what we watch.

The Bible also tells us we are "**transformed** by the renewing of our minds (Romans 12:12)." This is where the change of our inner being takes place. This is done by taking into captivity the thoughts that come either just from our fleshly, sinful, fallen, human nature or straight from Satan himself. We need to catch these thoughts while they are still thoughts, because if they remain, thoughts lead to words and words lead to actions. Even when we're thinking something about someone that doesn't line up with the word of God, we need to catch it and replace it with the truth of God's word. (He loves that person.)

We are called to be set apart for His glory, and to be holy as He is holy. The Bible sums this up well, "**Friendship with the world is enmity with God.**" Jesus tells us in the book of John that we do not belong to the world, but that he has taken us out of the world. It's not easy, but it's worth it. And He'll never ask us to give up something that he won't replace with something better.

For all that I've given up that I used to esteem- relationships, drugs, my old identity, etc. he has given me more- life and life abundantly: a husband, children, and an opportunity to see him change hearts and lives and work miracles on a daily basis. Apostle Paul sums it up well, "**I consider everything a loss compared to the surpassing greatness of knowing Christ as Lord, for whose sake I have lost all things** (Philippians 3:7-9)."

## To Lessen Our Cries

As I watched my baby crying in his crib, hungry and wanting his bottle of formula, the Lord began to speak to me. He had a need: he was hungry. But his crying stopped as soon as I either picked him up or handed him his bottle, because he knew the answer to his need was near. He was still just as hungry and in need as he was a few seconds ago, but just knowing he had the answer next to him was enough to give him peace and satiate his cries.

This is how it is with us and our Father. We may be in a painful situation, have a physical ailment or need, or seem to be helpless in and of ourselves to answer our problem. Just the knowledge that we are close to someone who *does* have the answer and is able is enough to give us peace and keep us steadfast. Are we willing to let Him hold us? He says, "Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy and my burden is light (Matthew 11:28-30)."

## A Poetic Submission: The Decision

Here I sit, deep in thought,  
as I focus on a vision.  
A fork in the road, which way to go;  
I need to make a decision.  
Where I've been, a life of sin,  
that's torn my heart apart.  
I feel so scared, so all alone;  
I don't know where to start.  
Oh, dear God, this Lord of mine,  
please lead me to the light.  
For I am powerless, and just don't know,  
If I can win this fight.  
So much pain, this life of vain.  
Father, take my hand,  
open my eyes,  
help me understand.  
I ask advice of family and friends,  
on what they think I should do.  
But every time, the answer is the same;  
the decision is up to you.  
From on my knees, I beg you please,  
before it is too late.  
I ask of you, what to do,  
before I seal my fate.  
This hurt inside, how much I have cried,  
I feel I have tried my best.  
Gave all I have, but still so lost,  
I think I'll fail this test.  
So dig my grave, and dig it deep,  
marble and stone from head to feet.  
On the top, please place a dove,  
to show I've died from lack of love.  
But at that time, yet still so blind,  
a voice from above:  
said, "Take my hand and understand,  
it's about a father's love.  
Oh, precious child, so meek and mild,  
listen to what I say:  
I love, adore, and cherish you, son,  
in each and every way."  
So give me your fears, wipe away your tears,  
and go back to the start.  
Lay down your pride, dig deep inside,  
and let me change your heart.  
My precious lamb, please understand;  
It's not your time to go.  
Hear my voice, it's not your choice,  
for I will let you know."  
As time goes by, yet still I cry,  
I see another vision...  
That with God's grace, I'll have the strength,  
to make the right decision.

Written by Troy Akin (a program participant)

## Testimony of Tad Kruse: Be Responsible With the Little, and He Will Give You More

I grew up here in Cowlitz County, Washington. I was born into a good home, but tragedy took things for a turn. My brother, who was enlisted in the navy, was killed in Vietnam in 1968 when I was seven years old. As a result, my father began drinking heavily. He was an angry drunk and I remember feeling scared.

The first thing I ever drank was a bottle of vodka when I was eleven years old. My father had slid it under their seat, and I just grabbed it and poured some in my soda cup. My parents, sitting up front, never even noticed, and I remember thinking, "Wow, this feels pretty good."

From this point on my use just escalated. I began stealing medication out of medicine cabinets, such as valium and sleeping pills. By the time I was seventeen I was hooked on narcotic pain medication.

From that point on things just spiraled downward. Criminal activity began, with a lot of stealing to support my habit. By the time I was in my early twenties I was into heroin. I discovered that it was both cheaper and more effective than pharmaceutical opiates.

I ended up getting arrested by Multnomah County Narcotics for delivery of heroin and ultimately was sent to prison at Oregon State Penitentiary. After my time served there my behavior just stayed the same. The heroin abuse continued and I ended up getting even more charges in Washington State.

At this point I could not, in and of myself, get out of the downward spiral I was in. I couldn't have stopped if I had wanted to. (And I did try many times.) I completed several different treatment programs: in-patient treatment, out-patient-treatment, AA meeting, NA meetings, seemingly never-ending. All to no avail.

This entire time I knew that God existed and knew of Jesus. I believed all of my life in a heaven and hell. I knew that I was an addict, and had had given up on being able to change my lifestyle, thinking I would die using. I remember praying in hopes of saving my soul, and asking that when I died that He wouldn't send me to hell: "Lord, you have to do something, because I can't."

It wasn't more than a couple days after I prayed this prayer that I first heard about Mountain Ministries. At

that time the program was only offered to men. Upon entering the program, I came with the understanding that I had no other chance.

Once here, God gave me a new lease on life, and I sensed it. Out of love and awe for what He had done for me, I promised on that day that I would obey and serve him to the best of my ability. This hasn't stopped yet.

The Bible says, "but seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well (Matthew 6:33)." As I surrendered my life to Him and continued to remain I became increasingly more involved in the ministry. I began working at the Victory Center in Kelso and by 6 months into my program had become the director.

Shortly thereafter, God revealed His vision for the program to include women. This eventually expanded into a women's and children's discipleship program. I am now the director of this program; currently we have 30-35 (it varies) women and children on site. God has also added on to me a wife that adores Christ and two beautiful young daughters.

One scripture that stands out to me now is to be faithful in the little and He will do much. If you have a willing heart and are willing to be obedient, there is much to be done in His kingdom. He will just keep adding to you more and more. At that point, it doesn't matter who you are or where you came from; God will use you.

-Tad Kruse, April 2010

## A Note of Thanks

We want to give a special thanks to *all of you* who have you have given to this ministry, whether it be with your time, finances, or other support. This ministry is funded primarily by donations. Because of you, lives are being changed, families are being restored to health, children are now safe, and most importantly, the kingdom of God is being quickly advanced.

This is a program that reaches out and even gives back to the community. We are involved in Servant Week and other projects in the community. Graduates are able to re-enter the community and even the work force, becoming productive members of society.

Thank you, thank you, to all the pastors and passionate individuals who have shared your hearts, time, the gospel, and your love for Jesus with our program participants, leading bible-studies and getting involved. The program wouldn't work if the word of God wasn't being placed into hearts.

We know that our Lord's hand is on this ministry, because there is definite fruit. Matthew 7:16 says, "**By their fruit you will recognize them.** Do people pick grapes from thorn bushes, or figs from thistles?" People are being delivered, houses are being swept clean, and lives are being healed. John 8:36 tells us, "So if the Son sets you free, you will be free indeed." People are being set free from more than just drug and alcohol addictions, but whatever it is that is holding them bondage, whether it be an eating disorder or a life of abuse.

God is the same yesterday, today and forever. His promises are valid today and we see them active and working. 2 Chronicles 7:14 promises us, that, "If my people, who are called by name, will humble themselves and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven and will forgive their sin and **heal their land.**" There are individuals that tested positive for Hepatitis C prior to doing the program, that no longer have the disease. He promises that He won't let the diseases we knew in Egypt (our life of sin and bondage) overtake us, but we need to do our part.

He says, "If you listen carefully to the voice of the LORD your God and do what is right in his eyes, if you pay attention to his commands and keep all his decrees, I will not bring on you any of the diseases I brought on the Egyptians, for I am the LORD, who heals you."

There's something beautiful to our Father about a group of individuals that used to start their day off with a needle in their arm or searching for their next hit now grouping together early in the morning to seek His face and honor Him throughout the day and with the rest of their lives. "**I tell you that in the same way there will be more rejoicing in heaven over one sinner who repents than over ninety-nine righteous persons who do not need to repent (Luke 15:7).**"

As He looks down and acknowledges these past sinners acknowledging and blessing His name, favor is found, prayers are heard, and healing begins.

Thank you for being there to help accomplish what God is doing here. We are ever-expanding and need your continued support.

"**For Christ's love compels us,** because we are convinced that one died for all, and therefore all died. And he died for all, that those who live should no longer live for themselves but for Him who died for them and was raised again (2 Corinthians 5:14-15)." Thank you and may God richly bless...

Compiled by Jami Otton  
(women's program graduate & volunteer staff)