



November 2, 2009

Do you dread Christmas? I normally really look forward to Christmas, but this year I have been dreading it somewhat. It is the result of something that happened last Christmas... I turned 49! Which means this year is the big 5-0? It is amazing how a number can stir up some weird heart stuff.

This past spring as my 49th year ticked away and we prepared to see Kevann graduate from High School it seemed a question kept surfacing in my mind, "God is there a place for a youth speaker who is 50?" Over the years people have asked things like "How long do you think you can keep going as a youth speaker?" My response has generally been "I will keep on speaking as long as God keeps providing opportunities, there is fruit, and he keeps meeting our needs." But 50 had me rattled. Late spring I came to a point where I was able to wrestle these feelings to the ground and I simply said "God, I will do whatever you put in front of me to do and trust that you can figure the details of my life."

In June the Sr. Pastor of Westside Kings Church asked if we could talk about their youth ministry. I do get the odd chance to do some youth ministry consultation so I thought we would meet, talk and then I would go on my merry way. The first meeting led to a second and a third. Eventually an invitation was extended to help their youth ministry become healthy, well balanced and sustainable. Because I have not felt a release from Straight Talk, we have worked out a very unique relationship. They have contracted me through Straight Talk as a youth ministry consultant; to set vision, direction, and strategy for the youth ministry, and build a team of people who can execute that vision and strategy. This is a very exciting opportunity!

What does this mean for Straight Talk? I am NOT the new youth pastor at Westside Kings Church! I will be working with them very closely to build a team for the youth ministry at their church. They have contracted with Straight Talk for my services. I will still continue my role speaking to students. I will take a full load of camps in the summer. Through the rest of the year I will take one less weekend speaking event per month so that I can give the ministry at Westside Kings Church some time and attention.

One of Straight Talk's board members asked a very insightful question, "Are you consulting or are you mentoring?" I asked what the difference was. Consulting is when you make suggestions and they pick and choose what they will implement. Mentoring is when you have a much deeper buy-in to what is taking place and you actually help implement ideas and plans. We have a mentoring relationship.

There is much to think about and even more to do but this could be a wonderfully beneficial relationship. If this works well, it could open other opportunities to help other churches. More than one person has suggested there are a number of churches that could benefit from the kind of input I hope to supply to Westside Kings Church.

This is a bit of a new area for the youth side of Straight Talk. It still falls under the vision that Straight Talk had at the beginning, "to support local church's efforts at evangelism, discipleship and ministry training". This opportunity will give me practical hands on ministry experience in local youth ministry again as well as regular contact with a group of students. This could help ensure my relevance as a speaker and youth specialist with Straight Talk into the future.

Thanks so much for being a part of our team as we embark on another exciting journey that God has invited us on. As I have said before, none of this could happen if it were not for the faithful support of our partners!

In His Grip,

Straight Talk Schedule

November - December 2009

Praise God For...

Great fruit at recent speaking engagements.

The nine women who made first time decisions in Vernon this month.

Randys' new consulting opportunity at West Side Kings Church in Calgary.

God's faithful provision for Straight Talk during a challenging year. We are aware of many non-profit organizations that have been much more deeply affected than we have.

Please Pray...

Wisdom for Randy as he works to build a team and strategy at West Side Kings, and the ability to balance these new responsibilities with his existing ones.

Donna as she works to complete her new book. Pray for anointing to write what God would say to his church and for open blocks of time to dedicate to writing.

That God would increase Straight Talk's sphere of influence and open the door to more speaking opportunities. The economic climate has significantly reduced the number of events requiring speakers.

Randy's Schedule

November 6–8: Southview Alliance Sr. High Youth Retreat

November 13–15: Ellerslie Road Baptist Church, Edmonton

November 27–29: Spruce Grove Alliance Youth Leaders

December 11-13: SunWest Christian Fellowship, SABC

Donna's Schedule

November 6-7: Centre Street Inspire Conference, Calgary

November 12: Stonecroft Leadership Conference, Edmonton

December 1: Linden MB Church, Linden

“And pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests. With this in mind, be alert and always keep on praying for all the saints.”

Ephesians 6:18