

“SideLines”

Pastor Tracy Gorman – July 21, 2008 – Southside Church of the Nazarene

Good afternoon, Church family!

I sure hope your Monday is off to a good start. I am getting ready for our Church Board meeting tonight, in which we will discuss the recommendations of the Worship Study Commission. Please keep that meeting in your prayers. We certainly have a lot to discuss, so this will certainly make for quite a long day of ministry here at the church. Yep, Pastors DO work on Mondays!!! HAHA!!! Seriously, I had a kid walk up to me one day recently and say, “So, you’re a pastor, right? So, what is your real job then?” I laughed my head off on that one.

You know, speaking of being a pastor, there are days when probably everyone who holds the position that I do, wonders why we ever decided to spend our life doing this ministry. Believe it, or not, but there is quite a lot that goes on “behind the scenes” that pastors deal with, and absolutely, we should understand that this goes with “the territory.” (Sometimes I am troubled that it does, but it does.) Anyhow, then there are things that happen, that make you step back and say, “This is what it’s all about.” Yesterday, I had two such instances occur literally within minutes of one another. Let me tell you about them: The first one had to do with the mom of the boy who was hurt a week or so ago on the baseball field. I was watching a practice game, and someone brought her over, because she wanted to meet me. She thanked me for praying for her son (Dylan), and she talked about how grateful she was that I led the boys in a prayer for him on the field that scary evening. She also talked about how thankful she was that our church prayed, and that Jan Morris came up to see them in the hospital. She said, “I don’t even go to your church, and the fact that you would do this for us, is something we’ll never forget.” That blessed my heart, and I hope it does yours, because we’re all in this together! So many of you prayed for that boy, and God honored your prayers!!! Then a few moments later, another mother (whom I know very indistinctly) came over to where I was sitting, and said that she’d been having some difficulty dealing with / relating to her son. She said she was hoping she could think of someone who could help her, and she said she knew she was supposed to talk to me. She and I sat there for about 15 minutes talking about “raising a teenager,” and I tried to help her through her questions and concerns. Does she go to our church? No. Does she need Jesus? Yes! Am I called to help her? Absolutely! Again, this is a team effort, and I believe that when a difference is made in someone’s life, our team wins! I take my ministries both inside and outside of the church VERY seriously. As a follower of Jesus Christ, I am commanded (and so are you) to go to where the people are.

Sometimes people don’t understand why my “ministry through baseball” is so important to me, or why I am so passionate about it, but here are the reasons it is: 1. It’s important to me because it’s important to my son. 2. I have an INCREDIBLE opportunity to witness to lost people, and to show them Christ. See, brothers and sisters, you should be thrilled that your pastor has these opportunities (because I am VERY thrilled when you have opportunities like this and you share them with me), and we should all rejoice when we know that people are getting help from Christ through the ministry of baseball, or whatever ministry you’re involved in outside the church, where lost people are (band, work, golf, restaurant, VP, etc.). I hope this gives you a much clearer picture of why I do what I do in our community, and I hope you’ll pray for these two individuals that I mentioned. Seeds have been sewn. Praise the Lord!

Believe me, a few years ago, I didn’t know who played for whom (outside of a few major players)! I actually began to develop a love for the game as my son did so, and then when I saw the impact I could have on people, WOW...it just began to blossom in my heart. Hey, there are times that I sit with people who are drinking beer (although I have never one time tasted the stuff), and I hear lots and lots of dirty words! I see terrible behavior, and I witness (with my own eyes) people who are desperately lost. But, if in those moments (that sometimes make me uncomfortable) I can plant a seed for Jesus, then my

discomfort isn't much of a problem, is it?! I pray to the Lord that I never lose these opportunities. I pray to God that He gives you a few of them too! He will, if you truly want Him to.

Well, that was on my heart today, and I just wanted to share it with you. It will give you more of a glimpse into "who I am" and "what makes me tick." I'm just a guy who loves Jesus, and who wants to take as many people to Heaven with me as I can. As I said in the message yesterday, it won't happen if I have a "Smart Car" mentality...which means that I am in this just for myself, and what makes me feel good or happy. We have to develop a "bus" mentality, where we're trying to get as many people on the Journey as we can. That is the cry and desire of my heart, my friends.

At this moment, just so you can plan accordingly, I am planning to have a prayer service in the Sanctuary this Wednesday evening at 7:00 for all adults. I really believe we need this time, and I hope that you will come and join me. It will be time well spent. I will send out an update tomorrow (Tuesday) to let you know for sure if this is happening. Please watch for this announcement through the Prayer email distribution list. I sure hope to see you there!

This coming Sunday, we will continue the series, "Just Like Music," which has been very effective. The altars have been used each week, and I've had lots of comments from people who've said the messages have helped them a lot. I give God the praise for that! This coming weekend, we'll be using the song, "Every Other Weekend" to enhance the message about divorce, and the awful effect it has on everyone involved. The song is sung by Reba McEntire and Kenny Chesney, and it will touch your heart. As well, I pray that the message is very helpful to those who'll come. I just know that God hates divorce, and so do I. I wish there were never another couple who got one. That's not a "popular statement" to make, but since I am not running for "Miss Congeniality," I thought I'd just go ahead and make it. ☺ Pray for the Lord to move and use the message, and for lives to be changed forever. It will be a straightforward message, but also one that is uplifting and one that offers us hope.

As I close this email update, I just want you to know that I believe great days are ahead for our church. People are really getting help each week. There's been a wonderful spirit in the Worship experience each Sunday morning, and we're actually seeing a larger attendance each week (for the past few weeks) than we did on the same Sundays last year...and our tithes and offerings have been larger. Those facts bless my heart, and since I've seen Satan working overtime to try to derail what God wants to do, I am more convinced, than ever, that the Lord is moving and working. See, Satan doesn't spend any time on churches that are "doing nothing except dying and taking up space." They're comfortable, and he wants them to keep on doing what they're doing. They're no threat to his miserable kingdom. But, He will work hard to disrupt the church that he sees can really make an impact on people's lives, which is truly a danger to all he stands for. So, I just ask you to pray, seek the Lord's face, turn from any wicked way in your heart, and then we'll see Him move and work, and He will hear from Heaven, and He will heal our land, and our church. Its then, and only then that we'll see this happen. Because what Satan means for harm against us and God's church, God will use for His good and His glory. See, I learned this principle a long time ago: Be weary of people or events that sew disruption and confusion in your life, your family, the church, your job, etc. Those people or events are **rarely** from the Lord, because our God is a God of peace, justice, victory, and stability. Satan is the one who has come to kill, to steal, and to destroy, and he uses a lot of people, events, etc., to get his job done. Watch out for them! Just a thought for you to consider today...early in your week.

Hope the rest of your week goes well. I love you, and I thank God for each of you.

Pastor Tracy Gorman

ps Keep Seth in your prayers tomorrow. He has an MRI on his knee to see if surgery is necessary! Thanks a lot for doing this. He's a little nervous, but ready to get it over with.

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