



House of Faith

NEIGHBORHOOD NEWS

Taking JESUS to neighborhood children, youth, and families

October 2023

The Fertile Soil of the Family

By Shelley Emmons, Family Ministry Coordinator

This semester at House of Faith we have been teaching the children and youth the parable of The Sower, found in Mark chapter 4.

The farmer goes out to sow seeds. He scatters them here, there, and everywhere. The seeds are good seeds; seeds that should produce fruit, and lots of it! The types of soil in the parable Jesus told, on the other hand, differ greatly. Some of the soil is hard. Some is rocky and thorny. Some is good and fertile.

Depending on the type of soil the seeds land on, there will be different results.

What do farmers and seeds and sowing have to do with **families**?

Families have been a part of God's heart from the beginning of time. God created man and woman and He told them to be fruitful and multiply, to fill the earth and to govern it. So, Adam and Eve had children, thereby creating the first **family**.

All through the Bible, God has provided rules and guidelines for healthy relationships. The goal is to reflect the image of God in each of the relationships within a **family**, and then to the rest of the world. He gives commands on marriage and relationships, how to love one another well, how children should treat parents and how parents should treat their children, to name a few.

Families have been a part of House of Faith's heart from its beginning, also. For the last 29 years, our mission has been to take Jesus to neighborhood children, youth, and **families**.

Last week, House of Faith celebrated a milestone! We celebrated the **one-year** anniversary of our **Family Bible Study Small Group**! Through conversations we have had over the years at family camps and Christmas parties, and in parking lots after backyard Bible clubs, and the hundreds of other little encounters we have had with **families**, the Lord has prepared the soil of the hearts of our **families** to receive the Word and it is producing fruit!



Our faithful Tuesday night Bible study crew!

The **families** that have been attending the **Family Bible Study** have said that the group has created connections between them and other believers, encouraged them, given them confidence to share the Word with their children and with co-workers, created a sense of community, and helped them mature in their faith! In this group we have experienced first-hand, what community coupled with the study of God's Word can accomplish in **families**, and we are MORE excited than EVER!

We are so thankful that the LORD of the harvest, has been plowing up the heart-soil of our children, youth, AND **families**, and that He is producing fruit that will last for generations to come.

If you would like to join us for Bible study, please contact me! (Shelley 325-277-1494)

We meet on Tuesday evenings from 6:30-8:00. We share a meal, God's Word, and have lots of fun together! We CANNOT WAIT to see what the Lord will do in the hearts of our **families** in the coming year!

“In this group, we have experienced first-hand what community coupled with the study of God's Word can accomplish in families”

Back in Action, Growing & Learning!

By Brandon Berry, Youth Co-Director

Last month, we resumed all our weekly programs! On Monday, September 25th, we hosted our first 321 youth program of the school year, and 117 middle and high school students showed up to hear the Word of God proclaimed! Then, on Wednesday and Thursday of that week, we returned to the neighborhoods for our after-school Backyard Bible Clubs, where we teach around a thousand elementary school students about following Jesus every week.



Our first unit for all programs this year is called The Sower. We first taught the students about what parables are before launching into stories about how various people received and responded to Jesus's words. Our goal is for the students to understand that they must choose to be good soil every time they hear from Jesus. Once they understand that, they can make the decision every moment and every day to receive Jesus's words with soft, good soil so that they can produce faith. My favorite Bible story from this unit has been Judas's betrayal. Judas spent years following Jesus and performing miracles, demonstrating the fruit of a good soil lifestyle. But at some point, he was tempted by Satan (John 13:2) and even allowed Satan to enter into him (John 13:27), becoming hard soil.

PRAYER

Prayer is any word or thought directed in faith towards God.

FAITH

Faith is believing and trusting in who God is and what He says.

As we prepare our curriculum for our programs, the team is making some exciting changes. In addition to the biblical teaching that already exists in the lessons, we are adding character traits and spiritual disciplines to the application portion of our curriculum. Our plan is to create a three-year roadmap that teaches all our students essential Bible knowledge, godly character, and spiritual habits so that they can "strengthen their faith" and "honor God with their lives and offer themselves in service to Him." Our first character trait is FAITH, which we define as "believing and trusting in who God is and what He says." We paired this with PRAYER, defined as "any word or thought directed in faith toward God." We are continually adjusting how they are taught and modeled, but we are very excited to do all that we can to teach and equip our students for a life that honors God!





Thank You!

Thank you to the San Angelo Kiwanis Club for supporting House of Faith's Backyard Bible Clubs through their annual grants program! We are thankful and grateful for our community partners as we work together to positively impact the lives of local children and families.

Pictured are the Kiwanis Grant Committee Chairman Dee Jay Wilde and House of Faith Executive Director Marci Menchaca.

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Gifts Given In Honor of:

All Students beginning a brand new school year

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