



Trivia Night



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INSIDE THE ISSUE:

Trivia Night	1
Kruis Korner	2
Operation Christmas Child	3
Missions Moment	3
Hey Y'all	4
Make a Difference Day	5
Men's Workday	5
Mark's Musings	6
Trunk or Treat	7
A Word...or Two	8
Articles Continued	9

Seven tables of participants vied for best of the best at Rincon's annual Trivia Night. The theme was keyed to Thanksgiving and events that have happened around this holiday. Did you know that that Thanksgiving favorite, green bean casserole, was invented in the 1950s? And that it is the Dallas Cowboys and Detroit Lions who always play football on Thanksgiving day? The winning tables were 1st Infinity, 2nd Inquisitors and 3rd The Know Nothings.





Pastor Phil Kruis

Kruis Korner

The Incredulity of the Incarnation: Theory or Reality?

Who is the person in Tucson that is least like you? If you were to take all of the words that describe you and find their opposite, would it be that person? Here are the ways I describe myself along with their opposites: conservative – liberal; evangelical – indifferent; follower of Jesus – loner; God worshipper – atheist; married – single, divorced, widowed; brother – orphan; American – immigrant; friend – enemy/lonely; homeowner – homeless. Certainly there are more words that describe who I am and perhaps better words to describe the opposites but this list alone demonstrates the stark differences between me and those least like me.

Then consider that in becoming man, God came to live with, empathize with, sympathize with, become friends with, become brothers with, to die for and to make sure he would spend eternity with those least like him! It is only when we spend time with and get to know the back story and the present difficulties of those in our community that we can empathize with them, that we can know them, that we can be Christ to them. Apart from intentionally leaving the comfort of our lives and entering into other's we cannot know the reality of the incarnation.

There are brief moments when we taste of the blessed reality of the incarnation like when we share our struggles with one another in our LIFE Groups or when we are afforded the opportunity to confess our sins to one another. But in large part, these opportunities arise with those very much like us, and they are fleeting. These moments when the reality of the incarnation break in are like the appetizers you might enjoy before a meal. But we miss out on the great feast that we are intended to delight in when we share life with the least, the last and the lost.

Living in light of the incarnation is not easy. It means dying to self, dying to comfort, and dying to what we know in order to live for others, live in discomfort and messiness, and living in order to know better what others are going through. Living in light of the incarnation and entering into the lives of those least like us is how we truly know, live and proclaim the gospel of Jesus Christ. Entering into the lives of those least like us is hard and scary, so start with someone who is a little different than you. Become their friend. Invite them into your home. Be Christ to them.

Operation Christmas Child

Operation Christmas Child is an opportunity to bring gift boxes and the Gospel to children around the world. A successful packing party and additional filled boxes brought Rincon's total to 206. We are grateful for God's blessings on this important ministry.



Missions Update

A short term missions trip to Costa Rica happened July 13-20, 2018. 5 people went to help 6:8 Ministries.





Pastor Luke Smith

Hey Y'all!

The Faithful Witness of a Homeless Man

A couple of weeks ago, a 71-year old homeless man showed up at my office at Rincon Mountain. This is a man I have seen several times walking the streets near the university, but I have only met him once before when he had shown up in July during a service at the church plant we have been serving, Midtown Presbyterian Church. “Good to see you! But why are you way out here?” I asked. He replied, “I need prayer and wanted you to pray with me.”

He said he remembered our conversation and that he knew I also was serving a church on the eastside of Tucson but he couldn't remember the name of the church. So he took a guess and made the trek out to the church 10 miles from Midtown. He began to share with me a little bit of his story how he was awaiting a Parkinson's diagnosis.

As we sat there, three things struck me. First, this is a man who stunk—the smell was almost unbearable. Second, this is a man who has suffered—as many homeless people have—from the effects of isolation that is the reality of homelessness. Third, this is a man who, as we say in the South, loves Jesus somethin' fierce!

For someone who was awaiting a serious health diagnosis, this man's primary worry was not his health but rather “I am praying that God would show me how my disease might be used to witness to others so they can turn to the Lord and know him as their Savior.”

I was floored! Here is a man who spends his days roaming the streets of Tucson and his big concern in the midst of terribly life circumstances and facing a crippling disease is how he can faithfully point people to Jesus.

After I prayed for him, he started praying for me! He prayed that the Lord would give me the wisdom to understand his purposes for me that would bring God glory and bring many people to Christ. We spent the next 40 minutes together as I drove him back to the VA. On the way there, he wanted to discuss theology (note: he is well read in Reformed theology and went on at length about how sad he was to hear that R.C. Sproul had passed away).

As we parted, he said something that will stick with me forever: “Do you know the difference between people like us and everyone else in the world? Grace. God has given his grace to us by giving us Jesus. And that means everyone else is weighed down by a world of worries but not us. What do I have to worry about? I've got grace! I've got Jesus!” Here is a man who is homeless, carries all of his possessions in two backpacks, and probably has Parkinson's yet he is living with the confidence of knowing he is a recipient of the riches of God's grace in Christ.

(continued on page 9)

Make a Difference Day

Several folks from Rincon Mountain were put to good use on Make a Difference Day at Emily Gray Jr. High School. The volunteers painted the interior of the school's office space and power washed the courtyard area.

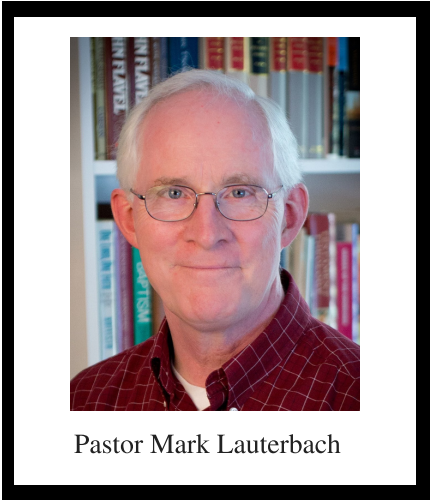
We appreciated this opportunity to help out one of our community neighbors.



Men's Workday

The campus was spruced up as Rincon men trimmed vegetation, cleaned windows and walls and worked on the audio visual system. A great breakfast was provided by volunteers in the kitchen.



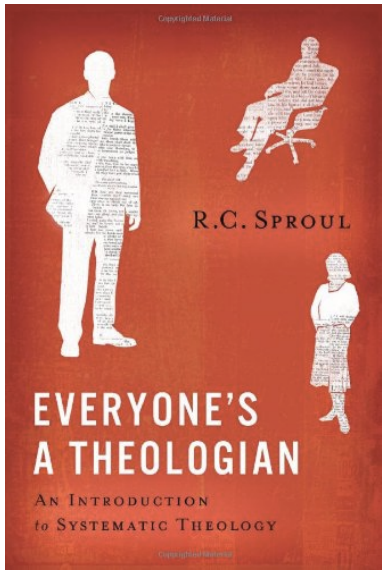


Pastor Mark Lauterbach

Mark's Musings

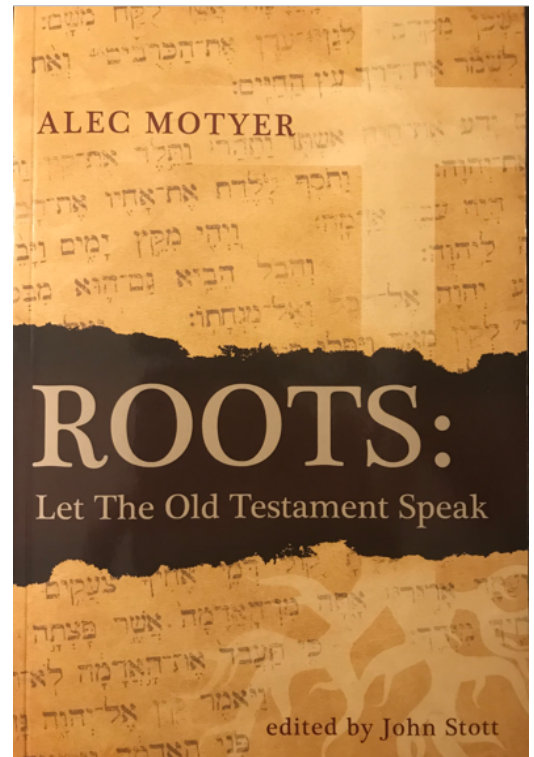
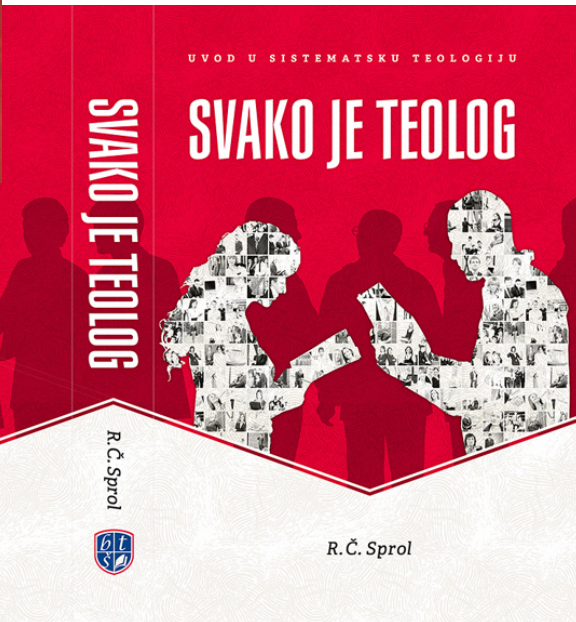
Serbian Trip

From Dec 2-7 Pastor Mark was in Novi Sad, Serbia as part of a team training the next generation of Christian pastors for a whole nation. The seminary school is now the largest in the region and the only one with a curriculum. None of these students were there four years ago. Because of Rincon Mountain's generous giving, we have been able to publish, in Serbian, RC Sproul's Everyone's a Theologian. This is one more book to serve the pastors in Serbia. Remember, they have so little for their own study of Scripture. The school has a goal of creating a pastor's library of 50 translated books.



Preodutim, dr. R. C. Sproul tvrdi - svako je teolog, i to je zato što se bavimo teologijom svaki put kada razmišljamo o poučavanju Biblije i kada se trudimo da je razumemo. Stoga je važno da razna biblijska učenja uredimo na sistematski način koristeći adekvatne, proverene metode tumačenja da bismo došli do teologije koja je dosledna i utemeljena na istini.

To je baš ono što dr. Sproul čini u knjizi Svako je teolog: Uvod u sistematsku teologiju. Ova knjiga je sve samo ne suvooparan rasprava o nebistnim doktrinarnim temama. Naprotiv, dr. Sproul ponovo pokazuje sebi svojstvenu sposobnost da lako objasni složene teme, istražujući osnovne istine hrišćanske vere i podsećajući nas još jednom kakav je Bog i šta je učinio za svoj narod na ovom svetu i na sledećem.



Next book translation project!

Trunk or Treat

This year's Trunk or Treat was again a great outreach to the surrounding community. There were sixteen decorated trunks and over 300 attendees. 120 family devotions (with thanksgiving-themed crafts) were handed out, walking parents and kids through the story of the Gospel. Michael and Gail Jansen won the best of contest with their Green Bay Packers trunk.





Pastor Ben Castaneda

A Word...or Two

When you hear the words "youth ministry," what comes to mind? Mindless games that usually involve shaving cream? Endless jokes from a flipflop-loving, raggedy jean-wearing youth pastor with a receding hairline? Crazy kids with no manners bouncing off the walls yelling at the top of their lungs (and therefore deposited in their own building to give their weary parents a break)?

If so, you're not alone.

The attitude of most people in the church toward youth ministry can be summed up in one word: babysitting. That's what a pastor once told me I'd be doing in youth ministry, and for good reason. For about the last fifty years, the picture I've painted above has been the dominant paradigm in youth ministry. In general, the goal has been to create a fun place where teens want to be (by being entertained enough) and in the process learn something positive. The motivation for this was usually sincere: our youth need a place where they will stay out of trouble (such was the reasoning behind the YMCA).

But that paradigm of youth ministry simply falls short. It really is just a more sophisticated form of babysitting. The youth minister basically becomes a substitute parent. Kids are ever more isolated from their families. And the results have been tragic.

However, since the early '90s there's been a slow but growing trend in youth ministry: adding the word "family." This represents a paradigm shift. Youth (& Family) Ministry is a movement which recognizes that God has already given structures for nurture and discipleship (see Deut 6:1-9). Parents are the primary disciplers of their kids, both when they're young as well as when they're teens. The role of youth ministry isn't to replace parents, but to come alongside them, to affirm the authority and responsibility of parents, and to supplement what (should) already be going on in the home.

Here's the first challenge. Parents often don't know what to do or where to start! Teens, with all their emotional and physical changes, complicated relationships, and disturbing eating habits, can make you silently wonder what happened to your little boy or girl! How are you supposed to disciple them? In these situations, youth & family ministry is a resource for parents, providing them with ideas for family discipleship, insight into teens' lives, and accountability for parents.

But there's another challenge here too. The nuclear family is quickly becoming a thing of the past. More and more parents work long hours, are divorced, were never married, or in prison. More and more teens are raised by relatives, and some never grew up with a mom or (more commonly) a dad in the home.

[Hey, Y'all! cont'd from page 4]

My prayer is that we all would have a faith like this man where we live daily as people who have been saved by grace and have a concern for bearing witness to the gospel of Jesus Christ so others may come to faith in him.

[A Word...or Two cont'd from page 8]

It's in these situations that the Church as a body of believers is so important. We are, in the truest sense of the word, a family. We are brothers and sisters in Christ. In these situations, the youth & family ministry acts like an arm to draw hurting and broken families into the embrace of the Church, helping with both practical needs (rides to and from school, tutoring, financial needs, etc.) and spiritual needs (friendship, mentoring, and counseling). It's a whole-person, whole-family philosophy of ministry.

And it starts by adding the word "family."



GRM Work Days

We partnered with the new Gospel Rescue Mission, Center of Opportunity. The cornerstone of this center is the new GRM men's center and we signed up to sponsor/renovate two rooms over multiple workdays this fall.