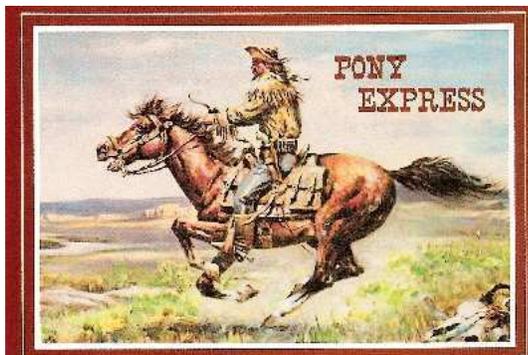




JANUARY 2016



THE CHURCHE'S VOCATION—TO EXPRESS THE LORDSHIP OF CHRIST

MATTHEW 28:19

Stay tuned and read on in this addition as promised the devotion, "The Kingdom of Heaven Suffereth Violence."

A NEW YEAR or just ANOTHER YEAR:

CALENDAR:

January

23 OUTPOST 89 indoor swimming trip to YMCA

February

- 26-28 FCF Winter Camp Glasgow Ky.

March

- 9-12 National LEAD Conference, Dallas TX.
- 26 Pine Car Race, Radcliff First Assembly of God
- ***At our local church, collectively, we are beginning a 21 day Danial Fast.***

I would encourage each of you to consider a time of fasting to begin your new year. Print out a hard copy below of The Value of Royal Rangers and read it over each day during your fast. Listen, wait and perceive for yourself what His Holy Spirit would say to you. (Habakkuk 2:2-3)

The Value of Royal Rangers

Royal Rangers provides an effective means of discipling boys and young men by utilizing direct personal relationships between men and boys, developed around a core of shared interests and experiences. Activity-based ministries **with men** are essential to the spiritual development of boys.

Our History & Heritage

Royal Rangers has a rich history upon which this great ministry has been built. If you don't have this memorized, "do it." How can it be possible for you build upon and pass the legacy of it?

Our Core Principles The Royal Rangers ministry is defined by the core principles upon which it was built, **LEADS**. These are **Leadership, Evangelism, Achievement, Discipleship,** and **Service.**

These core principles are represented by our **pledge, code, motto,** and **emblem.** These principles can be displayed together using our Royal Ranger's **program poster** found at Gospel Publishing House at www.royalrangers.net

Our Mentoring MISSION

Royal Rangers is a **mentoring ministry for future men.** We provide Christlike character formation and servant leadership development for boys and young men in a highly relational and fun environment.

Our MISSION is in evangelizing, equipping, and empowering the next generation of Christlike men and lifelong servant leaders.

Our Mentoring VISION

Influence more, more effectively! That is our vision since 1962.

Our VISION is to influence more boys and young men than ever, and do it more effectively than ever before.

Our Mentoring METHODS

They are not fixed, but ever changing keeping them relational.

Our METHODS are highly relational, interactive activities building relationships between men and boys.

Boys will be boys! They are God-designed to be assertive, competitive, and energetic. Our experienced mentors provide needed guidance, discipline, and structure, using the methods described below.

FRENSHIP

ACIVITIES

ADVANCEMENT SYSTEM

INTERACTIVE LEARNING

UNIFORMS

PATROL SYSTEM

SERVICE & MINISTRY OUTREACH

MEMORIZE—EMPLEMENT—GROW YOU WILL!



Friendship

Our mentors are committed to insuring friendship charges our ministry atmosphere. Boys develop lifelong friends in Royal Rangers and meet wholesome men, who will affirm them and who they can look up to.



Activities

Royal Rangers is about hands-on adventure and side-by-side relationship building. It's how boys learn and relate best. Beyond the fun, boys discover they have what it takes to be men as they spend time with mentors outdoors, in the gym, at the computer, on the service project site, or on the stage. Royal Rangers provides boys with fun activities in five areas of interest, which we refer to as our "core competencies": Outdoor Activities, Sports, Trade Skills, Technologies, and Arts. Many activities in Royal Rangers involve earning merits, which are awards based on the development of skills in one or more of these core areas. A complete list of the merits used in Royal Rangers can be found on our Royal Ranger [Merit Index](#) page on line www.royalrangers.net .



Advancement System

In Royal Rangers, boys and young men are challenged to embark on an adventure that requires them to participate actively. It is a spiritual journey that will forge their character and maximize their leadership potential. To the uneducated eye, boys are just learning survival skills in the wilderness, playing sports, producing a music video, repairing the home of an elderly person, etc., but in the process, our mentors are intentional about laying biblical foundations of sexual expression, worldview, culture, manhood, and leadership. By awarding merit badges, boys are guided on a measurable, personal, and spiritual growth process. (They think they are just having fun, so let's keep that our secret!)



Interactive Learning

Personal development in Royal Rangers is all about hands-on fun and getting dirty! Boys learn by hearing, seeing, doing, and when appropriate, teaching others. It's learning by doing.



Uniforms

Boys want to belong! Royal Rangers gives young men who want to band together to serve Christ wholeheartedly that place of belonging and an image and identity of which to be proud.



Patrol System

Young men want to influence and try their wings. Guys-only small groups allow boys to have fun together, share responsibility for leadership, learn teamwork, and grow spiritually.



Service & Ministry Outreach

"It's not all about me!" This is a lesson boys learn in Royal Rangers. Meaningful opportunities are provided for young men to move beyond themselves to help others, instilling attitudes and behaviors of lifelong servants.

Local Outreach

The most important role a Royal Rangers group can play in its community is to share the message of Christ in a way that is clear, Biblical, and appealing to boys and young men. A Royal Rangers group can never accomplish its central purpose unless it is actively pursuing a plan to attract new boys through a diversified program of activities while sharing with them the gospel message.

Royal Rangers has long been one of the most effective tools for reaching boys outside the church community. Countless church leaders can testify of how Royal Rangers has attracted boys to the church who may never have come for any other reason. But in order to be fully effective local group leaders must be trained and intentional in their efforts in reaching boys. Here are just a few of the common methods used by Royal Rangers groups to reach boys:

Family Ranger Derby—Bonding family and leadership

Ranger Derby (formerly Pinewood Derby) has long been a favorite of Royal Rangers, girls, and the entire family by providing for all ages a fun craft and an exciting competition, strong positive relationships are built that can last a lifetime.



Father & Son Campout

Camping continues to be a popular activity for many boys, and father & son camps can build great memories. These events can be an excellent “first step” in bringing new men and boys into your church community.

Sports Demonstrations, Clinics, and Camps

In our culture today, sports has become a fundamental part of life.

Many boys take great interest in refining their skills in their favorite sport. Royal Ranger groups that provide boys with opportunities to broaden their skill, or just practice skill they've already got, can be very attractive to many boys.

Concerts & Dramas

For many boys, music and drama provides an avenue for showcasing their skills while having a great time with friends. And these kinds of events can be a great way to reach new boys with similar interests.

Auto Checkups & Maintenance Clinics

For many teen boys, getting a driver's license and buying that first car can be an accomplishment like no other. But basic vehicle maintenance can often be confusing and frustrating to the unprepared. Auto maintenance clinics can provide older boys with valuable skills while creating an easy entrance to the group.

DEVOTION: (Matthew 11:12) and from the days of John the Baptist until NOW the Kingdom of God suffereth violence, and the violent take it by force.

THE KINGDOM OF GOD SUFFERETH VALIONCE AND THE VIOLENT TAKE IT BY FORCE.

What is this statement saying? Well let me share an experience I had a few weeks back. During our regular Wednesday evening outpost meeting we were doing our brown bible merit, 1 Cor. 15:1-7. For the leader WHAT IT'S ALL ABOUT—God's Word is absolutely true.

After the lesson in our open discussion I was to read one boy a story about a lost boy and he would pass it along until the last boy heard it and then that boy would repeat the story, which came out somewhat different than from the start.

Being only two weeks before Christmas I thought I would ask the boys what Christmas was about, and why we give gifts. Well like the story of the lost boy we had several topics on that having very little or nothing to do with the truth. One boy nailed it when he said, "It is Christ birthday and God gave us a savior as our gift." I SAID, "THAT IS RIGHT THERE IS NO SANTA CLAUS". Well one boy's mother, (church member) called me and chewed me out and continued chewing as I tried to explained how that came about. I finally ask her to take it up with the pastor, and had to just say good bye and hand up. Her husband immediatly called me back and commenced to chew me out to put it lightly. After several minutes of being called names I just said let's pray, said a short prayer and hung up.

Now I got to tell you while on the phone, I was filling inside like something was welling up within and I knew it was not the Holy Spirit. That night I had a dream, the Bible says old men have those you know! Well in my dream I was trying to get to someplace in ministry. A time of training or event of some type. As I was trying to go things keep getting in my way. Not bad things just trivial stuff like needing to tend to grandkids and help get stuff done before I left and it was making me late and things never seemed to stop. I couldn't get to where I need to be!

The next morning while setting on the throne. Well some of you guys know where I was; anyway, God will talk to you anywhere you're at, in body or spirit, we only need to perceive what he is saying. What He was saying to me was; you are studying and writing about the Kingdom Of God suffers violence, now do you know this was a trial for you to experience it. Well about now I was really felling like a failure for I knew God knows my heart. But you know my Father looked at me and said, "no son you did not fail you made a D this time." About that time I really started feeling good about making that D because in the past I had been making so many Fs. I knew I was bringing up my grades; Praise God!

So I share that with you, and ask you what did Jesus mean when he said entering the Kingdom of God is to be born of water and Spirit? If you are interested, I have an idea on that.

BORN AGAIN INTO THE KINGDOM OF GOD:

Nicodemus said to Him, “How can a man be born when he is old? He cannot enter a second time into his mother’s womb and be born, can he?” Jesus answered, “Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. Do not be amazed that I said to you, ‘You must be born again.’ The wind blows where it wishes and you hear the sound of it, but do not know where it comes from and where it is going; so is everyone who is born of the Spirit.” (John 3:4–8)

Jesus’ shocking statement was far more than Nicodemus had expected. Incredulous, Nicodemus **said to Him, “How can a man be born when he is old? He cannot enter a second time into his mother’s womb and be born, can he?”** Certainly, this highly educated Pharisee was not so obtuse as to have misinterpreted Jesus’ words in a simplistically literal sense. He knew our Lord was not talking about being physically reborn, but he replied in the context of the Lord’s analogy. How could he start all over, go back to the beginning? Jesus was telling him that entrance to God’s salvation was not a matter of adding something to all his efforts, not topping off his religious devotion, but rather canceling everything and starting all over again. At the same time, he clearly could not grasp the full meaning of what that meant. His questions convey his confusion, as he openly wondered at the impossibility of Christ’s statement. Jesus was asking for something that was not humanly possible (to be born again); He was making entrance into the kingdom contingent on something that could not be obtained through human effort. But if that was true, what did it mean for Nicodemus’s works-based system? If spiritual rebirth, like physical rebirth, was impossible from a human standpoint, then where did that leave this self-righteous Pharisee?

Far from minimizing the demands of the gospel, Jesus confronted Nicodemus with the most difficult challenge He could make. No wonder Christ would later say to His disciples, “Children, how hard it is to enter the kingdom of God!” (Mark 10:24). By calling him to be born again, Jesus challenged this most religious Jew to admit his spiritual bankruptcy and abandon everything he was trusting in for salvation. This is at one point where the Kingdom of God suffers violence; in letting go and keeping out all the stuff. That is precisely what Paul did, as he declared in (Philippians 3:8–9).

Jesus answered Nicodemus’s confusion by elaborating on the truth He introduced in verse 3: **“Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.”** A number of interpretations have been offered to explain the phrase **born of water**. Some see two births here, one natural, and the other spiritual. Proponents of this view interpret the **water** as the amniotic fluid that flows from the womb just before childbirth. This view was also my preconception for many years!

Since Jesus expected Nicodemus to understand this truth (v. 10), it must have been something with which he was familiar. **Water** and **Spirit** often refer symbolically in the Old Testament to spiritual renewal and cleansing. In one of the most glorious passages in all of Scripture describing Israel’s restoration to the Lord by the new covenant, God said through Ezekiel, (Ezek. 36:24–27). *For I will take you from the nations, gather you from all the lands and bring you into your own land. Then I will sprinkle clean water on you, and you will be clean; I will cleanse you from all your filthiness and from all your idols. Moreover, I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit within you; and I will remove the heart of stone from your flesh and give you a heart of flesh. I will put My Spirit within you and cause you to walk in My statutes, and you will be careful to observe My ordinances.*

It was surely this passage that Jesus had in mind, showing regeneration to be an Old Testament truth with which Nicodemus would have been acquainted. Against this Old Testament backdrop, Christ's point was unmistakable: Without the spiritual washing of the soul, a cleansing accomplished only by the Holy Spirit. For us, in this dispensation we are familiar with New Testament writing such as (Titus 3:5) through the Word of God (Eph. 5:26), no one can enter God's kingdom.

Jesus continued by further emphasizing that this spiritual cleansing is wholly a work of God, and not the result of human effort: **“That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit.”** Just as only human nature can beget human nature, so also only the Holy Spirit can effect spiritual transformation. Even if a physical rebirth were possible, it would produce only **flesh**. Thus, only the **Spirit** can produce the **spiritual birth required for entrance into God's kingdom**. Regeneration is entirely His work, unaided by any human effort.

Although Jesus' words were based on Old Testament revelation, they ran completely contrary to everything Nicodemus had been taught. For his entire life he had believed that salvation came through his own external merit. Now he found it exceedingly difficult to think otherwise. Aware of his astonishment, Jesus continued, **“Do not be amazed that I said to you, ‘You must be born again.’ ”** It was absolutely necessary for Nicodemus to get over his astonishment at being so wrong about how one is accepted into God's kingdom and seek to be **born again** if he was to enter. And he could never do so based on his own righteous works.

Then the Lord illustrated His point with a familiar example from nature: **“The wind blows where it wishes and you hear the sound of it, but do not know where it comes from and where it is going; so is everyone who is born of the Spirit.”** The wind cannot be controlled; it blows **where it wishes**. And though its general direction can be known, **where it comes from and where it is going** cannot be precisely determined. Nevertheless, the wind’s effects can be observed. The same is true of the work of the **Spirit**. His sovereign work of regeneration in the human heart can neither be controlled nor predicted. (James 2:26) Yet its effects can be seen in the transformed lives of those who are **born of the Spirit**.

Are you up for a fight? Let me point out that it is not only a once-for-all entering into the Kingdom, but it is a continuous entering. There is everything from devil and men to obstruct. (Matthew 23:13)

STAY TUNED NEXT MONTH’S PONY XPRESS WILL CONTINUE—THE KNIGDOM SUFFERS VIOLENCE.

Kentucky District

Royal Ranger Director

Gilbert E. Kerby