

FBF Newsletter

May 2011



Helping people find and follow Christ

Quick Notes:

- > Make powering the ministry through prayer part of your church involvement. Monthly prayer guides are available the first Sunday of every month.
- > Come together for a time of prayer for ministry-related and personal requests on the first Thursday of every month.

From Pastor Chris:

God Knows Where

Everybody at one time or another has suspected they were in the middle of nowhere, but how would you know? A pretty good case can be made that the geographic coordinates of the middle of nowhere are 36° 59' 56.3152" N 109° 02' 42.620 19"W. An "X" literally marks the spot where the states of Arizona, Utah, Colorado, and New Mexico meet.



There isn't much to do at the Four Corners Monument. If there are four or more in your party, you can get in different states and take a picture. Couples sometimes get their picture taken kissing directly over the spot. Singles almost always strike a Twister pose – a limb in each state – as someone snaps a picture. Get the picture?

As a young teenager in the 1960s, I stood at attention on the spot like a dart in a bull's eye. "Hey, Dad," I said, "what state am I in now?" "You're in a state of confusion," he said.

Now it's he who struggles with confusion. What happened forty-five years ago

(like the western vacation including a stop at Four Corners) is crystal clear, but what happened forty-five days ago and forty-five minutes ago is lost altogether. "Now where's my room again?" "So how's the church going?" "Now tell me again where the kids are." "What time of year is it?"

Over these past few years, I've admired my dad's positive attitude about the gradual loss of his eyesight. He says things like, "I like my audio books so much, it almost makes me regret ever having learned to read."

But the loss of memory and the increased dependency that comes with it has been harder to accept. When he realizes our conversation has just repeated a

very tight circle, he'll say, "My mind used to be my strongest asset – now it's just mush." Or, "At work people used to say, 'Let's ask Ernie – he'll remember' . . . can you imagine?"

Over the years we've had many conversations about Christian faith. Most of them ended with dad making some statement of passive acquiescence, but he still couldn't articulate the gospel. I sure wish I had seen in him some of the typical marks of new birth – things like a thirst for God's word, a knock-down-drag-out warfare between holiness and sin, or a longing for a deeper communion with the Lord.

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See **God Knows Where***

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Volunteer Needs at NHC Healthcare Carnival

NHC's second annual Nursing Home Week Carnival will be held on Saturday, May 14 at NHC Healthcare, 300 Laboratory Road, Oak Ridge, from 9 a.m.—4:30 p.m.

Faith Bible Fellowship has an active ongoing ministry at NHC, and NHC's Activities Director Cammie Duncan has asked us for help with this year's carnival.

Like last year, NHC will be borrowing the big canopy we use for many outdoor events, and we need some men to help deliver and set up the canopy at 8 a.m., and break down and return the canopy after the carnival (4:30 or later). Sign up to help at church or contact Pastor

Chris. Volunteers will also be needed to help with other set up/break down needs, and assist with operating booths. Last year FBF members and friends operated booths offering children's games and items for sale. It is not necessary to commit to the whole day—you can just give an hour or two.

Bake sale items (bagged or wrapped and ready for sale) are also needed, as well as whole cakes to be given as cakewalk prizes. Baked goods should be delivered to the carnival site (in NHC's back parking lot) Saturday morning.

Donated rummage sale items



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are also desired, and can be brought to NHC at any time before the carnival. Unsold items will be donated to Goodwill.

NHC has welcomed our presence in visiting new residents for encouragement and witness, and in regularly visiting residents who for one reason or another are not visited by family or friends. Contact Nancy Mills to see how to get involved on a more regular basis.

“Search me, O God, and know my heart! Try me and know my thoughts! And see if there be any grievous say in me, and lead me in the way everlasting!”

God Knows Where (continued from Page One)

The truth is that I just don't know for sure where my dad is spiritually. You might say I'm in a state of confusion about it. On the one hand, he gladly adds his amen to gospel truths when he hears them. On the other, he still says things like, "I hope I've been good enough to get to heaven." We still talk about how certainty of eternal life is possible, but now there's the added complication that tomorrow Dad will not remember today's conversation.

I continue to persuade as well as I know how, and leave it to the Lord to sort it all out. There's a comfort in knowing that it's not my job to decide who's in and who's out, or what level of understanding is a prerequisite for saving faith. I take hope in every evidence I see,

and every deficit of evidence is a matter for prayer. But in the end it isn't my role to be everyone else's spiritual GPS, because the Lord knows it all – not only latitude and longitude, but also spiritual altitude.

I've read that modern, more precise surveying equipment places the exact quadripoint of those four states about 1800 feet west of where the Four Corners Monument actually is. Isn't that something? I really was in a state of confusion—none of us really knew where we were! But God knew all along, and that's where we must all come to rest.

¹O LORD, you have searched me and known me! ²You know when I sit down and when I rise up; you discern my thoughts from afar. ³You search out my

path and my lying down and are acquainted with all my ways. ⁴Even before a word is on my tongue, behold, O LORD, you know it altogether. ⁵You hem me in, behind and before, and lay your hand upon me. ⁶Such knowledge is too wonderful for me; it is high; I cannot attain it. ... ¹¹If I say, "Surely the darkness shall cover me, and the light about me be night," ¹²even the darkness is not dark to you; the night is bright as the day, for darkness is as light with you. ...

²³Search me, O God, and know my heart! Try me and know my thoughts! ²⁴And see if there be any grievous way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting!

Psalm 139

