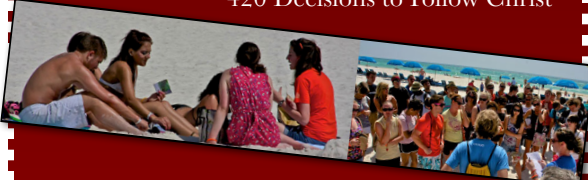




Big Break 2012

Panama City Beach, Florida
14,000+ Spiritual Conversations
420 Decisions to Follow Christ



During the month of March, Northeast students joined others from around the nation for Big Break at Panama City Beach, FL. They spent their Spring Break learning how to clearly communicate what it means to follow Jesus, and initiating spiritual conversations among the throngs of students on the beach. God was present in these conversations, as many put their faith in Jesus!



✧ Oasis and Rochester ✧

Caring for Women, Caring for Teams

BY KERRI

OASIS In late February, we held a conference for staff women in the northeast which we call Oasis. This year's theme was "Dreams and Disappointments" and I was asked to be one of the three speakers. It has been quite awhile since I've given a talk, so I felt quite rusty!

After much prayer and reflection, I decided to talk about my dreams and disappointments with regard to female friendships.

Speaking is a lot of fun for me, but also spiritually challenging because of my tendency to want to be "good." It's so easy to fall into the trap of wanting people to be moved or amazed by what I have to say; what I *should* want is for them to not really notice me at all but instead be challenged by God. This time, I spent a lot of time praying that God would use this talk to reach my audience and to prepare their hearts to hear from him during our weekend together (I was the first talk). I was never fully confident about how this one would go.

That morning, I woke up with almost no voice and truly worried that I wouldn't be able to make it through the talk. There was no way I was going to dazzle anyone with my rhetorical abilities that day!

God also used my physical weakness to force me to beg for prayer (thanks to you who prayed) and I think He really showed up as a result of your prayers. So many people spoke to me afterwards about their own struggles with friendships and suffering in general.

I do think that God used that talk to prepare many of the women for the weekend and it was an amazing time of sharing and vulnerability as a result. What a blessing to be used in that way! I know that this year's Oasis was truly that - a place of growth and refreshment for our women. I'm confident that the students in our region have benefited as a result. I love our staff and it is such a privilege to care for them.

ROCHESTER Another fun part of my job is visiting local teams around our region. I serve on the regional Leadership Development (LD) team and we try to visit several local ministries each year to encourage them as well as help with general team-building and development. Last week, we got to visit the team in Rochester, NY.

Each of us on the LD team met one on one with the Rochester staff. As new staff coordinator, I had a great conversation with a new staff woman, Sarah. I had met with her at our regional staff conference in November and it is so fun to see what God has done in her life since then and how she is growing. I also met with John and Laura, the leaders of the team, to discuss training issues and their new staff. They are a great couple and do an amazing job of leading their team. All in all, I enjoy being a blessing to the local teams and hopefully making it easier for them to do their jobs well. Our desire is to serve them well and equip them for long and fruitful ministries.

Thank you for your partnership with us in ministry!

Jonathan and Kerri