

ON THE ROAD WITH PASTOR RICK...

Well, I guess I asked for it. Last month I noted in this message my lack of miles over the summer. Now, two weeks later and I've just driven 2,500 miles (to Mexico and back). And today I will leave for Colorado to start my annual walk. Not only will I be driving 2,000(+) miles, I'll be living in my "travelling trailer", parked at nights in Walmarts and church parking lots. I'm back on the road...

I enjoy being able to keep up all my friends while I'm out on the road. I remember years ago when a good friend, Pastor Joe Sizemore bought me a new cellphone so he could call and keep up with me as I walked across Montana. Joe has kept up that type of contact every year since. He calls on the first day of my walk to pray with me. Other friends call during my walk just to see where I'm at. I guess it's a Pastor Rick type of "Where's Waldo". It seems like someone always calls or gets in touch with me when I need it most. Proverbs 25:25 says: *"Like cold water to a weary soul, So is good news from a distant land."*

When it's 100° and you're walking down some lonely road a thousand miles from home, I can assure you, a long distance phone call, an email or a message on facebook is "cold water" to this old boy when he's far, far from home. I will be putting up a daily "Twitter" (I just can't say that I'll be "tweeting"--sounds too much like I'd be a bird). You can keep up with my walk on Twitter at www.twitter.com/rickhagans. I will also be putting something up on facebook every day and on our ministry website as well (www.harvestevangelism.org). You're welcome to try and call me if you'd like. My cell number is 334.332.3932.

I've already been asking my facebook friends what their favorite travelling song is. What's yours? Let's do this journey together, on the road.

You've probably heard it said before, "I'd rather see a sermon than hear one any day." Well, this month's message is one to "see". I've included the testimonies of our 4 Mount Zion interns so you can get to know them, and be blessed. These girls have been with us for two months now. Their insight on ministry here at Harvest Evangelism, in the South is interesting. I hope you'll be as blessed reading about these young ladies as I've been working with them.

Mount Zion Intern Reports, June and July:



(June) My first month of internship was kind of crazy for me. To me, the South has been a completely culture shock not only do the accents throw me off but the culture all together has taken some time for me to adjust. Pastor Rick, I want to say thank you I can truly see you want this to be the best internship ever! In this past month I have learned a lot about myself. Adjusting to Hosanna Home was a lot harder than I thought. This month God showed me that a lot of times we think we know things but we know nothing. I thought that I had everything under control, especially since I came from this kind of ministry. My mind-set has begun to change little by little because God told me to step back, He said, "If you come into this show thinking you run it I won't be able to be the Master." Since then it's been a humbling experience. Overall I've learned that this ministry is going to be fruitful and touch many lives and I'm happy I get to be a part of it. I can honestly say I love the women and children not because I feel bad for them or because of human compassion, but because the Lord is in this. I really enjoyed the bbq Pastor Rick, that was fun. I got very competitive and I enjoyed it. By the way, I am really starting to enjoy Country Music.

(July) Month two has been a semi hard month. After adjusting for the first month at month 2 I still felt like I didn't quite know my place or position as a intern. As time went on I was very frustrated but the more I went to God the more He spoke to me about my heart. Month two I've learned a lot about my personality and how some characteristics need to change within my personality in order to reach people in Christ. God spoke to me out of 1 Corinthians telling me that in this ministry I was going to have to get low as to getting weak with the weak. Not that physically He was saying they were weak but spiritually. This was hard for me because that meant that I would have to be vulnerable to this ministry. My biggest fear was rejection I guess in my mind I couldn't handle the fact that rejection is going to be anywhere you served the Lord. To say the least my emotions were everywhere! A week before Mexico I really reached a place where I didn't know if I really wanted to even stay in Hosanna Home. I was very discouraged and felt so inadequate. I remember laying in bed and crying one night and God





He said he will be with us through the fires and I felt like I was burning inside. Things got resolved and before I knew it I was in Mexico being the little missionary; translating, laughing, EATING, and enjoying God's people. Mexico was an eye opener and it really made me grateful for Hosanna Home. I couldn't wait to come back to my Hosanna Home family to see all the pretty faces and to be able to sleep in my own bed. I'm not fooled by the fact that I missed them so much. I know in about a week I'll be back at the same place picking up my cross! I'm so glad I have Maya, Esther and Jessica. I feel like they have been my armor bearers. When God spoke to me about picking up my cross and I knew that this cross was one I was going to need help with and that's what they are there for. God is binding us together with cords of love that cannot be broken. At times it might seem like a division but God is doing a work and raising a testimony of love, unity and forgiveness.

By the way Pastor Rick and Miss Kim, you guys are so amazing. I really, really do love and appreciate ya'll, you guys have made me feel as if I was a Hagans. The day I spent with Miss Kim was amazing, She got to give me some "wisdom" about relationships. Thank you so much. I am looking forward to month 3! I know this report probably sounded intense, but this is me just being real. I'd be lying if I said Hosanna Home is peaches in cream, but I know this is for ministry period. Well, I love ya'll.

Esther Hamby:



(June) When I first arrived into Alabama at Hosanna Home I was a bit nervous and yet excited to see what God was going to do in these 8 months I am here for. I have never worked in a rehab/shelter place before, working with women who have struggled with alcohol and drugs, etc...addictions. As I started to work here and learn the ropes of how this ministry runs and my role, I started to doubt myself. I started wondering if I was really going to impact these women even though I haven't really dealt with a lot of their issues. God showed me though that it didn't matter if I couldn't totally relate to them, but that He could still use me and my testimony to reach these needy women. All I had to do was trust Him and be the willing vessel for Him and He'd take care of the rest.

Within my first month I have learned what it truly means to die to yourself and live fully for God and enhance His kingdom. I also learned what it means to be very flexible and go with the flow, especially because a lot of times changes will come up often in ministry.

One thing I have had a hard time with is working as a team. I'm asking God to help me be more open to them and them to me. We still struggle some with relating to each other, but God is doing a work.

I just want to say that I love being an Alabama and being a part of this wonderful ministry. Pastor Rick and Mrs. Kim, you have made us feel at home and part of the family. From eating pig ears at the bar be que and watching movies and eating fried chicken, to the trip to Mexico, all of this has been so much fun and I really appreciate it. Thank you for opening your hearts and arms to us. I pray that we will truly serve this ministry wholeheartedly and as unto the Lord.

Until next time----

(July) Well, a month has come and gone and I am still loving Hosanna Home very fun. This month has brought a lot of fun but then some struggles. I have had to learn how to not be jealous and not always wanting to be in control. I tend to get jealous when the same people always get recognized for things yet I feel sometimes I'm just behind the scenes, not seen. God showed me that I was feeling rejection and that He can use each one of us differently. I don't have to be someone else just be myself. There were a few times I just wanted to throw in the towel and just give up on this place and me, but God firmly held onto me and equipped me to stay strong and press through.

Also during this month God has helped me to become more bold instead of always being weak. He's starting to put me into leadership position which isn't naturally easy cause I'm more of a follower. I believe God is wanting to show me new and amazing things through this time of me being stretched into leadership. My desire is to be used by God no matter when or how.

I want to say that being down here has been awesome. I have met some really amazing people. I can't express how good God is. He knows our every need and when we need it. Thank you Pastor Rick for being really wonderful and so down-to-earth. Mrs. Kim you have been such an encouragement to me and I really thank you from the bottom of my heart. I am looking forward to next month and all the adventures God is going to bring to us...

Until next time---

Jessica Lee: (June) I am not sure where to start...My first month of internship was different than I expected. While I was extremely happy about being here, I felt a little fearful. Honestly, I feel like I had every emotion under the sun in my first month. I enjoyed getting to know everyone and the bbq was so much fun! I felt really accepted by you and Ms. Kim right away. It felt really homey. At the same time, it was really hard finding my place at





Hosanna Home. I think that's where the fear came in, in the unknown.

God is making it a reality that I daily need His grace and this life of walking with Him is truly Him carrying me.

So, to sum up my first month, I have enjoyed being here and being a part of this ministry. At the same time, I feel very vulnerable but God has truly been faithful.

(July) My second month of internship was definitely a deeper continuation of month one. God's grace has truly carried me. If I'm honest, I have felt inadequate in everything I do. God continually reminds me..."My strength is made perfect in your weakness." Since for most of my life I've relied on my own strength's and abilities, this has been a hard chapter in my life.

On a different note, I have been really excited about the relationships formed with the ladies. There are a few that I really feel close to and have really gotten to know. The walls are really coming down and it has been awesome. I also loved Mexico. I was blessed so much. I feel so challenged to "be" other than myself.



I also want to say Pastor Rick, I have felt like a part of your family. You and Ms. Kim, Dreamer and your boys are an amazing family. It's been an honor being a part of the "Hagans" family.

I have also in this month been challenged to walk outside of my feelings. No matter how I feel or the circumstances I find myself in to believe what God says. "We walk by faith not by sight."

Maya Golden:

(June) Looking back on it now, my first month...it's almost a blur. I didn't really know what to expect, didn't have an agenda, and was simply ready to jump into whatever I needed to jump into. It was a month of 'trial and error'. Not only did I have to get to know new ladies (the residents) and new leadership, but I had to get to know my team as well. The first month was tough. I felt like a fish out of water...towards the end of the month, I really started to feel lost. I didn't know what I was doing and really felt I was of no use to anyone.



Before I came into this internship and even my first week into it, God gave me 3 things: 1) Eph 6-The armor of God and how important it is to work in the fullness of it. 2) John 15:4a- "Abide in Me and I in you..." 3) Exodus 14:13a "Fear not, stand still and see the salvation of the Lord." The Lord also gave me this "token"-Psalm 94:19 "In the multitude of my thoughts (anxieties), within me Thy comforts delight my soul." God is so good. When I got here, I didn't understand how things ran and got done. I didn't understand the structure...I kept telling myself, "I just have to make it through the 1st month..."

Coming from "Zion" I had become so used to very "tightly structured" ministries, so when I got here I figured it might be something similar, considering it's a rehab and all...I had come here on short term missions with Times Square Church back in 2009 and told myself I always wanted to come back...And "look at me now." Two years later. I suppose I didn't realize what I was praying for :) "His thoughts and ways are higher than mine." :) I'm glad He brought me here and I am excited to see what's next.

(July) My 2nd month...was on of the hardest months of my Christian walk. Ministry became a reality. Everything I have ever known as far as being "a Christian" was being put into full swing. Truly walking by faith and taking hold of every promise...The first part of the month was the hardest part. I felt like it was never going to end. By the time my 2nd month rolled in I was completely discombobulated. God has been speaking so much to me, but I didn't understand at the time. I didn't know how to walk out what He had been speaking to me. I felt alone and like I had absolutely no one to run to. During that time, the Lord gave me this scripture verse: Psalm 32:7"Thou art my hiding place; Thou shalt preserve me from trouble; Thou shalt compass me about with songs of deliverance. Selah." By this time I realized that the Lord had brought me to that place for the sole reason to drive me to Himself. Ministry is allowing yourself to be hidden in Christ...He is showing me that. Getting to know my team a bit better was good. Tough...but good. We didn't' always see eye to eye, and that was frustrating. I had never felt so overwhelmed in my life. I felt like what I was being told to do wasn't what was actually being expected of me. The battle of my mind was in full swing. I felt so bombarded and so weighed down...my only outlet was the Lord, and I was not used to that. I didn't want to really share with anyone else because I didn't want to weigh them down as well...The Lord truly became my hiding place. I had not cried so much in the last 6 months of my life as I had the first half of the month of July...Although exhausting, it in the end, had become refreshing to get everything out. I would have to say I survived that month as the month of surrender. I stopped fighting in my own strength and did exactly what the Lord told me to do during month one: Stand still and see His salvation." The last week and a half of July was spent split between Texas and Mexico. Mexico was amazing, the Lord really did a lot in me there. I went into it exhausted and wondering, "What could I possibly have to give?"...And left blessed and very refreshed. The Lord met me one night in the sweetest way and





reminded me that not only was I not ----, but that He was carrying me. He also showed me the beauty of the body. Being with that group of believers was much needed! “The joy of the Lord is my strength...”

Pray for our four girls as they travel this adventure called “ministry”. We will see what God does in the following months. We are excited to know, the God who calls us, equips us and He is even now, equipping them.

Rick

Pastor Rick “The Book Man” and his Book of The Month

I read a lot. I talk about the books I read a lot. I put quotes from the books I read on facebook.

Friends ask me all the time, “Read any good books lately?” People I don’t even know post me on facebook asking what books I recommend for a good summer read or what book I would recommend for a spiritual pick-me-up. I guess I’ve become “The Book Man.” Which is alright, better than becoming a dummy. I read once, (in a book) “Education won’t necessarily make you into a man of God, but ignorance definitely won’t either...”

My “Book of the Month” this time is a fun read and a spiritual pick-me-up. “Tattoos of the Heart” by Gregory Boyle. The following is an excerpt and but one example of what “Tattoos” has in store:

“Most of the Masses I do in the probation camps take place on Saturday mornings. Then I race home for an afternoon of baptisms, weddings and Quinceaneras at Dolores Mission. These usually start at one or two in the afternoon. I have a narrow window of half an hour one day between my morning Masses and my one o’clock baptism so I stop by the office and go through the day’s mail. I’m not there fifteen minutes, when this woman in her thirties walks through the door. I immediately glance at the clock I have hanging on the wall. I check how much time I have left before the baptism and am already lamenting that I probably won’t get to all the mail.

I find out later that the woman’s name is Carmen. She is a recognizable figure on First Street, and yet this is her first visit to Homeboy. Today is the moment she chooses. Carmen is a heroin addict, a gang member, street person, occasional prostitute, and champion peleonera. She’s often definitely storming down the street, usually shouting at someone. She’s a real gritona, hollering at the men inside the Mitla Bar as she stumbles out to the sidewalk. I’ve heard her a number of times, arguing loudly on the pay phone with relatives or friends, “Daaammnnn, JUST LET ME STAY TONIGHT.”

Now I have seven minutes until my baptism. Carmen is a dusty blond, which couldn’t be the color God originally gave her. She’s attractive but so worn, by heroin and street life. She plops herself into one of the chairs in my office and cuts the fat out of her introductory remarks.

“I need help,” she launches right in, brash and something of a “no-shit sister.” “Oooooohhh,” she says, “I been ta like fifty rehabs. I’m known all over...nationwide.”

She smiles. Her eyes wander around my office, and she studies all the photographs hanging there. She multitasks, and her inspection of the place doesn’t derail her stream-of-consciousness rambling. The family will arrive for the baptism in five minutes.

“I went to Catholic school all my life. Fact, I graduated from high school even. Fact, right after graduation, is when I started using heroin.” Carmen enters some kind of trance at this point, and her speech slows to deliberate and halting.

“And I...have been trying to stop...since...the moment I began.”

Then I watch as Carmen tilts her head back until it meets the wall. She stares at the ceiling, and in an instant her eyes became these two ponds, water rising to meet their edges, swollen banks, spilling over. Then, for the first time really, she looks at me, and straightens.

“I...am...a...disgrace.”

Suddenly, her shame meets mine. For when Carmen walked through that door, I had mistaken her for an interruption.”

You can keep up with me and my walk across Colorado on TWITTER (at -----) or on facebook, Rick Hagans. I will have daily postings.

Be a part of my walk by helping cover the extra costs with a special offering. Send your designated gift to Harvest Evangelism, PO Box 2888, Opelika, AL 36803. You can also give online at www.harvestevangelism.org

Special thanks to Merrell Shoes for providing me with a new pair of hiking boots for this walk.

And to Kerri Griffin for getting in touch with Merrell for us.

“It works best” when we all work together.