

Psalm68five Ministries

2018 Psalm68five Year-end Update

Bryan C. Johnson, Managing Director

*God's special blessing
to the fatherless and
their mothers: "A
father to the
fatherless, a defender
of widows, is God in
his holy dwelling."
Psalm 68:5NIV*

*How Jesus describes
the character of our
heavenly father in the
story of the Prodigal
Son: "So he got up
and went to his father.
But while he was still
a long way off, his
father saw him and
was filled with
compassion for him;
he ran to his son,
threw his arms around
him and kissed him."
Luke 15:20NIV*

James 1:27 says "Religion that God our Father accepts as pure and faultless is this: to look after (the fatherless) and widows in their distress and to keep oneself from being polluted by the world." Psalm68five Ministries helps send children, growing up without a father presence in their lives, to unplug from their world each summer, to unplug from the pollution of the world (and screens), and to enjoy God's creation and fellowship for a week at summer camp. More than that, Psalm68five partners with these camps to bring a specific message of hope to our kids, a message of "identity" as God's children of the true Father, through faith in Jesus Christ. All this at no cost to the child. Increasingly, we are inviting single-mother families, which have no active father presence, to summer "family camps" to share the message of God's heart for the fatherless and their mothers. It is our hope and prayer that the Holy Spirit will use this ministry to help our kids/families make choices in life, consistent with this true identity through Jesus Christ and not the "orphan spirit" identity which leads to so many bad outcomes in life.

Summer 2018 Highlights:

How can we become God's children: "Some, however, did receive him (Jesus Christ) and believed in him; so he gave them the right to become God's children. They did not become God's children by natural means, that is, by being born as the children of a human father; God himself was their Father." John 1:12-13 GNTD

We (all of us) are sinners and must believe and receive the free gift of Jesus and his sacrifice on the cross: "We all, like sheep, have gone astray, each of us has turned to our own way." Isaiah 53:6NIV

"...for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God..." Romans 3:23NIV

- **435:** the number of kids growing up without fathers in their lives, who attended our partner camps and for some single mothers to attend family camps with their children. These campers attend on full camp scholarships. We also continue to work with our partner camps to improve our combined ministry to fatherless children, to help them realize the truth that they are specially blessed sons and daughters of the King, with God as their True Father. Unfortunately, we have now reached the point in our ministry where requests for fatherless child and family scholarships is outpacing our available level of funding. We are praying the Lord will supply the resources so that we will not have to turn any fatherless kids away from a potentially life-trajectory-changing week of summer camp.
- **Development of Resources for the Fatherless:** We have completed the first collection of curriculum resources and training materials, specifically designed for fatherless campers, through our grant with Wheaton College and their Honeyrock Outdoor Ministry Programs. Our 2018 Psalm68five Ministry Symposium took place in March of 2018 at Camp Wonderland in Wisconsin. We are planning to meet again in December 2018. A special "SHOUT OUT" to Dr. Rob Ribbe of HoneyRock/Wheaton and Jim Galvin of Galvin and Associates spearheading our first Psalm68five Resource Training Manual project.
- **What is TBRI?:** We are adding trauma-informed care training to our Fatherless Ministry "toolbox" with the assistance of Melinda Cathey of Orphanos Ministries and Trust-Based Relational Intervention (TBRI) resources. These resources will help our camp staffs to better come alongside kids from broken homes and hard places to turn behavioral issues, which sometimes occur at camp, into inspired means to show the Father's heart. This is a truly inspired and revolutionary approach to connect with kids whose lives often have been marked by traumatic experiences, to prepare hearts and minds to hear, receive and accept the Father's love.

“For God (the Father) loved the world so much that he gave his only Son. God (the Father) gave his Son so that whoever believes in him may not be lost, but have eternal life. God (the Father) did not send his Son into the world to judge the world guilty, but to save the world through him.” John 3:16-17 ICB (see also 1 John 4:14)

“God’s Spirit touches our spirits and confirms who we really are. We know who he is, and we know who we are: Father and children.”

Romans 8:16 The Message Bible

Frontier Camp (Grapeland, TX) Update

For the summer of 2018, about 82 fatherless kids attended our Timothy Week Camp in early August. Most of our kids come from urban, underprivileged areas and would never have had the opportunity to attend a camp in the countryside. Most of our campers attend weekly Christian ministries in their local communities so that the seeds of God’s love continue to be watered and cared for through these ministries, including CityChurch McKinney and Tamina Ministry near The Woodlands, TX. A majority of the campers took the Psalm68five Prayer Journal Challenge while at camp and memorized key scriptures which help our campers understand the wonderful heart of our Heavenly Father toward fatherless children and their identities as sons and daughters of the King. (See Verses in the right margin.) We have already committed to partner with Frontier Camp to hold the Timothy Week Camp for 2019 as well as provide camperships to the regular camp sessions earlier in the summer. Psalm68five Ministries helps provide volunteers at the Timothy Week camp.

Camp Lake Louise (Boyne Falls, MI) Update

We had 167 campers attend Camp Lake Louise in the summer of 2017. Included in these numbers are an increasing number of single mothers and their children attending the Winning at Home Family Camp sessions; these are single parent families where the fathers are not active in the children’s lives. All of the Psalm68five Ministry Board members helped lead the Winning at Home Family camp. Psalm68five also provided funding for 2 summer-long counselors who were there specifically to minister to the fatherless kids who attended summer camp and to especially help our kids with the Psalm68five Prayer Journal Challenge. Paige Vandenbrink and Christian Schut were our female and male Psalm68five counselors, respectively, for the summer at Camp Lake Louise.

We continue to see the number of fatherless kids at Camp Lake Louise grow. We went from funding 56 scholarships in 2016 to 146 in 2017 and 167 this last summer. Children are carefully screened to ensure the integrity of providing camp scholarships only to kids growing up without a father. (Note: the camp offers other scholarships to kids with financial needs.) Several kids were baptized at Camp Lake Louise including 4 returning Psalm68five campers at Winning@Home family camp.

Camp Wilderness Ridge (Bastrop, TX) Update

Camp Wilderness Ridge joined with Forest Glen Camps to continue their important outdoor ministry for boys and as the name implies, Camp Wilderness Ridge provides a more rugged outdoor experience; but the fatherless boys who attend on Psalm68five scholarships love it. They especially love the opportunity to come back year after year to participate increasingly in “servant leadership” roles. Camp Wilderness Ridge (in their new association with Forest Glen camps) initially believed they could provide 20 camp scholarships for fatherless boys, mostly coming from Foster Care situations. However, midway through the summer they had been able to fully utilize the scholarships for fatherless boys and we were able to supply an additional 20 scholarships. They served 46 fatherless kids altogether in summer 2018.

Camp Beechpoint (Allegan, MI) Update

We provided 50 scholarships to Camp Beechpoint and they were used for many inner city, Chicago-area youth to summer camp. Camp Beechpoint has been ministering to inner city, underprivileged children for many years and as such, they can be a “resource camp” as we learn to develop improved ministry to the fatherless going forward.

Wildwood Hills Ranch Camp

This is a new partner camp located in Iowa, which serves at-risk fatherless youth including many kids who have been in the foster care system or from juvenile delinquency situations. They also have been a “resource camp” sharing what they have learned about specific ministry to fatherless kids.

Honeyrock Camp (Three Lakes, WI)

This year we provided matching scholarship funds which allowed for over 30 fatherless kids to attend summer camp mainly from the rural areas around Honeyrock in Wisconsin and from inner-city Chicago. Honeyrock and it’s staff, especially Dr. Rob Ribbe have shared their “world-class” best practices for camp ministry to youth and have been an incredible inspiration and encouragement for our ministry.

Thank You

Thank you for partnering with Psalm68five Ministries in your prayers and gifts. Please send us any resources or links to materials that might help us in fulfilling this mission, as we continually seek to improve our ministry “toolbox” to help our partner camps impact the lives of fatherless children. We would love to hear from you!

Your Brother in Christ,

Bryan C. Johnson, Managing Director