

Dear 6th Grade Serving Ones,

As you are probably aware by now the annual 6th Grade Camp that is held every April or May was suspended due to the current COVID-19 pandemic. We had hoped to reschedule it for later this summer, but with the appearance of a second wave of COVID-19, we have decided to suspend the camp indefinitely for this year.

We realize this camp is incredibly special for the 6th graders and their families, as this is the first time many will hear the gospel spoken to them. Many of our 6th graders either receive or confirm their regeneration and are informed about their need for baptism, to complete the second step of their salvation. For many, the camp is the beginning of their life with Christ.

However, over the past few years, there has been a strong sense that this time should transition from a time of serving one and young people to a family time: Fathers speaking and presenting the gospel to their sons; mothers praying with their daughters to receive the Lord; the young people having their Christian life born by their parents; their parents ushering them into a normal, Christian living; and families truly entering into a household salvation. While the camp will not go on as it has in years past, it seems the Lord has opened a door to emphasize this burden of “household salvation.” Just as Noah and his family built the Ark, each member of the family would become Ark builders.

We would encourage each locality to pursue this burden. We understand this new way may be intimidating for both parents and serving ones; however, our experience in Atlanta has been very encouraging. We started by contacting the parents of the 6th graders to pray and fellowship about this burden. We found that the parents were extremely responsive and already quite burdened to take the lead with their children. We also sent care packages to each of our 6th graders with snacks, treats, personalized notes/cards from the serving ones, a pocket New Testament, and a copy of the Mystery of Human Life. We followed up with the parents again to pray and encourage them to find the right opportunity to present the gospel to their child. From our years of experience in serving with the 6th graders, the time is right, the children are ready to receive the Lord, and the opportunity is there. It does not take much more than sharing a few verses, reading a tract, and praying with the children to receive the Lord.

While this way is different than what we have previously done, we hope that through much prayer, fellowship, and support, this will become the “new normal”. For years, it has been our history of parents handing their 6th grader over to the serving ones for their spiritual care. While we are not suggesting that the serving ones no longer care for the 6th graders, this pandemic has provided a wonderful opportunity to change our way, so we can support the parents as they take the lead in the spiritual care, growth, and shepherding of their little lamb given to them by God.

Please feel free to reach out to any of us for more information, prayer and fellowship. We are learners and are open to more fellowship in the carrying out of this burden.

Lord, bless all the 6th graders, their parents, and their serving ones.

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