

## CALLING ALL CHEF FAMILIES-

Please Consider Contributing Cards and Notes of Thanksgiving for a TLC Package for Doug Phillips's Family

Please send cards and notes of thanksgiving to the Phillips family by December 14, c/o Jon Summers, 236 St. Louis Avenue, Ferguson, MO 63135, and we will make certain that they are included in a special care package that we will be sending to their home. You may either mail them to our address above or drop these off at our Ball on December 14.

Dear Families,

As many of you know by now, on October 30, Doug Philips resigned from Vision Forum, with Vision Forum Ministries dissolving on November 11. Like most of you, we are deeply grieved over this tragedy. On behalf of Doug, we would like to say that in all our years of leadership, we have never known another man with such a brilliant mind, clear reasoning, great wisdom, passion for God's Word, courage and fortitude in fighting for the family, an innovative mind in creating tools for equipping families for the cultural battle, and who possessed a genuine love for his family. Nor have we known another man who has produced so much fruit for God's kingdom. Just think of all the fruit Doug created and spearheaded. It is truly phenomenal! He deeply cared for the flock and labored continuously to feed the flock God's best. He protected many from continuing in their sin of neglecting their duty as fathers, mothers, and children. He fed; he fed; he fed. He took God's people to the choicest of pastures and the purest of waters. He elevated their sights to the heavenly throne of God and labored to keep them there. Doug had been given a vision and mission from God.

Doug was clearly raised up for such a time as this. He was our hero—the man who could lead us to victory through this horrific war. We revered him, loved him, and cheered him on. He was family. Furthermore, in all the years we worked with Doug, we have never known another man who adhered to such high standards in keeping himself above reproach. He always traveled with his family, or at least one of his children, and surrounded himself with interns and staff. Doug told us that he went so far as to refrain from entering an elevator alone with a woman. So you may wonder, with all this protection, how did this great sin occur?

From our study of history, we know that the enemy always works at destroying the very thing that leaders boldly proclaim—the very principles upon which the fortress is built—and like a lion ferociously devours his prey. Doug built his ministry on Christian marriage, Christian patriarchy, the Christian family, virtuous boyhood, virtuous manhood, virtuous womanhood, virtuous families. Boldly engaging in the cultural battle for the family, Doug was winning victory after victory, so naturally, the foundational truths upon which the ministry was built was the area that Satan must destroy.

Everyone knows that the best strategy for winning a war is to concentrate all efforts against the leaders of the battle. You simply take out the generals, the captains, the colonels—those who lead the fight—and you demoralize the troops to the point of total defeat.

Doug Phillips was the general in the homeschooling community. He led the battles, so it comes as no surprise that Satan pointed his biggest guns against him—to silence the voice of hope and destroy the heart and soul of the ministry. Although God is mightier than Satan, we must never underestimate the power of the enemy and the endless legions he has for fighting his battles. Although the gates of hell shall not prevail against the church, leaders always suffer heavy losses because they are in the forefront of the battle for life.

So if God is greater than the enemy, why did He give Satan permission to sift him and allow this to happen?

“Oh, the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are His judgments and unfathomable His ways! For who has known the mind of the Lord, or who became His counselor? Or who has first given to Him that it might be paid back to Him again? For from Him and through Him and to Him are all things. To Him be the glory forever. Amen.” Romans 11:33-36

#### Sobering Warning

Candy and I shudder because we know that greater men than we have fallen! Indeed, this understanding stands as a sober warning for each of us. Knowing that not one of us is righteous or immune to the wiles of the devil, all of us should tremble in fear that we, too, could give God’s enemies occasion to blaspheme Him because of our sins. “Because of this deed you have given occasion to the enemies of the LORD to blaspheme...” 2 Samuel 12:14 Let each of us heed this serious admonition and examine our own hearts. Let us humbly pray that God reveals hidden sins and the sin of pride in which we think we will never fail or fall. Let us plead for God’s forgiveness and beseech His protection.

#### Our Response to Doug Should Be One of Christian Love

Legalists will respond, “What a shame. I knew he was not the man he pretended to be. That certainly will never happen to me.” Those who envied Doug’s ministry will respond with, “I knew it. It was just a matter of time because no one can be that good. He was just too big for his britches.” Those who idolized the man, and not Christ, will be devastated and reject that which he propounded because the idol fell and all that went with it.

“Let him who thinks he stands, take heed that he does not fall.” 1 Corinthians 10:12

“And He told this parable to some people who trusted in themselves that they were righteous, and viewed others with contempt: ‘Two men went up into the temple to pray, one a Pharisee and the other a tax collector. The Pharisee stood and was praying this to himself: ‘God, I thank You that I am not like other people: swindlers, unjust, adulterers, or even like this tax collector. I fast twice a week; I pay tithes of all that I get.’ But the

tax collector, standing some distance away, was even unwilling to lift up his eyes to heaven, but was beating his breast, saying, "God, be merciful to me, the sinner!" I tell you, this man went to his house justified rather than the other; for everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, but he who humbles himself will be exalted." Luke 18:9-14

Christians, who understand their own wretched natures, and that but for God's mercy and grace they deserve nothing other than eternal damnation, will grieve over Doug's sins, Doug's family, the ministry, the young woman and her family, and for the community of believers.

"Who is the one who condemns? Christ Jesus is He who died, yes, rather who was raised, who is at the right hand of God, who also intercedes for us." Romans 8:34 "Be on your guard! If your brother sins, rebuke him; and if he repents, forgive him. And if he sins against you seven times a day, and returns to you seven times, saying, 'I repent,' forgive him." Luke 17:3,4

"Brethren, even if anyone is caught in any trespass, you who are spiritual, restore such a one in a spirit of gentleness; each one looking to yourself, so that you too will not be tempted. Bear one another's burdens, and thereby fulfill the law of Christ. For if anyone thinks he is something when he is nothing, he deceives himself." Galatians 6:13

Reaffirm Your Love "...you should rather forgive and comfort him, otherwise such a one might be overwhelmed by excessive sorrow. Wherefore I urge you to reaffirm your love for him." 2 Corinthians 2:7-8 Doug always told us that our conference was his family's favorite conference and that it always felt like home here because we were his family. In light of Doug's brokenness, and his family's emotional injury, let us join together to help bind up their wounds so that they will not be overcome with despair. And let Doug and his family know the tremendous love we have for them. Again, please send cards and notes of thanksgiving to the Phillips family by December 14, c/o Jon Summers, 236 St. Louis Avenue, Ferguson, MO 63135, and we will make certain that they are included in a special care package that we will be sending to their home in Texas. You may either mail them to us or drop these off at our Ball on December 14. Our Hope for Doug Phillips and for Each of Us Our only hope lies in God's mercy and grace. When we consider the mighty men of God, their great sins, and God's greater grace, we can rejoice that there is hope for ones as wretched as we are. You shall find David's sin clothed with great, heinous, and aggravated circumstances to make it great and grievous; and yet, for all this, that sin was forgiven him.

Examine the circumstances that aggravated David's sin. He who commits adultery sins against his own body. He sins against the body of the woman he is unclean with. It is a wrong to his wife. It is a wrong to the adulteress's husband. It is a wrong to the child that is illegitimately begotten. Consider that it was a great injury to a faithful commander in this army, Uriah. The chief circumstance of all was that David committed many sins to

hide that one sin. He sent for Uriah, Bathsheba's husband, to leave the army when they were storming a place; this might have endangered the whole army. David made Uriah drunk, thinking thereby to make him to go in to his wife. He used a means for Uriah to father the bastard that he had begotten in uncleanness. David conspired and consulted how to kill Uriah. David sent a letter by Uriah, wherein Uriah was a messenger of his own death, which was unknown to him. He laid Uriah's death on God's providence alone, when it was he who plotted how he should be slain. Oh, where was David's conscience all this while? He killed the husband, and then he married the wife. To make the sin sinful beyond measure, David continued under this sin, with all these aggravations, for nine months without repentance or remorse of conscience...yet God forgave such a sin as that, therefore well may David say, "The Lord forgave the iniquity of my sin," not only "sins" but "the iniquity of sin." (Penitent Pardoned by Christopher Love, pages 87-89) "For I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more." Jeremiah 31:34 "Blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven, and whose sin is covered." Psalm 32:1 "Wash me thoroughly from mine iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin." Psalm 51:2 Peter denied Christ when he had made more confident professions that he would cleave to Christ than all the other eleven disciples. Peter said, "Though all men should forsake Thee, yet will not I." Peter denied himself to be Peter. He said he did not know Jesus Christ. He denied Christ to the maid and before all the people. He denied with an oath. To swear to a lie is abominable. Peter not only spoke a falsehood, not only swore a lie, but Peter cursed himself if so be he knew Jesus Christ. (pages 89,90)

Then there is Paul who wronged many of the saints. He put them into prison. Shut them into prison. He gave his voice against them. Paul's rage went against their souls. He compelled them to blaspheme Christ. He labored to damn their souls as well as destroy their bodies. He was exceedingly mad with rage. He drove them into strange cities. He struck at the honor of Jesus Christ. (pages 91,92) "Which thing I also did in Jerusalem, and many of the saints did I shut up in prison, having received authority from the chief priests; and when they were put to death I gave my voice against them. And I punished them oft in every synagogue, and compelled them to blaspheme, and being exceedingly mad against them, I persecuted them even unto strange cities." Acts 26:10,11

These all sinned greatly, and their sorrow and lamentation carried a proportion to their sin in some measure. Peter denied Christ shamefully, "And Peter went out and wept bitterly." David sinned notoriously, and he mourned exceedingly. "Rivers of tears ran from his eyes, he watered his couch with tears." (page 110) Though your sin is great, yet the mercy of God is greater than your sin. "I have blotted out as a thick cloud thy transgressions, and as a cloud, thy sins; return unto Me, for I have redeemed thee." Isaiah 44:22

David fell into the sin of adultery, and the sin was known among all the Gentles, insomuch that the enemies of God spoke ill of religion and spoke ill of God. What did

David do to recompense the wrong done to the church? He made Psalm 51, which was not for his private use only, but for public use. Mark the title of it: "To the Chief Musician, a Psalm of David, when Nathan the Prophet came unto him after he had gone in to Bathsheba." This Psalm was permitted to be sung in the sanctuary and in the temple, that the church of God, being scandalized by David's sin, should be satisfied by David's public confession and repentance. (page 35)

"If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." 1 John 1:9 Our Consolation Consider that no gross sin committed by a justified person can make void his former pardon. The work of God cannot be made void or frustrated by the work of man. Election is a work of God, redemption the work of God, justification the work of God, all which cannot be made void by the work of man. Therefore, if God has elected you, redeemed you, justified and pardoned you, the incursion of gross evils cannot restrain you of former pardon. It is true, sin may make void your former comforts, your former evidence. Gross sins may lay waste your conscience; but they cannot lay waste your grace and the mercies of God. Herein you may be greatly comforted and established.

God does good to His people by their sins...to abate pride in his heart. Men of great parts are apt to be proud. God many times will let strong lusts attend strong gifts the more to abate and keep under the exaltation of spirit. Therefore, said Paul, "I have the messenger of Satan to buffet me, that I might not be exalted above measure." (pages 117,118)  
"You shall remember all the ways which the LORD your God has led you in the wilderness these forty years, that He might humble you, testing you, to know what was in your heart, whether you would keep His commandments or not... In the wilderness He fed you manna which your fathers did not know, that He might humble you and that He might test you, to do good for you in the end." Deuteronomy 8:2,16 Let us take heart, knowing full well that "a righteous man falls seven times, and rises again." Proverbs 24:16

"But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, so that the surpassing greatness of the power will be of God and not from ourselves; we are afflicted in every way, but not crushed; perplexed, but not despairing; persecuted, but not forsaken; struck down, but not destroyed; always carrying about in the body the dying of Jesus, so that the life of Jesus also may be manifested in our body. For we who live are constantly being delivered over to death for Jesus' sake, so that the life of Jesus also may be manifested in our mortal flesh. So death works in us but life for you... For all things are for your sakes, so that the grace which is spreading to more and more people may cause the giving of thanks to abound to the glory of God. Therefore we do not lose heart, but though our outer man is decaying, yet our inner man is being renewed day by day. For momentary, light affliction is producing for us an eternal weight of glory far beyond all comparison, while we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen; for the things which are seen are temporal, but the things which are not seen are eternal." 2 Corinthians 4:7-12; 15-18

“The steps of a man are established by the LORD, and He delights in his way. When he falls, he will not be hurled headlong, because the LORD is the One who holds his hand. I have been young and now I am old, yet I have not seen the righteous forsaken or his descendants begging bread. All day long he is gracious and lends, and his descendants are a blessing.” Psalm 37:23-26 “This I recall to my mind, therefore I have hope. The LORD’s lovingkindnesses indeed never cease, for His compassions never fail. They are new every morning; great is Your faithfulness. ‘The LORD is my portion,’ says my soul, ‘therefore I have hope in Him.’ The LORD is good to those who wait for Him, to the person who seeks Him. It is good that he waits silently for the salvation of the LORD.” Lamentations 3:21-26

“Sing for joy in the LORD, O you righteous ones; praise is becoming to the upright. Give thanks to the LORD with the lyre; sing praises to Him with a harp of ten strings. Sing to Him a new song; play skillfully with a shout of joy. For the word of the LORD is upright, and all His work is done in faithfulness. He loves righteousness and justice; the earth is full of the lovingkindness of the LORD. By the word of the LORD the heavens were made, and by the breath of His mouth all their host. He gathers the waters of the sea together as a heap; He lays up the deeps in storehouses. Let all the earth fear the LORD; let all the inhabitants of the world stand in awe of Him. For He spoke, and it was done, He commanded, and it stood fast. The LORD nullifies the counsel of the nations; He frustrates the plans of the peoples. The counsel of the LORD stands forever, the plans of His heart from generation to generation. Blessed is the nation whose God is the LORD, the people whom He has chosen for His own inheritance. The LORD looks from heaven; He sees all the sons of men; from His dwelling place He looks out on all the inhabitants of the earth, He who fashions the hearts of them all, He who understands all their works. The king is not saved by a mighty army; a warrior is not delivered by great strength. A horse is a false hope for victory; nor does it deliver anyone by its great strength. Behold, the eye of the LORD is on those who fear Him, on those who hope for His lovingkindness, to deliver their soul from death and to keep them alive in famine. Our soul waits for the LORD; He is our help and our shield. For our heart rejoices in Him, because we trust in His holy name. Let Your lovingkindness, O LORD, be upon us, according as we have hoped in You.” Psalm 33

Love, Jon and Candy