

FAITH, HOPE AND LOVE ABIDE

Summer time is a time of festivity, a time of gathering together, a time for merry making. It is a time of feasting and celebration. The Bible tells us that a merry heart does good like a medicine and a cheerful mind works healing. We experienced just such a time as this on Friday the 13th at the annual Family Festival of Faith sponsored by the core churches and participating ministries of the downtown core of Abbotsford.

On that night there was a great celebration taking place in the streets of Abbotsford. In the midst of the "Jericho March" the participants from the core churches sounded the shofars (trumpets), and waved the banners and flags in declaration and acknowledgement of the presence of the Living God in the streets of the city. It began at the Abbotsford Baptist Church, winding through the core past the other churches to join with the other participants waiting in the parking lot of Faith Bible Church. The sounds of celebration and victory echoed through the streets in a section of town where defeat, hopelessness, despair, discouragement and many more issues of life abound. A visual statement and message of victory over darkness, of faith hope and love was ushered into the city streets.

As the crowd gathered together for the festivities, acquaintances and friendships were renewed and new relationships sparked as we shared corn on the cob and homemade cookies prepared as a labour of love for those in attendance. There was great music provided by the various musicians of the participating churches ... music that was inspirational, inviting and engaging. Prayer was made available at the prayer tent stations for any who desired to receive it. This relaxed atmosphere on a warm summer's eve was conducive to the comfort experienced as the crowd mingled and enjoyed being in the presence of one another and the presence of the Lord Himself.

There were true to life stories presented by people whose lives had been changed forever. From the young in age to the older adult, lives have been radically transformed not by human strength but by supernatural strength and power. The chains of drug addiction, criminal activity and the like have been loosed from these ones who chose a better way --- the way of the cross of Jesus Christ and the victory He won for each one, no matter what the past has been or the present is. There is hope for a future that is different.

Ace Clarke of Hamilton, Ont. Shared his testimony of the supernatural ability and power that rescued him from a lifestyle of drugs and criminal activity as Sergeant of arms of the "Wild Ones" bike gang some 30 years ago. Jesus Christ, the superhero of all time – past, present and future saved this man, and each and every one of us from eternal damnation and separation from the Living God. The Bible tells us that God has highly exalted Him and has freely bestowed on Him the name that is above every name, that in the name of Jesus every knee must bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue confess and acknowledge that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of the Father.

In this day and this hour when the people in the streets of our city are in desperate need, there is an answer. Faith, hope and love in action made possible through the power of Jesus Christ working through God's people. The Bible says, " what eye has not seen and ear has not heard

and has not entered into the hearts of man, all that God has prepared for those who love Him. 1Corinthians 13:13 says, And so faith, hope, love abide these three; but the greatest of these is love. The Family Festival of Faith may be an annual event but the love, acceptance and forgiveness is available to all every day of the year.

Written by: Ray and Leslie Johnson from Resurrection Life.