

Tacoma Chapter



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Newsletter

June-July 2001

Monthly Meeting – Come and join us each month on the third Monday at the home of Ron & Mindy Gretty, 5512 33rd Ave. Ct. E in Tacoma. *Here are directions:* You will need to get on Waller Road. From the Puyallup tribal center near I-5 take Pioneer Way southeast then turn south on Waller Road. From HomeClub near I-5 take 72nd Street east, then turn north on Waller Road. Go to 57th Street and turn east. Travel a few blocks and turn left (north) on 33rd Avenue. Go to the end of the street and take the driveway straight ahead.

Next meetings: July 16th, 7pm and August 20th, 7 pm.

God's Amazing Miracle Storm in Manti Stuns Mormons

June 23rd is a day that will be remembered for years to come in Manti, Utah as the **Anti Manti Miracle Storm of 2001**: The year a '14-year-old boy went into the woods to pray' (in Manti Park), calling on God to show His wrath upon the "Mormon Miracle" pageant and tens of thousands of Mormon attendees.

It turned out to be the grand climax to a remarkable mission trip to reach LDS people with the real gospel. The Tacoma chapter of Saints Alive had sent 12 trained lay Christians on the five-day mission trip. The group joined over a hundred Christians from all over the United States who independently came to witness on the streets of Manti each evening of the Mormons' temple pageant during the hours preceding each show.

In all, it is known that at least nine Mormons (probably more) gave their lives to (the real) Jesus Christ, receiving the gift of the forgiveness of sins and eternal life. Two of those decisions were reported by the Tacoma team, and twenty more that had heard the gospel clearly presented by our own Tacoma Saints Alive missionaries were thought to be very close to receiving Christ by faith. How many Mormon lives

were changed forever through the witnessing during those five days will only be known when we all get to heaven as seeds were planted again and again, but the final evening of the pageant involved all of the twenty to thirty thousand Mormons present.

Josh Champneys, the 14-year-old son of ex-Mormon Mark Champneys, had been saying that he wanted to pray against the evil message portrayed in the pageant and to ask God to send rain to disrupt it. However, Mark and Jim reminded him that such a prayer might not be helpful since the Christians wanted good weather prior to the pageant for witnessing. So Josh decided that for the final and biggest evening of the pageant that he was going to pray for a miracle. He was going to pray for God to send a storm to show God's wrath upon the pageant, yet not to send rain in the hours prior to the pageant so that witnessing could still take place. He contrived this plan on Saturday and enlisted a few others in the group to join him in his prayer while Mark and others had gone to the Provo area for the day. When his father returned for the evening witnessing, Joshua excitedly told Mark and others what he had been praying for. "For over thirty years the Mormons have boasted that the pageant has never been rained out," Mark said later, "but Josh has a habit of getting his prayers answered."

It was truly a remarkable evening of witnessing that final night as Josh and his 16-year-old brother Nate led a Mormon young man to Christ, then had the opportunity to witness to the president of the Manti Temple Pageant along with Pastor Rains' daughter, Ingrid. Confidently, these young people discussed the forgiveness of sins with this older gentleman, and were stunned as the president admitted that he did not have the forgiveness of all his sins—in front of a crowd of other Mormons. The man began to shake visibly, and then explain that he was to play the part of the angel Moroni during the pageant itself, standing atop the west tower of the temple with a trumpet in his hand. Even then, clouds were gathering and lightning could be seen in the distance here and there. He admitted he was afraid.

Meanwhile, Mark was concluding a witnessing encounter with another LDS man as it grew darker and the 9:15 start time of the pageant approached. Then... it began to rain lightly. Suddenly Mark remembered his son's words about his prayer and stopped the conversation about salvation to look up and say, "My son prayed for this storm." After leaving the Mormon man with a tract, he joined other Christians in the team to stand outside the

barricades to watch the pageant begin...and to watch the storm begin.

The wind started to blow furiously, lightening flashed, and the rain came down harder and harder. Few of the thousands of Mormons in the seating area were prepared with umbrellas or rain gear. The street barricades blew over and slammed to the ground. Finally, most of the Christians decided to leave for the shelter of "Miller's" where they often gather for a late hamburger and for reporting on the witnessing of the evening. A large group of young Christians from San Diego were already gathered inside, filling it with the beautiful sound of songs of praise to God as the storm outside became more and more violent. Then Mark remembered that one of the prayer team back home had passed along a verse two days before that he hadn't fully understood at the time: 2 Chronicles 20:21-22. He read it aloud to them:

And when he had consulted with the people, he appointed those who should sing to the LORD, and who should praise the beauty of holiness, as they went out before the army and were saying: "Praise the LORD, For His mercy endures forever." Now when they began to sing and to praise, the LORD set ambushes against the people of Ammon, Moab, and Mount Seir, who had come against Judah; and they were defeated.

Indeed, the ambush was occurring at that moment as the storm grew in intensity. Mormons began to scramble for the exits, rushing to leave the pageant. Most had come from hundreds of miles away, and many from thousands of miles away just to see the pageant, but they rushed by the window with their blankets and their families. Soon, a long traffic jam formed as Mormons tried to leave town at once through the storm, while, pridefully, LDS Church officials refused to stop the pageant despite drenched performers playing to an "empty house." Josh returned to the pageant to watch the judgment of God on the Mormons, as he watched most of the last of the most stubborn ones leave the pageant, long before it finished. The Christian missionaries stood in awe as they watched the amazing storm rage; and then, as the pageant ended, saw the storm end as well. The Tacoma team of Christians had experienced hot, dry, sunny weather throughout their five days, except for two very wet hours during the final climactic night of the pageant from 9 to 11 p.m. And all because a 14-year-old Christian boy went into the woods of Manti Park to pray. Ironic, isn't it.

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