



Inside this issue

Remembering

by Evangelist Bill Rice III

Back at the Ranch

Highways and Hedges

From West Branch

Big Events in Colorado
by Evangelist Troy Carlson



From the President

Do You Celebrate Christmas?

by Evangelist Wil Rice IV

You will recognize this story as your own. I stood in the restless check-out line. The scents of perfume and pumpkin spice advertised themselves as the celebration of...something. The storewide stereo piped the carols of a crooner across the massive building. Green wreaths, golden lights, and red bows all seemed to blurt, "Merry Christmas!"

Actually, every sense seemed to be bombarded with sights and sounds that loudly *implied*, though carefully so not to offend, "Uh, have a Merry Christmas, if you want. But if not, the shortest day of the year is on its way; feel free to party!"

As I made my purchases, all of them Christmas gifts, the lady at the check out smiled warmly. "Merry...uh...Happy..." The momentary cloud cleared. "Happy Holidays!" "Same to you," I smiled back. A little empty, isn't it? By now, we all know the growing trend to only imply Christmas. We profit from it, and we party in it; but we take pains not to celebrate it.

Well, what is the difference? What does it mean to "celebrate"? My family had this very discussion a month ago, the next to the last evening of October. To party and to celebrate are not necessarily the same thing. A party needs but an excuse; a celebration must have a reason.

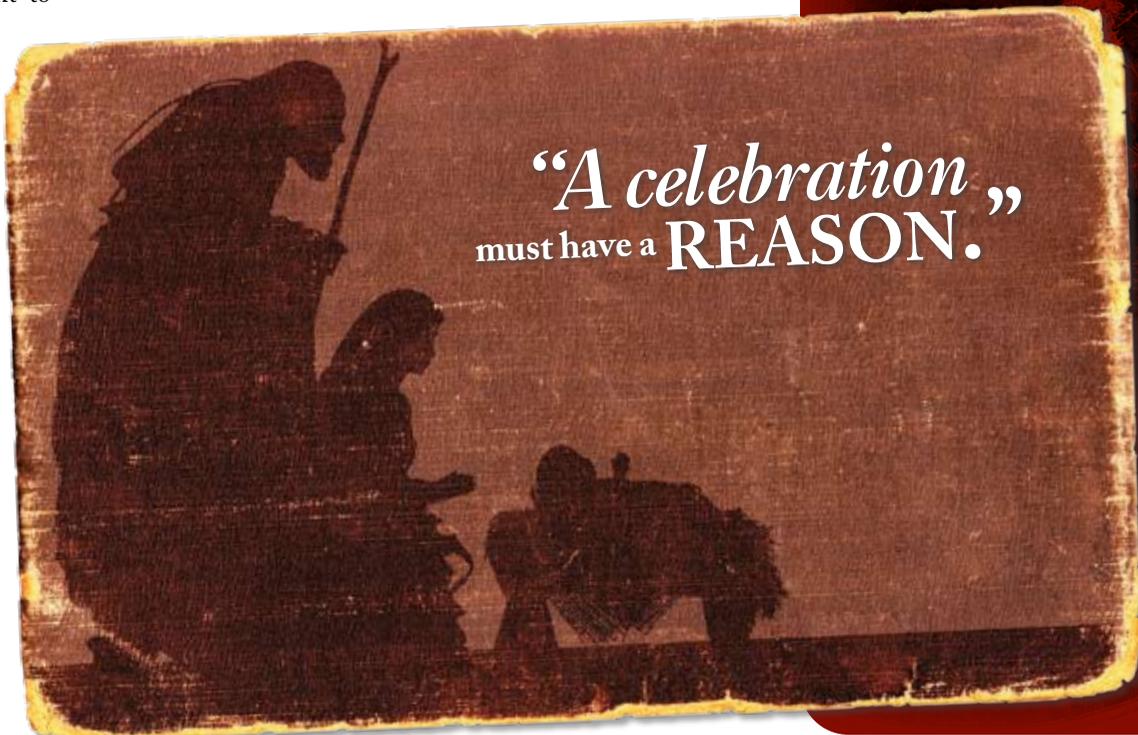
To celebrate, I told my kids, is to remember or recognize the worth of something or someone. Think about it. On Memorial Day, does every American recognize the worth of the sacrifices made to keep this country free? No, but we all like grilling out and kicking back! Now, there is certainly nothing wrong with festivities. There is nothing necessarily wrong with a

"happy holiday." But when there is no memory on a day, there is no celebration, only a party, like a birthday party without a birth...like Christmas without Christ.

Good friend, you can have "Merry" without "Christmas"; but without Christ, you will never have the joy of which the angels spoke when they announced Christ's birth to shepherds. You will not have the peace that is a Person. That peace comes in the Prince of Peace.

Now, let us take a deep breath and remember something. "Merry Christmas" is a wish and not a weapon. And yet to many, God's offer is an offense. God's Gift is, to some, like offering advice to the brilliant, health to the young, or money to the rich. They think they don't need it! Christ's birth implies that, contrary to one bumper sticker I saw, you and I were not born right the first time! A person who does not recognize his need of Christ will be hard-pressed to celebrate Him.

So, do I recognize Christmas? Do I remember the birth of the Son of God? Do I take time in December to acknowledge God's Gift? Yes, I do! This is a season to celebrate!





Remembering

by Evangelist Bill Rice III

What a wonderful time of year! Christmas, the ending of one year, and the beginning of the next all constitute a special time for me. Of course, I am not alone in this; more than likely you feel the same way. One of the things that makes this time of year special is its ability to cause us to reflect, to remember. One cannot go through the Christmas season without remembering the birth, the life, and the death of the dear Lord Jesus Christ. But December, it seems, also demands that we reflect on our own previous twelve months or on our past in general. I have been doing that lately and have recalled many of the people who have had a blessed impact on me. One such person is Paul Levin.

Paul Levin was an evangelist who came to speak at the Ranch for my father in 1956 for the first time and for me in 1996 for the last time. He also preached every year in between those two years. Paul Levin preached on the Ranch over one thousand times! "Dr. Paul" made a great impression on me, on my brother Pete, who preaches literally around the world, and on my adopted brother Ronnie, who preaches primarily to those who are deaf.

I learned from Dr. Paul about the will of God,



about assurance of salvation, much about the calling of evangelists, and a bunch – believe it or not – about marriage! He taught me how to be logical in the progression of a sermon, how to be true to a text, and how important it is to use proper illustrations.

He was gracious and kind, always presented the gospel clearly, loved softball, and disliked riding horses! He was quick to defer to others but strong in his own convictions and lived

with a constant desire to point others to Bible truths. He was a musician and had a great sense of humor.

Paul Levin has been in heaven now for more than twelve years. And I still miss him! Countless others do, as well.

I should mention the fact that he also had a significant impact on Wil's life. So, interestingly enough, remembering Paul Levin gives me an opportunity to think on the present and dream for the future. All of this brings us back to where we started a few moments ago. This time of year with its recognition of Christ's birth and the beginning of a new day, gives us a reason for remembering the past and looking toward the future. The Christmas season demands this of us. After all, the Lord Jesus was born, lived, and died more than two thousand years ago. But that past provides to everyone who trusts in Christ a future in heaven. So, this season provides remembrance and a look to tomorrow. It is a little bit like remembering Dr. Paul Levin. The memories are bright, but since I will see him again in Glory, the future is as well.

*What a wonderful time of year!
Merry Christmas!*

BACK AT THE RANCH...

BILL RICE RANCH

Highways and Hedges



Throughout the fall, Ranch evangelists have been around the country holding revival meetings and conducting conferences. The Lord has blessed with a wonderful harvest of souls, encouraging God's people. The harvest has been primary back home, too, where many young people have trusted Christ in retreats and through our own Bill Rice Christian Academy. People from fourteen states have attended our conferences and retreats this fall.



Camp staff members have made recruiting trips to several Christian colleges to find workers for next summer's harvest also. Many contacts have been made, and over forty have already joined our team for the 2010 summer.



We are also preparing facilities for the many campers who will travel the highway our direction next summer. We thank the Lord for work projects completed by our own staff and by volunteers who have come from out-of-state to donate their abilities to air conditioning, fencing, and other projects. Local volunteers in Arizona have also spent time on the West Branch site under development.



WANTED SUMMER STAFF CONTACTS

Past

Help us locate past Bill Rice Ranch summer and permanent staff members to join our Pardner Club. Know someone who has talked about the "good ol' days" working at the Ranch? Make sure they know about our Pardner Club!

615-893-2767 ext. 155
pardnerclub@billriceranch.org

Future

Help us find summer staff counselors for 2010! Know some godly young people coming home from Christian college for the Christmas break? Give 'em a nudge our direction and see the Lord work in their lives as they help others this summer at the Ranch!

REWARD:

Knowing you encouraged a young person to have the summer of his or her life!

615-893-2767 ext. 135
recruitment@billriceranch.org

Big Events in Colorado

It was the largest recorded October snowstorm in the history of Fort Collins, Colorado. Maybe you heard about it. Over the span of 121 years of record keeping, this was the biggest October storm, officially 21.3 inches. Hundreds of miles of Colorado and Wyoming interstates were closed because of mammoth drifting. Friends contacted me to see if I had gotten stuck in it. With praise to the Lord, I say...nope—I had already high-tailed it out of there!

I was interested to hear about all that snow, though. We had traveled many stretches of those closed highways across Wyoming just a few days before. In fact, we traveled about 450 miles one day alone. During that drive, I noticed the largest snow fences I had ever seen in my life and wondered in amazement at the huge storms that must blow through that part of the country. I am very thankful that the Lord saw fit to only let me wonder about it and not see it for myself! We had also parked our fifth-wheel in Cheyenne, Wyoming, which got hit with the same big storm. But, again, all was dry when we saw it. We missed the “big event.”

We had been in Fort Collins for a big event, though—but not that big event. Front Range Baptist Church hosted our second **Men on the Move** Conference of the year, the first being in our hometown of Williams, Arizona. In Fort

Collins, we were pleased to have men join us from Colorado and Wyoming to hear the preaching of the Bible from Evangelist Bill Rice III and Evangelist John Goetsch. I was also



privileged to preach. In our brief time together, we heard great Bible truths from Romans 8:28 and Luke 6:38. We were also challenged to be “full” like Stephen, to consider whether we like the fruit we are “eating” in our lives, and to simply believe what God has said. I believe every man present saw God do something in his life. Many important spiritual decisions were made. That constitutes a big event!

A few days after the snowstorm was over, I called an assistant pastor in that area who had been out on an elk hunt in the mountains when the storm

came. I was concerned that the snowstorm might have been a big problem to these guys who were a few thousand feet higher in elevation than the cities that had been blasted. To my amazement, he told me that they only saw about eight inches of snow! Even more amazing was the fact that all the “record snow” had melted by the time they got back home!

You know what? Snow falls and snow melts. That happens. The melting kind of minimizes the significance of the event in our memory. But the preaching of the Bible isn't really like that. Our spiritual lives may have big events in them—like a men's conference, but the significance of the men's conference isn't necessarily the “excitement” of the event. The significance is the fact that we men gave ourselves to hear many Bible truths in a concentrated time. While the event was exciting in some regards, it was more like a 450 mile drive in one day. We covered a lot of ground! When we got done, we had gotten somewhere—progress in the journey.

That is what I love about being a part of a Bible-preaching ministry. You see progress. So many times critics will say that “events” aren't really that helpful because the benefit will just melt away. While the memory of an event could melt away, the benefit of the “water by the word” is long-lasting and immeasurably helpful.

Check out our
West Branch on the Move
 SCHEDULE for 2010 [online!](#)



CHRISTMAS IS A SPECIAL SEASON for spending time with family and giving gifts in commemoration of God's greatest gift, His Son. As we near the end of this year, would you prayerfully consider making a special gift to support the **twenty-two families and nine individuals** who have been giving of themselves at the Ranch this year? Your gift will help us continue to share God's greatest gift with deaf and hearing young people from all over the country. We thank you and the Lord for your spirit of giving this Christmas season.



Join over 1,800 subscribers who are encouraged and challenged three times each week by Wil Rice's brief devotional thoughts. Sign up at www.billriceranch.org.

No charge. Unsubscribe at any time.



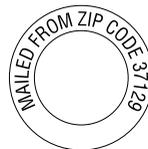
Needs at the Ranch

- Metal Chop Saw**
- Jack Hammer** (Electric or Air Compressor)
- Rock Drill**
- Leather Sewing Machine**
- Small Sized Self-propelled Road Grader** (needed for upkeep of cinder road at West Branch)

If you have a lead on any of these items or you would like to make a donation of one of these items to the Ranch, please contact Dale Stover, 615-893-2767, ext. 105 or dstover@billriceranch.org



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Bill Rice Ranch PUBLICATIONS

Christmas Special

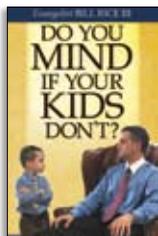
FREE SHIPPING!

on **all orders over \$30.*** November 23–December 16 **ONLY**

Here are two sale items to get you started:



**Sing We Now
of Christmas**
Beautiful harmonies of
traditional Christmas
songs **\$12.99** ~~\$15.00~~



**Do You Mind If
Your Kids Don't?**
A gift that will
last for generations
\$11.99 ~~\$14.00~~

Many other great gift ideas online!

*Free shipping does not apply to international orders.

Where can you find ?

a place that will support your convictions with your family or church youth group

At the Bill Rice Ranch. !

Have a great time in an atmosphere you can trust while seeing the Lord change lives

Summer 2010

Youth Week I
June 13-18

Youth Week II
June 27-July 2

Youth Week III
July 11-16

Youth Week IV
July 18-23

Youth Week V
July 25-30



NEW for 2010: All rooms now
AIR CONDITIONED!

Junior Weeks

(ages 8-12) offered simultaneously with each Youth Week and Family Week I.

Family Weeks

July 4-8 & August 1-5

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Bill Rice Ranch Summer 2010



Save \$15
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to receive the lowest rate
for camp next summer in
the Youth or Junior programs.

Deaf ages 9-19 are invited for
one week **Free!**

Go to billriceranch.org for more details.