

# Grounded in Grace



## *Turning Points*

THIRTY YEARS AGO a group of teenagers and adults made an incredible impact on my life. At fifteen, I was an awkward little teenager who struggled with my self-image, friendships, and social skills. During those years, my family fell on hard financial times. I went to school, worked two part-time jobs, and gave my earnings to my parents to help pay the bills. In order to get to my jobs, I rode a ten-speed bike. The bike was dangerous to ride. I needed a new one, but my parents could not afford to buy one. So times were tough.

On December 28, 1986, I was given an amazing gift. My youth group, called “THE ROCK,” raised money and bought me a twelve-speed Bridgestone bike for Christmas! I was shocked, but even more so my life was impacted! Mitchell Road Presbyterian Church became a place of safety, love, and support for me in a world I was finding out wasn’t too kind. God used this group of people to show me grace. This day was a turning point in my story. The above picture is of Zoe, Christopher, and me next to this very same bike. A few weeks ago I had it completely restored for this anniversary. Now they will have an opportunity to ride it. Over the last year I have tried to find many who were part of this special group. Sadly, I could not find them all. If you have received this letter through the postal mail, you were part of this special story. I want to express a heartfelt

**“THANK YOU!” You made an impact in my soul more far reaching beyond anything you could ever imagine. This gift has never been forgotten. I received a glimpse of heaven in my broken world. Because of your generosity to me, I have desired to love others more than me, give generously to the disadvantaged, and make an impact in other people’s worlds. One of our (Krista’s and my) core values is to give without notice, love others lavishly, and be a secret saint for God’s grace to the soul. Because of you, others have benefited from your incredible love towards me many years ago. Thank you for making an impact!**

If you are reading this because of a connection we have, then I ask to you to make an impact in another person’s life. God intends us to experience turning points so we may capture a glimpse of his heaven.

A turning point might be offering an olive branch toward reconciling brokenness.

A turning point might be turning away from self-protected attitudes through humility.

A turning point might be giving grace to those who hurt you though they may not deserve it.

A turning point might be finding others who are disadvantaged and giving generously.

A turning point might be going back or discovering the gospel of grace in a new way.

Any way you go, live for a turning point this year rich with eternal rewards!

Love beyond yourself. Give grace when another disappoints you. Show eternal kindness to those who live in a world that is not kind. Be a mover of grace because you never know the eternal impact of your choices.

**Remember- you are his beloved!**

*Steve Benson*

P.S. Please keep in contact. My e-mail is [sbenson317@gmail.com](mailto:sbenson317@gmail.com)

# A YEAR IN REVIEW- 2016

## January - March

In January, we adopted our incredible son Christopher Samuel. He is Zoe's full biological brother. We are thankful to the birth parents for our two wonderful children. Krista was able to take most of last spring off on maternity leave so she could be with him. What a wonderful gift. Zoe and Christopher are doing well together. They are wonderful little beloved children. We are thankful to love them and to live out the parable of grace. What a blessing God has given us!



## April - June

I had the opportunity to speak at the North Carolina Spring Addiction Conference. I was also able to teach a few seminars on my book, Embracing Love, this year. If you are interested, some of the talks are posted on my website: [www.groundedingrace.net](http://www.groundedingrace.net).

## July - August

In the summer, I contributed to an article published by Covenant Seminary on loss and grief in transitions of two churches becoming one. Also a brief excerpt from "Embracing Love" was featured in a men's newsletter from my church. I had the privilege of preaching at my in-law's church in Ohio as well.



## September - December

I started year four of teaching at Charlotte Christian College in the area of counseling. Krista continues to teach at Enochville Elementary. Christopher got baptized in November at Lake Forest Church. We both enjoy loving on our two children. We spent the Christmas holiday with Krista's family.



Overall, God has allowed Krista and me to make an impact as a counselor and a teacher. It is wonderful to be involved in helping others discover their turning points, to see transformation of people's hearts, and to watch God redeem brokenness through us.



*Remember - You are his beloved*