

# Cliff's Notes

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## Meet Pastor Mike



Pastor Mike Burchfield of West Hills Community Church, Morgan Hill

On May 12, 2006, Pastor Mike hosted a church plant meeting in Sunnyvale for anyone interested in starting a new Bible church in the Bay area. Cliff & Debbie McManis were invited, along with a couple dozen others. 3 months later God started GBF! Mike has been at West Hills Church for over 20 years, is a missionary, has planted churches, exposites the Word and was a catalyst to get GBF started. He has remained a faithful counselor and advisor to GBF the past 2 years. A few months ago Mike was a guest at our Elder's meeting, where he spent almost 2 hours answering questions about church-planting, leadership, ordination and many other practical ministry issues. Having him was part of GBF's formal elder-training process. His wisdom, humility, and commitment to biblical integrity are exemplary and have set a worthy model for us to follow.

## Meet Pastor Steve



Pastor Steve Fernandez of Community Bible Church & The Cornerstone Seminary, Vallejo, CA

Pastor Steve planted a church over 20 years ago from scratch and today it is a model, thriving church in Vallejo, CA. Steve is the President of The Cornerstone Seminary in Vallejo where Pastor Cliff is currently a part-time Professor of Theology. Steve is a missionary, evangelist, church planter and fiery preacher of God's Word. Steve is also a friend of GBF. He came as a guest 2 months ago to our monthly Elder's meeting and spent 2 hours with our men answering questions about elders, deacons, missions, small groups, finances, prayer, church-planting and more. The time was worth 3 units of a seminary education. Steve's visit with us was also part of the deliberate ongoing leadership training we have been providing for our elders and deacons. The Bible says "there is wisdom in a multitude of counselors." We have been seeking out godly counselors like Mike, Steve, and a few other biblical pastors, to glean from their many years of hard work and experience in church-planting, shepherding and ministry in general. Steve continues to be a source of encouragement, fellowship, accountability and friendship to GBF, particularly to Pastor Cliff. I thank God for faithful foot soldiers of the cross, like Steve and Mike, here in the Bay area that we can partner with in advancing Christ's Kingdom.

# Marriage Under Siege

Two weeks ago on May 15, 2008, the California Supreme Court subverted the will of the people by overturning Prop 22 by a ruling of 4-3. This ruling is the result of Mayor (of SF) Gavin Newsom's crusade to formalize gay marriage. In March 2000, California citizens overwhelmingly voted in favor of Proposition 22, the Defense of Marriage Act. Prop 22 states, "Only marriage between a man and a woman is valid or recognized in California." 61.4% of the voters supported this measure—the actual number voting for it was 4,618,673! 52 out of 58 CA counties voted in favor of it—all 6 of the opposing counties were from the SF Bay area. Four liberal judges overturned the democratic process by the stroke of a pen. One of those four liberal judges is Justice Ronald M. George. How can four people undermine the sensibilities of over four and a half million people? It's ghastly, and a barometer of the ongoing dissolution and decay of the moral, societal and political fabric that continues to spread like cancer in American society.

This injunction will become law within 30 days unless there is a 'stay.' Fortunately that is being considered, thanks to the **Alliance Defense Fund**, whose attorneys submitted a petition on May 22 to the CA Supreme Court. The petition is a request for a 'stay' until the Secretary of State decides whether or not a Marriage amendment will be on the ballot for voters this November. Over one million signatures have been collected in an effort to get the amendment on the ballot. Governor Schwarzenegger has vowed to **NOT** support a constitutional amendment that protects traditional marriage.

Currently 26 states have amended their constitutions in favor of traditional marriage. Only Massachusetts, since February 2004, allows "gay" marriage. Federally, in 1996 Congress passed the Defense of Marriage Act which states, "the word 'marriage' means only a legal union between one man and one woman as husband and wife, and the word 'spouse' refers only to a person of the opposite sex who is a husband or wife."

Hebrews 13:5 says, "Let marriage be held in honor among all, and let the marriage bed be undefiled; for fornicators and adulterers God will judge." God created marriage in the beginning, before He created government, Israel and the Church. He codified its safeguard in the 10 Commandments (Exodus 20). He is more committed to protecting biblical marriage than we are. He will not be mocked. Biblical monogamous, heterosexual marriage is the very picture and symbol of the greater eternal reality of Christ's relationship with His precious Bride, the Church. God will not allow that picture to be distorted. "He who sits in the heavens laughs, the LORD scoffs at them. Then He will speak to them in His anger and terrify them in His fury" (Psalm 2:4-5).