

## Doing the Father's Work

This past weekend we took our local grandsons to see the Spectacular Holiday Blooms walk at the Paul J. Ciener Botanical Garden. It lived up to its name – it was spectacular! As we walked around and saw all the lighted flowers, we ran into David Ciener, one of two sons of Paul Ciener. Paul Ciener loved botanical gardens. He traveled the world to study them, and dreamed of creating one in his hometown. Gardening is a tradition that spans generations of the Ciener family. Before his passing, Paul Ciener told his sons about his vision of a botanical garden in Kernersville. Upon Paul Ciener's passing in 1998, his sons brought the vision of their father to life, creating a 7-acre, public botanical garden. The garden is a non-profit organization that serves the community and is a source of community pride. It attracts tourists to the community, educates children about flowers and gardening, and is a favorite venue for weddings, outdoor concerts, and community events.



It seems that every time I am at the botanical garden (which is often), one or both of Paul's sons – David & Greg -- are also there. Initially, David Ciener operated his late father's auto dealership, but scaled back to devote the time to create and develop the Paul J. Ciener Botanical Garden. While each son owns a Kernersville business, they focus significant attention to developing the garden that honors their dad. Paul Ciener would be most proud.



Jesus' earthly dad was a carpenter and was in the lineage of King David. Jesus also developed skills in the carpentry trade, but Jesus' purpose in life was to do the work of His Heavenly Father. His goal was the salvation of mankind. Even in His youth, Jesus knew His purpose. The first recorded words of Jesus were spoken when he stayed behind in the temple, while his parents started their return trip home after celebrating the Passover. When Mary and Joseph realized Jesus was not with them, they went back and found him in the temple. Jesus' response to them was: *Why were you looking for me? Did you not know that I must be about my Father's business (Luke 3:49 NKJV).*

Jesus saw himself as the servant of His Heavenly Father. He didn't seek his own work, but was devoted entirely to His Heavenly Father's business. How did He do this? He did it through the Spirit of obedience and honoring the sacred call to the work of His Father. He kept a covenant with the Father, carrying out His earthly purpose until he said the words from the cross, "It is finished." He turned the work over to His followers – including us.

As followers of Christ, our goal is to be like Jesus, and to encourage others to do the same. The disciples certainly did this, traveling far and wide to spread the Good News. Now, it is our turn. We can use whatever gifts God has given us to do the business of the Heavenly Father. Sharing the Good News of Jesus Christ fulfills the Will of God. *I delight to do your will, O my God; your law is within my heart (Psalm 40:8)*

David and Greg are dedicated to carrying out the vision of their dad, Paul Ciener, creating a place of year-round beauty. David and Greg are their biggest volunteers. David Ciener once said, "The garden is my father's way of giving back to the community that supported him." As Christians, we support our Heavenly Father's vision when we light the path for others by sharing His vision of salvation. Life eternal with the Father is beautiful, too. The garden was only possible because of the passing of Paul Ciener. Our salvation is only possible because Jesus died on the cross for us. Browsing the flowers at the PJCBG is a gift to the people. The salvation offered by Jesus Christ is also a free gift. A 2011 Winston-Salem Journal article had the headline, "Family Realizes Father's Vision." David and Greg have worked diligently to make it successful. How about you? Do you realize God's vision for mankind? What can you do to further that vision by growing the Kingdom?



**The Bible Says:** *Why were you looking for me? Did you not know that I must be about my Father's business (Luke 3:49 NKJV).*

**Question:** How can you share God's vision of salvation with others?

**Prayer:** Lord. We thank you for people who are devoted to sharing the free gift of salvation as we encourage others. Let us be part of illuminating their paths to grow the Kingdom. Amen.

