



HOPE Ministries Highlights

April 2012

Special points of interest:

- Nevin talks about a killer in relationships
- Kevin and Sharon Knepp share their testimony of God's work in their lives
- Enjoy an update and pictures about the Hospitality Cottage
- Board member, Julian Nisly, shares about true restoration

Mission Statement:

HOPE Ministries seeks to help individuals explore patterns that may have developed over their lifetime and provide opportunities to allow Jesus to bring healing and HOPE to their lives in fresh ways.

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Who's On Top?—by Nevin Nisly



Nevin with granddaughter, Alice

Have you ever found yourself in close proximity with a person who had an over-inflated view of themselves? We are quick to label this mentality with the word “pride.” I’m wondering if perhaps the main reason that people find themselves in this place is because they DON’T have a good view of themselves and they are fighting to be on top. It is easy to point fingers at these people and tell them that God hates pride and they need to humble themselves. This person lacks understanding of the intrinsic value of who God created him to be.

There is a less obvious kind of pride. This shows itself in putting ourselves down and making ourselves out to be a nobody. Our thinking or speech constantly degrades ourselves. Both kinds of pride are self-focus—the subject of each kind is “I”. Pride or self-focus actually does not agree with what Jesus thinks about me. God calls us to be

“other-focused.” Consider what Paul says in Phil. 2:3-5. “Put yourself aside, and help others get ahead. Don’t be obsessed with getting your own advantage. Forget yourselves long enough to lend a helping hand. **You must have the same attitude Christ Jesus had.**” (MSG)

It is easy to self-focus when we feel misunderstood or attacked rather than having an “other-focus”, which is to reach out to understand the other person. Self-focus demands that people care about me, while caring for someone else is a gift we give.

Why is it that we often find ourselves defending our position instead of trying to understand what the other person is thinking? Why do we tend to get defensive when someone takes something out of context and makes us look bad? Why do we have to have everything perfect because of what others might think? These are all ways that we tend to look out for ourselves.

When I upset someone, my natural response is to

withdraw, quickly try to appease them, retreat and “lick my wounds,” and feel sorry for myself, hoping they quickly get over their anger. Some people self-focus by going to anger, some use criticism, and others use control to make sure they don’t get hurt. How much better it would be to ask and investigate the feelings that are going on inside of the other person.

What would it look like for me NOT to pick up self-focus after an attack, but instead care about the one who has just hurt me? When someone gets angry with me, could I stay engaged and let them know I care about the feelings they are experiencing? Could I find out

what was done or said that triggered their anger? When someone takes something I said out of context, instead of defending myself, could I recognize that they are hurting and try to understand what motivated them to judge me in ways I never intended. The hardest step of breaking out of self-focus will be at this point.

To care about someone

Self-focus demands that people care about me, while caring for someone else is a gift we give.

Who's On Top? (continued from page 1)

without expecting them to understand my feelings is a gift of "other-focus" that I have the ability to choose, even when it seems like I don't. The enemy does not want me to see my choice and wants me to believe it is okay to follow my familiar patterns of reactions. The solution is to find out what Jesus thinks of me and what He made me to be rather than depending on what others think. Would this fulfill the law of Christ which is to love my neighbor as I love myself?

This is not an easy task, but a life-long journey. Joann and I both have our own ways of moving toward self-focus which is so natural. As we've become more aware of these natural

patterns that the enemy has controlled, we've also become more aware of how it destroys our relationship as well. When we focus more on what the other one is experiencing and feeling, we actually both come out of the ordeal feeling loved.

Yes, to go against the tug of the natural is very difficult—but the end result is worth it. Remember, self-focus (pride) demands; care and understanding are gifts to be given. What will you give to those you with whom you come in contact?

To go against the tug of the natural is very difficult—but the end result is worth it.

When we are misunderstood, Jesus cares. He wants us to come to Him for comfort and healing; He loves to GIVE it to us. When we go to Him and receive His care, acceptance, and understanding, we begin to understand our value to Him as a person and don't need to self-focus. This is a way that we can guard our own hearts rather than negate the hurt (Prov. 4:23). Jesus calls for us to learn this supernatural response to the pain we experience. We invite you to join us in this journey.

- Nevin Nisly

Update on the Hospitality Cottage Project

The Hospitality Cottage Project continues! This is a faith venture, a lot of hours are being donated and yet, there are still bills to be paid. The HOPE Ministries Board Members are fully supporting this project and have made personal contributions toward it. The estimated cost is \$35,000 and since the last newsletter, donations total \$7600. Please consider asking the Lord if this is a project He'd like you to consider donating toward.

We anxiously await use of this building, allowing



Nevin and Joann to work with singles simultaneously, thus helping the 12 month waiting period. Other ideas are also being tossed around to enable couples who come to maximize their time spent at HOPE Ministries. By May 1, the drywall and the siding are expected to be finished.

Please earmark checks as "cottage" and send to Julian Nisly or HOPE Ministries.



The project as of 4/22/2012



Our Journey With Jesus—testimonials by Kevin and Sharon Knepp

"Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." Matt. 11:28. Since my journey with HOPE Ministries, I realize that I didn't know what real peace was. I discovered it takes work to keep my relationship with Jesus open. It seems there are times when I feel so weak and Satan is right there trying to take me back into my old life and tries to make me believe all his lies and rob my peace. Moral failure is something I struggled with since I was very young not realizing the depth of it. I kept turning to that for comfort knowing it was wrong, but thinking no one knows or cares about me, so why does it matter? Satan had me exactly where he wanted me.

How thankful I am to Jesus that He cares and loves me so much that He'll forgive all my sins. When I was taking these sins to Jesus and asking for forgiveness, I asked Jesus what He's going to do with this sin that He took from me. He showed me a picture of a dump truck. He'll put everything in there and dig a hole and bury it. So I asked Jesus what He would put in its place. He said, "I will give you good seed to plant into your life and you can grow a beautiful garden." What more can I say but "Thank you, Jesus!" After leaving HOPE Ministries that afternoon, I felt so free and peaceful. I told my wife I felt like I could fly. My heavy load was lifted, and now for the first time, I knew what real peace was.

"And the peace of God, which pas-

seth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus." Phil. 4:7. Real peace comes from knowing that God is in control, our citizenship in Christ's kingdom is sure, our destiny is set, and our victory over sin is certain. Praise the Lord! I'll let my wife share her experience.

"It seems there are times when I feel so weak..."

"I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me." Phil. 4:13 Sharing my experience seems very vulnerable, but with God's help, I'll try my best. I was one of those people that would say counseling is a wonderful thing, but thinking it is only for people that had something major happen to them. I didn't want to admit that it's a good thing for anyone. On the outside, I can easily show people I have everything under control and life just glides along for me. I can do most things that I try to accomplish and can make people believe that I am a very confident person. But let's face facts; that's not the truth. Inside there was a little girl crying out in pain and I often knew that no one knew except the people I told. I often and still do struggle with the feeling of not being good enough. If I did make a mistake, I often was very hard on myself taking the blame fully on myself even if other people would be involved. Often when I'd come home, I was very depressed thinking that I'm nothing but a big mistake and no one loves me, no one cares, and

"Jesus said, 'Yes, you can stop trying to be someone else; be yourself.'"

everything I do is stupid. Often I'd re-think things I said and think how dumb it sounded. At times like this when I didn't snap out of it, I got very depressed and Satan was very, very real. I still get goose bumps at some of the very negative thoughts he put in my mind, and if it wouldn't have been for the teaching and prayers of my parents, I'm not sure where I would've ended up. But thank God as time goes on, it gets easier to remember the positive things. I wasn't at HOPE Ministries very long until I realized what God thinks about me. As they led me in prayer asking Jesus if He loves me, He told me He loves me because He created me. When I asked Him if I am good enough for Him, He said, "Yes, you can stop trying to be someone else; be yourself. That's the way I want you to be. I made you like that for a reason; the talents you have are gifts." Jesus showed me a picture of lifting all those negative thoughts and taking a brush and scrubbing my heart clean. With the help of Jesus, I can now remember that I am special to Him. We as a couple want to thank Jesus for walking with us on our journey. Life will still go on, hurts and pains will come, but if we can remember the tools that He gave and apply them to our lives, then we can benefit from the work that Jesus is doing in our lives. God bless you!

-Kevin and Sharon Knepp

Praises:

The seminar with James Wagler in March brought another full house. Each session had around 200 people eager to hear what God wanted to say through James. Besides Kansas people, there were attendees from IL, IA, MO, AR, OK and NE.

THE NEXT SEMINAR:

Guest Speaker:
John Regier - Feb. 24-Mar. 2, 2013



CONGRATULATIONS

to Arlen and Gloria Mast
on the birth of:
Shanae Rhyann
April 12, 2012

From a Board Member:



Julian, Bertha, Sherilyn & Johan Nisly

Recently I heard this reading and found it both humorous and helpful:

"Restore"

A man fell into a pit and couldn't get himself out...

A *subjective* person came along and said, "I feel for you down there."

An *objective* person came along and said, "It's logical that someone would fall down there."

A *Pharisee* came along and said, "Only bad people fall into pits."

A *mathematician* came along and calculated how deep the pit was.

A *news reporter* came along and asked for the exclusive story on the pit.

An *IRS agent* came along and asked if the man was paying taxes on the pit.

A *self-pitying person* came along and said, "You haven't seen anything until you've seen my pit."

A *Christian Scientist* came along and said, "The pit is just in your mind."

A *psychologist* came along and said, "Your mother and father are to blame for your being in the pit."

A *self-esteem therapist* came along and said, "Believe in yourself and you can get out of the pit."

An *optimist* came along and said, "Things could be worse."

A *pessimist* came along and said, "Things couldn't be worse."

A *spiritual man* came along, took the man by the hand, and lifted him out of the pit.

- Source unknown

It's easy to see how counselors could fall into any one of the traps in the above story in their desire to help people. However; I see HOPE Ministries doing what the spiritual man did by helping people out of the pit. One of the things we sometimes hear about counseling is that it's just a way to find someone to blame for our problems. Playing the blame game is an age-old problem. Adam blamed Eve, Eve blamed the serpent. Blaming others for our wrong responses keeps us stuck in our own sinful patterns. In Christ-centered counseling we learn to take responsibility and repent of the sins we have committed while extending forgiveness and compassion to those who have hurt us. This is a way

to break the cycle of sinful patterns and behavior. Forgiveness opens the path to healing and receiving forgiveness from God. Mt 6:14,15 "For if you forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. But if you do not forgive men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses." This is a serious thing to consider. As Christians many of us know we need to forgive, but until we can forgive from the heart, it's just a mental exercise. Sometimes God uses others to help us and I'm grateful for the way God continues to use HOPE Ministries to bring reconciliation and hope to many.

On another note, the work on the cottage is coming along well! We've been concerned as a board how Nevin & Joann's schedule is pressed full and running over and we're glad for the additional counseling space that will be available for them. If they can be running sessions simultaneously when counseling singles, it will hopefully give them a more manageable schedule. Thanks for your gifts and your prayers.

-Julian Nisly

Julian is on the pastoral team at Center Amish Mennonite Church. He also farms as well as doing part-time maintenance work in rental houses. He and his wife, Bertha, recently celebrated their 16th wedding anniversary and have 2 children, Sherilyn & Johan.

FINANCIAL UPDATE:

Our desire is that no one will be excluded from meeting with us because of finances. All counseling is done on a donation basis where people can give with the idea of making this available to others, allowing us to be full time in this ministry. God has been faithful in supplying our needs and because of His people, we ended the 2011 year in the black. We are grateful for all who have stood with us in so many ways and do trust in God's continuing provision. As a 501(c)(3) organization, we are accountable to our board for the finances and the operation of HOPE Ministries. If you wish to know more details about our finances, please contact Julian Nisly, our treasurer, at 620-664-5304. As God leads you to think about HOPE Ministries, please pray for us, and if He prompts you to join in our financial support, donations can be made in several ways as stated below. Tax deductible receipts will be issued.

Donations can be sent to:
HOPE Ministries
Box 103
Partridge, KS 67566

OR

Go to our website and use the donation button through Paypal.



HOPE Ministries Board Members

Nevin & Joann Nisly—director
Lynn & Sandra—Board Chairman
Julian & Bertha Nisly—Sec./Treasurer
Arlen & Gloria Mast—Vice Chairman
Ray & Gina Miller—Board Member
Gene Miller—Board Member