



HOPE Ministries Highlights

January 2014

Special points of interest:

- Nevin talks about questions we often get asked p.1
- Announcement about Follow-Up Retreat and new secretary p.2
- Crystal Yoder writes a testimony about walking in grief p. 3
- Board member, Lynn Miller, talks about New Year's resolutions p. 4

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.

CONTACT INFORMATION

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Addressing Common Questions -by Nevin Nisly



Nevin & Joann Nisly

During the years as we have been developing HOPE Ministries, there have been some recurring questions. We will make an attempt to address a few of those.

What do you do?

In sitting down with people, we recognize our inability to understand people and their situations fully. Therefore, we don't like the word *counseling* to define what we do, but we acknowledge that Jesus is the Wonderful Counselor and Healer. He understands people's strengths and weaknesses perfectly, He knows their situations, He knows what to do for every obstacle they face, and He gives them the power and the grace needed. We don't claim to do any of those.

Our goal is to walk alongside each individual attempting to understand their belief system, the pressures and difficulties they have faced, and the feelings they have had. We also seek to understand what trauma they have experienced both in the form of things

done to them and by what they missed. As they gain understanding of this, they quite often begin to understand the care of a *personal* Jesus, as well as an understanding of their actions today. We also guide them toward releasing those who hurt them and coming into agreement with Jesus about themselves. So what we do could be much more accurately called marriage and/or personal enrichment time as we attempt to walk alongside people in processing things like this.

Why look at the hurts we have had in our lives? Is it really true that God doesn't waste pain?

I believe that pain can cause much damage to our hearts and the devil loves to use it to rob people of life, joy, and peace. He loves to tweak our thinking in the process and often gets us to believe lies about ourselves and who God is. *It is my understanding that pain that is not visited is wasted pain.* It is much easier to deny such hurts, to justify our actions, or to blame others than to embrace them and work through the pain. We often are accustomed to our own reactions because we have lived with them all our lives, not even recognizing them. Looking at our past pain and the lies that may be residing in us helps us understand what moti-

vates our actions today. When we admit our hearts have been hurt and receive God's comfort, we can receive and offer forgiveness at a much deeper level. We can also relate to others much more openly.

Who comes to HOPE Ministries?

We see a wide variety of people. Many desire to have a closer walk with Jesus. Many want to have their marriage enriched, knowing that they have a good marriage, but want to do what they can to improve it. Often people want to understand better why they do the things they do as well as understand their spouses better. We have been blessed with many singles and young couples coming through just trying to build a solid foundation for their life or marriage. We've been privileged to do some premarital counseling also.

What does a typical marriage enrichment time or personal enrichment time at HOPE Ministries look like?

Typically we schedule five 3-hour sessions in 2½-3 days. We ask that local people take at least 2 days off from work and the normal busyness of life to focus on this process, staying at our cottage or a motel, making it more of a retreat. This allows us to make much more progress. Single ladies will meet with Joann and single guys with Nevin.

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**"Heaviness in the heart of man maketh it stoop: but a good word maketh it glad."
Prov. 12:25**

Common Questions—Continued from page 1

What is one of the greatest strongholds we encounter?

One of the strongholds that we see on a regular basis is the pressure to perform properly in order to be acceptable. This shows up in comparison, concern about what people think, the need to do/be right, judgmentalism/criticism, etc. These things put pressure on a person and lead to feelings of inadequacy, worthlessness, and often fear of failure. Others go more to “I can’t be wrong” and go to perfectionism, being hard on themselves, and being driven. There is often an underlying motivation to depend on a “Performance Mentality” in their Christian walk, resulting in an inability to enjoy the grace that Jesus extends to them.

Jesus desires for us to see at a heart level the value and worth He places on us. He longs to replace the “performance bar” with a personal walk with Him and take us regularly to the ROOM OF GRACE where we experience His comfort and find mercy and grace to help in our need. (Hebrews 4:16).

To understand more about HOPE Ministries, we invite you to visit our website at www.nislyshopeministries.com.

To understand more about the material we use, visit the home office website: www.caringfortheheart.com

“Let us come boldly to the throne of our gracious God. There we will receive his mercy, and we will find grace to help us when we need it most.” Heb. 4:16(NLT)

Follow Up Retreat...

March 7-9, 2014
Please register by Feb. 2, 2014

Please respond as soon as you know that you would like to attend. The cost includes 3 meals on Saturday and one meal on Sunday and two nights of lodging.

Check website for more updated information:
www.nislyshopeministries.com

Who? Anyone who has attended counseling sessions with HOPE Ministries

Location: Cross Wind Conference Center—Hesston, KS

Cost: \$250/couple; \$175/single

(Two singles may choose to share a room at the cost of \$125/person)

Registration Deadline: February 2, 2014

\$50/couple non-refundable due upon registration

For Registration:
Please call the office—620-259-9390 or email
hope4yourheart@gmail.com

TENTATIVE TOPICS

Friday eve. – Caring For My Own Heart
Saturday a.m. – Understanding Grace vs. Performance
- Dealing With Enslavements
Saturday p.m. – Moving Toward Forgiveness
Saturday eve. – Testimonies
Sunday a.m. – Fighting The Battle

ANNOUNCING...

HOPE Ministries has been blessed the last 9 months to have a part-time secretary. Those who have visited with Edna Beachy have experienced her heart for people. We regret that in a couple months she will be leaving HOPE Ministries. We also rejoice with Leland and Edna as they look forward to their family expanding.

We are delighted to welcome into that position, Crystal Yoder. Crystal has a heart for missions and has put in her first few hours of training with Edna. Over the next six weeks, if you call or inquire, you may have interaction with one or the other of these ladies. Pray for Edna and Crystal as they both move into new phases. HOPE Ministries will be having new office hours in a few weeks.



Crystal Yoder



Edna Beachy

HOPE Ministries is not planning to host a seminar in the local area in 2014. Keep your ears open for information in 2015.

In the last 3 months, HOPE Ministries has had:

- 4 new couple cases
- 4 new single cases
- 2 follow-up couple cases
- 5 follow-up single cases

We are thankful to Kathryn Yoder who has been lining up people to keep the Hospitality Cottage cleaned. We appreciate those of you who have participated in that. If you are interested in helping with this project, please contact the office.

A Journey In Grief—by Crystal Yoder

When HOPE Ministries asked if I would be willing to write something for the newsletter, I agreed, thinking that I would probably write something about my counseling experience here, or my testimony, or a gracious new-secretary sort of letter.

But that is not what came when I sat down to write. Actually, I didn't know I was sitting down to write the article. I had sat down to journal a summary of my journey of grief from the last 4 months, but as I finished, I realized this was what Jesus wanted me to share. The grief that I am referring to has been walking with my boyfriend, John, and his family as they grieve the death of their lovely sister and daughter, Anja.

This writing could apply to other struggles in my life. It may apply to struggles of yours. It may be the hurts from others in your past, it may be an ongoing difficult relationship, it may be choices of sin you have made, it may be _____; you fill in the space. My prayer is that this writing will give you a glimpse of *The Rock* in a new way.

The Invitation

Grief feels like ocean waves constantly lapping against me. Sometimes they are gentle. Sometimes they are harsh, huge and overwhelming. But it is that constant lapping, lapping, lapping that just gets me. It wears a person down.

As the months go by, I feel more and more of my strength washed away...of what I knew to be "me" washed out to sea. Stripped away, gone forever. As it happens I begin to realize with vulnerable, stark clarity that I don't have what it takes

to make it through.

I'm dying. Sometimes it feels like a slow, painful, feet-first death. Other times it feels like that tragic, crippling kind. But its all death. A death to this thing called "self".

I don't have what it takes to make it through. Gradually the strength has run out to pull myself up by my own boot straps. The wonderful-used-to-be-inspiring phrases don't work anymore. The pet Bible verses don't seem to comfort either. They hit, bounce and fall back into the ocean. And I remain cold, wet, and numb. Uncomforted.

Grief feels like ocean waves constantly lapping against me...But it is that constant lapping, lapping, lapping that just gets me.

"Do I have to die?" I wail. "Is that really what it takes to make it through *alive*? Does it really have to take *all of me*?"

"Yes, yes, yes..." comes from that constant lapping, lapping, lapping.

I feel it pulling me. Beckoning me. Inviting me.

Why do I want to go, and yet resist it so much?

Maybe I *resist* it because of that helpless out-of-control feeling. The big, dark unknowns. That horrible, sinking feeling of being overwhelmed by darkness and depression.

Maybe I want to *go* because as I search my memories of the past, I find that when I stopped struggling to stay at the top and let myself sink, I eventually hit the bottom. Rock bottom...and as I limply lie there, I know with a new, different sort of strength that I am not going to die. It is still dark, murky and unknown around me, but strangely

I am more alive than ever.

"I go to the Rock, when there is no one else to turn to..." I've sung this song lustily in my strong times. In those times I pictured myself choosing to go crawl in a cleft when a thunder storm hits, knowing that it will soon pass and I'll be able to crawl out unscathed.

But somehow going "...to the Rock" by way of "drowning" doesn't sound so safe, fun or comforting. It costs everything. My Pride. My control. My dignity. I *don't* come out unscathed. I can't even choose when to come out. The strangest part is that somehow it *is* safe there. It can't get worse, I'm already at the bottom. There's a freedom there as well. Suddenly I don't need my pride, my control, and my dignity to keep me afloat, or to give me a false sense of security.

And so, in the oddest, most upside down sort of way, I come to conclude that maybe when God gives me more that I can handle, He really wants to save me from my "self". Could it be that He *more* wants my total dependence on him; my weakness, not my strength; my surrendering, not my service?

Maybe it is a great *Love* that keeps lapping, lapping, lapping against me. Constantly, gently, beckoning, inviting me to come away; come away and be free.

"A person's thoughts are like water in a deep well, but someone with insight can draw them out." Prov. 20:5 (GNB)

From a Board Member:



Lynn & Sandra Miller
Courtney, Vanessa, Tanisha

What About God's New Year's Resolutions For Me?

With the beginning of a new year, my thoughts quickly become scattered as I think about goals for the future: regrets of the past...missed opportunities...life is so short...What if I'm misunderstood?... Am I failing as a parent? These can motivate the overwhelming "to do" list for 2014.

Some of us have made our own goals and resolutions for 2014. Why? Does it make me feel good because I have good intentions? Maybe just a little :-). Are these goals based upon what pleases others? Are these goals

based on discontentment? What do my spiritual goals look like? There really isn't anything wrong with setting goals and New Year's resolutions.

Recently a friend challenged me to ask God what His goals are for me this year. Hmm, never thought of that. In Hebrews 12:1-2 Paul tells us to "throw off the weight of sin and face life with a patient endurance and an active persistence". No big deal, right? The word throw doesn't seem very passive here. What is my response to sin in my life? Another goal I felt God laying out in front of me was in the way that I run the race of life. It's kind of easy to get a burst of energy in my walk with Jesus and then I hit that long hill of discouragement and the race becomes more of a painful shuffle. Patient endurance and active persistence come in to play here. Habakkuk 3:19 says, "The Sovereign Lord is my strength! He makes me as surefooted as a deer". It's in these long uphill climbs that I gain my strength and endurance from Jesus. When I allow Jesus to heal my blistered, shuffling feet and make me as surefooted as a deer, the race suddenly becomes exciting.

So what is God's goal for me this year? Run the race of life with active persistence and allow Him to strengthen me and make me as surefooted as a deer. GLORY!

At HOPE Ministries, Nevin and Joann have invested hours into many peoples' lives to help us understand the love of the Father and to build a more intimate relationship with Him. One of the goals at HOPE Ministries is to provide opportunities to allow Jesus to bring healing and HOPE to lives in fresh ways. What are God's goals for you this year?

Lynn and Sandra have served on the HOPE Ministries Board 3 years. They have 3 girls: Vanessa-15, Tanisha-11, and Courtney-7. Their enthusiasm about HOPE Ministries has been an inspiration.

HOPE Ministries is now set up to accept credit card donations. If you wish to do this, please call 620-259-9390.

**HOPE Ministries' office hours:
Mondays: 10:00-3:30
Wednesdays: 10:00-12:00**

FINANCIAL UPDATE:

Our desire is that no one will be excluded from opportunity for sessions because of finances. All counseling is done on a donation basis, and this plus the gifts of God's people, allow us to be full time in this ministry. 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 automatically be issued for checks of \$50 or more.

Donations can be done in various ways:

Send to:
HOPE Ministries
Box 103
Partridge, KS 67566

Call 620-259-9390 to use Credit Card

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



HOPE Ministries Board Members:

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