



HOPE Ministries Highlights

July 2012

Special points of interest:

- Take note about the upcoming seminar in Feb., 2013
- Rachel Miller shares her testimony on p. 3
- Read inside a note from the HOPE Ministries Board about the new cottage project
- Board member, Gene Miller, talks about little voices

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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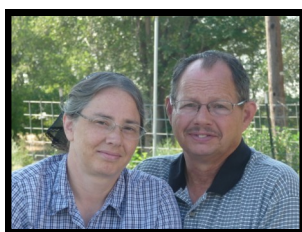
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Complacency vs. Change

by Nevin and Joann Nisly



This spring, Nevin spent many working hours putting new raised beds in our garden. He put in the new beds because of the heavy clay soil that makes it difficult to till, water properly, and keep water out. Our choices boiled down to the following: 1. Have no garden and leave things as they were, 2. Leave the soil as it was and have a half-hearted crop, or 3. Change

the soil, enrich it, work on the Bermuda grass that wanted to intrude, and raise the beds. This would mean a lot of hard work, but hopefully a much better garden.

Who likes change and the work it takes...and especially when it comes to personal issues? Change can be risky. Why do I find it difficult to talk about personal things? Why do I find it hard to deviate from anger or escalation in times that are overwhelming? Why do I maintain being “driven”? Why do I stay in patterns that are familiar but do not bring me or my spouse and family “life”? What keeps me in this..... complacency.....do we dare say the word? Somehow, it is often more easily noticed

in others, but I have reason for staying there myself—I seem to better understand my own motives more fully...or do I? This also gives me reason to judge others and place “shoulds” or expectations on them. What about me? What keeps me from motivation to change?

Nevin can struggle with the inability to respond back verbally when processing questions. Joann can struggle with getting frustrated and then escalate when feeling misunderstood. So, she presents a problematic issue, and he doesn’t know how to respond, so he just nods his head with no verbal response. She feels misunderstood or a lack of involvement, gets frustrated, and

What’s Been Happening??

The big thing the last few months has been the progress of the Hospitality Cottage. By the time this newsletter is in hand, we hope to have the new cottage in use. We are so thankful and grateful for the many people who have donated materials, labor, lunches, and much expertise and planning in this endeavor. This has been a blessing to us and will be to both local people and those from a distance. Currently, we have \$17,000 toward the cottage expenditures and we still need \$15,000 to complete the payment of the building. May God bless each person richly who has entered into this vision with us. We invite you to contribute towards the cottage as the Lord prompts you.



Complacency vs. Change (continued from page 1)

continues to verbalize more, putting pressure on him to respond. This leads to his inability to think and communicate...and the crazy cycle continues. The potential “untalkables” in our relationship grow if we allow this to “just be life.”

The real question is... “What keeps Nevin from responding and how does Jesus want to change this?” The other real question is... “What keeps Joann ‘needing’ to have understanding from Nevin?” Both of us must be willing to face these questions. Yet, it is easier to not explore the whys and live like we always have.

What would it look like if Nevin was willing to explore why he resorts to silence?

“Jesus, when a question comes from my wife for which I have no words, why am I unable to respond? Am I afraid of something? Am I willing to allow change in this part of myself? I think I’m unable to change this by myself. I want to care about my

wife’s heart and her longings. To care for her means being vulnerable and sharing my insecurities with her. It is so much easier to stay silent. What causes this to feel unsafe to me? Jesus, I give you permission to work in my heart in this area. Am I afraid of her criticism? Where is a safe place I can go when I hear criticism from her? What do you think of my inability to communicate? What is standing in my way?”

There are many other questions that can lead Nevin out of his complacency by allowing Jesus to speak to his heart. By allowing Jesus to minister to his own hurts and desiring and actively pursuing the language of Joann’s heart, his own heart will also be understood.

For Joann, what would it look like to break out of the familiar reaction of criticism and escalation?

“Jesus, what kinds of questions will draw my husband out and make it a safe place to share what is going on within himself? What does my escalation do to his heart? Why do I tend to escalate? I think I’m afraid he’s not going to understand and I want to GET him to understand which causes more and more “facts” to come to mind. I so badly want to be understood by him.

His verbal communication would help bring calmness to a restless heart. Do you understand, Jesus? Am I demanding more from him than he can give? Are You REALLY enough for me? Do You care about my restless heart? What would YOU like to do to bring peace instead of me demanding that from Nevin?”

These are just a few questions we can ask in order to

break from the complacency and comfort of the familiar. To stay in our familiar unhealthy reactions will pull us further away from our own longings and the longings of our spouse.

If we don’t want hard work emotionally, we will be content to let it go. The daily cares of this world, which are the “thorns” in the soil, will often get more attention than the heart issues—the soil— because they are more obvious. They seem like less work and more pertinent to life. Primarily attending to these “cares” though, will not improve relationship with others, which is the reason we were created. The enemy is out to distract us from God’s primary purpose for our existence.

“...And the Lord—who is the Spirit—makes us more and more like him as we are changed into his glorious image.” II Cor. 3:18b (NLT).

Will you allow the Lord to work with the soil of your heart?

To stay in our familiar unhealthy reactions will pull us further away from our own longings and the longings of our spouse.

YOU ARE INVITED...

**to an OPEN HOUSE
for the**

**HOPE MINISTRIES
HOSPITALITY
COTTAGE**

**Sunday,
Sept. 23, 2013
2:00-5:00 p.m.**

Testimonials from counselees

“To be able to start caring for our own hearts, to come to Jesus and to each other with total honesty about how our hearts are looking is a huge gift!

We are seeing each other thru different eyes, are seeing Jesus thru different eyes—we’re loving the new depth it’s bringing to our relationship...”

“I experienced Jesus as a little 1st grade girl who felt rejected by the teacher, but Jesus knelt down to my level on my little chair and let me cry on His shoulder. He took off the label of ‘2nd rate’ and He opened the double doors of my heart and parked Himself there facing me on a little chair in my heart, holding the doors open with both arms.”

“I felt cared for as a person, not just as one of the masses who comes cruising through the doors to get healed by Jesus...I experienced Jesus as the one who listens to a little boy, and then cares about his heart. He doesn’t just care, however, He also heals the broken, shattered heart.”

The Gift of A Rose -by Rachel Miller

I knew, for many years, that I was carrying a lot of pain. I actively sought help from different sources, finding small steps toward freedom along the way. In our fourth year of marriage, Craig and I decided to make use of our local counseling ministry, thinking that it would help us have an even better marriage, clear our lives for more effective missions, etc.

Thus, I embarked upon the path of a lifetime. I am—a different person. We had no idea what all I was carrying: the cumulative pain of so many different things, piling up upon my back as a very young girl, until it was simply too heavy of a load to carry.

I won't be able to go into a lot of detail here. But many of you know who I am, and I am very happy to sit down and chat with anyone who has questions or email me at thailandkids2012@gmail.com.

What we found as we worked with Nevin and Joann, was that I did not believe Jesus was a loving, kind person who really cared about me and watched out for me. Also, I most definitely did not believe that God was love. I saw Him only as a very harsh deity. I did not know I believed this. I had heard He was gentle and good and I really tried to believe the truth. So this came as a bit of a shock.

Jesus, however, was not going to leave me without hope. One day at home, between sessions, I saw a picture. Above me there was a solid wall, with no way to God. Then Jesus opened a small trapdoor. Through that door I saw God's face. He was weeping. Not tear *drops*, but rivers of tears. I will never forget that. I knew, in that moment, that I would know Him someday—in truth. And for the first time, in my heart, I knew that God *cared*.

But there was still a very long road

ahead of me. I knew I could not pray to God at that point, but as we started talking to Jesus, we found that neither could I pray to Him. I did not know the real Jesus. So they sent me home with a gentle assignment. I was to be relieved of as much pressure as humanly possible. Then I was to allow my heart to be a very young heart, a tiny infant heart. I was to sing songs to my heart and teach my heart Bible stories. And so we went home.

It was not difficult allowing my heart to become young. Yet, it took some gritty faith and determination to be willing to sing and speak to my heart. As I did that, however, I slowly began to find who Jesus is. I saw a different Jesus—One who is so incredibly gentle. And as I was able to begin trusting Him, I started asking Him questions. He began giving me answers. Pictures. Thus the healing began. The forgiveness began. *Life* began.

Does this all sound weird to you? That's fine. It still does to me. :) But when you get a picture or a sentence from Jesus, you will know. It goes straight to your very soul and you *are a different person*. He has confirmed to me that this is real, that this is truth. Let me give you an example.

One day I was sitting down and working on some rather intense pain from my teen years. Jesus gave me a picture of Himself placing rose petals around my heart. They were lovely, perfect rose petals. It brought such gentle truth to me that I found myself weeping. And no, I don't cry easily. Suddenly I had such a longing just to hold a rose in my hand! Just to look at a few rose petals. Craig was in town at the time, and so I wrote a text asking him if he could just get me a cheap, Aldi rose, but I didn't send it. I just didn't want to ask my husband for a rose. If Jesus wanted

me to have one, He could tell Craig to get one. But I didn't really think he would.

Craig came home with a beautiful rose.

There is so much more to my story. My sketch book is full of pictures. I am no longer an infant heart. In the past months, Jesus very gently grew me up. I'm not finished. But there is something I want to tell you. Don't say, "I can't ever get anywhere." I will tell you that my combination of issues was a very difficult one. Ask Nevins; I was at a loss at the beginning.

Jesus has something to tell you. He is waiting quietly, with more love than an entire universe can hold. He has things to tell you.

Take away all pressure. Allow your heart to be as young and vulnerable as it needs to be. Allow it to be broken in two pieces. Allow it to be smashed flat. Allow it to be pock-marked. Jesus is not looking at your sin with a face of judgment. I am speaking from experience. When all I saw was sin, anger, criticism, and a heart of stone, He showed me what He saw. It was a heart broken in two pieces. And when He heals that with His fingers, the sin is swept away. His is the face of love.

I have found that Jesus, and His Father are love.



Coming Up!

February 25-March 2, 2013
HOPE Ministries will host a Seminar
with Guest Speaker,
John Regier, founder of
Caring For the Heart

Brochures and more details will come out in the fall. Information will also be found on our website when more details are decided.

From a Board Member:



Gene Miller

Little Voices (part I)

I once heard of a T-shirt stating, “You’re just jealous the little voices aren’t talking to you!” a lighthearted reference to a form of serious mental illness. Usually such voices tell the person to do harmful or destructive things. Whether they obey the voices or not, these people tend to live miserable, confused lives, constantly trying to escape the voices.

While we may not hear those voices, many of us hear other voices such as, “It’s all your fault. You’re no good. Nobody wants you. You’ll never be

good enough. They’re all against you.” They may come when we’re already discouraged, or they may rob us of a sense of accomplishment for a job well done. As a Rich Mullens song puts it, “I’m reeling from these voices that keep screaming in my ears, all these words of shame and doubt, blame and regret.” Listening to them will cause destructive patterns in our lives.

Elijah heard the voices right after a tremendous spiritual high. He lived during the reign of Ahab and Jezebel, a time of tremendous wickedness. He was established as God’s prophet when his prophecy of an extended famine came true. He enjoyed God’s miraculous provision, first when ravens delivered food to his hideout, then when the widow’s one serving of oil and flour outlasted the drought. He experienced God’s protection during King Ahab’s methodical search for him. He saw dramatic answer to prayer when God’s fire consumed his water-soaked offering on Mt Carmel. He witnessed God’s gift of plenty when rains finally soaked the parched earth. And in God’s miraculous power, he ran ahead of Ahab’s chariot through the downpour all the way to the city gates.

Yet after all this, Jezebel’s threats sent him running far into the desert in

terror. God refreshed him with deep rest and a double meal, and strength that lasted 40 days. He gently asked why he was there. Elijah confessed the voices were telling him, “You’re not protected. It’s no use. Your work has been for nothing. You’re all alone. You’d be better off dead.”

God showed him some of the strongest forces of nature: wind so violent it broke rocks, an earthquake, and fire. Then God showed Elijah a much stronger force—the Father’s still small voice speaking to his heart. God reassured him, revealing the work He still had for him. He also showed him he was not alone—there were 7000 true worshippers of God. When Elijah listened to the voice of his Father, his ministry was again characterized by unmistakable miracles. Following God’s voice instead of his inner ones moved him from isolation and deep depression to accomplishing God’s plan for his life. Which voices will determine your course of action?

Gene Miller is an RN, working in the local prison. He enjoys singing, cooking and interacting with children. He is currently a member of the Cedar Crest Amish Mennonite Church.

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 and allowing 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 receipts will be issued upon request.

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

OR

You may use bill pay for electronic processing

