



Urban Initiative Biblical Counseling Newsletter

April-June 2008

Testimony of God's grace

April 1st marks twenty years of being reunited after nearly 2 years of separation as a couple. So, it seemed appropriate that our second newsletter should include the story of God's amazing grace in restoring our marriage. The first 23 years of marriage were terrible, like a battle zone. Each of us firmly believed that the other person was the problem. Conflict, bitterness and anger made family life miserable for everyone in our home.

We developed patterns that promoted division - avoiding one another, keeping secrets, and choosing to place our focus on children, career and hobbies. We were in church whenever the doors were open, thought we knew the Bible, and we were teaching our children about God. However, as professing Christians, we were clueless about how to live the Christian life in a way that pleases God. We knew nothing about Ephesians 4:22-24, which teaches us that we must put off the old ways, renew the mind, and put on righteousness. These things may have been taught in our church, but we didn't get it.

Our Sovereign LORD graciously allowed us to "crash and burn" in order to place us in a position to learn. God used many faithful servants to come alongside us at that time. John and Mary Hartzell and our own pastors were "in the emergency room" with us and for us. Later, in God's perfect time, He provided biblical counselors in Lafayette, Indiana who not only loved God's Word, but also were trained to help people to change and grow to become more like Christ. We are unable to adequately express our appreciation for the help of the late Dr Bill Goode and Dr Bob Smith and others over the years who have taught us. They have fulfilled the message of 2 Timothy 2:2.

"And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose...to be conformed to the image of His Son." Romans 8:28, 29

In 1989, we began to attend biblical counseling training seminars and conferences because we still had so much to learn. The truth of Romans 8:28-29 is in large, bold print on our hearts.

The "all things" of our heartbreaking past was not ever able to thwart God's loving purpose to help us become more like Christ. That same year we joined Woodcrest Baptist Church where Pastor Clarke Poorman graciously provided an office for us to meet with individuals. (Pastors and friends who had known us "before and after" God's transforming work had begun to send people to us for counseling and discipleship.) After serving there for thirteen years, we made the transition to our present church Family Baptist seven years ago.

God in His great mercy and grace sent our trials to accomplish His purposes. We have been the recipients of His chastening and His patient loving-kindness. Now it is our joy and delight to counsel and disciple fellow believers toward becoming more like Christ. Many have become our good friends, and several are

counseling and discipling individuals in their local churches. We are very, very grateful. Praise Him! Praise Him!

Ministry Update

Opportunities to Speak and Teach

On Sunday March 30th, Jerry “filled the pulpit” at First Baptist Church of St Francis, MN, speaking in both the morning and evening services. In the adult Sunday school class we presented material on the heart and ruling motives that drive our thoughts, feelings and actions. What a blessing to be among old and new friends, rejoicing together in what God is doing in that place.

We have been invited to present a seminar at a church in the area on Conflict Resolution through Biblical Counseling. The pastor contacted us after reading the last newsletter. We love doing this, and are continually amazed at God’s goodness to us.

“As you therefore have received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk in Him, rooted and built up in Him and established in the faith, as you have been taught, abounding in it with thanksgiving.” Colossians 2:6, 7

Counselees’ “Stories”

New opportunities for counseling occur every week, and we are so blessed and encouraged as we see God at work in the lives of fellow believers. Recent examples (used with their permission):

A woman called us, but was fearful of actually coming in for counseling. So she was invited to try the Saturday ladies’ Bible study, which Karen leads, to get to know us in a less intimidating environment. She faithfully attended the study, and the women in the group demonstrated Christ’s love for her. After two months, she was ready to make an appointment for counseling. We studied the Bible together, addressed the concerns that she has, and taught about God’s holiness and Christ’s sacrifice for sin. The Holy Spirit worked in her heart, and she asked Christ to be her Savior after meeting together for four weeks. She continues to be a delight as a sister in Christ who is growing and changing. As she learns more of Him, she is also learning to interpret and handle her life situations through the Truth of Scripture.

A man was recently arrested and put in the jail where David Whiteford, a member of Family Baptist Church, is the chaplain. David was ministering to this man in the jail, and suggested that his wife call me (Karen) for some encouragement. Praise God, she did call. She was bewildered, crushed and distressed, and she readily agreed to meet together. We thank God for the privilege of meeting with this delightful woman and studying the Word for answers to real life struggles, and look forward to ministering to her husband in the future.

A couple had been part of good churches their entire lives but had not learned to embed the truth of Scripture into their hearts. They had knowledge of the Bible but were not regularly reading, meditating, or learning to apply it. They were busy working, raising a family and serving in the church. Their neglect of the spiritual exercises that God says are essential for progressive sanctification eventually produced fruit with a devastating result. The husband became involved in a life dominating sin that affected not only the two of them, but hurt the entire family. We have had the blessed privilege of coming alongside them as they have grown in the knowledge of God as individuals and in their marriage. They have become our dear friends in the process.

Counseling Study and Discussion Group

Anyone who desires to become more proficient in applying the truth of Scripture in his own life, and more skilled in discipling others may attend the counseling study and discussion group. We meet every other Friday morning from 9:00 to 11:00 (or so) at Family Baptist Church. Men and women from at least 6 different churches participate in this interactive study. We are having a great time growing together in our knowledge and ability to apply the Bible to life's situations. Come join us!

“And the things that you have heard from me among many witnesses, commit these to faithful men who will be able to teach others also.” 2 Timothy 2:2

Support of the Ministry

We are thankful for the individuals who faithfully support this ministry at any level. We were blessed by one older woman who sent a check along with a note explaining that she supplements her retirement income by cleaning houses. She wants to support the ministry with \$10 a month “for as long as the Lord gives me the strength”, and the \$120 she sent was her contribution for one year. Praise God for her and others who are sacrificially helping to support the counseling ministry. We are currently supported at about 60%.

Anne Kittleson: Prayer Warrior

Often we tell the people we counsel about our prayer warrior and dear friend, Anne Kittleson. We ask them if we may share a little of their story with Anne, who is willing and faithful to pray for them. We have never received a negative response and have been blessed and encouraged to have Anne praying for our counselees who have given their permission. Although Anne has relocated to Roseau, MN, the telephone is our prayer hot line for requests and updates on answers as we relate to her the work of God in the lives of those she brings to the throne of grace. We are so thankful for her example of intimacy and fellowship with Christ in prayer.

Testimony of Cary Flinck, pastor of Berean Baptist Church, Brooklyn Park:

“The counseling ministry of Jerry and Karen Hime has been a great blessing to me as a pastor. They are biblically centered and prayerful in their approach to counseling. God is using them greatly and I have enjoyed working alongside them in counseling settings that concern members of my local church ministry.”

Reading Suggestions

Why are we recommending so many books?

Sadly, many of the “self help” books one finds in the Christian bookstore integrate psychological theory with Biblical truth. We regularly encounter fellow believers who have purchased these kinds of books because they are desperate for something to help them with their struggles of life. When these individuals seek counseling, their understanding and interpretation of issues and problems has been largely shaped by what they have been reading. We have observed many who lack the ability to discern truth from error, and they have not been taught how to interpret their “story” biblically. They desperately need help and answers, as we did 20 years ago. Praise God, He put people in our lives who believe that the Bible is sufficient and superior to man's “wisdom”. We believe these books contain a genuinely biblical approach to the issues of life.

Books:

Jay Adams:

From Forgiven to Forgiving

How to Overcome Evil (from Romans 12:18-21)

Mike Cleveland:

The Way of Purity and other books on sexual purity/pornography

Wayne Mack:

Out of the Blues by (addressing depression)

Anger and Stress Management God's Way

Sweethearts for a Lifetime (co-authored by Wayne and Carol Mack)

Martha Peace:

The Excellent Wife

Attitudes of a Transformed Heart

Damsels in Distress: Biblical Solutions for Problems Women Face

Lou Priolo:

Teach them Diligently

The Heart of Anger

Getting a Grip: The Heart of Anger Handbook for Teens

Stuart Scott:

The Exemplary Husband

Topical Studies (workbooks) by Marshall Asher (Focus Publishing)

The Armory Series

Giving Hope

God's Sovereign Control

Our Resources

Repentance

Habit Replacement

Booklets: (Focus Publishing)

Martha Peace: *Psychologized Man* and *The Salvation Handbook*

Stuart Scott: *Communication and Conflict Resolution* and *From Pride to Humility*

Howard Eyrich and Mark Shaw: *Hope and Help through Biblical Counseling Series*

Addressing: suffering, marriage, husbands and fathers, gambling, homosexuality, self-injury and video game/TV/internet "addiction"

These books available from: Focus Publishing: 1-800-913-6287 or www.focuspublishing.com.

Timeless Christian Books: 1-800-814-1045 or www.timelesschristianbooks.com

Cumberland Valley Bible Book Service: 1-800-656-0231 or <http://www.cvbbbs.com>

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