

The Sharing Org

Ministry to the Adult Foster Care Community

NOVEMBER 2013

In October, I began meeting with a small group of the residents at an assisted-living-type facility. Our time together has been less structured and more organic as we focus on our relationship and communing with Jesus. The following is a Facebook post that I wrote a few weeks ago.

At last night's small group, a person tearfully shared about the hatred and anger in her heart for the doctor and God surrounding the passing of her husband. The woman is devoted to her faith in Jesus but still she cannot understand how the doctor did not do more nor how God could allow her spouse to die: especially when he was so faithful to the church.

I was not trying to placate her grief, nor her sorrow. The pain that she felt was very real and very natural. However, the hatred and anger that possessed her - *these many years* - needed to be addressed or it would continue to eat at her.

I asked her what the problems were as she saw it. She pointed out that the doctor messed up and that God could have prevented it, so both were to blame. She had a great angry contempt for both the doctor and God.

I asked her if she was at all mad at the devil. The devil, I explained, has done a sleight of hand. Just like a magician who gets us to pay attention someplace other than where the action really happens, the devil is the author of death. The devil is the one who introduced death into this world back in the Garden of Eden. The devil is the source of the problem and is actually the one who killed her husband. It's just that we humans tend to look at the doctors and God as though they can actually do anything to prevent men from dying in this world. Sure, it is true that God can prevent anything, but ultimately we exist in a fallen sinful world where everything is born to die. God, through Jesus, has indeed defeated sin and death but the fruition of that reality is yet to be revealed at the end of days. This is the Christian faith and the Christian hope.

While her pain, anger, and hatred were not instantly vanquished, she did appreciate this new perspective.

I am in no way immune to the pain of loss in my own life. I am just not personally surprised nor disheartened by it either. I am less shocked that there is pain and suffering in this world than I am joyfully surprised that we men may experience love, hope, and joy through the many miracles of God in the first place.

When we know where to look, the magician is not so tricky.

~John

Prayer Letter:

Dear Prayer Partner,

Greetings my friends, please allow me to begin by entreating you to pray for the health of my wife as she brings our new baby into this world. Yes, we are expecting next summer, and we could not be happier! So please, we covet your prayers for the safety and health of mom and baby. My daughters are already praying for a girl, and my son, a boy. WE are simply praying for the health of both.

As of this writing, we have completed all of the shoebox parties with the residents in the various homes. We are having our church small group over to fill the last few boxes, fix any problems with labels, and eat! When Christians gather, you can't forget the food! We filled 100 shoeboxes this year, and I am already thinking that maybe next year we'll need to do 200. However, with the baby coming things might go differently. Please pray for next year and the children who will be blessed by this year's boxes.

Also, this past month our whole family was honored to attend an event for Operation Christmas Child – Southeast Michigan. The Sharing Org was recognized for our outreach to the AFC community by way of the annual shoebox program that we do. It was great to reconnect with old friends, meet new ones, and learn more about OCC.

Finally, I had five goals this year. All of them have been realized except for one: I have not yet published the 10-year anniversary book about the ministry. It is in process. I was hoping for a November publish date (pushed back from September), but now that looks like a December publish date is more likely. Please continue to pray that everyone on the publishing team is able to get their tasks completed efficiently and that we have a well-done product in the end!

Until next month!

For His Glorification,



John