

The Sharing Org

Ministry to the Adult Foster Care Community

APRIL, 2015

Ministry Moment...

It broke my heart a little. I was actually on my way out the door when a lady called me from across the room. When I went over to her I expected that she would ask about my kids but what she said surprised me.

“I’m lonely.”

I stood silent for a few seconds wondering how to respond to this. I thought the scheduled activities, visitors, and televisions are all supposed to distract residents from this sense of aloneness, but still it seems to be the dominate culture. I have decided that no matter how many programs or housemates there are, the residents in the homes still struggle with being alone.

I wondered what to do and how to respond. I assured her that Jesus loved her, I prayed with her, and I assured her that Jesus was always with her. But then I spoke candidly to her and told her that I knew my words were trite and not much comfort to her in the reality of her life. I understood that she lacked real connection with her friends and family. I knew she was surrounded by people but the reality was that these people, though friendly, were not really her friends. Not really. They all just happened to live in the same home, in the same circumstances, in the same situation, and all of them were thrust together as an unlikely family.

To be among many people but to not have a real connection that satisfies the need for significant human relationships. It seems to me that the feeling that comes from being wanted and needed by other people is a vital component of health. I guess even our Lord struggled with feeling all alone at times.

Since that day I have pondered how to solve this epidemic among the residents. I admit, I am no closer to solving the riddle but I now pray differently. I don’t believe that I can solve this issue but I can pray that Jesus will touch them right where they are, in the circumstances which they are in, to do a miracle in their lives to make the aloneness not so painful in their souls, and to present Himself to them in His glory.

I don’t know, is this trite? Is there a solution that I am not seeing? I admit, I often wonder.

John

<http://psychcentral.com/news/2015/03/12/loneliness-epidemic-threatens-longevity/82251.html>
<https://www.psychologytoday.com/blog/connections/200905/epidemic-loneliness>

Prayer Letter...

This has been a great month! I was able to join other ministers from our association at the Celebration of the Nations conference in Grand Rapids. It was a great blessing to learn how Jesus is being proclaimed around the world and how in many ways this ministry to the marginalized people in the nursing care community, here in Michigan, is being done around the world in South America, Africa, India, and China. Jesus is reaching out to many people who have no other hope and it is encouraging to learn about it. Thank you for making this ministry happen right here in Michigan.

I've been asking you to pray for Kayla as her health has been troublesome with her pregnancy. This month she was ordered to bed rest by her physician to complete her pregnancy. Please continue to pray for her and baby as she continues to bring this new life into the world. I've taken over doing the worship services at the three homes that she was doing on Sunday afternoons. I must admit that I was grumbling in my spirit about having my schedule interrupted like this, but God has reminded me that it was to this I have been called. Despite my initial negative attitude, this added responsibility has been a great blessing to me. I have genuinely been enjoying ministering in the new homes. Our church also recently transitioned to two services on Sunday mornings, so we can attend the earlier gathering as a family and are home in time for me to head out and do worship services at the three AFC homes in the afternoon.

Our family is doing well and everyone is growing like weeds. For the last many months my 11-year-old daughter has been raising money for St. Baldrick's Foundation for childhood cancer research. On the 14th of March she got her head shaved. And just so she wouldn't feel alone, my wife did too (along with nearly 600 other shavers at our local St. Baldrick's event). Thank you all who prayed and supported them in this effort. Please see our website for photos. "Team Furler" has raised over \$2,800 so far!

I mentioned how we (the Rock family) were doing an outreach in our neighborhood. I guess because we are in the ministry we have not been too active in evangelistic efforts around our home. Since Christmas we have been regularly reaching out to our neighbors with holiday-related gift bags as well as the gospel message. This Easter will be another push, with a Memorial Day hotdog cookout being the final planned effort. We have no idea if any of this has been beneficial to anyone, but it has been a great blessing to us and the kids as we have rallied to pray specifically for our neighbors. Please pray for us as we do this effort and that the Spirit of God will touch the hearts and minds of the some 26 people in our neighborhood.

And finally I would like to offer praise to our Lord. Just today as I write this (3/26/2015) I was informed that our nephew who was born a micro-preemie in January was released from the NICU a whole week earlier than his due date. He is finally at home safely in the loving arms of his mother and father! Thank you for praying with us about this.

Have a happy Easter!

John

"And if Christ has not been raised, your faith is futile; you are still in your sins. Then those also who have fallen asleep in Christ are lost. If only for this life we have hope in Christ, we are of all people most to be pitied. But Christ has indeed been raised from the dead, the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep."

1 Corinthians 15:17-20