



Compassion

Sharing hope...

2019 - First Quarter

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Somebody shared this quote with me recently: "God, give me patience and compassion for people who sin differently from me." I appreciate that take on *viewing other people's messes*. Instead of being like that Pharisee in the Bible, "I thank you, God, that I'm not like other people" (Luke 18:11), it acknowledges the fact that I'm a mess, too, just a different kind of mess.

I thought of that quote a few weeks ago when I was in a recovery discussion group. One of the people there, Tom, shared how he'd been able to stop drinking, but he wasn't having the same success with smoking. Immediately, other people in the group piped up with suggestions, including, "Try praying over your cigarettes," "Try evicting the demon of smoking," and "Try picking up your Bible every time you want to pick up a cigarette." I watched Tom as he listened patiently to all the advice, and I could see a look of amusement coming onto his face. He finally spoke up and said, "I'm noticing that all these *helpful* suggestions are coming from non-smokers."

Oops. I see his point: You never want to look at the human weaknesses of others and think, *That's simple!* if you've never struggled with it yourself.

At Institutional Ministries, the people we work with are often dealing with big and obvious sins that the rest of us have probably never gone near. They "sin differently from me." So, since I'm still giving in to my own human weaknesses (e.g. holding onto resentments, or saying things that damage someone's reputation, or being oblivious to opportunities to be kind to people who need my kindness), am I really any different than that Pharisee in the temple, if I think or say things like, "Anybody who really wanted to quit drinking could quit," or "What part of 'illegal' don't these people understand?"



Details on Another Volunteer Gathering for this Spring Coming Soon.

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Viewing Other People's Messes

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The apostle Paul said, "Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners – of whom I am the worst" (1 Timothy 1:15). If we take these words of St. Paul to heart, then perhaps we will also remember that what we all have in common – being sinners who are loved and forgiven by God – far outweighs what's different about us and the human weaknesses that we all struggle with.



*by Chaplain
Philip Merten*



Learning Patience from Noah

Natasha was a young woman I met in the psychiatric wing of the hospital. She was born in Russia and when she was a little girl her father died, her mother was sent off to prison and she ended up in an orphanage. Thankfully, a Christian family from America adopted her soon after. Whether or not it was from all the trauma she experienced as a little girl I cannot say, but later in life, Natasha struggled with clinical depression and needed medical help.

I had visited Natasha on several other occasions, but on this particular day, I found Natasha sitting in the corner of the TV room, crying unconsolably. I inquired with the staff who was monitoring the situation, but no one seemed to know the source of her tears or what to do with her.

She recognized me as I approached but continued to cry. I led her to a private area to talk and asked, "Why are you crying?" Through her tears, Natasha managed to tell me about a fellow patient who had just gone home and about her discovery that her own discharge had been delayed. "I just want to go home!" she cried.

As I listened and thought about her situation, I decided to improvise a little with the story of Noah and the ark. I told Natasha that her depression was kind of like the terrible storm Noah had to endure. Even after the storm finally subsided, Noah had to stay in the ark for almost a year waiting for the earth to heal. Two times Noah sent out a bird to see if it was safe to leave the ark, and two times the bird returned indicating that it was not.

We talked about how hard it must have been for Noah to wait inside the ark while the earth was healing, and how God's promise of a Savior provided comfort, courage and patience to Noah as he waited to leave the ark. When I reminded Natasha that God had made those same promises of love and forgiveness to her, she began applying the story to her own situation, and her tears eventually ceased.

Jesus had dried Natasha's tears and filled her heart with renewed hope. Like Noah, she would now patiently wait upon the LORD, confident that He would continue to provide healing and the proper time for her to leave *her ark* – the hospital that had kept her safe in the storm of her depression.

With a smile on her face, Natasha joined me in prayer. "Thank you," she said, as we ended our time together, and "thank you to Institutional Ministries for sending a chaplain to bring me the healing power of God's Word."



by Chaplain Kenneth Wenzel

The Spirit's "Click" of Faith

When I first met Jason in October of last year, he was just a few weeks away from his 28th birthday. According to Jason, between juvie (juvenile detention), county jail and state prisons, he had spent nearly half of his life incarcerated in one institution or another. His entire life seemed to be going in the wrong direction.

More significantly, Jason had grown up without the Word of God and saw no reason to spend any time reading the Bible or learning about a Savior named Jesus, until he met a fellow inmate named Robert. They began having long discussions about God, life, heaven, hell and a Savior named Jesus. Then "something clicked," as Jason put it. That "click" was undoubtedly the Holy Spirit working faith in the heart of this young man. He put in a request for a Bible, and when it arrived, he began to read. Jason was filled with questions – lots of questions! – so he turned to his friend Robert. When the questions just kept coming, Robert encouraged him to request a pastoral visit with me.

For over three months now, Jason and I have been studying God's Word together every week. I pray that the Holy Spirit will continue his work in Jason's heart and give him the peace that comes from sins forgiven and leads to eternal life in heaven!

Jason often thanks me for making time in my schedule to study the Scriptures with him. And I am thankful, too – thankful for all the ministry partners that make it possible for me to tell people like Jason about a Savior named Jesus. Jason's eagerness to learn about his Savior is a wonderful blessing of faith and evidence that the Word of God is "living and active" (Hebrews 4:12) as the Holy Spirit touches Jason's heart and soul with the Gospel.



by Chaplain Charles Iles, Sr.

*“the Word
of God is
living and
active”*





Sharing hope...
with those who need it most!

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OUR MISSION

*“To provide
direction, comfort
and hope by sharing
God and His love
with individuals
(and their families)
who are, or have been,
in an institution.”*

Special Gifts & Memorials 12/05/2018 to 01/18/2019

IN CELEBRATION OF

**Marion Schweitzer's
96th Birthday**
Ms. Paula Rauth
Mr. Rudolph Cook
Rev. & Mrs. Russel Kobs
The Birth of Our Savior
Mr. & Mrs. Ted Nommensen

IN HONOR OF

Pastor David Cooper
Rev. & Mrs. Allen Zenker
Dorothy Seifert
Mr. Loyley Seifert
Ed Huth's 95th Birthday
Mr. & Mrs. Eugene Huth
John Kramer
Mr. & Mrs. Allan Kohls
L Lenore Stege
Mr. & Mrs. Jon Stege
Jesus Christ
Mr. Leonard Cox
My Staff
Rev. Philip Henselin
**Chaplain Ken Wenzel's
Retirement**
Ms. Bea Pamperin

IN MEMORY OF

Adolph Fehlauer
Mrs. Carol Ryan
Allen Krause
Mr. & Mrs. Kurt Adams
Mr. & Mrs. Willard Mess
Mrs. Marilyn Krause
**Rev. Arnold H Schroeder
(Grandpa)**
Mr. & Mrs. Ric Stuebs
Barbara Steinle
Mr. & Mrs. Jerry Raddant
Barbara Stoegbauer
Mr. Duane Stoegbauer
Carolyn Schaser
Mr. George Schaser
Charles H Vogel
Mrs. Alyce Vogel
Cindy (Seevers) Polfer
Mrs. Joann Seevers Wolfgram

Darlene Gove-Beyer

Mr. David Beyer Sr.
Donald W Rice
Mr. & Mrs. Robert Johnson
Doug Klemp
Mr. & Mrs. Daniel Saar
Ed & Katie Meyer
Ms. Marietta Paap
Betty Welke
Mr. & Mrs. Ronald Niedfeldt
Daniel Manke
Mr. & Mrs. Robert Manke
Eunice Uhlenbrauck
Rev. & Mrs. Donald Thompson
Everett & Paul Edmundson
Ms. Roberta Edmundson
Fred & Delia Just
Mr. & Mrs. Dale Just
Gladys Paur
Mr. & Mrs. Jerry Siegmann
Grace Oppitz
Mr. & Mrs. Jonathan Oppitz
Herbert William Bonow
Mr. & Mrs. John Bonow
Jack Fieldhack
Mr. & Ms. Joseph Weinkauff
**James Gilbert - Former
Felon - Now Deceased**
Mrs. Dorothy Rusch
Jim Hilden
Mrs. Shirley Hilden
Jim Shallow
Mrs. Margaret Trissel
John Caira
Ms. Joan Wintersberger
Karen Bartholomew
Mr. William Bartholomew
Kenneth W. Krueger
Mrs. Jane Krueger
Lester Zubke
Mrs. Judy Zubke
Marvin Ellinghuysen
Mrs. Faye Hoffmann
Nancy Jean Tometczak
Mr. & Mrs. Art Peavy
Otto E Wolff
Mrs. Norene Wolff

Richard A Berner

Mrs. Carol Berner
Robert Young
Mrs. Dorothy Young
Pastor Roland Welch
Mrs. Barbara Welch
Stewart & Leona Golner
Mr. David Golner
Wally & Vera Voigt
Mr. & Mrs. Paul Voigt
Mrs. Beth Behnke
Wayne Krueger
Ms. Kristin Krueger
Rev. William Staab
Mrs. Idella Staab
Wilma Brehmer
Mrs. Patricia Piippo

IN CELEBRATION OF

God's Blessings
Ms. Arlene Sennhenn
Our Children
Mr. & Mrs. Blair Haddle
God's Grace
Mr. & Mrs. Dennis Simonds
Jesus
Mr. & Mrs. Fred Werth
Mr. & Mrs. Phillip Moll
God's Grace
Mr. Harold Marquart
**Ida Pfaff's Continuing
Recovery from Surgeries**
Mr. Duane Pfaff
John Martin Steinke, PhD.
Mr. Paul Steinke
God's Abundant Blessings!
Mr. & Mrs. Keith Koch
Pastor Ken Wenzel
Mrs. Patricia Shabaz
**All the Blessings the LORD
has given our Family**
Mr. & Mrs. Timothy Sievert
**Family Who Walk with
Our Lord**
Mrs. Viola Georgson