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COMPASSION

COMMON, ORDINARY THINGS

by Chaplain Mark Wenzel



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What did you eat yesterday? What did you wear? Unless it was a special meal or event, you probably did not pay a whole lot of attention to what you ate or wore. In addition, I don't think too many of us would get excited about a Filet-o-Fish, fries, Cheerios and a banana. Wearing jeans probably does not rank very high on the excitement scale either. Except maybe if for the past 7 months, you were not able to eat any of those things, or wear any of your own clothes. Then you might just pay a bit more attention to these common, ordinary things.

George* called me early in the morning after his release from jail. He was excited to be able to contact someone at will. When I asked him how he was doing, he mentioned his excitement at stopping at McDonald's for the Filet-o-Fish and fries. He got up in the morning and put

on his own jeans, and he enjoyed a bowl of Cheerios and a banana for breakfast. He was experiencing an exciting fresh start to life after 7 months in jail.

George had a list of items to take care of for his fresh start. Get some personal care products, look for a job, and get a haircut. In addition, at the top of his list: church. This is a major change in priorities for George.

George had become a regular participant in Bible study while he was in jail. He had reconnected with God and he really desired to live differently, living for God instead of himself. He credits our ministry with helping him make this transition. Of course, we know it is the power of God's Word



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UNRESOLVED GUILT

by Chaplain Kenneth Wenzel



Grief at the time of death often indicates unresolved guilt. For example, when in I Kings 17 the widow at Zarephath saw her son become ill and then die, she cried out to Elijah, “What do you have against me, man of God? Did you come to remind me of my sin and kill my son?” (Verse 18) Her son’s death pointed directly to the curse of sin and she felt the guilt of her own sins. In her grief, she cries out for help to Elijah who was God’s representative. In this case, the Lord in a miracle restored the boy’s life. The widow wanted to learn more about the Lord from the “man of God.” She needed to know forgiveness of sins and have her guilt taken away.

Tamika* was an African-American woman who accompanied her boyfriend in an ambulance to one of the hospitals in which I minister. She wanted a second opinion. At a different hospital,

a simple leg surgery on a healthy man went terribly wrong. The patient, her boyfriend, went into a coma. The doctors here tragically confirmed that the patient was brain dead.

Tamika fell into great grief and unresolved guilt. She cried out to God for help. She was in the family lounge with her sister nearby, lying down on a couch, shaking and crying to God for help. I had the opportunity to share the gospel with her. She began confessing her sins to me and tried to bargain with God for a miracle. Her grief and confession was intense. Her sister and I tried to remind her about the saving forgiveness and love of Jesus to calm her down. With growing stress, she continued confessing her sins and crying out to God until she physically passed out.

“COMMON, ORDINARY THINGS” —CONTINUED FROM PG 1

working through us that has brought about this magnificent change.

George continues to have contact with our ministry through an after-care ministry and support group. May he continue to stay in contact with God’s Word that will guide him through the difficulties of life.

May George enjoy many days of Filet-o-Fish and fries, many days of putting on his own clothes, but especially many days of celebrating life with his Savior here on earth and for an eternity in heaven.

**Not his real name*

Her sister ran to get a nurse while I watch over Tamika. A medical response team was called. Tamika was taken to the emergency room and later improved physically so that she could go home.

Her grief and stress were great. However, below her grief was unresolved guilt and that guilt attacked her and even made her physically ill. She knew about Jesus but somehow she had not fully understood His amazing grace.

In I Kings 17, the widow talked to Elijah. Tamika promised to talk to her pastor. We too may need to talk to our own pastor if we experience unresolved guilt. Do that now! Take all your guilt to the cross of Jesus for His unconditional forgiveness, and live in His victorious resurrection. Do not wait for grief to bring the guilt to our attention. Jesus, with loving kindness, has taken away what “God has against us.” Now is the time to enjoy His miraculous friendship with hope and comfort!

**Not her real name*



MINISTRY “SUCCESS”

by Deaconess Sarah Owens

I learned a long time ago not to try to predict “success” when doing ministry. I can’t go into a ministry situation now with my own preconceived notions of what would happen for a successful encounter. Instead, I approach a visit with an open heart in prayer realizing I don’t know what to expect. By merely going and being open to the Lord working in and through me, success is often the result.

Sharon* was only 14, but was detained in the youth detention center for a serious crime that would probably result in at least five years of incarceration. She had not been in trouble before.

The last time I had seen Sharon her mood was fairly jovial and upbeat. We had studied Scripture together and Sharon found peace and joy. She was ready to accept whatever time the judge gave her.

However, in this visit, Sharon was discouraged and angry. Her speech was violent and I could tell she was very upset. We had gone through some difficulties in the past at detention, but I felt that rapport and trust had developed between us. I really liked Sharon. She had a great sense of humor and lively speech and a friendly smile. It hurt me to see her frustrated and in pain. I asked her to remember that Jesus loves her. She said she doubted that was true. She had prayed so many times and it felt that Jesus just did not hear or care for her. I gave her more time to talk about the disappointment and fears. She finally told me that she was so angry with her lawyer who she felt was not trying to fight for her.

Although this angry and negative Sharon was not easy to be around, I prayed that God would give me courage to listen and patience to speak with care and wisdom. As our time ended, I asked if I could pray for her. I was unsure what her reaction would be. Her answer was surprising. “Sure,” she said, “Who wouldn’t want that.” I prayed, while smiling inside.

Sharon had not given up on God. She was a 14 year old who was “locked up” (since being abused at 3 years old) in the outside world with anger and pain deeply embedded in her heart. Sharon needed someone who would not turn away despite her vulgar language and threats. She needed someone who would tell her that Jesus loves her, someone who was willing to pray for her and someone who would love her despite her sins and failures.

I offered Sharon a prayer book. She was excited to get another copy; the first had been taken away. With a smile on her face, she recalled her favorite sections of the book.

No one said that ministering to people would be smooth and gentle. It is more like a roller coaster ride. However, there is much excitement in not knowing what God will do and knowing that He is the great Designer. God rides beside me and that gives me the courage to do what needs to be done. As long as God is with me, the victory will come.

**Not her real name*





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OUR MISSION

*“To Share God’s Law and
the Saving Gospel of
Jesus Christ With People
Who Are Institutionalized,
and Their Families.”*

SPECIAL GIFTS & MEMORIALS

1/27/2010 - 5/5/2010

IN MEMORY OF:

Dorothy Bauer by Barbara Bauer; **Betty Becker** by Rev. & Mrs. Kenneth Wenzel & Kimberly; **Eloise Berg** by Mr. & Mrs. James Hilden; **Lori Boville** by Barbara Martin; **Carol Davidson** by Mr. Daniel Davidson; **Martin Eisenman** by Mrs. Lucille Eisenman; **Clyde Griffith** by Mr. & Mrs. Kenneth Gawrisch; **Viola Hartwig** by Mr. & Mrs. Harvey Zeitler; **Eric Helms** by Mr. & Mrs. Larry Liebrecht; **Don Heppner** by Mr. & Mrs. Louis Baehman; **Mary Ann Hirn** by Mr. & Mrs. Charlie Thompson; **Florence Hoelz** by Mr. & Mrs. Jonathan Rupprecht; **Mr. & Mrs. Otto Hoppe** by Mr. & Mrs. Earl Reichel; **Audrey Johnsen** by Mr. Richard F. Johnsen; **Ruth Kastner** by Mr. & Mrs. James Hilden; **Doug Klemp Memorial** by Amie Kahler-Klemp; **Henry Krenz** by Mr. & Mrs. Stan Voigt; **Jean Kunz** by Mr. Kenneth Kunz; **Winnie & Elten Maloney** by Mr. Mitchell Maloney; **Carl Meitner** by Mr. & Mrs. Stephan Meitner; **Evelyn Meitner** by Mr. & Mrs. Stephan Meitner; **Esther Merrill** by Virginia Bartell; **Ava Micheel** by Mr. & Mrs. Virgil Micheel; **Loved Ones** by Mr. Earl Moldenhauer; **Marlyn Niemuth Sr** by Ruth Niemuth; **Albert Nimmer** by Mr. & Mrs. James Beyer, Mr. & Mrs. Gerald Bruss, Mrs. Cheryl Ehlke, Mr. Edward Huth, Ms. Gwen Huth, Mr. Edward Nimmer, Mr. & Mrs. Dick Stuhr; **George Ottosen** by Mr. & Mrs. Charlie Thompson; **Ralph Peterson** by Mr. & Mrs. Charlie Thompson; **Marty Rase** by Rev. & Mrs. Roland Welch; **Mr. & Mrs. Fred Reichel** by Mr. & Mrs. Earl Reichel; **Roy Schlicht** by Rev. & Mrs. David Tetzlaff; **Ervin Schultz** by Mr. & Mrs. Delmar Hoeffner; **Loved Ones** by Ms. Joann Wolfgram; **Jerry Seymour** by Mr. & Mrs. Charlie Thompson; **Patricia Sievert** by Mr. Walter Sievert; **Mary Uthemann** by Mr. & Mrs. Charlie Thompson; **Earl Wichman** by Mr. & Mrs. Daniel Gresens; **Effie Wynkoop** by Betty Baumann

IN HONOR OF:

Mother’s 97th Birthday by Mr. Roy Bantley Jr.; **John & Barb Becker** by Mrs. Carol Oros; **Jason Edwards** by Mr. Matt Banbury; **Rev. Dean A. Gunn** by Mr. & Mrs. Dean Gunn; **Del Hoeffner 81st Birthday** by Mr. Lloyd Hoeffner; **Chaplain Charles Iles Sr’s 35 years in ministry** by Mr. & Mrs. Kevin Klug; **Rev. Charles Iles Sr** by Mr. & Mrs. Elton Iles; **ArmyCW2 Charles Iles Jr & Lynn Iles** by Mr. & Mrs. Elton Iles; **Adam Johnsen 24th Birthday** by Mr. Richard F. Johnsen; **Dennis Johnsen 48th Birthday** by Mr. Richard F. Johnsen; **Jean Johnsen Birthday** by Mr. Richard F. Johnsen; **Richard F. Johnsen 82nd Birthday** by Mr. Richard F. Johnsen; **Tyler Johnsen 13th Birthday** by Mr. Richard F. Johnsen; **Bob & Chris Johnson 40th Wedding Anniversary** by Mr. & Mrs. Timothy Holmes; **Howard & Mildred Lemke 55th Wedding Anniversary** by Mr. & Mrs. Earl Pappenfuss

IN THANKSGIVING:

George A. Schlei by Doris Schlei