



Center of Hope Newsletter

Sowing Seeds of God's Love  Physically and Spiritually

August 2011

WHAT TO DO WHEN “LOVE HURTS”

By: Michelle Van't Hul

I recently was at a back to school fair promoting warm winter wear from Center of Hope when a tattoo like this caught my eye:



The tattoo and its message took me by surprise. My mentality and image of love is the opposite: Love is good, love is positive, love is warm fuzzy feelings.

As I thought through the message that this person was sending, I realized that there are many people who feel this way: the woman who has been abused and taken advantage of in the name of love, the child who only sees the ugliness of fighting and arguments in marriage, the man who is left by his wife for someone 'better' and so many more situations.

The more I thought about it, the more I got discouraged. How do you show God's love to people whose mindset (and reality) is "love hurts"?

My first thought was, "well, show them love". I quickly threw that out. If love hurts, actions of love will not be received until something changes.

Then, God showed me something profound: Love does hurt. True, Godly love hurt God a lot.

Let me explain: God sent his Son, Jesus,

to earth knowing that his Son was going to be killed. We can compare this to sending sons and daughters to the military. They are going for a purpose, but there may be a chance of loss. God knew without doubt that there was going to be death...and resurrection.

How do we show God's love to people whose mindset is "love hurts"?

This is our connection to "love hurts" thinkers. As we count the cost of Jesus' death on the cross and the pain of the Father, we begin to feel the "love hurts" feeling.

We can share that "yes, love does hurt, and God understands that more than we will ever know." We can also plant seeds of hope, of new love, in Jesus and the resurrection love story.

God's love is similar to this visitor's desire to care for his daughter (compiled by Helene Vander Werff):

When asked, "What brought you to Sioux Falls?" he replied that he was relocating to establish a new foundation, so he could get his daughter back. He

shared he had gone through a bitter divorce and lost everything. He told me he had everything—success, money, home, cars—but lost it all in the divorce.


He assured me that it was o.k. He showed no bitterness or anger. He said, "It was all just stuff. What is more important is I lost custody of my daughter. I love her so much and am a good dad and she loves me. I just want her back." Therefore, his decision to start over again and prove his credibility as a good dad.

He remarked how he felt like God led him to this holy city of angels. "Everyone has been so kind to me in this city. It really is a city of angels."

I told him Sioux Falls was a good city and about the beautiful restored Sioux Falls water falls and he smiled. "I walked there last night. I sat on the rocks and listened to the water and thought about my daughter. I thought about the angels in Sioux Falls and the heat wasn't so bad then. It was the most beautiful place I have seen."

He talked about his little daughter. She was seven years old and he took a picture out of his billfold and showed me "his little girl." Again he said, "I love her so much and she loves me. I want her back so much."

This is an example of how God thinks of us: "I love him/her so much...I want him/her back so much." Sharing God's pain and his desire to have us back permanently connects us to the people with "love hurts" mindsets.

Ministry Update on Page 2! 

MINISTRY UPDATE

Bike-to-Work Program

It has been a great year for the Bike-to-Work program. The demand for bikes is so great that we will have 8-10 bikes available and 20 minutes later all of them are out the door. There has been 451 bikes distributed this year, with an average of 5-10 people turned away a day who need a bike.

The new shop has helped us build many new relationships with guests because we are able to teach those off the street how fix bikes. This has really furthered the possibility to pray with our guests and ask spiritual questions. This continues to grow as people who have received a bike from us come back to fix flat tires, adjust brakes, and do basic maintenance of the bikes received.

Steve Johnson has come back on a more regular basis, which is a great blessing. His knowledge of bikes and desire to help people is a great benefit to the Bike-to-Work program. He even showed off and got out of his wheel chair and stood up with his two prosthetic legs.

We are excited at the opportunities the new Bike Ministry Area has provided. On some days, our friend Lonnie will come and read scripture to all who are in the Bike Ministry Area. This leads to many good discussions.

It is such a blessing to be working on bikes and hearing God's Word. Thank you for all your support in the Bike-to-Work program. Please con-

sider donating your gently used bikes to help us meet the growing demand! Blessings!

Aaron Van't Hul
Bike Shop Coordinator



Aaron and Steve
working on a bike

MEMORIAL GIFTS



Judy Benz of Lennox, South Dakota

Joan Temple of Sioux Falls, South Dakota

Don Boeve of Hills, Minnesota

Delores Bunjer of Lennox, South Dakota

Florence Ronning of Dell Rapids, South Dakota

Dorothy Willard of Colton, South Dakota

Dorothy Hein of Hartley, Iowa

Terry Sward of Dell Rapids, South Dakota

Mylo Preheim of Freeman, South Dakota

Dick Ronken of Sioux Falls, South Dakota

Leland Randall of Dell Rapids, South Dakota

Rodney Lamfers of Sioux Falls, South Dakota

Lois Hazelton Widvey of Brookings, South Dakota

ENCLOSED!

Enclosed is some information on winter clothing and commodity gifts. If you would like more information about either of these things, please contact us at info@centerofhopesf.org or 605-334-9789. Pass it on if someone may be interested in one of these opportunities!



CENTER OF HOPE

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