



From The Desk of Peggy

God's generosity in grace

In all of our years spent giving a hand up to people who find themselves homeless, Bob, RJ, and I have experienced first-hand the generosity of God's grace in one life at a time—a promise that the bible speaks to. "And God is able to make all grace abound to you, so that having sufficiency in all things at all times, you may abound in every good work." My encouragement over the years for

believers to give "more" has been rooted in these truths, especially the assurance that "God is able to make ALL grace abound" to us so that we may "abound in every good work".



Over the years our newsletter has been full of stories of God changing our guests' lives. Joe and Christina's have a story that is hard to put into words in what you, your love and donations have done in their lives as well as that of their new daughter, Brandi.

When they first walked into A Ray of Hope, they wanted a room so they could be together, but when the staff found out they were not married they were told that they had to stay apart.

They both were facing legal issues that were going to cost them a great deal of money and time in jail. Fast forwarding—they have faced and settled their legal issues with a hand up from AROH.

They both will tell you they did not like AROH guidelines at first. But in a short time they found that by living by them, their heart's desire became to change their lives. They grew in the knowledge of God's grace that when forgiveness is asked for and choices are made to walk in obedience to God's truth, the Lord blesses. Joe and Christina are now a walking, talking miracle and examples of people who have taken responsibility for their lives trusting God's purposes. Come and meet the staff of AROH. You will be blessed in what your donations have accomplished—knowing that giving a hand up to someone who now has "a ray of hope" growing inside them for a new life.

With a grateful heart,
Peggy

From Corlis (Nikolaisen) and Ron Schellberg

I read about Peggy Christensen and her amazing work for A Ray of Hope in the Daily Inter Lake online edition. What a difference Peggy has made in the lives of many men, women and children in Kalispell. I have donated and shopped at the Ray of Hope thrift store and have been touched by the people I have met there who are working hard to turn their lives around.

I grew up in Kalispell, graduated from Flathead H.S. and have always been interested in the houses on the corner of 5th Ave and 1st St W, because my great-great-grandfather, Albert Paulson and his family, lived in the blue house next door to where Peggy's House is being built. This was in 1903-1904 and Kalispell was a young town.

Our prayers for Peggy during this time of her cancer treatment and for all the volunteers working to make Peggy's House a reality.

Sincerely,

On the Outside Looking In

from the desk of Wayne Appl

You have all read stories from guests and how they came to reside at A Ray of Hope and letters from the community on how AROH has helped them. What you might not know is how AROH is unique from other organizations. The work in the office, shelter, thrift store and for fund raising is all done in-house by guests who also reside there. We the staff, (people who have lived in the house for 6 months or more), are grateful for the opportunities awarded to us and have a desire to give back and help others in need. The benefits are numerous to us. We continue to grow, learn new skills, take on more responsibility, interact with the community, and are held accountable and lead by example.

Some people come to AROH simply because they have nowhere else to go. However, others want to be here in order to rebuild their lives, change their way of thinking and become better individuals. Others... Well? Let's just say being an old cowboy, I'll have to go with the old saying, "you can lead a horse to water, but ya can't make 'em drink". The struggle is real and so at A Ray of Hope it is not uncommon practice to give people a second chance and even sometimes a third and fourth. As long as they are willing to try we are here to help.

Additionally, living at the house has certain stipulations/guidelines that must be followed: participating in household chores is required and a minimum of 20 benevolence hours per week is given. Benevolence hours consist of helping out either at the house or office, the thrift store, construction on or fund-raising for the new shelter or out in the community. The expectation of the guests is consistent with the AROH adage "a hand up, not a hand out". Subsequently this keeps our administration fees extremely low with nearly 97% of donations going towards operational costs and back to those in need in the community.

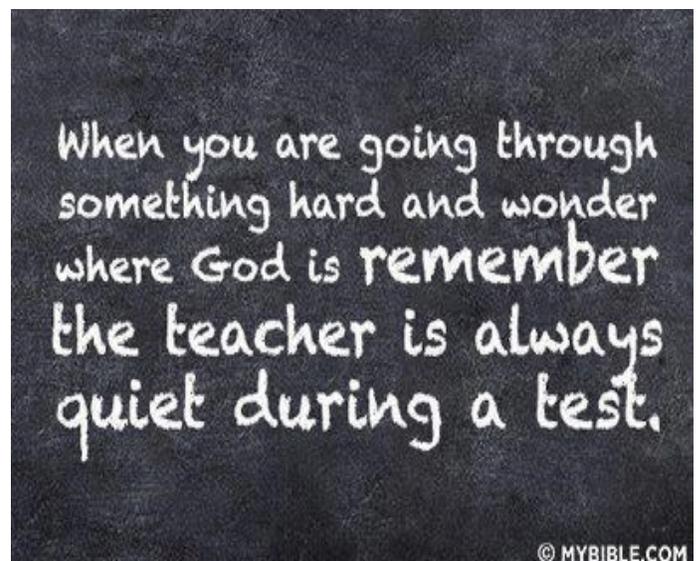
"Many are the plans in a person's heart, but it is the Lord's purpose that prevails."

Dear Ray of Hope,

My husband worked on a road construction crew for three years, never missing a day and was early for every shift. Two months ago he was laid off from his job because he had a seizure and called in 45 minutes late. The company knew he was epileptic from the start. We had no choice but to come back to Montana from Oregon, and stay with my sister.

When things didn't work out at my sister's house we had to send our 15 year old daughter to stay with friends, and my husband and I were in the streets with nowhere to go. You guys helped us out with bedding and camping gear to get by with until we could get ourselves into a better situation. I also received a gas voucher to help me get back and forth to work. You turned a desperate situation into hope and faith that things will get better in our lives. We are deeply grateful for not only the camping gear but also the respect and kindness we received when coming to A Ray of Hope out of desperation.

My husband and I are both currently working and have upgraded from a tent to a camper and plan to continue moving forward. Thank you for everything!



6 Keys to Responding When Someone Sins Against Us

How successfully do you handle the sins of others? Observation suggests that the Christian family too often reacts with either hot indignation or cold indifference, without a proper sense of biblical responsibility.

Sometimes we seem as bad at handling others' failures as we are at overcoming our own. No doubt these two things are related. Yet, given the nature of the gospel, would we not expect that the church should be vastly different from the world on this point?

Scripture gives several principles which should govern our response to the sins of others.

1. Grief. A life has been marred. Christ's name has been shamed. Perhaps others' lives have been invaded by the consequences of sin. Things can never be quite the same again. Hearts will have been hardened, making repentance the more difficult. Knowing this, we will weep with those who weep.

2. Realism. Conversion does not deliver the saints from the presence of sin. We may have died to sin, but sin has not yet died out in us. The regenerate man is only in the process of being healed. Sin dwells in him still, and is deceitful still.

This does not excuse the believer's sin, but it underlines that it is possible for Christians still to sin. Scripture encourages us that there will be no fatalities, but warns us that we can still be critically wounded.

The strong-stomached authors of the Westminster Confession caught this balance when they wrote that "sanctification is throughout in the whole man; yet imperfect in this life, there abiding still some remnants of corruption in every part, whence ariseth

a continual and irreconcilable war . . . In which war, although the remaining corruption, for a time, may much prevail; yet, through the continual supply of strength from the sanctifying Spirit of Christ, the regenerate part doth overcome . . ." (XIV,ii,iii)

Such knowledge does not protect us from grief over others' sins, but it does help us to see that a single wound is not the end of the war, and thus preserves us from despair of ourselves or others.

3. Self-examination. We too are frail, we too may fall. Our sins may not have produced the same public consequences as those of our brethren, but may be no less horrible. We may have been spared the combination of sinful desire, the pressure of temptation, and the opportunity to act that has brought another to fall. Only those who know that they too are "subject to weakness" will be "able to deal gently with those who are ignorant and are going astray" (Heb.5:2).

4. Mutual confession. We are to confess our sins to each other, and to pray for one another (James.5:16). Why? Because mutual confession breaks the grip of Satan over the guilty heart.

Satan's paralyzing stranglehold depends on our acceptance of his winsome lies:

1) No other Christian could have sinned as you did.

2) No other Christian will accept you and love you now, so you must disguise your sin by any means you can.

A Ray of Hope
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MISSION STATE- MENT

A Ray of Hope shall provide a safe harbor for those in the community with nowhere else to turn. It will provide those who seek help not only with food, clothing and shelter, but also with knowledge and a avenue to develop competency in meeting life's financial, emotional, family, and legal rehabilitation challenges.



Shelter

46 5th Av West Kalispell MT 59901 PH 406 755 4673



Thrift Store

105 6th Av West Kalispell MT 59901 PH 406 260 4184

Please send donations to PO Box 5407, Kalispell MT 59903