



A Ray of Hope News Letter

October November 2015

From The Desk Of Peggy

Not Breaking the Bruised Reeds

Some of us tend to do away with things that are slightly damaged. Instead of repairing them we say: "Well, I don't have time to fix it so I might as well throw it in the garbage can and buy a new one." Often we also treat people this way. We say: "Well, he has a problem with drinking; well, she is quite depressed; well, they have mismanaged their business...we'd better not take the risk of working with them." When we dismiss people out of hand because of their apparent need of help, we stunt their lives by ignoring their gifts, which are often buried in their wounds.

We all are bruised reeds, whether our bruises are visible or not. The compassionate life is the life in which we believe that strength is hidden in weakness and that true community is a fellowship of the weak. Henri Nouwen Society.

The workforce of A Ray of Hope is made up of people who came as a guest of A Ray of Hope. Because of good work habits and having gratitude and a heart for the ministry of A Ray of Hope, these guests become the workforce in giving a hand up in giving back to others in the

community. These great people are the ones who keep the new guests on track to give back their hours, filling out their time sheets, and making sure the work is done and done well. This is training our guests and themselves for better paying jobs. The blessing of this wonderful workforce to A Ray of Hope is that we are able to use your donations to help others to stay in their homes and meeting needs of people who have fallen through the cracks. We are so grateful because of your support we have been able to help over three hundred people in our community with a hand up not a hand out on less than \$200,000 a year.

We work with each quest—not pushing them from the minute they walk in the door with the pressure you will be out of here in a certain amount of time. If a guest continuously refuses to follow the guidelines of A Ray of Hope in living a life of recovery from their poor choices they are asked to leave.

The good news is that the average stay of a guest is sixty days before they have a job and a safe place to live. The main thought of our work is “what would Jesus do” with the special gifts of our guests have. He would have us extend to them the same grace, love, tender correction and accountability that the Lord gives to each of us.

From The Desk of Dave McClean

- Act 3:1 Now Peter and John were going up to the temple at the ninth *hour*, the hour of prayer.
- Act 3:2 And a man who had been lame from his mother's womb was being carried along, whom they used to set down every day at the gate of the temple which is called Beautiful, in order to beg alms of those who were entering the temple.
- Act 3:3 When he saw Peter and John about to go into the temple, he *began* asking to receive alms.
- Act 3:4 But Peter, along with John, fixed his gaze on him and said, "Look at us!"
- Act 3:5 And he *began* to give them his attention, expecting to receive something from them.
- Act 3:6 But Peter said, "I do not possess silver and gold, but what I do have I give to you: In the name of Jesus Christ the Nazarene--walk!"
- Act 3:7 And seizing him by the right hand, he raised him up; and immediately his feet and his ankles were strengthened.
- Act 3:8 With a leap he stood upright and *began* to walk; and he entered the temple with them, walking and leaping and praising God.
- Act 3:9 And all the people saw him walking and praising God;
- Act 3:10 and they were taking note of him as being the one who used to sit at the Beautiful Gate of the temple to *beg* alms, and they were filled with wonder and amazement at what had happened to him.
- Act 3:11 While he was clinging to Peter and John, all the people ran together to them at the so-called portico of Solomon, full of amazement.

We tend to miss the mark no matter which side of circumstances we are on. As with this lame man, we tend to ask for money when we really need greater healing. On the other hand, we tend to give money when we're able to give greater healing. We don't take into consideration the greater gifts of God. I see the same thing in counseling people in their needs. Very often people with financial struggles **think that money will solve their problems** when what they really need is the counsel to walk in the truth and light of the Lord and the provision God has given them. Very often people who want to help people in financial troubles **think that money will solve**

their problems, when they can give them a much greater gift of spiritual healing which is of the Lord.

Add into this equation a nation that has established an entitlement system that gives money to the needy without discernment and faith. This has hindered the motivation of those in need to work toward financial recovery and it can hinder the giver's motivation to help those receiving entitlements.

Shortly after taking office, President Roosevelt appropriated \$500,000,000 to be given to the states for relief. He later said, "The lessons of history confirmed by the evidence immediately before me, show conclusively that continued dependence upon relief induces a spiritual and moral disintegration fundamentally destructive to the national fiber. To dole out relief in this way is to administer a narcotic, a subtle destroyer of the human spirit. It is inimical to the dictates of sound policy.

It is in violation of the traditions of America. Work must be found for able-bodied but destitute workers."

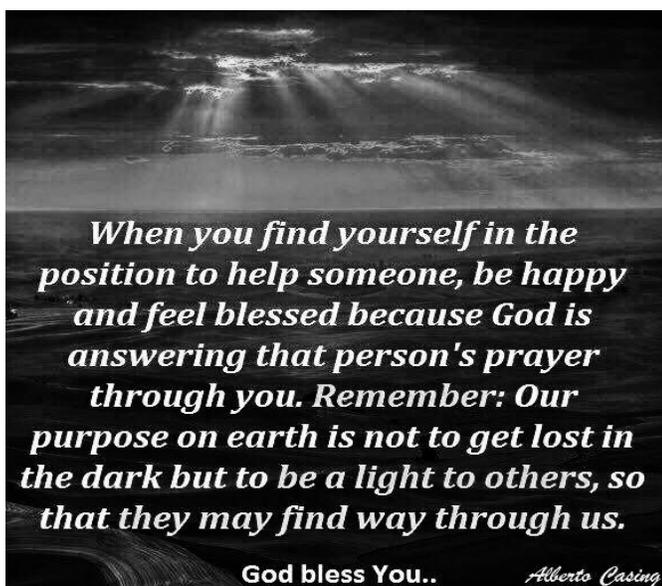
His words have proven true. I have encountered those who purposely avoid looking for work to avoid losing their entitlement money. This is not true for all, but for some. This wars against their very soul, and the guilt can keep them from turning to the One Who can truly heal their soul. Discernment must be exercised in giving, to avoid coming between God and His work in a person's soul. Very often, God allows financial struggles to bring those in need to the greater gift of Himself, and for those who help, to be His hands and heart for His glory. His gift and work always has a greater purpose: to free us from bondage and to bring us to Himself, He does this in the hearts of both the receiver and giver. The Lord truly is the God of grace, bringing us unto Himself and each other.

We have before us, in our community, an opportunity to shine God's light into the souls of many in need. A Ray of Hope is in the development stage of building a women's shelter. This is an opportunity to shine in the lives of women and children in need, and their needs are great. God is glorified when we minister to their needs. We have an opportunity to come together and show the greater gift of God in the building process and serving in this shelter. Not just in providing shelter, but in providing a Christ centered environment for His glory. I look forward to working and serving and "walking and leaping and praising God" with you as we journey this road together.

If you are interested in sharing God's vision for A Ray Of Hope's Women's Shelter with your church, please call Peggy at 406-260-8084 to schedule a speaker to share with your fellowship.

Letters

Before coming to A Ray of Hope my life was falling apart again. Only 2 years out of treatment in Los Angeles, California I had begun drinking again. Upon coming to A Ray of Hope I have been blessed in so many ways it's hard to count. I've learned how to solve problems biblically and I have never had such an intimate relationship with God. I have learned that I have great worth, and can also be a blessing to others. Each day I learn something new on how to live by Jesus Christ's statues and ways, and how to apply them in my life. I've tried many times to get sober on my own and it's never worked. The only times I have stayed sober is with God. I give great appreciation to Bob and Peggy for all the blessings, wisdom, insight, unconditional love, and introducing me to the One who does the work, God. I am very excited to continue a great life and have Jesus lighting my path on this great journey. I know where I've been. I know where I am now. And I don't know what the future holds, and it's a amazing feeling. Words cannot explain how grateful I am. A Ray of Hope has done just that... giving me HOPE. ~ Jarred Hergett



Hello, my name is Brandon S. Pelton some of you may remember me from my articles in past newsletters, and for those who are new, this article is my testimony of my stay at A Ray of Hope's Helmville Retreat and what I've learned so far and what I'm continue to learn. However first let me introduce myself for those who are new to receiving the newsletter from A Ray of Hope. As stated earlier my name is Brandon S. Pelton, I'm currently 25 years old and I was born in Kalispell, Montana on June 12, 1990. I've spent most of my life in Kalispell, until I became homeless on my 22nd birthday with my mother. We spent about a month and half living on the streets before coming to A Ray of Hope on Aug. 3, 2012.

I came up to the Helmville Retreat the next day on Aug. 4, 2012 while my mother stayed at the Kalispell shelter. It is 2015 and I'm still here at the Retreat learning so much about my God, my country's history, myself, how to better communicate with others, as well as to become the man God wants me to become. And that's not all I've learned since I've come to the Retreat. Among other things I've learned and still learning are office skills, in home health care skills, leadership skills, and survival skills.

The knowledge and wisdom and insight God has given to Bob and Peggy Christensen is absolutely amazing, I've learned so much from them. They have taught me so much more on the historical facts of our nation and the Constitution than I would probably have learned from a college or university. They have morning Bible studies every morning at the Retreat, which have helped me immensely because when I first came to the Retreat I was a very angry individual. But God had a plan already in place because when I got here they had just started a Bible study on anger. God is so good, and my anger has greatly diminished since I first got here and I've let go of a lot of things. I'm still working on forgiving myself and understanding that I have great worth, and not listening to what the world has to say about me.

And through the A Ray of Hope I have gotten numerous friendships. Without A Ray of Hope I would still be on the path of death and destruction and not the path of Life which I'm currently on. So I continue to say Thank You to everyone at A Ray of Hope, Bob and Peggy Christensen, RJ Christensen, and to all who support A Ray of Hope. Thank You for your continued support of this awesome ministry which has helped me so greatly. And remember God is good all the time, and all the time God is good!

God Bless,

Brandon S. Pelton

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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 with knowledge and a avenue to develop competency in meeting life's financial, emotional, family and Legal rehabilitation challenges,



Shelter

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