

Missionary Evangelism to Corrections

Sharing the gospel & Christ's love with those in corrections since 1982

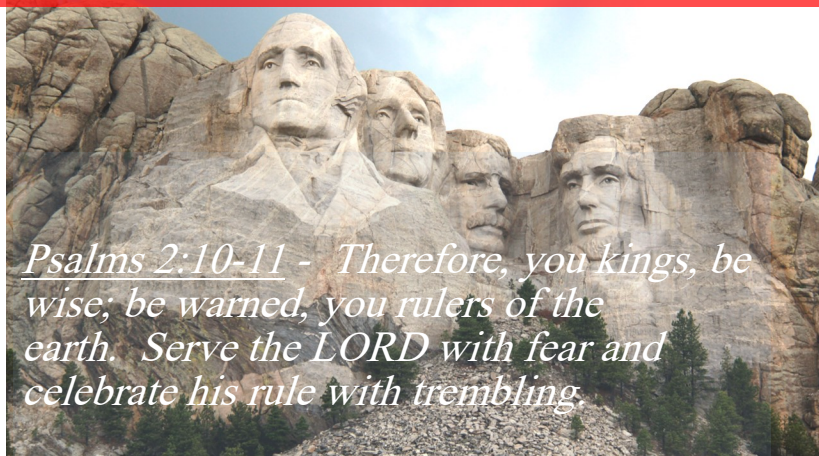
I was in prison and you came to me Matt. 25:36cESV



As we celebrate the nations independence, may we acknowledge and grow in our dependence on God

June 30, 2019

MEC Spotlight Pablo Montanez



Psalms 2:10-11 - Therefore, you kings, be wise; be warned, you rulers of the earth. Serve the LORD with fear and celebrate his rule with trembling.



Pablo & Deb Montanez

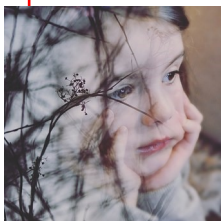
Healing from Trauma and Forgiveness

(part 2 of 2)

In part one of Healing from Trauma and Forgiveness we laid out six ideas that are helpful in the healing process and discussed the first two of them. This month we will discuss the last four.

- 1) Trauma must be acknowledged and dealt with for healing to take place.
- 2) Connecting with others and leaning new material or ideas can only be done when our brains [we] are not in too high or too low of energy.
- 3) There are helpful processes that contribute to healing.
- 4) It is often when affirmation or love is expressed that pain surfaces and needs to be addressed.
- 5) Once healing takes place, we can choose how we react.
- 6) Even though not everyone understands it, there is great healing in prayer and forgiveness.

Brad Hambrick has a series of videos which help us to look at and



Healing from Trauma & Forgiveness ... cont. pg. 2

I have been serving through MEC in jails since 2005. Jail ministry is one of the best gifts God has given me. Of all the wonderful things God has allowed me to do for Him, there's nowhere else where I see God move through His Holy Spirit in power like He does through this ministry.

I'm not talking about big, earth shaking, powerful external signs, but the quiet and internal way the Holy Spirit works to awake a soul to the truth of the Gospel. God has entrusted His followers with the greatest message ever. As Romans 10:15 states - "How beautiful are the feet of messengers who bring good news!"

In 2018, I was asked to be a part of the Hennepin County Adult Detention Center chaplaincy volunteer team. As a bilingual (Spanish/English) person, I have been given open access across the entire jail to minister to inmates with the gospel truth of the Lord Jesus Christ.

It amazes me to see the raw power of the Gospel. We are called to be faithful and proclaim it. Not to add or detract from it. As Charles Spurgeon once said,

Spotlight:
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June 30, 2019

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Pabolo Montanez

“The Gospel is like a Lion...it doesn’t need to be defended; it just needs to be let out of the cage”.

Here is one of many stories. A few months ago, I agreed to sub for another MEC volunteer to lead a Bible study session at the Hennepin County jail. I got to the room and nobody was there. I sat down and waited for 10 minutes and nothing. I prayed, “Lord if it’s only one person, let your will be done”. Two minutes later one inmate comes in and sits down. I greeted him and stated that God must’ve wanted us to have a conversation. With tears in his eyes, he shared that he had a dream about Jesus the night before. In the dream, Jesus asked him, “What would you do if I give you a chance?” After he woke up, he asked God for a sign. He knew about the Bible study class scheduled for that day. He shared with me that he had made up his mind to intentionally wait for 10 minutes after the PA announcement for the Bible study class was given. Then he had planned to show up to the room late and look for the sign. I was able to share the Good News of Jesus with him. I’m so glad the Lord had me wait! I was humbled to see that God truly goes before us preparing the way...at times much different than what we expect.

As we follow Jesus, because He has touched our lives, we have something to say. We might not be the most talented or articulate but we have Him - which is more than enough! Let me encourage you to ‘Go for it!’ I pray: Lord, let our lives (Actions) show your love. Let us share winsomely what God has done for us (Testimony). As you bring us new friends and opportunities, help us to be faithful and proclaim the way to God or back to God, through Jesus (Gospel). Teach us Lord to love you more and to serve you better every day. Amen!!



Por lo tanto, ya no hay
NINGUNA CONDENACIÓN
para los que están unidos a
CRISTO JESÚS,
pues por medio de él
la ley del Espíritu de vida
ME HA LIBERADO
de la ley del pecado
Y DE LA MUERTE.

NVI

ROMANOS 8:1-2

We have been privileged to have Pabolo Montanez serve in the Ramsey County Correctional facility for 11 years and the Hennepin County Adult Detention Center facility for 3 years. Thank you, Pablo for sharing!

Healing from Trauma and Forgiveness part 2 cont. from pg. 1



deal with Trauma that are well worth the time to view and learn from. (bradhambrick.com) He opens with helping us understand that acknowledging and taking steps to change traumatic situations takes courage and he quotes Judith Hermann in sharing that this will overcome abuse/abuser(s) and empower survivor(s).

Acknowledging the reality of events, understanding their impact, making sense of it, mourning the wrongfulness/receiving God’s comfort, learning our individual gospel story, combating impact, taking on and persevering in new identity, and stewarding life for God’s glory are topics that Brad covers in these videos from the Sam James Institute.

There are many helpful processes that contribute to healing. Searching out and finding a safe place to do so and taking these steps with the right timing, gives control and voice which were not available to us during the trauma. This healing to us as individuals, by ourselves and



We know we are not alone in Ministry and so each month do a shout-out to others.
This month our Ministry Friends Shout Out is to



Transform MN

Transform Minnesota is a network of churches.

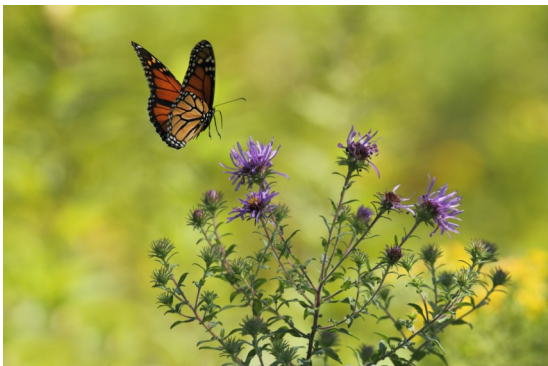
We provide a space for pastors and Christian leaders to wrestle through complex issues from a Biblical perspective. We want the church to be relevant. Which means Christians need to engage in dialogue about society's critical issues. We do this through conferences, forums, and trainings. We're a unique organization because we bring together a variety of denominations, ethnicities, and perspectives. Upcoming topics have to do with addressing Sexuality, Love them 1st film screening, Conflict Management, and Affirmative Communication

<https://transformmn.org/>

with others, then impacts our interactions. The ongoing interactions which we have with others when healing is taking and has taken place are much more peaceful and prevent further trauma or trauma on top of trauma. Exercise, nutrition, involvement with others are additional pieces of this puzzle which bring power to healing.

Discussing forgiveness where trauma has taken place can be like uncovering a minefield of pain. Thinking that forgiveness is condoning the action that caused the trauma, or other misunderstanding of what forgiveness is, can be traumatizing in itself. Understanding the idea of forgiveness as a process and that mourning the trauma and the effects of it, is deeper than just one conversation. This ongoing interaction involves trusting someone to help with the healing, letting go of the event and letting go of the power that we have given to the person we have been hurt by. This healing can help one not remain stuck, but to move on in life.

Recently, different people have talked with me about the effect of trauma on their lives and I have had to discuss with others and to let go of trauma both past and present. One, who I will call Cammie said that she has very often been able to understand her mother's negative actions and reasons for them because Cammie has done similar things while she was using. Cammie was able to pray for her mother and let these things go, to find God's peace and be able to sleep. But there were other things that her mother had done that Cammie would never do. Lately, when she was trying to forgive and pray to connect with God, these would come to mind and she would also remember other situations which she had released in the past. At this point, the negative thoughts might go away for a little while after she prayed, but then would return to plague her. She described the trauma in her mind and life as "going on and on and on." She was wise in understanding that God has this happening for a reason and wanted insight to what that reason was.



Our discussion that led to her need to pursue the treatment and counseling that she had bypassed or rejected when it had been suggested previously was significant. Some of the trauma that had occurred in her life since she had accepted the Lord was happening because she had not pursued healing. The current trauma was also compounded by past unresolved trauma. Understanding this was helpful to motivate her to enter treatment and to receive counseling. This would give time and structure to untangle the mess of what had happened to her and her actions/reactions which made things worse. Our prayer was for the safety to remember and to give over the entire mess both now and piece by piece. That as she walked in safety she could raise the two children she was expecting safely.

Actions, attitudes and reactions that come out of reacting to pain of the unresolved trauma bring on more pain and trauma. This was true with Cammie and with another inmate in the next group. He had a history of anger and fighting that was rooted in some losses followed by his father's treatment of his grandmother that actually led to her death. For years he said he had forgiven his dad for the event but could not forgive him as a person. The pent-up anger and rage led him to



not trust anyone. Anxious and fearful and reactions to perceived, or real situations that called for trust, kept him continuing to lash out. Recently he had come to understand that the time of his incarceration, in isolation seeking God and then progressing to where he could come to groups where he learned more about God's love, helped him grieve and let go of a great deal of the anger. There was more to do, but he has taken huge steps in the process. This is not to say that the event or the man was acceptable, but that it, and he, did not have the hold on Neil it had before. Now he could interact in ways and make connections which he had not been able to before grieving the situation and the person.

This same need for healing exists in people who have been incarcerated in the past. There is a need to heal from trauma that happened before the incarceration and from additional traumas that happen during the incarceration. This seeking God, these new interactions, and the paths that open up with them are the same for others not just those who are incarcerated, but for all of us who need freedom in our hearts.

It is often when someone shows understanding and love to us that the pain re-surfaces but grace and mercy can be experienced when we confess our pain and receive God's comfort. Once this takes place, we do not forget the event but it does not have the power over us when we are reminded of it. When the memory comes up, we have the choice to take the thought captive and put it on the new track. Redemption has taken place and the new path leads to new places. When the truth is uncovered God's love can confront and restore our hearts and minds.

Others may not understand this process and forgiveness makes no sense to them because they have not been down that road or experienced this process. Not understanding forgiveness as a process of grieving and resolving the pain of what needed forgiving is to come up short of the fullness of it. Grace, mercy, redemption and healing is more than saying something has not happened or that it happened but did not impact you. It is new life.



Picture of new life after Storm
Palisades Inn

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