



PORTLAND
fellowship

Dear Fellowship Partners,

update october 2010

We have all been stuck at one time or another. Maybe it has been a traffic jam interrupting your evening commute. All you want is to get home and unwind, but the long line of brake lights stands in your way. Or maybe you have been trapped on a phone call with that one friend who seems to be perpetually in mid-story. You keep waiting for the moment to end the call, but it just never appears. Or how about that feeling you get the moment you walk into the DMV; that there is no getting out of there and that you have no other choice but to settle in for the long haul.

When you are stuck, you quickly become aware of how powerless you are to change your circumstances. You cannot will the cars ahead of you to move and you cannot make the line at the DMV shrink faster. On some level, you must choose to accept the circumstances and have faith that soon, things will change. The common denominator in these “stuck” experiences, as annoying and inconvenient as they are, at some point, you will no longer be stuck. Most of these experiences keep you trapped for only a matter of minutes, or if severe, hours. But what if the traffic jam has been going on for 10, 20, or 30 years? How hopeful would you feel? How long would it take before you began to believe that the circumstance would never change?



We have the privilege to walk alongside people who, by virtue of their presence at PF, are seeking the Lord's healing in their lives. Some here are excited and hopeful and fully expect the Lord to work in their lives. Others are in a bit different place. They have heard our testimonies, they may even believe that God is capable of healing them and they have come to the place where God has healed others... but being stuck for a decade, or in some cases, decades, has had a tendency of wearing down their hope or at least making them ambivalent to it. Hope that their circumstances may change has grown cold. They are here at PF because it is the only thing left that they know to do, yet they have been stuck for so long in the same struggles, temptations, relational patterns, and failures that believing things can change feels like believing in the impossible.

In John Chapter 5, Jesus interacts with a man who, I believe, probably felt similarly to how some at PF feel. He had been an invalid for 38 years and had spent the majority of his days sitting by the pool of Bethesda hoping to get healed. Jesus' first recorded words to this man after learning how long he had been in this condition was to ask him, “Do you want to get well?” Even though the man had been coming to the place where others had been healed, and even though he clearly was putting himself in a place where he potentially could get healed, Jesus still asked the question. I wonder if the man had lost hope that he would ever experience healing.

“He has sent me to bind
up the brokenhearted to
proclaim liberty to captives,
and freedom to prisoners.”

ISAIAH 61 : 1

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I remember having a similar moment with the Holy Spirit. When I first came to PF 11 years ago, I really did not believe that my life would change. Don't get me wrong, I believed that God was capable of changing my life and I also believed that God had changed the lives of people who had testified as such at PF. The problem, however, was that I had spent a long time "stuck." I remember one night at Taking Back Ground during the middle of a teaching, God's still small voice became a bit more like a firm but loving confrontation. "Drew, do you want to get well?" My ambivalence and apathy was called onto the carpet. I did want to get well. But I did not want to have to go through the hurt, effort, or discomfort required of me with a chance that nothing change in the end. What was clear to me in that moment was that God was not mocking me or shaming me, He was waking me up. His next words He spoke to me were, coincidentally, the same words He spoke to the invalid "Pick up your mat and walk."

Faith is a difficult thing. Choosing to believe in the good character of God when you have decades of disappointment, frustration, and evidence challenging that faith is no small task. This month men and women will begin their time in our program. Even though they have come to a place where God has healed people and even though they may believe our testimonies, many will still need to hear the voice that awakens hope. Hope that calls them to, in spite of years of disappointment, fear, and frustration, "pick up their mats and walk." Please join us in praying that the voice of Jesus becomes louder than any other.

In Christ.



Drew Berryessa
Program Manager

adopt an intern

The nine months that our Upper Room Program interns spend here at Portland Fellowship has, in the past, proven to be very challenging. This next program year, we have five men beginning this journey and each is going to have a different set of challenges to contend with. Certainly, God has a point and a purpose for the trials and challenges. We would like to help these interns by giving them support and encouragement on this challenging journey.

For the first time, we are offering you the opportunity to "Adopt an Intern". Adopting an intern will give you the chance to provide a little extra financial support, encouragement, and prayer coverage for one of these men who has committed the next 9 months of their lives to serve and be transformed by Jesus. *If you are interested in learning more about adopting an intern, contact drew@portlandfellowship.com.*

low cost counseling

We have a counselor available onsite for ongoing, low cost, support. Sharon has an in-depth understanding of those struggling with unwanted same-sex attractions. Sharon is available for men, women, youth, family, and friends. For more information or an appointment, contact us at 503.235.6364.

prayer requests

Please pray for our staff and leaders as we head into our program year. Pray that the Lord will protect us and strengthen us as we walk alongside those who are hurting.

Please pray for more opportunities to open up for the staff to share the mission of PF with the greater Body of Christ.

Please pray for the men in this year's Upper Room Program, that the Lord will provide for their needs and be close to them as they work through difficult material this month.

Pray the word gets out for those needing the Taking Back Ground program.

portland fellowship is a nonprofit, 501(c)3 nondenominational organization. We are exclusively supported through private donations, support services, and offerings. Thank you for your gifts.

events calendar

october 8-10

Drew Speaking:
Christ Community Church
Drew will be speaking at a youth retreat in Sacramento, CA.

october 15

Family and Friends Group
For those who have a loved one involved in homosexuality and want guidance, encouragement, and personal support.
7 p.m.

pf alumni group

second thursday of each month
A place of connection and support for those who have completed the TBG program.
Contact office for details.

taking back ground

Discipleship program for men and women struggling with unwanted same-sex attractions.
Contact office if interested in attending.

Check website for additional updates at www.portlandfellowship.com