



PORTLAND
fellowship

Dear Fellowship Partners,

update august 2014

I will gladly spend myself and all I have for you, even though it seems that the more I love you, the less you love me. (2 Cor. 12:15)

Sometimes when I read Paul, I feel as if he could totally relate to this thing called relational ministry. Some of the relational and spiritual dynamics (drama) that he encountered in his ministry are enough to make me cringe. And yet, when I read Paul, I can hear how much he valued the relationships that God brought into his life. He valued people, even when they were messy, and even when they didn't love him in return.

So here I am in this ministry of sexual and relational discipleship, and often along the way you use your resources, you give your time, and even give your heart away to the people you are ministering to. In 2 Corinthians 12:15, Paul is expressing his heart towards the church of Corinth. He's the caretaker of their souls, and their spiritual father. He was intent on loving them without limits. From what I understand of my reading, the relationship between Paul and the Corinthians was strained. Poor Paul. But this is the experience that is repeated by many ministers after Paul. The minister's intention in whatever they do is to strengthen the people they minister to (vs 19). The great aim and design of a minister is to express God's love tangibly through relationship. So what happens when you spend yourself for the sake of others only to be loved less and disrespected? Have you ever loved someone fiercely only to be hurt by the choices they made? Have you ever poured yourself out passionately only to be met by complete passivity and lukewarmness?



Cynthia has served on staff with Portland Fellowship for the last five years as PF's Ministry Assistant.

Sometimes, in ministry, you earnestly care for people's spiritual and eternal welfare. Sometimes your love ignites radical things in people and you celebrate. And then sometimes you mourn over the unrepentant and strained relationship brought on by sin. King James says in vs 21, "And lest, when I come again, my God will humble me among you, *and that I shall bewail many which have sinned already, and have not repented of the uncleanness and fornication and lasciviousness which they have committed.*" (KJV 2 Cor. 12:21) Do you *bewail* over someone?

I've been thinking about Eden lately. Personally, I have gone through some health changes, and the shift in my lifestyle has me evaluating God's original intention for health. So, of course, as I meditate on this, I am taken back to the garden. What comes to mind when you think about Eden before the fall? Uninterrupted relationship with God? Peace with creation? Peace with each other? Have you ever tried to imagine the Garden? Vibrant colors, lush greenery, exotic smells, the sounds of springs, and long walks with God in the cool of the night. Everything about it was "very good" (Genesis 1:31).

In the Garden, the care that the Heavenly Father gave to His children was supernatural and unhindered. Would you say Adam & Eve had a garden of blessings? I sure would. He gave them a garden of infinite blessings, and yet the temptation to fixate on the ONE forbidden tree was strong. The satanic tactic causes our hearts to become obsessive on the *one thing* that God says is a boundary and we forget that we are standing in a lush Garden of Blessings! And what was the result? The fall of man. Seems that God the Father can relate to Paul, and to every other minister who pours themselves out to love those

"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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they are called to minister to, just to sometimes have them throw it away. This is the painful reality of ministry. I am sure that what I experience here at PF is just a shadow of God's experience. So what can we do?

Though the more abundantly I love you, the less I be loved. Even though Paul increased in his love and in the expressions of it to the Corinthians, and even though the Corinthians grew more indifferent towards him, he did not dim in his passion to pursue them. The greatest example of this kind of love is Christ on the Cross. There was no sin too great, no heart too cold; no soul too blackened enough to discourage the pursuit of Christ's love to the Cross.

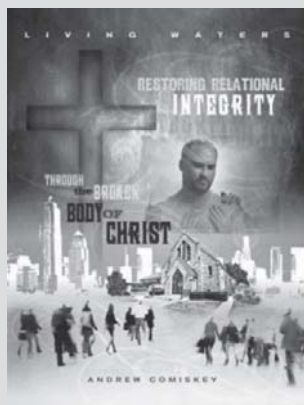
"Now I am coming to you for the third time, and I will not be a burden to you. I don't want what you have—I want you." (2 Corinthians 12:14) I hear God calling us all. Begging...Pleading. *I want you.* Jesus spent himself for us, a cold and indifferent generation. Who is God calling you to love even when it hurts? God will empower you in this journey. Be comforted that He truly knows the pain of rejection and empathizes with your suffering of love. Or, maybe it is your heart that has grown cold and indifferent? Have you abandoned a garden of blessings for a forbidden tree of death? The invitation is for you. God is crying out, *I don't want what you have—I want you.*

Dear brothers and sisters, I close my letter with these last words: Be joyful. Grow to maturity. Encourage each other. Live in harmony and peace. Then the God of love and peace will be with you. (2 Cor. 13:11)

In Christ,



Cynthia Beaudry
Ministry Assistant



Living Waters Starts in October

This October, Portland Fellowship will be offering a program called Living Waters. Living Waters is a 20 week closed group for men and women seeking healing in their lives. It is an intensive and unique small group. Ultimately, we learn how to press into Jesus more deeply, allowing Him to meet our needs and transform us for His Kingdom purposes. Living Waters provides a thoughtful and safe place to look at the ways we've become ensnared.

"Where can I go to share my pain and struggle? Will anyone listen to me? How can I find hope in my struggle? I'm alone and afraid to tell anyone what's really in my heart." Such thoughts and questions plague many Christians. The discipleship and prayer ministry of Living Waters addresses the roots of sexual and relational issues that ensnare Christians into unhealthy living. This program is not exclusive to same-sex attraction, and is open for anyone to apply who is struggling with sexual and relational issues.

If you are interested participating in Living Waters, contact Drew or Cynthia to arrange an intake interview. 503-235-6364

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events calendar

wednesday nights Deeper Foundations

*Our summer series, open for anyone to attend. Call the office for details.
7 p.m.*

aug 15

Family and Friends Group
For those who have a loved one involved in homosexuality and want guidance, encouragement, and personal support. 6:30 p.m.

aug 24

Drew Speaking
Drew will be speaking on a panel "What's Your Question" at Grace Chapel in Wilsonville.

Speakers, counseling youth support and personal support:
can be arranged through the office.

Check website for additional updates at www.portlandfellowship.com