



PORTLAND
fellowship

Dear Fellowship Partners,

update february 2014

One of my favorite parts of the day is the bedtime routine with my kids. My six year old son, Cody, has named it "cuddle time!" It begins with me slowing stomping up the stairs only to be welcomed with a loud and gleeful, "Welcome to Cuddle World!" The routine is randomly precious. It includes reading the 'Picture Bible', laying on the floor to be walked on, followed by me tickling his back, then a ride on my back around the room to his bed, followed by a big squeeze hug, and finally ending with me swinging him around and tossing him into the bed. I'm cherishing these moments because I'm fully aware they will end. I cannot, nor want to, imagine that routine happening when Cody is in High school.

The last several 'cuddle-times' have included a reading from the Picture Bible, of the Exodus story, from Egypt through the wilderness. Each short chapter had a familiar repetitive problem that both my boys picked up on. First scene -- the people get to the Red Sea and complain to Moses that he led them there just to die. God parts the sea. The people walk through and exclaim, "Now we know we can trust God from here on!" Next chapter, next night, the people get to a body of bitter water, where they complain and doubt God. God makes the water sweet, and again the people exclaim, "Now we know that we can trust God from here on!" Next night, next chapter, the people are hungry. They complain and doubt God. God supplies bread from heaven. The people exclaim, "Oh wow... now we know we can trust God!" Same chapter, they take more manna than they were supposed to. Maggots are found the next morning, at which, you guessed it, the people exclaim, "Oh, we should trust God. From now on we will!"



The repetition of the Hebrew children complaining and doubting God, God providing, and then the people having a change of heart for less than twenty-four hours, continued for the next several nights of our reading. And each night I heard both Trevor and Cody exclaim, "Good grief... trust God already, will ya?!"

It could be easy to be disgusted with those people and wonder why they can't get their act together. Are they so blind that they cannot see God's faithfulness, God's provision, God's power and strength? Can't they assume after the parting of the Red Sea that trusting God is a sure thing?

Yes, I suppose it could be easy to shake my head at them, but during these 'cuddle times' with my kids, I heard my own Father, through his Spirit ask me, "What about you Jason? You see me move in powerful ways and yet you quickly forget and begin to doubt". Sadly, God is correct (again). I can't tell you how many times I have seen God do the seemingly impossible, such as watching lives dramatically change, starting with my own. I have seen countless times where God provides for my needs and the needs of others - like manna from Heaven. I have witnessed God's comfort, peace, and joy that came after a season of grief and mourning. And each and every time, God is faithful, even though I doubt.

Over the years of serving at Portland Fellowship I have seen many who struggle with trusting God's goodness and His power to transform. But I've also seen the antidote to this doubt, which includes a consistent presence with the Lord and choosing to remember all of His corrections, blessings, and favor over all His children who trust and walk in obedience.

"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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The amazing work of God continues in all sorts of ways. A week ago, Cynthia and I traveled to Central California to connect with a remarkable team from Golden Hills Community Church's Recovery program. God laid on their hearts the desire to begin the *Taking Back Ground* program using our online process. As I sat with their team, I heard powerful stories of God's faithfulness even through the uncertainty of a wayward daughter, triumph from painful sexual abuse, sobriety and victory through obedience, and forgiveness from abusing a loved one. We were there to train their team on how the program works and how to lead groups, but within our first meeting, I realized this was yet another reminder of God's faithfulness and power in the lives of His children.



The newest church to use the *Taking Back Ground* program
New Hope: a ministry of Golden Hills Community Church

I know I will continue to struggle with doubt in my heart on various levels, but my prayer, instead of grumbling and complaining, is to remember the emphatic words of my boys, "Good grief... trust God already, will ya!!!"


As always, I'm grateful for your friendship, your prayers, and your support. May our Lord Jesus be your strength and your portion today. May you experience the full blessing of God through your trust and obedience in Him.


In Christ,

Jason Thompson
Executive Director

SAVE THE DATE

Featuring:
Dr. Larry Crabb





3rd Annual Hope Conference
June 27-28, 2014
Portland, Oregon

Other Special Guests:
Dr. Joseph Nicolosi
Drs. Earl and Sandy Wilson

For more information:
www.restoredhopenetwork.org

Restored Hope Network is excited to announce the keynote speaker for their **June 27th & 28th, 2014** annual conference in Portland, Oregon. As special keynote, Dr. Larry Crabb will be speaking on Saturday, June 28th. Dr. Crabb is a well-known psychologist, conference and seminar speaker, Bible teacher, popular author, and founder/director of NewWay Ministries.

For more information, visit: www.restoredhopenetwork.org

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events calendar

tuesday nights

Taking Back Ground

A Discipleship series for men and women struggling with unwanted same-sex attractions.

feb 14

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.

feb 17

Multnomah University

Onsite visit from Multnomah students learning more about Portland Fellowship

feb 24

Skype Speaking

Jason will be speaking to a Family and Friend's group in California via Skype

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

Check website for additional updates at www.portlandfellowship.com