

TUESDAY, JANUARY 26, 2010

Mission Tuesday #47



I learned a valuable truth a few years ago that has really stuck with me. I seem to be reminded of it often lately...

"Hurting people hurt people."

I'm seeing more and more that there are a lot of hurting people out there in the world, and many are near to us...at work, at home, at church, on the highway, in stores and restaurants we frequent, in our neighborhoods, at our children's activities we attend, etc. Look around you, and you'll see.

Many don't know how to deal with their hurt. Some don't have anyone to talk to, to help them work through it. Some wounds are very deep, and have deepened through the years, and some are pretty fresh. Most hurting people often take their hurt out on others, and sometimes don't even realize it. And some, thank the Lord, find their way to Mission of Hope.

Today was another day for me at Mission of Hope. God always humbles me when I'm there, and I know that's a good thing. I am thankful that I get to be there twice each week, to be able to be a part of God's work in helping others. I saw some hurting people today...I may not know all their stories yet, but each person has one. I may not be able to fully understand where each person is coming from, and where they are at in life, but I can understand how past hurts can affect one's life, attitude and behavior.

One man deals with mental health issues, and his behavior changes from day to day.

One woman seems to struggle with taking a moderation of free food/items.

One man seemed to want to challenge my authority.

One man seemed very lonely, and just wanted someone to listen to him.

Another man just wanted to feel appreciated and recognized.

One man was hungry and wanted more food than he really needed.

Another man, I could tell is craving attention.

One woman seems to just want to feel loved.

Hurting people. My heart broke as I sat back and watched and took in the sadness, emptiness, the hurt that I witnessed. You can see it in their eyes, and most often, it's shown through behavior. God made each of these people, just as he made me. How am I any different? Maybe I haven't had as much hurt in my life as many of them have had. Maybe my experiences have been a little different than theirs. Maybe I had someone in my life to help me through the hurts, where they maybe didn't.

Each of them has someone in their life now who can help them though, who will listen and who care. The people at Mission of Hope. I watched how the staff and trained volunteers cared for and loved each of these today. I watched how boundaries were set to help. I watched as they were listened to, given food, given emergency clothing, were fed a hot meal, and were loved on in a way that each one hopefully felt a little more accepted, loved and appreciated.

I also witnessed how others reached out to them, in conversation, laughter and sharing a meal together. People make friends at Mission of Hope. I know I certainly have. What a gift! People who become friends, helping each other through situations and circumstances of life!

God wants us to reach out to the hurting in our lives. Take a look around...who in your life is hurting? Who could use a hot meal, an encouraging word, a hug, someone to listen to. Who can you be a friend to today? And the next time you get hurt by someone, could it be that they are hurting, and maybe they really didn't mean to hurt you? Remember, hurting people hurt people.

I'm thankful that those who are hurting in this area do have a place to go to find healing and acceptance. I'm very thankful for Mission of Hope, and I'm thankful that I get to be a part of it!