

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 17, 2010

Mission Tuesday #84



As I sit here at my computer this Sunday morning, I'm enjoying my coffee. I enjoy my coffee every morning. Growing up, I can recall my mom and dad having coffee every morning together at the kitchen table, and also ending the day the same way in the evening. Maybe that's part of the reason I like it so much? :)

But as I sit here, I'm drawn to some of the thoughts I've had previously this week while I was at Mission of Hope. It was a wonderful week at the Mission. Many people were helped with food, clothing, a hot meal, and other kinds of assistance.

What keeps coming back to me is the prevalence of addictions in our society today. We at the Mission see what affect addictions have on others each day...whether it's an addiction to a drug, alcohol, food, power, a sexual addiction, etc. I feel like I'm just beginning to learn about addictions through the lives of the people we serve at the Mission.

I did some searching this week. The definition of addiction is: *The state of being enslaved to a habit or practice or to something that is psychologically or physically habit-forming, as narcotics, to such an extent that its cessation causes severe trauma.*

Wow...that seems right on. In addictions, the person becomes a "slave" to what they are addicted to. I've been there. It seems we may all have something that we struggle with or could be addicted to. At one point in my life, it was recognition and achievement. At another point, it was being obsessed with working out and being a certain jean size. Today, it could be my coffee.

One addiction we see often is alcohol addiction. This week alone, I saw at least three instances each day of people struggling with this addiction. Some were very obvious, and some not so obvious. Some are people like you and me, who have gotten caught up in it, and who are now enslaved to it. It breaks my heart, trying to understand what they are going through struggling with this addiction.

I found some startling information in my search this week on this type of addiction. *"The craving to drink has been compared to that for food when starving or water when dehydrated."*

As the disease progresses, more and more of a person's life becomes dedicated to drinking. Relationships fail, health deteriorates, and loss of employment occurs. Alcoholics put others at risk when they drive or operate machinery under the influence. Gradually, the health problems mount and death from liver failure is the predicted outcome. Fatty tissue builds up in the liver, constricting blood flow and eventually, the alcoholic drowns because of backed-up fluid in the lungs."

Not such happy news, is it?

We at Mission of Hope have been trained to continue to love and help those who struggle with addictions, even if by chance they come in intoxicated or under the influence of some type of drug. We accept them, and do what we can to try to help them...even allowing them to stay at the Mission of Hope Shelter, if we have room. If their behavior isn't extremely disrupting or threatening, they are welcome to stay. We feel Jesus wouldn't have turned them away, so why should we?

Another way we can help is on Tuesday nights at 7pm at the Mission, Randy Cole from the Department of Corrections leads what we call "Triple A" or "AAA"... All Addictions Anonymous. It's support for anyone with any sort of addiction. Randy says there's 30-35 people coming every Tuesday night! One of these Tuesday nights after my children's schedules slow down, I plan to go check it out.

As my thoughts this morning are centered around those who are struggling with an

addiction, I am praying for them. I am praying for their protection. I am praying that God gets their attention and draws them to Himself. I am praying for their healing. Conquering an addiction on his or her own is probably one of the hardest things someone will ever attempt to do. But with the help of our Savior, Jesus Christ, they can be saved from their addiction, and have victory over it. I've seen it time and time again...in other's lives and in my own.

In the meantime, we at Mission of Hope will continue to show Jesus' love and compassion to whomever He brings through our door, in whatever state in their addiction they may be in...and praying God works through us as we do.

And personally, I'm taking my coffee intake to God, to make sure it hasn't become another one of my "struggles." :)