

“...I will make a way in the desert, and streams in the wasteland...” Isaiah 43:19

Fall Harvest

Gorgeous fall color greeted those coming to our Fall Wives' Weekend. Seven couples came for a full weekend of teaching, inspiration, fun and fellowship. It was the first Wives' Weekend for three of them. On Friday evening, we had separate prayer and share times for the wives and husbands before meeting together in the chapel for a time of worship. These separate sessions are especially helpful for the new wives who are encouraged and affirmed by the other women. Our time of worship was led by staff member Jake Stielow and his wife Lacey.

Speakers Norm and Kathy Wenig's biblical teaching resonated with our couples. Norm stated that the key to a happy marriage is a good relationship with God. In the first session, he taught on the subject "I Can Control My Harvest Tomorrow by Planting Good Seed Today." This is the law of the harvest. Norm pointed out that the good seed we plant are things such as love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control (Galatians 5:22-23). He encouraged us to faithfully plant good seed whether we feel like it or not. We are to do it to please God. On the other hand, we are to avoid planting bad seed such as hatred, fighting, anger, selfishness, complaints, criticism, and drunkenness (Galatians 5:19-21.) If we plant harsh words and anger in our marriages, we will reap harsh words and anger. On the other hand, if we plant loving words and kindness, that is what we will reap. Norm stated, "The Law of the Harvest is as sure as the Law of Gravity. It works every time."

Kathy taught a session on "Your Mate's Greatest Need" stressing how each of us needs unconditional love from our mate. She also gave the couples information on "Discovering Your Love Language." Other subjects taught by the Wenigs were "Symptoms that Lead to Divorce," "Overcoming Anger" and "Five Steps to Peace." They concluded their sessions with a helpful Q & A session.

Along with the beneficial teaching, our couples enjoyed good fellowship. Saturday afternoon we enjoyed great food and fellowship at the Pizza Ranch. We then visited the Pella Women's Teen Challenge Center where Director Candace DuRegger gave us a tour. After returning to Colfax, the couples had free time to spend together or play games with other couples.



Amy and Corey at our Fall Wives Weekend

On Sunday we attended morning worship service at Glad Tidings Assembly of God in Des Moines. Pastor Bill Wenig and the church family gave us a warm welcome. After the service, Pastor Bill and his wife Shari, along with some of their church leadership, hosted a pizza party for our entire Teen Challenge group.

The Glad Tidings Women's Ministry provided the lovely gift bags for each of our women. The church also gave a generous offering to help with the expenses of the weekend. Their offering, and the offerings of other friends of Wives Ministry, made it possible for us to take the group out on Saturday evening and help each of the current wives who needed help with her gas expense. We are very grateful to all who support Teen Challenge Wives Ministry.

One of the wives summed up the value of these weekends with this comment: "Thank you so much for these weekends – they have been such a blessing during our time at TC! I will forever be grateful for this ministry!"

January 21-23 is the date of our Winter Wives' Weekend. Plans are underway to make it a very special event. Ray and Joyce Henderson are returning speakers who have always been very popular with our couples. The Henderson's have many years of experience in ministry and marriage. Please RSVP by January 5 if you plan to attend. You may call me at (515) 674-9678 or (515) 988-2204, or email me at judyaubuchon@mis.com.

The Joy of Restoration

In June of 2009, I lay completely broken, weeping openly before God at the altar of my church. I felt that Ryan's addiction to drugs and dealing had reached a point where I could no longer do anything to help him. I had done everything I could for him in my own power and strength, but to no avail. I now relied solely and desperately on the Lord. I knew that He was the only one who could change the situation we were in, and who could truly heal and deliver my husband.

While slumped over the altar, drained of all energy and hope, the Lord spoke over me prophetically through a dear brother in the church. "I AM THE GOD OF RESTORATION," He said.

"Remember the cross—the pain and suffering that I endured while on the cross. Then there was Resurrection Morning! Keep your eyes on Me, and look to Resurrection Morning." The hope of those words touched my spirit, and I realized I was not alone in this fight. God was in control. The Lord continued, "Without the pain of a broken heart, you cannot fully experience the joy of restoration." His words spoke hope into my life at a

time when I most desperately needed it. Now, over a year later, I understand the fullness of His message.

Do not be fooled...the change did not happen immediately. In fact, things got much worse before they got any better. I continued to pray faithfully for my husband, holding on to the truth of God's promises. Yet I watched my husband plummet even further and further down the deadly spiral he was caught in. It was painful. In addition, it was difficult to stand on faith when everything around me seemed to prove the opposite of the hope that God had given me.

Three months later, I took the children, and moved out of the house for good. In his depression, Ryan desperately cried out to the only One who could help him. He lay alone in our deserted house, and cried out the name of Jesus until he felt the peace of the Lord. God spoke softly, but assuredly, to Ryan with one simple phrase: "Teen Challenge." And so began the road to restoration.

The year was tough. Any hope I had had in Ryan was shattered, and the sliver of trust that I held onto had finally been let go. After four and half

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years of steadfast prayer and faith for my husband's deliverance, I had let myself fall into a pit of believing that Ryan was beyond the touch of God, as if that were even possible.

Yet I watched first-hand as God broke the chains of addiction, violence and pain that had held my husband captive for decades. I saw Him heal deep-seeded pain that had plagued Ryan since childhood. I sat back and watched in amazement as God transformed my husband into a new creature with a renewed mind and heart.

And while this was all going on, God did not leave me on the sidelines. He taught me the genuine truth of what it means to love as Christ loves. I felt the freedom that comes from wholly forgiving another and pardoning their sin for the rest of their life. I recognized the sin that had been committed on my part in our marriage, and felt the relief of God's acceptance and grace in spite of it. God's peace, which passes all understanding, filled my life in the midst of trial and pain. I finally understood that we are incapable of accomplishing God's will in our lives, and that we

don't have the strength to endure...but that God's strength is made perfect in our weakness.

I have learned what it truly means to leave your life completely in the hands of God, and I have felt the joy that comes from restoration. A true joy that comes in witnessing the hand of God move dramatically in someone's life. In seeing the truth of God's scriptures being played out right in front of me. In watching the peace of God wash over the heart of the truly re-

pentant, and in feeling the deliverance that can only happen by the hand of the Lord.

God has restored my marriage. God has delivered and restored my husband. God has healed and restored my spirit. Yes, God is the God of Restoration, and I believe that He is right in saying that we cannot fully experience the joy of that restoration without first fully experiencing the pain. Praise God that He loves us enough to let us endure the pain for a season, that we may experience His joy for a lifetime!



The Allen Family at Ryan's Completion Service



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Mark Your Calendars!

These are special events at Teen Challenge, and the wives of students are invited. Please call ahead for information and reservations. (515) 674-3713 or (515) 988-2204



Christmas Eve Candlelight Service
(at Christian Life Assembly) ---

December 24th

Winter Wives' Weekend ---

January 21st - 23rd

Spring Wives' Weekend ---

April 29th - May 1st



Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!