



THE VINE

Growing Together In Christ

VOLUME 9, ISSUE 4

APRIL 2008

Smell the Roses

From Pastor Dennis

Here is an excerpt from an essay written in 1980 by Robert J. Hastings, "The Station," from his website: <http://robertjhastings.com/> - "Tucked away in our subconscious minds is an idyllic vision in which we see ourselves on a long journey that spans an entire continent. We're traveling by train and, from the windows, we drink in the passing scenes of cars on nearby highways, of children waving at crossings, of cattle grazing in distant pastures, of smoke pouring from power plants, of row upon row upon row of cotton and corn and wheat, of flatlands and valleys, of city skylines and village halls.

"But uppermost in our conscious minds is our final destination - for at a certain hour and on a given day, our train will finally pull into the Station with bells ringing, flags waving, and bands playing. And once that day comes, so many wonderful dreams will come true. So restlessly, we pace the aisles and count the miles, peering ahead, waiting, waiting, waiting for the Station.

"Yes, when we reach the Station, that will be it!' we promise ourselves. 'When we're eighteen. . . win that promotion. . . put the last kid through college. . . buy that 450SL Mercedes-Benz. . . have a nest egg for retirement!' From that day on we will all live happily ever after.

"Sooner or later, however, we must realize there is no Station in this life, no one earthly place to arrive at once and for all. The journey is the joy. The Station is an illusion--it constantly outdistances us. Yesterday's a memory, tomorrow's a dream.

Yesterday belongs to a history, tomorrow belongs to God. Yesterday's a fading sunset, tomorrow's a faint sunrise. Only today is there light enough to love and live."

Are you restless too? Ever feel like a hamster running fast on a wheel, but going nowhere? Life is short, and for some, much shorter than they ever expected. Our high school graduating class had 33 students. We all knew one another's families, where each of us lived and what everyone liked to do. We were good friends. Just one month after graduation,



we lost our first classmate, Donnie. Donnie fell asleep driving to work one morning, hit a bridge abutment and died instantly. I still vividly remember all 32 of us remaining classmates sitting together in silence at Donnie's funeral. We realized then that none of us can count on a full life or even tomorrow.

A few houses east of us there lives a couple whose front yard is full of rose bushes. When you walk by their house, they have a sign that invites you to stop and "take time to smell the roses." Let's do that, my friends. Your greatest challenge in this fast-paced world will be to say "no." But you must... often many times a day. Slow down. Say "no." Reprioritize your life every month if you can. Enjoy the journey. Stop. Take time to smell the roses. You may not have tomorrow, but you do have today. Will you spend time with your Lord today? Will you express your love for someone today, with a kind word or deed? Psalm 118:24 - "This is the day the LORD has made; let us rejoice and be glad in it."



Note from Pastor Dennis

Hi, brothers and sisters of New Hope! John Siston wants to “pass the baton” to someone else as editor of our church newsletter, the Vine. We thank John for his excellent work with the Vine since early 2004. Mary Terry, who has been John’s associate editor, will now step up to be the editor. Leonard Olive is our new layout and graphics editor. We will keep the name and slogan: The Vine: Growing Together in Christ.

This is a good time to revisit our original purpose for “The Vine.” Fred and Maryann Stevens were our first editors and published our first issue in September, 2000 with these stated purposes:

1. Get to know one another
2. Bond with our church family
3. Write about spiritual matters
4. Write about other things that matter to you
5. Encourage the development of spiritual gifts
6. Celebrate each other
7. Encourage each other

Since that first issue New Hope has become a close church family. To summarize the above points, we offer you this newsletter each month to encourage you and to connect you with your church family. We invite you to pass on your responses to the survey below to Mary Terry, and to please send her an article, a story, a favorite poem or recipe, or some good news to share with your church family. Thank you for joining us on our journey of growing together in Christ.

In His love and grace,

Pastor Dennis

Community Outreach



Jesus is the living hope of the whole world.

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777 Colorado Blvd.,
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Sunday Worship - 10:30 a.m.
Pastor Dennis Pelley
(626) 836-3199

Visit Our Website:
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This is an example of our monthly advertising placed in the Eagle Rock Newspaper “Boulevard Sentinel”.



STAFF BOX

Editor	Mary Terry
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Contributors	YOU!

Send articles or contributions to
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The VINE Survey

We invite our New Hope family to participate in making The Vine the church newsletter you want it to be. Please give us your ideas on the types of articles you want to read each month.

This is YOUR newsletter and we want your opinions. Not every item will be included every month, but you will be giving us something to draw on. We want to publish The Vine in a way that each of you can relate to it. We want to hear from you!

What are your interests?

- 1) Children (Babies, Toddlers, Pre-School, Elementary, Teens, College Age)
- 2) Sports (favorite)
- 3) Music (Classical, Listening & Dance, Jazz, (Country)
- 4) Sports (Baseball, Basketball, Football, Soccer, Hockey, Bowling)
- 5) Social Activities (Do you like to hear about activities that are going on with your church family, such as weddings, anniversary celebrations?)
- 6) Honors and Awards (Would you like to read about special honors and achievements received by our members?)
- 7) Good Reads (fiction or non-fiction)
- 8) Would you enjoy reading a book review on books you have read or want to read? (some of the ladies in our Church Family trade off reading different books – would that interest you?)

- 9) Movies (Would you enjoy a review on recent movies that are showing? Our Small Group has attended movies as a group and then discussed them, and we really enjoyed this.)
- 10) How about Small Group Interest? (We have a number of Small Groups in our Church Family.)
- 11) Food and Drink (Would you like to have a recipe section in your newsletter?)
- 12) Crafts, Sewing, Knitting, Crocheting, Needlepoint (Would this interest you?)
- 13) Camping (Does your family like to camp? (Would you like to share some of your camping experiences with the rest of us?)
- 14) Travel (Most of us love to travel. (Would you like to share some of your vacations with us?)
- 15) Poems, essays, inspirational readings suggestions too
- 16) Last, but not least, would you like to share your experiences as a born-again Christian with the rest of your Church Family? (We can't all speak or be worship leaders, but we can share through The Vine with interesting stories of our lives for Christ!)

These are just a few ideas. But we want your suggestions too. Please e-mail or mail your opinions and any articles to Mary L. Terry at Mistyt92536@yahoo.com

Mary L. Terry
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From The Kitchens of New Hope

STEAK SUKIYAKI (From Ginny Vielhaber)

- | | |
|--|--|
| 1 1/2 lbs Sirloin Steak
(<i>cut into thin strips</i>) | 1/2 Cup Cooking Sherry |
| 1 Cup Green Onions
(<i>sliced into 1" strips</i>) | 1 Cup Mushrooms |
| 1/4 Cup Bell Peppers
(<i>sliced into 1/2" strips</i>) | 2 Cups Bamboo Shoots |
| 1/4 Cup Beef Stock or Canned Consommé | 1 Cup Celery
(<i>sliced into 1/2" pieces</i>) |
| 1 Cup Blanched Almonds | 2 Tbs. Butter or Margarine |
| 2 Cups Cooked Rice | 1/4 Cup Soy Sauce |
| | 2 Tbs. Sugar |

Melt butter in skillet and sauté steak. When browned, add onions, sherry, mushrooms, bamboo shoots, celery, green pepper, beef stock, soy sauce, sugar, and almonds; salt and pepper to taste; Also add garlic as desired.

Cover skillet and simmer for about six (6) minutes. Serve on a bed of rice. Serves six (6).

Delicious with stir fried veggies and a green, garden salad.

Do You Have Baggage?

Think of the personality as being a large bag that holds our life experiences, good or bad. The more pain and hurt in the bag, the more dysfunctional we become.

by Grant Mullen M.D.

In my model there are three parts to humans, body, personality (or what the Bible calls soul) and spirit. They all have an influence on your emotions. The body is the part of you that relates to the physical world. It does that through your five senses. Your body is a temporary container that we use while on this planet.

The spirit is your eternal self. It's the part of you that relates to and communicates with the invisible or spiritual realm. It is able to connect to good or evil, the kingdom of God or of Satan.

The personality is the part of you that relates to other people. It includes your attitudes, self image, will and feelings. The health of your personality determines the quality of the relationships you will have in life. Your personality is molded and shaped by life events. The more good experiences you have, the more positive and pleasant will be your personality. The more painful and wounding experiences you have, the more damaged your personality will be.

I like to think of the personality as being a large bag into which we put all our life experiences. The more good experiences we have stored there, the better our personality and relationships. The more pain and hurt in the bag, the more dysfunctional we become.

This, is what we refer to as our emotional baggage. The bag can be small like the one on the left.

Or large, like the one below it.

The size depends on what we have lived through and experienced.

Where do you think that bag is located? Yes, you guessed it, between your ears. There is an astonishing amount of room there to store baggage. Before salvation our spirit is living in Satan's kingdom. As soon as we are born, Satan wants to wound, hurt and damage us so that we will believe all his lies and never be able to accept God's free gift of salvation. He wants to mold us into his image by creating as many negative experiences as possible which are then stuffed into the bag. The longer we remain in his kingdom, the larger our baggage becomes and the greater the damage to our personalities.

When we become Christians, what happens to our spirit? It changes kingdoms and changes ownership. It is a legal transaction. When we invite Jesus into our hearts, our spirit moves into the Kingdom of God and we begin a relationship with Him.

What happens to your body at the moment of salvation? Well, usually not much. If you wore glasses before you were saved, then you probably wore them after. We will eventually get a new body though, but we will have to wait for Heaven.

What happens to your personality at the moment of salvation? I've already shown you the amount of baggage that you may be carrying from the years in Satan's kingdom. Jesus comes and rescues you when you are at your worst, in a broken and lost state. You don't have to do a thing to clean yourself up or get rid of baggage to qualify for salvation. You just have to ask Jesus to come and He will remove all your guilt and sin from you. So what happens to all that baggage that you were carrying?



At the moment after salvation you become like the person on the right, a Christian with baggage. Yes, your sins are removed at salvation but your personality isn't. You enter the Kingdom with all your painful memories, bad habits, dysfunctional relationships and attitudes.

Unfortunately, too many Christians look like this. They wrap their Christian clothes around their baggage and think everything is fine. They don't realize that God wants us to be saved and transformed, so they continue to carry their baggage with all the painful memories and deep inner hurts.

When you are carrying baggage wrapped in Christian clothes, you may think everything is fine because everyone you know looks the same way. The reality is however that you really look like the defeated soldier below.



Is this man walking in victory? No, he is stumbling along.



Does this man know the truth? Well, he's carrying a Bible so he knows some truth. Does he know that something is wrong? Yes, you can tell from his face that he knows something is wrong.

But here is the most important question. Does he know what the problem is? No he doesn't. He's bewildered. He knows that as a Christian he should be walking in victory but he isn't. The problem is his baggage. As long as we don't deal with our emotional baggage it will weigh us down and be a constant stumbling block.

Do you think that Christians who look like this are a threat to Satan? Not at all. He's not intimidated by someone who is weighed down by baggage. What does a church look like when it's filled with these kinds of Christians? It's not a pretty sight. You've probably attended one. The reason why so few Christians deal with their baggage is because we never talk about it. It's just not a topic that comes up on Sunday mornings. We think that if we don't talk about it, then it's not there or it will go away.

God wants to set us free from our sins and our baggage. He wants to transform each of our three parts.

In 1 Thessalonians 5:23, the Bible says, "May God Himself, the God of peace, sanctify you through and through. May your whole spirit, soul and body be kept blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ."

To be transformed, we need to do what this man on the right is doing. We need to take our baggage to the cross. He is waiting with open arms to take your baggage from you. Will you give it to Him? Remember, God wants you to be emotionally free.



(Dr. Grant Mullen is a mental health physician in Burlington, ON, and author of Emotionally Free (Chosen Books) with a special interest in depression, mood swings, anxiety disorders and how these conditions affect Christians. This article was taken from his website in March, 2008 - www.drgrantmullen.com)