

Place of Promise

A Multi-Service Advocacy Center

"I will walk among you and be your God, and you will be my people." Leviticus 26:12

September 2011

"Trust in the Lord and do good; dwell in the land and enjoy safe pasture. Delight yourself in the Lord, and He will give you the desires of your heart. Commit your way to the Lord; trust in Him and He will do this: He will make your righteousness shine like the dawn, the justice of your cause like the noonday sun."

Psalm 37: 3-6

Dear Friends,

One of the biggest events in September is the opening of schools. Grad schools, colleges, high schools, middle schools, elementary schools, and even pre-schools open their doors, welcoming back returning students and greeting the new. Most teachers spend the first week reviewing what students should have learned in the previous year or prerequisite. Then they embark onto new territory with new materials.

This past month at Place of Promise has been a typical classroom in God's school of service. It has been a month of reminders; recalling lessons learned before that needed to be refreshed.

There have been many very difficult struggles this month. Several of our long-term residents have discovered they are facing serious illnesses. There have been newer residents come who are already battling life threatening disease. Some have experienced defeat and discouragement in their walk with God. Some are just tired; weary from battling addictions and old behaviors on a daily basis. Of course, one resident, Cory Sr., is trying to juggle being a new single dad, a student in college, an intern at a local family restaurant, and a resident of Place of Promise all at the same time.

Mixed, very turbulent emotions have been the norm this month. Change is happening in us and around us every day. We discover at times that we are resisting these changes at the same time we are striving so hard to obtain them. September seems to have brought a restlessness with it; a rise of discontent. Some who are very sick are facing a winter season of the cold and unknown. Why is God not acting more quickly on their behalf? Some wrestle with God for greater control of circumstances around them, while others long for a freedom that doesn't exist. Personal responsibilities seemed to have caused great dismay for many residents this month. There seems to be a confusion between what we are responsible for and what we expect God and others to do for us. Some still refuse to surrender to God's saving grace and instead hopelessly tell themselves that they can and will right the wrongs of their past and present themselves. They claim to be working so hard at doing what only God can do while neglecting to do what only they should so. "I just don't get the God stuff," many protest. My heart sinks knowing that God is all that there is and unless He transforms our minds, we can never "get the God stuff." So I have found myself discouraged this month thinking how hard I work at helping everyone who comes to Place of Promise find new life and how few seem to find it. Even I needed to be reminded what I'm responsible to do and be and let go and let God deal with the rest.

Even the less complicated world of the physical has presented us with daily troubles this month. As I already mentioned, several people are facing serious health challenges. Sickness and death seemed to be stalking us from every corner this month. Our houses have been a constant source

of concerns. Great progress was made towards getting the apartment in the basement ready for Cory and his two children. Huge thanks are due to the many of you who have helped and are still helping make this project happen. Yet it has been one of those months. We have accomplished the task of repairing the leaking roofs only to find a leaking pipe in the ceiling. One appliance gets repaired only for another to break down. We did a lot of work to plan our annual neighborhood block party only to have it rained out by Hurricane Irene. Mike Bundy fixed one of our vans; getting it past inspection only to have another breakdown right behind it. It's been one of those months!

Ah, but all the spiritual lessons to be learned in all of this is a wonder! In the midst of all the turbulence we can be still and know God. We thank God for the hard times, the overwhelming moments, the endless disasters. We thank Him because we learn of Him through it all.

What did we learn? What did God review for us during this difficult, but blessed, September month?

First, we're redirected to "consider Him;" get the focus off the troubles, off the pain, and consider Him. Hebrews 12:3 says, "Consider Him who endured such opposition from sinful men, so that you will not grow weary and lose heart." How easy is it to grow weary when your many passionate attempts to teach, to guide, to encourage seem to end in failure? Consider Him when you find yourself walking all alone or with a very few. Mark 14:50 says, "They all ran off and left Him all alone." Jesus, who was on His way to die on the cross for you and me, was "despised and rejected by men; a man of sorrows, well acquainted with grief." (Isaiah 53) All alone, yet He continued to do the will of the Father. I pray we never forget to continue the will of our Father and leave the results, the transformations, to God. So we don't quit; we consider Him. We feel as if we can't go on; we consider Him. We have also been reminded to wait on Him. Isaiah 40 says, "They that wait on the Lord will renew their strength. They will mount up with wings like eagles; they will run and not grow weary, they will walk and not faint." How many of us felt weary this past month? How often did some of us want to quit trying? Then we remembered that if we wait on Him like a waiter taking an order in a restaurant, we can regain our strength and figure out what we have to do next. What an important lesson for us to be reminded of during this tough month.

Finally, God helped us through everything each day by teaching us again to delight in Him. Most of the residents have suffered from being victimized by addictions, abuse, homelessness, despair, and trauma. As victims, their powerlessness leads them into moaning, groaning, complaining. As new creations in Christ, we can be empowered to be free – free to delight in God instead of wallowing in the pains of bondage.

So, it's been a month of hardships, frustrations, some sadness and struggles. Yet through it all, in it all, we've learned, grown and been reminded that when we consider, wait on and delight in God, we can still shine like the morning sun! Thank you all so much for walking with us, partnering with us as we continue to demonstrate God's love in Place of Promise! Many thanks for all your faithful prayers, support, and volunteer service! Together, we continue to grow, learn, and love!

Serving In His Name,



Beth Kidd, Director