

Scripture talks about people who are big babies

A man making his first sky dive was falling through the air, unable to get his parachute to open. Try as he might, it wasn't budging. In a panic, he yelled to a fellow who was flying up toward him: "Hey buddy, do you know anything about parachutes?" "No," the fellow responded. "Do you know anything about propane stoves?"

Sounds like the fellows in that old joke needed to read the instructions before they strapped on the parachute or struck the match to light that stove. Too often, we want to ignore in-



Ain't It The Truth
Roger Alford

structions and do things our way, even when we have no idea whatsoever what we're doing. Remember when your kids were small, and you dumped that box of nuts and bolts and pipes and chains and various other parts onto the driveway and set about putting together a swing set, ignoring the instructions altogether. Then, when you had gotten thoroughly stumped as to what to do next, you finally reached for the instructions.

At times like those, we can feel like what we really need isn't written instructions but a teacher to walk us through the project step by step.

The toughest of life's challenges are easier when we have someone to provide needed guidance and helpful insights. That's especially true when it comes to spiritual challenges. That's when solid Bible teachers are worth their weight in gold.

According to Scripture, solid Bible teachers aren't easy to find. In fact, the Apostle Paul said we have too many people in our churches who are big babies, instead of teachers.

"For when for the time ye ought to be teachers, ye have need that one teach you again the basic principles of the oracles of God; and are become such as have need of milk, and not of strong meat" (Hebrews 5:12).

Did you get that? The Apostle Paul said these men and women need baby food, not solid food. He was saying, in essence, that they're big babies.

I'm guessing you may have encountered people like that. What they need is someone who can challenge them to grow up. Good teachers will challenge us. Good teachers will even anger us at times at times. But good teachers are so very necessary.

In matters of eternity, nothing can get us into deeper trouble than not

knowing the Bible. The truth is, understanding the basics of the Bible can mean the difference between Heaven and Hell.

If people aren't taught that the gift of salvation is available free to whosoever will ask, they will never receive it. If they aren't taught that Jesus is the way, the truth and the life, they may look for another.

That's why it's vital that big babies grow up, that they put aside their milk bottles and move on to solid foods. That's why it's vital that they reach maturity and take their rightful positions in this world as capable teachers.

That way, they can impart to others the good sense they need to stay out of the kind of trouble the skydiver and the propane stove user got themselves into.

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A MESSAGE OF HOPE

Residents in recovery see peer support from others who have been through it

By Nita Johnson
Staff Writer

Hope.

It is the one characteristic that motivates many people to fight for a better tomorrow.

But those dealing with substance abuse and/or addiction often have that solitary quality as they may have alienated themselves from family and friends.

To reassure and support their efforts, First United Methodist Church of London hosted a meal and shopping spree for residents involved with All In Recovery groups last week.

Pastor Sean Ryan welcomed the group, followed by a meal and shopping for hygiene items and clothing for those attending the event. The participants were also allowed to pick a gift for their children, wrap it and have it ready for Christmas, as well as picking a backpack filled with supplies for school age children.

Josh and his wife are the owners of the residential homes that provide housing and support to those dealing with addiction. He knows the story of addiction first-hand, finding himself addicted at the young age of 17, and eventually alienating himself from his family and friends.

"At 17, I was a full blown addict," he said.

"I turned to drugs and alcohol - I was an addict from the time I was 17 until I was 32, or, half my life."

Josh said his early life was one of support - his mother was a school teacher and he was raised in church.

"I spent most of my life trying to fit in. I didn't fit in in church, so I turned to drugs and alcohol. There, I fit in - I was the life of the party," he said. "I was jailed 27 times in the time between being 17 and 32."

Josh wound up with legal charges and was referred to drug court and rehabilitation. After he became sober and started his life over, he credited the people who helped him along the way. And his journey helped him realize that he could help others in the same situation where he had found himself.

"I started these recovery houses to help other people," he said. "We have five and a sixth one opening soon. God has blessed me to help others. We get referrals from court and other places. Some of the judges who locked me up now release people to me."

Josh said it was a long and difficult battle to overcome addiction, but his own personal experience is what drives him to help those who are walking the same path he did

for many years. He said he realized that the involvement in recovery programs is what brought him to his current status.

"Judge Lay [Laurel Circuit Court Judge Greg Lay] saved my life," he said. "[Substance abuse] is an epidemic - there's not a family that hasn't been touched by it. I think that's why London was so welcoming to these recovery houses."

The inpatient program provides peer support, counseling and goals to re-enter society once recovery is completed. Josh said he had one resident who is sharing his vocational skills with other residents and preparing them for a career once they complete the program at the recovery homes.

"One guy is a certified plumber and he's teaching others those skills," he said. "It's hard when you get out of recovery or jail to find a job, especially when you're right back

with the people you were with before. We help people get their GED, get their driver's license back and help them find jobs. We've had several people who have moved on and gotten their own places."

Overall, the All In Recovery offers 70 beds and currently has 60 to 65 persons in their programs. Josh works in recovery and treatment programs and continues to purchase homes where he can house recovering addicts to re-enter society sober and ready to contribute back.

Jessica Dezarn is one of the peer support specialists in the program, who has a long history of addiction herself.

"I was the fifth female in the house, when there was only one house," she said. "I came here straight from a treatment program. They encouraged me to get back on my feet, get

a job, to be timely and keep my word. Everyone here pulls together to help one another."

Dezarn's story is one of frequent arrests as she delved deeper and deeper into addiction.

"For 10 years I was an addict. I was homeless, I lost custody of my kids, I was just doing whatever. I was in and out of jail, drug court and treatment," she said. "Now I own my own car, I have my own place, I get to see my kids. I've been off drugs for two years and I owe it all to coming to the recovery

house."

Dezarn said the recovery houses align former addicts with recovering addicts, which offers an immediate support system as they battle to remain sober.

"The recovery houses fulfill that purpose. The new people get hope from those who have been here longer," she said.

Dezarn said her recovery had impacted some of her former associates.

"They call me for help now, instead of for drugs."

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CLEARLY UNPLEASANT "HEAD NOISE" INTRUDES ON PEACE AND QUIET, OFTEN IN UNPREDICTABLE WAYS WHICH NEGATIVELY IMPACT OUR DAILY LIVES AND MOODS. FOR THOSE SUFFERING FROM TINNITUS, SINCE ELIMINATING UNWANTED SOUNDS IS NOT POSSIBLE, DISCOVERING VARIOUS METHODS OF HEALTHIER BRAIN PROCESSING CAN PROVIDE ACUTELY NEEDED HOPE AND RELIEF.

MOST PEOPLE WITH TINNITUS ALSO HAVE HEARING LOSS. IN ADDITION TO IMPROVING COMMUNICATION, HEARING AIDS MAY REDUCE TINNITUS SYMPTOMS BY ENSURING EXTERNAL SOUND SOURCES PROVIDE ALTERNATIVE AUDITORY STIMULUS. WHEN THE BRAIN'S ATTENTION IS DIVERTED AND INTERNAL "HEAD NOISE" IS NOT ALONE, BLENDED PERCEPTIONS MAY BE LESS NOTICEABLE AND IRRITATING.



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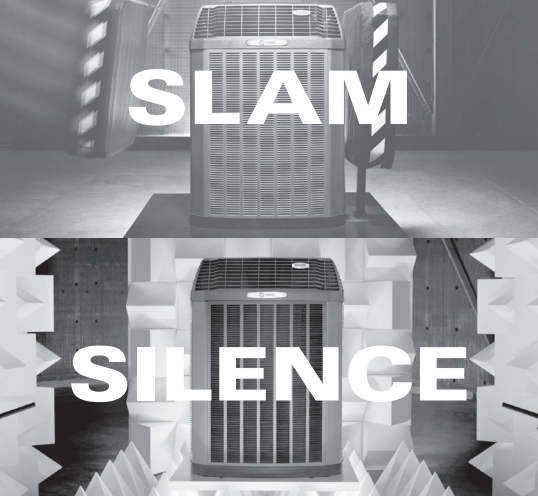
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