

PSYCHOLOGY FOR
Living

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The Birth of Jesus
... they were there, the days were
... accomplished that she should
... delivered.
... and she brought forth
... a son, and wrapped
... in swaddling clothes,
... laid him in a manger; but
... from for

Jesus Pres

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Everybody Matters

In God's economy, everybody has a role to fill and no one's gift is more important than yours.

"The body does not consist of one member, but of many... If the whole body were an eye, where would be the sense of hearing? If the whole body were an ear, where would be the sense of smell?... God has so composed the body... that if one member suffers, all suffer together; if one member is honored, all rejoice together." *1 Corinthians 12:12-26 ESV*

If you are not sure of your gift, ask God and others to make that clear to you. And remember, one of the greatest ways we can serve God is by helping others—and every one of us can do that every day. †

The Seven Ve

by Clyde M. Narramore

The Christmas story is packed with action—both on a divine and human level. It is so spectacular, yet it identifies with the most humble.

The arrival of the Messiah was the event for which the world had been waiting ever since the first man and woman sinned in the Garden of Eden. Now, at last, Jesus Christ, the Son of the highest, was coming to earth. He was to be born as a baby, to live a sinless life, and then to die on the cross to save us from our sins!

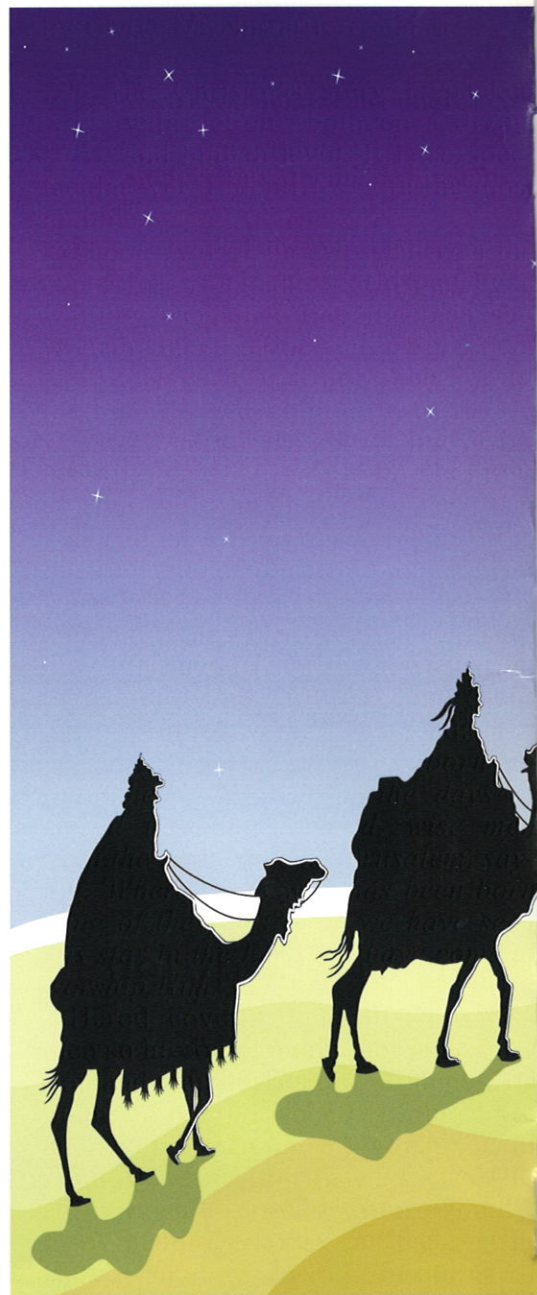
The book of Matthew records the thrilling story of earthly kings who were wise enough to recognize His coming. Following a very special star, they journeyed from the East to find the Christ Child. In the second chapter of Matthew verse 1, we read:

"Now after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea in the days of Herod the king, behold, wise men from the East came to Jerusalem, saying 'Where is He who has been born King of the Jews? For we have seen His star in the East and have come to worship Him.'"

Herod covertly sent for the wise men so he could obtain more information and map out his evil strategy. His intent, of course, was to kill the child, and he didn't care how many innocent victims he sacrificed in his effort to accomplish his evil purpose. Sadly, many people today are no better than Herod and are killing millions of babies even before they are born!

The wise men, however, didn't fall for Herod's scheme. They followed the star to the Christ Child. In *Matthew 2:11,12*, we see what happened:

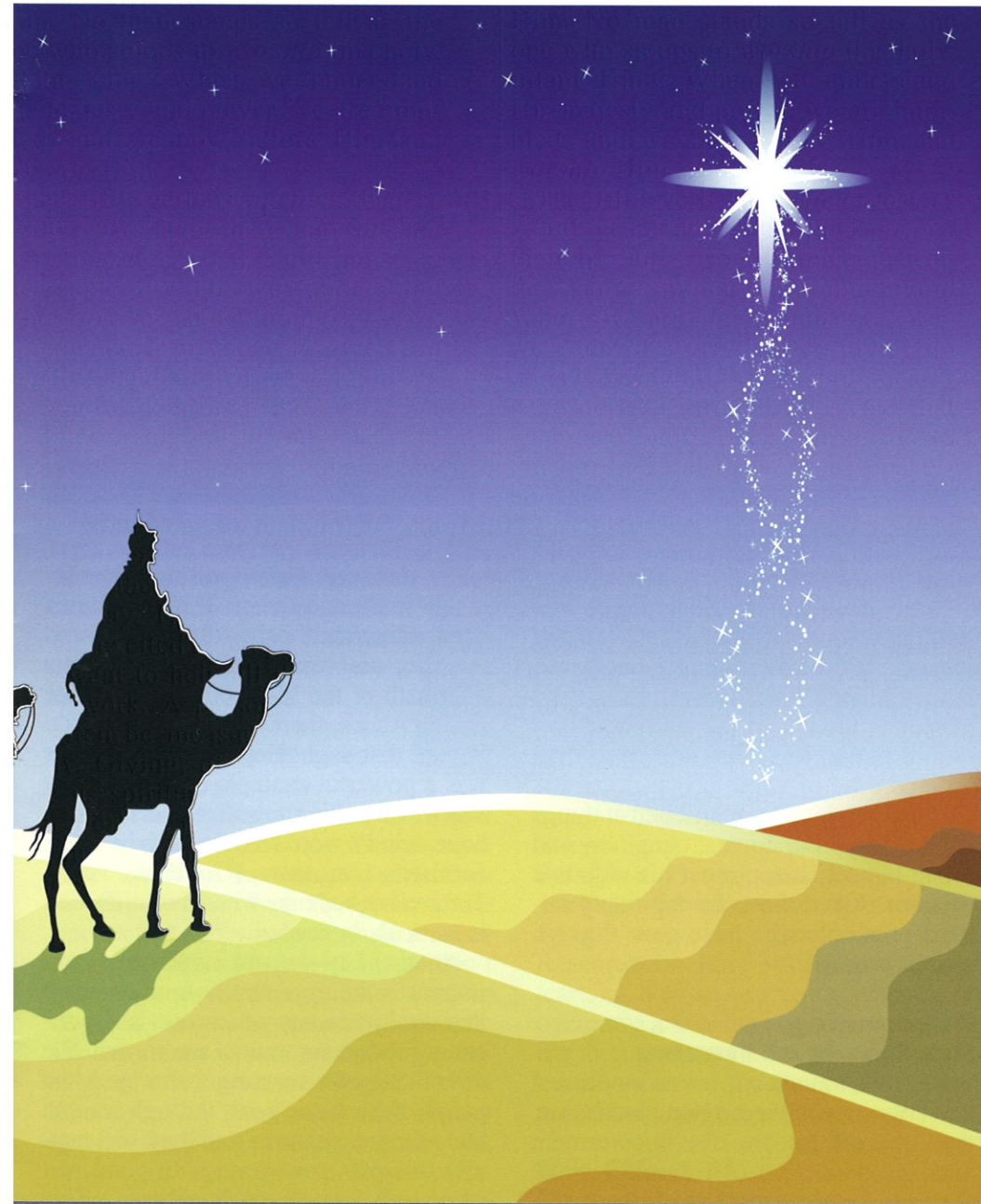
"And when they had come into the house, they saw the young Child with Mary His mother, and fell down and worshiped Him. And when they had opened their treasures, they presented gifts to Him: gold, frankincense,



and myrrh. Then, being divinely warned in a dream that they should not return to Herod, they departed for their own country another way."

Let's think about these wonderful verbs. First they *came*. Today, people are coming and going almost continually. Airports are packed. But are those travelers coming to Jesus? Regretfully, no. But we can do our part. This Christmas season you and I

Verbs of the Wise Men



Him. No man stands so tall as the one who stoops to *worship* this holy, infant King. When we understand His majesty and power, we are humbled, and we bow before Him and *worship* Him.

The fifth verb is *opened*. Just as 2,000 years ago the Magi *opened* their treasures, so we, too, must do the same. When we understand Whose we are and Whom we serve, we count it a privilege to give Him ourselves and all that we hold dear. I have noticed through the years that when we really *open* our hearts to the Lord, we also *open* our pocket-books.

The sixth verb is *presented*. The wise men *presented* Him with gifts. We have the privilege of doing the same today. Those who deeply love God are excited about giving to Him. They want to help all they can with God's work. A person's spirituality can often be measured by his generosity. Giving, of course, does not make us spiritual. But it's true that when we love the Lord, we love to give, just as God gave His Son.

The seventh verb is *departed*. Just as God warned the wise men of the pitfalls of following the advice of evil Herod, so today He still warns us not to follow the directives of those who are sinful. Fortunately, the wise men believed God and obeyed by *departing* "another way."

This is also true of us. When we give Christ the rightful place in all of our activities and thinking, we are no longer the same. We go (*depart*) another way. And just as the wise men went another way, so when we are born into God's family, we walk in newness of life.

Have you truly experienced these meaningful *verbs* of the Wise Men? Be wise, and let them become a reality in your life this Christmas...and all through the coming year! †

can follow the pattern of the wise men. Just as they *came*, so we must *come*. The greatest step any person can ever take is the one that leads him to the Lord Jesus Christ.

The second verb is *saw*. How wonderful to look into the face of the Lord Jesus Christ and be assured that we will spend eternity in Heaven with Him! People travel around the world to view the sights: temples, lofty

buildings, altars, sacred pageantry, and the like...but they fail to see Christ.

The third verb is *fell*. The wise men *fell* down by the crib of the baby Jesus. This Christmas season, let us follow the example of the wise men and humble ourselves before him.

This brings us to the fourth verb, which is the reason why the wise men *fell* before Him: they *worshipped*

Trauma Through the Eyes of Missionary Kids

By Becky Leverington, LMFT

During the Narramore Christian Foundation's annual reentry program for the sons and daughters of missionaries, one lengthy session deals with traumas the MKs have experienced. This year, one group of four MKs had been involved in, or closely related to, individuals who had experienced three fatal car accidents, three terrorist threats, five earthquakes, four suicides or suicide attempts, five divorces, three robberies, two muggings, nine deaths of family members or friends, and two near-death experiences. Other small groups of MKs had experienced similar traumas and this is true of missionaries and their children around the world. It is one of the greatest challenges facing missionary organizations and missionary families.

Trauma has been described as experiencing an event that is outside the range of usual human experience and overwhelms our normal coping mechanisms. It involves a threat to one's own or someone else's physical, sexual, or psychological integrity. Because traumas threaten our safety it's not surprising that they make us worried and anxious, and can lead to feelings of helplessness or horror, temporarily overwhelming our normal ability to cope.

In Part I of this article (Summer 2011) we met the "Smith" family, Bob and Jane and their children Dan (10) and Patty (16)*. The Smiths had been serving as missionaries in West Africa when they had to crouch hidden in the hallway of their home for a day and a half while rebels and government troops fought in the streets outside. Then they were evacuated to the capitol where they stayed with teammates who had experienced similar traumas until they were forced to evacuate the country. All four Smith family members experienced serious effects from that traumatic experience.

Dan (age 10) experienced nightmares, fears of being alone in his bedroom, loss of appetite, and panic any time one of his parents needed to leave the home. Patty (age 16) felt sick to her stomach



Becky Leverington speaks with 2011 MK Reentry Participants about trauma.

when seeing violence on TV, and she became afraid of enclosed places and startled by loud sounds. She also started spacing out while doing schoolwork. Jane experienced headaches and became incredibly anxious if the children didn't return home on time and Bob had become kind of numb and listless. He had also become easily irritated at things like Dan's post-traumatic clinginess and found himself snapping at his wife and children. All of these are typical symptoms of people who have gone through serious traumas.

Overcoming the Effects of Trauma

Because trauma causes an emotional and cognitive wounding or concussion, the core effects are disempowerment and disconnection. Trauma victims feel powerless and alone. Recovery therefore must enable trauma victims to create new connections and to regain a sense of mastery.

Research shows that the vast majority of people recover from even severe traumatic events, but recovery doesn't just happen. Several key elements are required to successfully work through the effects of trauma.

The first element in overcoming severe trauma is a supportive, cohesive family or

team that facilitates pulling together under stress and threat. Trauma victims need reassurance rather than blame, and realistic, not superficial, hope. In the aftermath of the 9/11/2001 World Trade Center Attack, there was a sign in Union Square that said "Hope is Alive." This was a powerful example of the amazing impact of pulling together and instilling hope. God's word teaches us to bear one another's burdens (*Galatians 6:2*). Trauma is a key time when this injunction is particularly needed.

Another key element in recovery from trauma is the opportunity to understand that the symptoms which one is experiencing following trauma are normal. We aren't crazy for reacting that way. Most people who have gone through trauma have these symptoms and they will usually dissipate over time with good self care and support from others. This includes such basic things as remembering to eat healthy food, get adequate sleep, exercise, and creative mini breaks for fun and laughter in the midst of the heaviness.

Trauma must also be processed in a safe, supportive environment in order for recovery to occur. Just as a physical wound won't heal until the infection is cleaned out, psychological wounds need to be processed before one can heal from

(MKs): Part Two

them. Freedom must be felt by the individual to debrief and discuss even the most difficult emotions associated with the traumatic event. And it is best to get away from the source and location to a safe place to do the processing.

The sooner the trauma can be processed after the event, the better, but it is never too late. Due to the importance of processing trauma quickly, it is now standard procedure for part of the response team after any major disaster to include people trained in psychological debriefing. Counselors frequently see people struggling with anxiety, depression, broken relationships, and addictions for which a long past trauma is part of the underlying cause. Most major missionary organizations now stay connected with trained counselors who can fly to the scene of tragic events to provide trauma debriefing for their missionaries.

Traumas can also impact us spiritually by challenging our faith. Unless we've experienced suffering, most Christians have a view of God that focuses on a belief that if we trust him and serve Him he will protect us. Even though Scripture teaches that suffering is part of life, until we come face to face with it, we don't have to wrestle with situations where very bad things happen to God's people. Trauma forces us to re-evaluate our theology of suffering as we face for the first time the reality that God doesn't always prevent us from experiencing tragedy. He does, of course, promise to be with us as we go through it and use it for good if we allow Him to. Working through a biblical understanding of suffering is a key part of successfully processing and healing from trauma.

Empowerment is another recovery key. Since trauma destroys our sense of control, and overwhelms our coping mechanisms, victims need to regain a sense of mastery and confidence in their ability to handle or avoid future traumas. Christians have a wonderful foundation

in this regard. We know God is still God and as we regain our sense of His care in the midst of the trauma, we are encouraged to face our trauma, yet start

# of times	Type of Traumatic Incident
5	Car accidents
2	Death of close
6	Earthquakes
5	Emotional ab
3	Death threa
6	Robbery
3	Sexual abu
5	Fire

moving through it. Getting back to work or involved in meaningful empowering activities can also help. Researchers have documented that learning how to use one's strengths to overcome and being committed to growing through the traumas, are key traits of people who are the most resilient and most likely to recover fully.

The Effect of Processing Trauma

As Bob, Jane, Dan and Patty were able to each share their own recollections of the experience of the fighting surrounding their home and the subsequent evacuation, they were surprised to hear that others in the family were experiencing similar symptoms and comforted to learn that what they were experiencing was normal. Being encouraged to share their feelings drew them closer as a family and helped the parents better

understand and take into consideration the very real effects of the trauma on their children as well as each other. It gave them tools necessary to make realistic short-term plans and better evaluate the best setting for their next term of ministry, balancing each family member's strengths, needs and vulnerabilities. As a result, they not only survived the traumatic experience but grew as a family and were able to begin their next term having a greater understanding of how to listen to one another's needs and with a greater level of resiliency than any of their previous three terms.

The need to work through past traumas is one of the reasons the Narramore Christian Foundation offers its annual MK Reentry Seminar. Daily small group sessions and one-on-one counseling opportunities with professional counselors provide MKs the opportunity to process any traumas they have experienced in a safe, supportive environment. Often a meeting with one of NCF's seminar counselors or the small counseling group is the first time an MK has shared his or her traumatic experience. Among MKs, traumas often include terrorist attacks, automobile or other accidents, kidnapping, rape, robbery, forced evacuations and other incredibly difficult experiences. The chance to share with others who have gone through similar experiences, and to process these traumas with a caring Christian counselor and pray together can literally be the beginning of a life-changing recovery. Without this help the MKs may continue to struggle for years from post traumatic stress and impaired safety in relationships.

The Fellowship of the Ring

One of the final sessions of the seminar involves giving each MK a ring to help them remember one another, what they shared and learned together, and the powerful bond they have as the sons and

MK continued on page 15 ▶

Learning to Cope with Stress

by Elizabeth Baker, Ph.D.

They taught me the facts in graduate school: Insomnia often grew from unresolved stress; obesity could be traced to stress-related eating; depression, anxiety and marriage trouble were a few of the psychological issues firmly linked to stressful lifestyles. And, many physical diseases from colds to cancer had sometimes proven to be exacerbated by mismanaged stress. But, it wasn't until Chronic Fatigue Syndrome threatened to put an end to my budding career as a Licensed Professional Counselor (LPC) that the issue of stress management became personal.

By that time, I had advised scores of clients to relax more. They seldom heeded my admonition and I often assumed they were not taking our sessions seriously. But when I tried to change my own stress-filled life I understood the difficulty of such simple, straightforward advice as "slow down." How is it possible to slow down and relax when life keeps rushing at you full tilt?

It was my own need that drove me to rethink the unrealistic assignment I had given others and seriously consider the "how?" of stress reduction. My physician told me that stress control would be critical to my recovery—if there was to be one. Yet as a middle-age, single woman I had to work if I was to live. How could I reduce stress without taking a six month vacation in Hawaii? It was the same dilemma my clients had faced.

Fortunately, I found there were ways to limit my stress damage without drastically altering my lifestyle. The key was in understanding the nature of my stress, how it worked, and some stress reducing alternatives.

Understanding a Vicious Cycle

It is not an overstatement to define stress as the life-energy required by the body as it adapts to change and challenges. The change and challenges may be strenuous or pleasant, small or large, physical or mental, yet each one takes a portion of the reserves we have for that

day. Any change of any kind and any challenge requires a certain amount of energy—driving a car, solving a problem, pressures at work, marriage, divorce, singleness, parenting, moving, new friends, and too little (or sometimes even too much!) money. Everything takes energy and each use of energy must be replenished by sleep, rest, and nutrition. We are always giving out slightly more energy than we gain—we call that ageing—but when we continually give out significantly more, any organ of our body can be impacted by the drain.

This is why a major technique for breaking the stress-illness cycle is nothing more than using our awareness of how the system works. Since adaptation energy is limited, being aware of how much we are "spending" and what we are "buying" for the expenditure can be life changing.

For instance, I found if I were in a grocery line and the person in front of me suddenly decided to exchange an item, I would often expend too much energy. I

could feel the tension rise. I would look at my watch, think of all the other places I needed to be, or become angry because I had not chosen a different line.

The mental churning was costing me. A situation beyond my control was requiring me to adapt, and life-energy was being spent to get the job done. But, how much energy was expended depended almost entirely on my attitude. Even if my sighs and frowns managed to make the customer move a tiny bit faster (which they rarely did), how much life-energy was I "paying" for that one minute of time? Was it worth it? I was like a driver repeatedly gunning the engine at a stop sign while complaining about the cost of gasoline!

Once I realized how much life-energy I was wasting I was able to make some major changes in how I approached every situation. I even practiced purposely driving one mile per hour under the speed limit! I also learned to look for what I could learn in the situation – like patience, sensitivity to others, or deeper

LAST LAUGH



"I made a list of 100 things I need to do this week and numbered them in order of importance. Unfortunately, 99 are ranked #1.."

dependence on God as I trusted my schedule to His control.

Biblical Meditation

As I continued studying ways of reducing stress, one of the most ancient and highly recommended methods, meditation, worried me. Meditation was often recommended to reduce stress-related illness and improve the general quality of life. But it sounded new-age to me and reminded me of people contorted into impossible yoga positions muttering a series of “ommm.” Yet, there is a good bit of research indicating that meditation can reduce anxiety and stress. So I went to the Bible to look at meditation through a scriptural grid.

To meditate, it turns out, is simply to consciously focus our mind on one particular thing. Consistently practiced it can slow down the firing of our brain synapses. We literally train our brain to function at a different speed. Even brief periods of meditation can provide a sense of internal calm. The Bible tells us to meditate on three things. We are to meditate on the works of God (*Psalms 77:12; 143:5*), the word of God (*Joshua 1:8; Psalm 119:15*) and on God Himself (*Psalm 63:6*).

The Works of God

A beautiful field of flowers, a mountain, or a river bank are all works of God. We may focus on the works of God through a long, silent walk in a garden, but a similar restful benefit can be achieved without the floral amenities. All that is needed is a moment of silence, imagination, and the canvas of our mind.

I learned to reflect on the works of God by taking a deep breath, relaxing and picturing a sea shore in my mind. I would “move” through the picture and “look” around me. I would consider the various smells that would likely be associated with the sea. The colors. The sounds. As other thoughts popped into my mind, I did not fight them. I just refused to follow them and instead went back to my slow, restful “walk” along the beach.

This type of meditation is not unbiblical. It is focusing on the works of God—just as we have been told to do—and it can go a long way toward slowing down a racing mind. It would be wonderful if

life allowed for long walks along the beach several times a day (or resting under a shade tree, or hiking a mountain trail), but until that privilege comes, slowing down to picture and consider the wonderful works of God makes a very good substitute.

The Word of God

We are also told to meditate on the word of God. This meditation is different than Bible study, rote memorization, or preparing for a Sunday school lesson. Meditating on the word of God is to focus on one aspect of scripture and discipline our mind to stay there long enough to deeply absorb what is being said.

One way to do this is to consider a short verse you know by heart or a phrase or even one biblical word and focus intently on that single portion of scripture. Cultivate the art of being alone with God, reflecting on His Word, and asking the Holy Spirit to help us grasp the breadth and depth of that scripture. The psalmist encourages us to “be still and know that I am God.” (*Psalm 46:10 NIV*).

I started with the first line of the first verse of *Psalm 23*, The Lord is my shepherd. I shall not want. I would say the verse slowly, giving emphasis to various words and holding them in my mind until their full meaning touched my emotion.

For instance, I would think: “The Lord,” “The Lord is.” “The Lord is my shepherd.” “The Lord is my shepherd.” Slowly emphasizing each word brought new meanings. When I emphasized The Lord, I focused on God’s greatness and His rule over His entire creation. When I emphasized Shepherd I reflected on a shepherd’s protective care of his sheep and God’s care of His sheep. But when I emphasized my, I focused on my personal relationship with Him.

In spite of my efforts to focus only on God, other thoughts would sometimes pop into my mind. I would be fully engaged in feeling the Lord as my Shepherd when suddenly the grocery list would jump between us! Our minds are busy places. But while we have no control over what thoughts suddenly bounce onto our screen of consciousness, we can choose which thoughts we will follow and which ones we will ignore. So I men-

tally put my grocery list aside and returned to focus on my Shepherd. Over time, I found it easier and easier to quickly set aside distracting thoughts and stay focused on God’s word.

Meditating on God

We are also told to focus our thoughts on God, Himself. I would get alone, rest, close my eyes, and prayerfully and emotionally reconnect with memories of times I was especially aware of God walking with me and of blessings in my life. When Noah left the ark, God put a rainbow in the sky for the purpose of remembrance (*Genesis 9:15-16 NIV*). David used remembering to encourage himself when trouble came and he rehearsed memories as part of his prayers (*Psalms 143:5 NIV*). And before Moses died he gave a final speech to his people, assuring them that remembering what God had done in the past would fortify them for the challenges that lay ahead (*Deuteronomy 7:18*). Memories would shield them against times of fear and doubt.

Even after Jesus came, the challenge to remember was still important. As His disciples blundered and their faith faltered, Jesus encouraged them to remember (*Matthew 16:9; Mark 8:17-21 NIV*). And when He was about to leave the earth He instituted the ceremony of communion telling His followers the specific purpose of the observance was that they remember (*Luke 22:19*).

If I am stressed and feeling far from my Lord, I put down my Bible, stop my prayer and simply remember. Are money issues the problem? I remember when I could not find work and I had six car wrecks within five months. None of them were my fault. All were with insured drivers. All left my car drivable. All paid off in cash. Coincidence? I doubt it. God just chose an unusual (and humorous!) way of caring for His own.

Are schedule pressures making me bite my nails? Small memories bring comfort and perspective. There was the time I sweat over getting a manuscript finished one week before the due date only to find publication delayed. And, the time I raced to get Christmas shopping done only to find myself unable to enjoy

STRESS continued on page 13 ►

The Destructive Voice of Shame

by Kimberly Davidson

After the fourth flush I grabbed the near empty bottle of Windex and then ripped off three squares of paper toweling and proceeded to clean up around the toilet bowl. I had just finished another round of binge eating and purging. After tossing the residue of my gaping emotional wound into the garbage I sat down on the couch numb and oblivious to what was going on around me. “I feel like garbage ... but tomorrow will be different”, I promised myself. I swore, “Today is the last day”. Despondent, that is what I had said every day for the previous fourteen years. It never was the last day...because I was driven by shame.

Shame is an uneasy topic. It is a universal experience but we often ignore it. Its causes are many and it poisons our lives. Shame is not the same as guilt. Guilt often leads to shame if the feelings of guilt are based on actions deemed by the individual to be morally wrong. Shame is complex and intractable because it magnifies defectiveness and sin.

Unbeknown to millions of people, they have significant unmet needs. We all have a compelling, God-given need to be loved, accepted, to feel worthy, and to have a sense of purpose. While everyone has these emotional needs, the level of those needs vary from person to person. Most of us will go to virtually any lengths to meet these needs. If we didn't long to be wanted and loved then we wouldn't care. If we didn't care, then we couldn't be shamed by others' rejection or attacks.

As a child, our family moved quite a bit. The first major move was age seven, moving from America to London, England. I was teased by schoolmates because I didn't fit into the culture. I was unlike them because I had an accent. I felt stupid because I needed a tutor. I was labeled weird because my clothes were different. What I heard was, “You are not accepted. You do not belong.”

My father has a powerful choleric temperament and he worked long



hours. I learned as a child to avoid conflict at any cost fearing my Dad's backlashes. I didn't have an intimate bond with Mom either. I can say that I did feel loved by my parents, but something was missing and some things I did receive weren't good.

We moved back to America when I was twelve. Further rejection and teasing from schoolmates and indifference from my parents only made my growing soul-hole deeper. To fit in I worked tirelessly trying to conform to the way I thought my peer group and teachers wanted me to be. We moved several more times. Feeling the pressure to fit in, I finally settled in with the “wild crowd.” This group gave me a sense of belonging and a means to forget the rejection and losses. Then I began to gravitate into a new world of worshipping celebrities and models. I believed the lie that to be popular you have to look like a model.

I turned off my God-given talents and gifts in search of the Western culture's definition of ideal. I didn't think, Who am I? What do I want? What was I created to do on this earth? I thought, What

must I do to please others and be accepted? This was the beginning of a grand masquerade. My spiral began innocently enough with a diet my senior year in high school after being called fat by my father. I believe that while parental behavior does not cause eating disorders, they may unintentionally set off a child's susceptibility to develop one with negative body image modeling or critical remarks.

I lost fifteen pounds and looked great. I received compliments and praise from my parents and friends...I wanted more. I felt accepted and loved. I belong! Now I'll be popular in college! One week before starting college, my friend Julie and I gorged on left-overs from her parent's party. She said, “I know how we can feel better and not gain any weight.” I thought, Utopia! It was not. It was bulimia. I learned how to purge.

The disordered eating thought process [which really means ‘disordered sense of self’] began in high school but exploded when I entered college and joined a sorority. In addition to bingeing and purging food, I found pleasure in binge drinking because my self-consciousness

and insecurities temporarily vanished. Drinking changed my reality for a moment, giving me the confidence to do things I would never do sober.

Promiscuity also soon became a way to fill my need to feel loved and that I belonged to someone—even if it was only for a minute. But my shame, humiliation, and abandonment deepened. I couldn't stop the cycle. I felt terrible about myself so I turned to sex to get men's attention. But soon after I only felt worse again. I thought sex was the only thing men liked about me. I slept with so many guys that I couldn't count them anymore. I was also sexually assaulted numerous times. The profound sense of powerlessness was compounded by self guilt for putting myself in those dangerous situations by binge drinking. Because of the promiscuity I got pregnant and chose to have an abortion. Then I had another demon to deal with.

I chose to keep others at a safe distance and avoided intimate relationships. Shame does that. Shame-filled people hide. They do not dare bare their souls to anyone, not even spouses. They feel corrupt and permanently damaged. They think "If you really knew me and could see inside, you would see I am 100 percent defective, so you might as well just send me back!" Dr. Steven Tracy defines shame as "the deep, painful sense of inadequacy and personal failure based on the inability to live up to a standard of conduct—one's own or one imposed by others."¹

For sufferers it becomes one huge vicious cycle. My bingeing on food and alcohol helped me temporarily escape from the pain-filled soul-hole within. Purging served two purposes: consciously, it was a means of comfort eating without gaining weight. Subconsciously, I was attempting to purge the demons that had taken over my life. But purging only set up more worthless feelings which set up the need to escape, which set up the destructive behavior and addiction which intensified my shame, setting the entire cycle into motion again.

As long as I could keep my bulimia and sexual promiscuity a secret I could slow down my cycle of shame. But my secrets got out when I lived in the sorority. The tarnished stain on my soul got

larger as the gossip and the whispering spread throughout the house. Harsh judgment from others only strengthened the erroneous core belief that I was irreparably defective. My fear of losing relationships, the anticipated rejection, and exposure was more than I could bear.

The dreams I conceived as a young girl turned into disillusionment. I experienced over twenty years of living alone in the dungeon of shame, unable to experience the fullness of God's amazing love and grace. The secrets, the lies and the behaviors were slowly killing me. It was beginning to look like a life or death situation. The day came when I couldn't take living this way any longer. It was vital I be rescued. God sent a person into my life and he took me to church. I asked Jesus Christ to be my personal Savior and he walked into my messed up life. I was saved ... but still in bondage. God miraculously released me from the act of bingeing and purging but my distorted thinking remained the same. I hadn't been set free from myself.

I sought out a women's Bible study group at my church, and it was no accident the leader chose Kay Arthur's "Lord, Heal My Hurts." Healing began as I connected with these women and we shared each other's burdens and brought our stories of shame into the light. To know I wasn't the only woman who lived with this toxic emotion was freeing. Change occurred as I meditated and reflected on the truth of God's Word. To take God's Word and line it up next to the lies I believed was like being let out of jail (I say that from personal experience). God didn't see me as some used up failure and whore, but as his—a genuine princess (*John 1:12*). *Colossians 2:10* told me, "you have everything when you have Christ, and you are filled with God through your union with Christ" (TLB, *my emphasis*). There is nothing else we can add or change about ourselves—we are already perfect in God's eyes because Jesus fills every crevice of our soul. That was startling yet remarkable.

I learned Jesus Christ the God-man was afflicted by shame. Then on the cross he dealt with it permanently. Christ not only bore the guilt of our sins but also experienced agonizing shame. Realizing he bore my shame helped me heal. I gradually put aside the striving for per-

fection, power and control, as I took into my heart the fact Jesus came to overcome my guilt and shame. "Let us fix our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy set before him endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God" (*Hebrews 12:2*).

To be able to talk in a safe environment about my childhood experiences and apply God's healing truths dissolved cloud after cloud. As I saw the errors of Mom and Dad's parenting I learned to give them grace, the same grace I received from my Lord. To confront Dad about some things he did would have been a battle—one I'd loose, so I chose to give him grace. Godly validation set into motion the process of learning how to engage in healthy relationships and how to set healthy boundaries.

God urged me to confront another dark issue—the shame of my abortion. Within a small circle of post-abortive women, we journeyed together through a healing Bible study led by a trained counselor. It was a process—fourteen long weeks—which required a commitment to do the difficult work of navigating through denial, then grief, then anger, and then forgiveness. But I came to know I was forgiven and set free by God himself which melted more shame away.

God puts amazing people in our lives. Through them and the incredible power of his Spirit and living Word, he shows us the truth and continues the work he has begun. These people, whether they are Bible teachers, clinical or lay counselors, pastors or friends, are shepherds. They aren't there by accident—they are instruments of our Redeemer. †

Kimberly received her MA in specialized ministry from Western Seminary. She is a board certified biblical counselor, personal life coach, speaker, and founder of Olive Branch Outreach—a ministry dedicated to bringing hope and restoration to those struggling with eating disorders and negative body image. Kimberly volunteers in prison ministry and youth education outreach. She is the author of four books and a contributor to five books.

¹ Steven R. Tracy, *Mending the Soul*, (*Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2005*), 74

Missionaries Complete Intensive Trai

Why would thirty-seven missionaries from ten countries and eighteen different mission agencies interrupt their work for two weeks and come to Chiang Mai, Thailand? Although each one had a slightly different reason, their motives could all be summed up in one sentence. *We want to become more effective people helpers and counselors so that we can support our agencies' missionaries and help them become more effective in their cross cultural ministries for Christ.*

These thirty-seven missionaries were all considered “member care” workers. They usually don't plant churches, spend most of their time in evangelization or equip and disciple new Christians. Instead, they come alongside the missionary church planters, evangelists, Bible teachers, translators, physicians, nurses and educators who are doing the front line work. They are much like traveling pastors for many hundreds of missionaries throughout Southeast Asia.

In these roles they are asked to help missionaries with almost every problem you can imagine. If the missionary is married, he or she may well be having some marriage conflict or be in need of support and encouragement to spend more and better time with a spouse. Missionary couples can have the same conflicts and misunderstandings as those of us here in the United States. The only difference is, they are also living in a strange and stressful culture without a support network or the help we can easily find in America. If the missionary has children, he may be concerned about a teenager with an eating disorder or a child with attention deficit hyperactive disorder (ADHD). If the missionary is unmarried, you may expect a good bit of loneliness since single missionaries often have few single Christian peers in their region of service. And if the missionaries are living in a limited access country, you can expect them to be dealing with feel-



Drs. Bill Hoppe (left) & Jenny Pak (right), seminar staff members sharing lunch.

ings of isolation, loneliness, and sometimes concerns over their physical safety. Unfortunately some missionaries are caught up in sexual immorality or addicted to internet pornography or other moral failures. Other times they are quite depressed, near burnout, or suffering post traumatic stress.

Missionary member care workers are usually the first person to whom a missionary can turn for help with these and many other problems and challenges. Yet most member care missionaries do not have formal training in counseling. Instead, they tend to be mature missionaries who have already served a few terms on the field as a typical missionary and are known to be sensitive, caring people to whom others can turn. So their mission administrator has asked them to take on a new role providing care and support for their fellow missionaries. It doesn't take long, how-



Bruce & Kathy Narramore (left) and Tim & Cindy Hibma (right) sharing a humorous moment during the closing poolside barbecue.

ever, for them to start feeling overwhelmed and in need of additional support and training themselves.

That's why the Narramore Christian Foundation offers its intensive in-service training seminar in counseling for missionary member care workers each year in Chiang Mai, Thailand. One of this year's participants said, "I am particularly coming to learn how best to help our missionaries' children." Another said, "I want to increase my ability to minister to missionary families." A married couple told us, "We periodically are asked to do conflict mediation between team-

ning in Counseling and Member Care



Dr. William Kirwan sharing spiritual and psychological insights from the story of the Prodigal Son.



Dr. Paul (right) and Debbie Hewitt (left) leading a Couples Enrichment Group.

mates." And another participant said, "I need more understanding of how to help missionaries who have gone through difficult traumas."

But these missionary member care workers don't come simply to learn to help others. They face struggles of their own and NCF's two-week seminar is one of the few opportunities they have to seek out counseling for themselves. So the seminar has a two-fold focus. It is designed to help the attendees grow in their own lives and relationships, and it is designed to help them help others.

Each day of the two-week seminar begins with a time of worship and singing, followed by one of NCF's staff team of eleven Christian psychologists and counselors sharing a portion of his or her life journey. These counselors, nearly all with some experience

living and ministering cross culturally, set a tone of openness as they discuss how God has worked in their lives, often through difficult situations. This lets the participants know that their instructors and counselors understand what their lives are like, and it also helps make it safer for the missionaries to open up about their own struggles.

The staff sharing is followed by a series of lectures on everything from depression through resolving conflicts in marriage, to coping with trauma and

working with adolescent struggles like eating disorders and self cutting. Sessions on stress and counseling techniques and the psychological implications of the doctrine of grace and other biblical doctrines round out the instructional aspect of the program.

Each afternoon all seminar participants join a two-hour experiential workshop where they either practice basic counseling principles on each other under the supervision of a professional counselor, or have a chance to work on their own personal or family issues with a counselor in a small group with four or five other participants.

Evenings are either free for relaxing and fellowshiping with other missionaries with similar experiences, taking a 20-minute trip into town for shopping and sightseeing, attending an elective evening session or a time

of entertainment. One evening one of the staff counselors, Dr. Kirwan, even puts on a magic show that takes the participants' minds off of some of the heavy things they are processing during the day! The weekend is free for relaxation, worship and/or sightseeing, and the final evening of the seminar features an outdoor barbecue to honor the staff and participants and send them off with some lovely memories of an evening dinner around the pool.

At the close of the seminar this year, one of the participants shared, "This has been a life, ministry-changing event for me! You have opened a left-brained cognitive up to the reality and importance of emotions. I have a long way to go to learn to express my feelings and listen well to others, but I am on my way and convinced God will use that! Thanks!" Another remarked, "This was one of the greatest learning and fellowshiping experiences of my life." And another said "I won't trade this conference for any spiritual retreat I have had before!"

A participant in the couples enrichment group said, "This alone made the seminar worthwhile. My wife and I were able to address some longstanding issues in our marriage. I also learned skills I can use to help other couples in conflict." And a participant in the Basic Counseling Skills workshop said "I learned so much about myself and patterns in my life and was able to begin processing them and find healing. I also learned some things about myself that were rooted in my life as a missionary kid and how to grow from them."

The leadership of the Narramore Christian Foundation wants to express our appreciation to all of those who prayed for this seminar and helped financially to make it possible. And we ask you to continue praying for the wonderful men and women who attended as they have now spread throughout Southeast Asia serving dedicated missionaries and their families. ☪

I Can't Stop Pulling Out My Hair!

by Robert Whitcomb, PsyD

When Roger first came to see me, he had hoped that his 17-year-old daughter would accompany him. Roger was concerned that Marie was not doing well since his divorce a few years earlier. She was his youngest and had always been his easiest child. Although she was occasionally moody and a bit erratic in her behavior, that didn't alarm him because he had already survived her older siblings' similar struggles.

Roger knew it was inevitable that his failed marriage would have some negative consequences on his children. But while he and his ex-wife had a messy time managing their children's visitations, he felt they had done a reasonably good job of buffering their children from their personal battles. Now his fears that their broken marriage might be damaging their daughter were coming true. Marie had started incessantly picking at her skin and pulling out her hair. At first Roger passed this off as "just a nervous habit." But as her skin and hair began to show the ravages of constant picking, Roger reluctantly sought professional help from a Christian counselor.

After some time interviewing Roger and his daughter, I realized Marie was suffering from a relatively rare psychological disorder that results in repeatedly pulling out one's hair to the extent that it causes serious emotional, physical, and relational problems. Marie pulled out so much of her hair that she was getting a bald patch on her head. She just could not control her impulse to tear out her hair.

Many adolescents go through a phase of twisting their hair around their finger or pulling out a few hairs, but Marie's hair pulling was much more serious – so much so that mental health professionals have given it a rather overwhelming name: trichotillomania (Trich – hair; Tillo – to pull). Trichotillomania is an impulse-control disorder that is characterized by recurrent pulling out of one's hair that results in noticeable hair loss,

an increasing sense of anxiety or tension immediately before pulling out the hair or when attempting to resist hair pulling, and pleasure or relief when pulling out the hair. To be officially diagnosed, the hair pulling must be sufficiently serious to cause personal distress or interfere with the person's social, educational, occupational, or other areas of functioning. It also cannot be due to a general medical condition (eg. a dermatologic condition) or accounted for by another mental disorder. Because this illness is so repetitive it can also be looked at as a type of obsessive-compulsive disorder (OCD) and much of the treatment is similar to that for OCD.

Understanding the Causes

Marie was the youngest of four children. Although neither Roger nor his wife drank alcohol their two oldest children had struggled with alcohol and drug abuse, and their family had several psychological and relational characteristics that are common among alcoholic families. For example, neither Roger nor his ex-wife were very good at expressing their emotions. Instead of talking through difficult issues, they had a habit of keeping secrets and ignoring or denying interpersonal hurts.

Privately, Roger's ex-wife had been seething with anger and withholding physical affection, but she kept up a good external appearance. She would passively-aggressively express hateful looks behind closed doors or speak stridently demeaning comments. Roger, severely hurt, defended the only way he knew. He cut himself off from his emotions. During our initial counseling session he periodically related painful stories of his childhood with practically no emotion. It was almost like he was intellectually describing someone he didn't even know. And in some ways he was. And because he grew up avoiding upsetting emotions he was not very sensitive to his children's needs and hurt. Conflict, pain, and suffering were potentially avoided at all costs.

The unwritten family motto was "If

we don't see it or talk about it, it must not be here." They simply didn't know how to face emotional pain or discuss disappointments, needs, losses, and struggles in life. Consequently their problems went underground. They were never resolved. Alcohol and drug abuse were the way Marie's two oldest siblings escaped their sadness and hurts. And Marie's hair pulling kept her from facing her inner emotional pain by substituting an external physical pain.

Trichotillomania is a disorder that affects 1.5 percent of males & 3.5 percent of females & is often associated with other mental health problems like anxiety and depression.

I decided to work with Roger and referred his daughter to a separate counselor so that she would feel safe to discuss anything she wished in confidence. Educating Roger about this disorder and the treatment options was my first order of business.

Trichotillomania is a disorder that affects 1.5 percent of males and 3.5 percent of females and is often associated with other mental health problems like anxiety and depression. Sometimes it accompanies drug or alcohol dependency.

Roger was willing to look at his contribution to the problem and learn to better support and encourage his daughter. Marie agreed to see a therapist and began the process of putting words to her feelings. Together she and her therapist realized that Marie lived under a lot of stress. From the time she was a young child she felt that she had to be a certain kind of person or behave in a certain way to be loved. And she thought she had to be extremely careful not to upset

her parents since she knew they were already having serious marriage conflicts. She didn't want to be "a problem" like her older siblings.

Treatment

As Marie gained trust with her therapist she revealed more about how she felt and discovered what feelings and situations triggered her hair pulling. She had very low self esteem, perfectionistic standards, and strong feelings of shame and guilt. She realized she tended to pull her hair when she felt increased anxiety in social situations because she feared her imperfections would be exposed. Pulling her hair temporarily relieved her stress and shame, and gave her a sense of pleasure.

Marie and her therapist worked with a treatment approach called "Cognitive Behavioral Therapy" and began employing techniques aimed directly at her hair-pulling behaviors. This included developing other behaviors that were incompatible with hair pulling like clenching her hands into fists when she felt like pulling her hair or picking at her skin. Relaxation training helped her handle times of stress and family conflict with less frustration.

Marie also gradually learned to share her heart's desires, pain, and secrets with her counselor and the Lord. Finally someone was inviting her to be seen and heard. As her relationship in therapy developed, Marie began to see how much her view of God had been shaped by her family experiences. She began to see that God loved her and was not a demanding critical parent, or a parent who couldn't face reality or emotionally intense interactions.

Marie's counselor also helped her learn to focus on some reassuring scripture verses. She began to wash her mind with verses of truth such as, "For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor any other created thing, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord," (*Romans 8:38-39 NASB*).

At the same time, Marie's dad began

to uncover his fears of inadequacy and failure and to grieve some lost hopes and dreams from his own childhood. He also saw how his parents' alcoholism and their inability to cope with emotions impacted their marriage and parenting and eventually his relationships with his children. As he was able to face his childhood vulnerabilities he became more sensitive to Marie's and they began talking and listening more deeply. Roger was learning how to be a loving father.

First Thessalonians 2:11-12 NIV, "For you know that we dealt with each of you as a father deals with his own children, encouraging, comforting and urging you to live lives worthy of God."

Roger periodically apprised me of Marie's progress and she followed a common pattern. She would do better for awhile, as she faced her inner struggles. Then she relapsed into old habits and beliefs about herself. For a time she took some medications that helped her relax and minimized her impulsivity. At one point she acknowledged that she had a drinking problem and worked in earnest on her addiction. During that time she found the support of AA particularly helpful. Another time shortly after that, I worked with Roger and Marie and her siblings in family therapy where they processed their past frustrations, hurts, anger, and unexpressed love and needs. Toxic secrets of all sorts began to be explored in the safety of the therapy and they started developing new family patterns of openness which also led to some enjoyable times together.

Eventually Marie's symptoms ameliorated to the point that she was able to finish college and begin pursuing a career. While she still has occasional lapses, especially when she is under a great deal of stress, she is quicker to reach out and talk with a friend or seek out her therapist and no longer has the severe struggles that brought her to counseling. †

Robert Whitcomb is a clinical psychologist practicing in Fullerton, California. His work includes psychotherapy with adults and teenagers suffering from a variety of problems.

the holiday. The family would have been just as pleased with simpler gifts and the turkey really didn't have to be finished off to perfection.

One Step at a Time

During my battle with Chronic Fatigue I learned to take life one step at a time. Some days I could barely get started in the morning. But I learned the importance of being a good steward of everything God has given, including my limited life-energy. And God provided day by day. As I understood my stress cycle and learned to break it by biblically focusing and reflecting on my relationship with God I found peace much closer. Some people find they have to change their life goals or vocational or life situation. But I was fortunate. I didn't have to quit my job and move to an island. I only needed to quit foolishly expending energy in places where it did no good and follow His command to slow my inner world and focus on Him through meditating on His works and His word.

Today, I stay symptom free most of the time. Occasionally old haunts return and pain, weakness, depression or other signs let me know my focus has slipped. When that happens, a little trimming of my schedule and a lot of returning to my priorities puts my world in balance again.

Professional Help

Many people are under stress because they have experienced severe traumatic life events like car accidents, the loss of a loved one, a job, a limb, or facing extreme pressure at work, or living in an extremely difficult culture. These experiences can lead to Post Traumatic Stress Disorders. When that happens, professional counseling help may be necessary. But even in those deeper struggles, learning to focus on God and His works and His word can be an important aspect of their growth. †

Elizabeth Baker, Ph. D., is a licensed professional counselor, public speaker, and author in Pittsburg, Texas. She has authored seven books, including her most recent, *How to Hang Loose in an Upright World*.

Brighten A Corner Here?

Finding a Ministry During Your Mature Years

by Leone A. Browning

When I found myself singing the words to the old song “Brighten the Corner,” I almost laughed. I hadn’t sung that since childhood, when Mother and I sang as we washed dishes. I said to my husband, Earl, “I don’t think we’ll find any corners here to brighten. Many here are beyond that.”

We’d moved to an assisted living apartment. At age 82, we anticipated the easy life, with time for relaxation, and our hobby of writing stories.

Since one meal a day was provided, we chose to have dinner delivered. We wanted to eat at our own table, with the exception of Wednesdays. It was Senior day, and we felt we needed to go eat in the little dining room once a week to get acquainted with our 12 neighbors.

I’ve always been timid about new situations. As we entered the dining room the first time, all eyes fell on us. One old fellow, who has macular degeneration, came to me saying, “I’m nearly blind, but I want to see what you look like.” I shuddered as he took my face in his hands. He explained that he could only see if he got my face in a certain position. I quickly responded, “Don’t look too hard. You might be disappointed.” His hands went from my face to my hair! “You have beautiful hair.” Hoping to discourage him, I said, “It’s a wig.” I hoped Earl would interrupt his exploring, but he looked amused. Finally, a cute 90-year-old, who tells folks when and where to go, demanded “Sit down. Shut up, and eat lunch.” I hoped she was talking to him! She has become a dear friend.

Although we attended our regular church services, we decided to visit Vesper service in the Fireside room Sunday afternoon. Again, I felt dread. Since the Fireside room divided the apartments from the nursing home, people from both places worship there.

Sensing I was new, one lady came up beside me. She felt my arms and hands and suddenly pinched me. Apparently satisfied, she wheeled away.

Since we enjoyed the singing and felt a loyalty to the pastor who volunteered, we continued attending Vesper services. Knowing Earl was a retired minister, the pastor asked him to pray. Earl couldn’t remember that we are referred to as residents so in desperation he prayed, “Lord, bless those of us who are inmates.” I had trouble controlling my laughter the rest of the service.

Another Sunday, a lady from the nursing home loudly asked, “Pastor, are you married?” He calmly stopped preaching to answer. He proceeded until she again interrupted, “Pastor, do you have kids?” He patiently responded and continued. Next, she inquired, “How old are you?” Satisfied, she remained quiet.

At first the nursing home patients depressed me. I’d



almost decided I wouldn’t attend joint activities in the Fireside room when the activity director asked if I’d play the piano for the Christmas party. “Who told you I play?” I asked. I hadn’t told anyone. Since I didn’t move my piano to our assisted living apartment, I thought I wouldn’t play anymore.

“Our beautician told me,” she explained. “She says you attend the same church and she knows you play.”

“Oh, my!” I pleaded, “I’m so busy unpacking and I’m out of practice. Isn’t there someone else to play?”

“One staff member plays, but she’ll be assisting in other ways. You may use the piano in the Fireside room to practice,” she offered.

“Of course I’ll play.” I yielded, remembering it is important to say yes sometimes. As I practiced, I heard voices behind me. People came from the nursing home when they heard Christmas music and joyfully began singing. One little lady sat on the bench beside me. She was a bit off key, singing so loud I could hardly hear my notes. Others were a few words ahead, but their faces beamed. Although practice was not perfect, I was glad if I’d brought a little happiness to those people. Suddenly I thought, perhaps I’ve found a

TRIBUTE
GIFTS

little corner to brighten. When I played for the Christmas party, it seemed God touched my fingers as they moved more easily than usual. I was glad I hadn't said no.

Soon we realized the need to get acquainted with our apartment neighbors so we gave an open house. Twelve people eagerly came, commenting that they were lonely. Few of them participate in the many activities provided in the Fireside room since they don't like to mingle with nursing home patients.

After a few weeks my husband had emergency surgery to remove part of his colon. I slept on a hospital cot beside him until I was sent home with a temperature. Our neighbors assured me they were praying and showered me with attention. I thanked God that they brightened a corner in my life, but I realized I was getting too much care when I heard a male voice saying, "Anyone home?" Suddenly, the blind man was at my bedside. I was too ill to get up and run! I breathed a prayer.

He said, "I guess I've lost my mind. Can you help me?"

I nervously responded, "I'm too sick to help. Go talk to your neighbor, Tom." He said, "I'll not go until I take your pulse." When he grabbed my wrist, my heart fearfully pounded. Again I insisted, "Please go talk to Tom and push door lock when you leave." He left!

When my husband was discharged from the hospital, he spent a short time in the adjoining nursing home. We thanked God I could walk to the nursing home to see him daily, without driving. At first I dreaded visiting Earl at the care center, but I soon began to chat with lonely people, who anxiously waited for me to speak. My attitude changed and I began to look forward to those brief encounters. When Earl came home, I neglected those folks!

In a short time, the activity director asked, "Will you play dinner music at the nursing home while a staff member is vacationing?" I consented and again practiced in the Fireside room. God turned that into a blessing.

For several days a young, autistic man paced the floor, but when I played "Jesus Loves Me," he quickly stopped. I asked, "Do you know this song?" He nodded. I said, "Would you like to sing?" He happily sang every word! Since then, I tried to converse with him, but after finishing dinner music, I seldom saw him. However, one day when I practiced, he was again pacing. He shocked me by saying, "I really miss you when you don't come." I quickly inquired, "Do you want to sing?" Once more, we sang "Jesus Loves Me." He asked, "Who is Jesus?" Joyfully, I shared the story of Jesus. The young man left singing "Jesus Loves Me."

He appreciates Earl's friendship. Sometimes they take short walks. Once when refreshments were being served, he smilingly brought dessert to Earl.

We are happy if we've brightened a dark corner in anyone's life. Perhaps God will show us more if we look and listen. †

Leone Browning is a long-time contributor to *Psychology For Living*. She is now living in an assisted living apartment with her husband Earl, a retired pastor, where she continues to write at the age of 91!

Gifts In Memory Of:	Presented by:
William Farley Burge, Jr.	Barry Silverman & Shara Fryer
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Would you like us to join you in honoring your loved one? You can send a Tribute Gift or Living Memorial Gift to the ministries of the Narramore Christian Foundation. Please include the following: In Honor or Memory of, Amount, Given by, Name, Address. Return to Narramore Christian Foundation P.O. Box 661900 Arcadia, CA 91066-1900.

MK continued from page 5

daughters of missionaries. One MK wrote a poem that provides a word picture of the effect of this deep sharing as they processed their life experiences with one another. He has given permission to share this poem with you.

*We shared our hearts, our stories,
in one mind And now we leave and leave
ourselves behind To live each day as days
were meant - to live To laugh, to love, to
gain, to grieve, to give. But here is why
our time was such a help: I opened up
your heart and found myself.*

In closing

Please pray for these MKs and others around the world whose families face hardship in many ways as they follow the call of God on their lives to take the Gospel around the world. Many of the places still needing to hear of Christ are torn by ethnic strife, political unrest, intemperate climate, and difficult living situations. Thus, missionary life is becoming increasingly difficult. Your prayers can make a difference in their not only surviving but thriving. "Pray for one another. The prayer of a righteous person is powerful and effective." *James 5:16* †

**Names and identifying information have been changed.*

Becky Leverington is a licensed marriage and family therapist and Director of the Child Safety Office for SIL International.



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In Memory of Roy Lee Mathison

This summer the Narramore Christian Foundation said goodbye to a long time faithful staff member, Roy Mathison. Roy passed away June 22, 2011, in his home in Whittier, California, at the age of 94. Roy served as Art Director for NCF from 1965 to 1996. He was responsible for the design and layout of all NCF publications, including *Psychology for Living*, and he also drew cartoons for many issues of *LIVING*. Roy was a much loved and faithful staff member who made wonderful contributions to the ministries of NCF as well as to his church and other Christian organizations throughout his lifetime. While working with NCF, Roy was known and loved for his zest for life, love for the Lord and his family, his servants heart and positive attitude and his sense of humor.

Roy Lee Mathison was born on March 9, 1917 in Emmetsburg, Iowa to Peter and Lillian Mathison. He grew up and attended school in Algona, Iowa. On October 22, 1939, Roy married his wife Phyllis Emily Mathison. He worked as a graphic and commercial artist beginning in 1934, focusing on Christian ministries including Child Evangelism Fellowship International and Good News Mission as well as the Narramore Christian Foundation.

Roy is survived by his wife of 71 years, Phyllis, sons Mark Mathison, David Mathison, and Dan Mathison, and his daughter Carol Mathison Farmer. He is also survived by his 10 grandchildren: Kim, Jenny, Maggie, Lily, Tamara, Michael, Stacie, Will, Jill, and Ben. He will be greatly missed but we are all comforted by the knowledge that Roy is with the Lord he loved and served throughout his life.

