



And they that shall be of thee shall build the old waste places: thou shalt raise up the foundations of many generations; and thou shalt be called, The repairer of the breach, The restorer of paths to dwell in.

Isaiah 58:12

Helping churches fulfill the great commission in the lives of shattered people.

Great Ideas

As I share the ministry of Rapha House with churches and individuals, I am told by all that a ministry like this is really needed. Many people want to get involved in helping Rapha House reach its first goal of acquiring the building in West Virginia, but they are not sure how they can be of a help.

Below are ideas or suggestions that you may consider utilizing to help us. I am counting on you to aid me in this urgent cause.

- ✓ Youth group fund raisers. This could be anything from a car wash, to offering themselves to do errands for church members, selling candy or pizza.
- ✓ Have your Christian school conduct a read-a-thon where people sponsor the youngsters at a designated amount for each book that they read.
- ✓ Take a special offering during the Sunday school class hour and designate all of the proceeds to Rapha House.
- ✓ Contact pastors that you know about giving to this cause or aid me in getting a meeting for presenting the work.
- ✓ Contact Christian businessmen that you know and share the work of Rapha House. I have a 16 page information packet with a DVD available for such contacts.
- ✓ Provide a gift from your mission fund.
- ✓ Sell items of which the church no longer has a need: extra piano, former sound system, school equipment, bus, etc. and donate the proceeds.
- ✓ On a weekly basis, explain our ministry to your church for one month and then take a special offering.

Because of your schedule, you may want to ask someone to head up or undertake this task. If you are in need of brochures to distribute to your people, please contact.

Praise

We praise the Lord for the blessing of \$1,000 given by the Mays Landing Baptist Church towards the purchase of the building. This is not a large church, but it is a church with a large heart.

Prayer

- A multiple CD duplicator. These run anywhere from \$500-\$700. From September until the end of the year, people have responded to our display table and bought 748 sermons. This is a great opportunity for us because many of these messages get passed onto to other individuals.
- Large gifts towards the building's purchase. Fund raising has been slow during the holidays. Pray that the Lord will burden pastors to be a part of this exciting work and that the Lord would continue to direct us to people who have the potential to provide large gifts. I have recently contacted a wealthy Christian businessman and asked him to consider supporting our work. I have another similar contact and am waiting to receive the necessary contact information.
- More three day conferences scheduled so that issues of the heart can be addressed and that we may have a greater effect in the lives of God's people.
- Pray for the Lord to continue to use us as we present our work each week and in the upcoming "Issues of the Heart" conference at Turbotville Independent Baptist Church in Turbotville, PA: March 28-30.

Thank you for your prayers and support.
Anthony Fusco

Depression (part 8)

In order to work through depression or help people overcome their depression, it is vitally important that they have some type of a regular devotional time with the Lord. An excellent tool that I recommend is the daily journal available at Reformers Unanimous. In order for this to be effective, the person should be held accountable on at least a weekly basis.

An erroneous view for recovering from depression is to have the person go out and make someone else happy. This view is not only incorrect, but it has kept countless people from obtaining the victory that they could experience. Depression is not overcome by positive acts or acts of selflessness, but by the removal of the cause for depression or the presence of hope. Hope is something that comes from God, but we can give hope to people by listening, encouraging and prayerfully supporting them. This is what every believer is called to do. However, removing the cause for depression is much more difficult. It is vitally important to discover root causes for depression. Many times other causes for depression stem from other deeper causes. When the corruptive root is addressed, rotten fruit falls from the vine. When searching for causes of depression, going back to any earlier point in a person's life should not be avoided. It is these events or people from their past that must be addressed.

Many root causes for depression have been pushed away or stuffed back into the heart to where it is difficult to identify them. I have created the Depression Work Sheet that will aid in searching out and addressing these areas. A good homework assignment would be listening to the sermon Anger: the source, results, and dealing with it. After listening to this, complete the first two rows of the depression work sheet. In the end, these will be the people that will need to be forgiven.

As sinners, we will intuitively seek to live a life independent of God. As we face problems, we deal with them in the manner that we see fit. Every one of these occurrences is sin and must be dealt with. Row three provides a place to record the sinful responses taken. A sinful response is any response other than what God wanted. Did the person rebel, withdraw, internalize, self pity, use drugs or alcohol, etc.?

Another good homework assignment is to listen to my message on Idolatry and complete row three on the form. This message deals with the many ways that people cope with the circumstances of life.

So far, the root causes for depression have been addressed and sinful responses identified. The next stage is to lead the person to forgive those listed in row one. This will not be an easy task.

These people may know the need to forgive, but they know in their heart that they cannot. Many may believe that they mean to say that they will not forgive, but they are wrong. These hurting people know that they can say I forgive them, but that it will not be meant. They feel so overcome with the flood of hurt and bitterness that they cannot swim to the shore of forgiveness. Our task is to support them, aid them and even cry with them (Gal. 6:2). A message that I preached called Forgiveness is one that deals with the aspect of how to forgive. It has several steps to take with step one being the most difficult. Step two cannot be taken or even considered until step one is accomplished. I suggest that both you and the depressed individual listen to the message as a homework assignment.

After listening to the message several times, row four of the Depression Work Sheet can be completed. If the person still struggles with this step, they should seek God's face and ask for wisdom to understand this person who hurt them (James 1:5). You may also feel that they need to listen to the message on forgiveness again. At this stage, you could offer input. You have heard enough of their life's story and the Lord may give you wisdom and insight. When the person is ready to forgive, I strongly suggest that they kneel before the Lord, state the person's name that hurt them, what they did and that they forgive them.

The remaining obstacle to overcome is getting forgiveness. Sometimes our actions require reparations: if we stole something to hurt someone back, we need to return it; if we spread lies about another for revenge, we must seek to undo our wrong doing. However, in our legalistic society, we often feel the need to be worthy of being forgiven. That is not the case with the Lord. In my message on How Do I Get God to Forgive Me, I explore what the Scriptures require and promise concerning forgiveness.

Addressing these areas in a person's life will bring victory from depression. When the hurts are properly dealt with, guilty people forgiven, and personal wrongs confessed to God, self pity and then subsequently comparing one's self with that of another, which leads to depression (Numbers 11) is removed. Consistent victory living can then be experienced.

This process may take several weeks to accomplish. As you probably know, when a person wants help and does what they should, the results are quick, but if a person really does not want help the results are either very slow or they never come. We are not responsible for getting results; we are responsible before the Lord in doing what he leads, with a willing heart and in the fullness of the Holy Spirit.