

Suffering - A Path to Hope

Jeff Simunds

Romans 5:3-5 "... but we rejoice in our sufferings, knowing that suffering produces endurance, and endurance produces character, and character produces hope, and hope does not disappoint, because the love of God has been poured out within our hearts through the Holy Spirit who was given to us."

This passage is one of my favorites because it starts with suffering, something that's been an integral part of my own story as well as the lives of the men and women and parents I meet with; and while the journey starts with suffering, it ends with hope.

Because of what Jesus did for us on the cross and God's love for us, we endure through times of suffering and trials. We persevere and continue to pursue holiness in the face of our unwanted LGBTQ desires, we continue to hold to Biblical truth while loving and praying for our LGBTQ loved ones, and we continue to stand on God's truth regarding LGBTQ behavior when we find ourselves at odds with our culture. It's in these times as we focus our eyes on Him that we encounter God's faithfulness as He walks with us, we find His love and grace sufficient for us in our circumstances, we develop spiritual resilience - the ability to increasingly follow God's will for us and stand firm on what we know to be true, and we develop Godly character as we are refined more and more into the image of Christ.

And character produces hope. The hope we find, and the joy we encounter, is in knowing that in the midst of the suffering and trials, that God poured out His love on us, that He was faithful and never left us, and that our suffering has had a purpose – to transform us more into the character of Christ. I know this has been true of my life. It has been through seeking him and his love for me during times of suffering that my love for Him as grown the most, that my spiritual resilience has been strengthened, and that I've grown more in His image. I pray it will be the same for you.

Jeff is the Founder and Executive Director of Tower of Light Ministries. After having spent time in counseling and group working through many of the issues in his past, Jeff counts it an honor to walk with others in their pursuit of holiness and wholeness. toweroflightministries.org

MEMBER NEWS

- Spokane, WA -- Path of Life**
Dr. Michael Brown made a home run presentation at our Transformation Truth conference, which was greatly beneficial to parents and those struggling with the "hard questions" from friends and family who are choosing to live LGBTQ. We are looking forward to expanding our Friends & Family group and offering groups for women in the coming year.
- Blue Hill, ME -- Free Indeed Ministries New England** exists to proclaim hope to the sexual captive, support the local church and to preserve the family. We have personalized one-on-one support and an At-home format which has allowed us to work with individuals anywhere. Our desire is to launch every program participant into the fullness of their Kingdom purpose.
- San Rafael, CA -- New Hope Ministries**
Like many, we have embraced on-line support meetings. New Hope now has a Zoom support group that meets on the second and fourth Saturday of each month at 7:00 AM PST. For more information please email us at info@newhope123.org

The Hope Update is an official publication of Restored Hope Network. Copyright © 2021 Restored Hope Network, All rights reserved.

Contact Information-- P.O. Box 64588 • Colorado Springs, CO 80962 | Phone: 719.598.0659 | info@restoredhopenetwork.org
Restored Hope Network is a non-profit 501(c)3 ministry. Your gift is tax-deductible. We are thankful for those who invest in and partner with us in this mission of hope. RestoredHopeNetwork.org



Restoring Hope • Proclaiming Truth • Equipping Churches



Anne Paulk, Executive Director

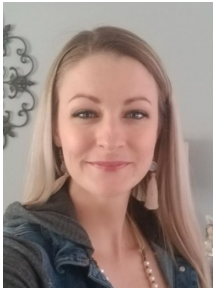
Looking Back at 2020 and Ahead at 2021

Last year was quite unusual when a disease that harmed many Chinese citizens emerged and swept across the globe. Sars CoV-2 invaded our daily lives: masks, toilet paper shortage, social distancing, cancelled events and family gatherings were all impacted. Some lost loved ones to the pandemic. Our HOPE Conference and pastor Equip Events became consolidated into one big online event--HOPE 2.0--which had the largest attendance with people from four continents. We were delighted to share 17 full scholarships to HOPE. *Thank you to all of you who donated to our scholarship fund!*

I gave radio interviews throughout 2020: Janet Parshall's "In The Market", Eric Metaxas Show TBN-NY, Julie Roys, as well as local Christian radio. Online articles published in Focus on the Family's Daily Citizen, The Stream, Lifesite News, Christian News Journal, Christian Post, Christian News Now, and my testimony taped for CBN's 700 Club. I spoke at a number of online conferences including--teen apologetics, adult worldview conference, connected with believers in Eastern Europe, and advised a few large Christian ministries on LGBT topics.

Other highlights in 2020, we welcomed two new member ministries to our network--Exchange Ministries (FL) and The Way Out Ministries (OH). A new affiliate category was created--Spiritual Mentor--with hopes of drawing in younger leaders. Various plans emerged for better equipping pastors, including an effort alongside Legacy Institute (WA).

Another highlight was hiring KaSaundra as my assistant. Married to a wonderful man of God and raising their two delightful teen girls, KaSaundra joined us from AIMS and had been executive assistant to Dr. Howard Foltz. She has since led the charge on member renewals, video uploads, document revisions, my calendar management, and more. I am grateful to the Lord for KaSaundra.



2021 News

New Member

2021 brought RHN another new member ministry, Vital Signs of Northern Michigan (parents group) is led by Chuck and Denise Bowman who have tender hearts for families grappling with LGBT identities.

Networking and Challenges

2021 brought challenges from the new political climate and federally proposed 'Equality Act', which would seek to punish any who differ from the secular culture's beliefs about gender and sexuality. In private leader meetings, I have been addressing how to handle 'cancel culture' in some practical ways.



RHN continues to meet with many international, national, and statewide strategic and legal groups. Networking opportunities have broadened.

Media Interviews

So far, I have given media interviews with Moody Radio, NRB TV, The Stream, podcasts: Victor Marx, Theology Mom, and Shepherd's Fold Ministry. Within our network, several of our leaders are podcast hosts--Debora Barr (All Things New- MD) creates "Transformed by the Word", Melinda Patrick and Dee Barnes (His Wonderful Works-GA) lead "The Even While", and David Kyle Foster hosts the "Pure Passion" podcast on Charisma Network .

HOPE2021

This June 11 and 12, HOPE2021 will be held online. Keynote speakers are Andrew Comiskey (help for the church and strugglers), Dr. Nancy Heche (support for families),

Alex McFarland (apologetics), and Dr. Andre Van Mol (understanding trans medicine). Excellent workshops will include Linda Seiler, PhD's "Transgender Trends", Dean Greer's "Church as a Healing Community", Francine Perry's "Absolute Surrender: The Only Way Out of the Dark Pit", Brenna Kate Simonds' "Learning to Walk in Freedom", and more. Registration is open and people can join from anywhere in the world with a computer, tablet or phone connected to the internet. To find out more: RestoredHopeNetwork.org/HopeConf

Giving Challenge 2021

This year we hope to give donors the opportunity to triple their gifts during HOPE2021 because of an early and generous gift from Cathy O. If you wish to partner with us in making this happen, we would be grateful! *Thank you to all who have participated in the past years. You are truly a vital part of the ministry.*

A few goals include: refreshing some of the Pure Passion videos, sustaining Pure Passion videos entrusted to RHN, hiring for our long-term plan, gaining younger and racially diverse leaders, and holding a leader retreat.

©2021 Restored Hope Network, April 2021 HOPE Update, RestoredHopeNetwork.org

FEATURED MEMBERS & AFFILIATES



Betty Kalbes, Director, OH

The Way Out is a Christian-based organization and our foremost interest is in strengthening relationships with Jesus Christ. The ministry provides support to those dealing with homosexuality. Ministry groups include support meetings for men and women who struggle with unwanted same sex attractions, parents of strugglers, and spouses of those who struggle.



Maria Nistri, Director, FL

Exchange Ministries exists to provide inspiration, hope and refuge to those seeking to re-align their sexual identity with their identity in Christ through equipping and supporting the church, individuals and families of LGBTQ+ identified loved ones.

Vital Signs Northern Michigan

Chuck & Denise Bowman, Directors, MI

Our ministry exists to support parents and families who have been told -or otherwise have discovered - that their child has "come out" and embraced a homosexual or transgender identity. We are not trained counselors. We are a group of parents who are traveling a journey of faith in God for the healing of our children's sexuality. We offer love, the support of Christian community, and resources to answer questions, encourage, and strengthen one another in the testing of our faith."

To learn about these and other RHN affiliates, visit: restoredhopenetwork.org/ministry-finder

FEATURED RESOURCE

Breaking Free Russell Willingham

When you find yourself addicted to sex, torn by feelings of guilt and shame, there is hope if you will find the courage to face your addiction and ask for help. And that help comes from Jesus, the only One who can offer forgiveness and healing. Let someone who's experienced this healing grace lead you to wholeness. A Focus on the Family Recommendation. restoredhopenetwork.org/recommended-resources.

