



romans 12

MINISTRIES

relate. refresh. restore.



Lonely, Judged and Tired

I see him standing on the same corner everyday holding a sign that reads, "God Bless." For years I've watched him wave at passing cars and have often wondered how his life ended up there. What's his story and how did he land on this corner, begging for money to survive? A few weeks ago I felt prompted by the Holy Spirit to pull over my car and speak with him. I'll be honest and admit I wrestled with my own thoughts for several moments - I didn't want to interrupt my day to speak with this stranger. I finally relented and chose to obey God's push to stop the car and engage this nameless person.

Chuck and I ended up talking for 20 minutes and he shared his heartbreaking story with me. He's disabled, and has been unable to work for years. He's been married to his bride since 1979. He's 65, but his face shows signs of wear beyond his years - deep creases from sun damage and stress from years of struggle.

Throughout our conversation, three words were repeated often - three words I hear on a daily basis: **lonely, judged and tired.**

The pastors, ministry leaders and families we work with don't share the same weather-worn face Chuck has. Those creases that mark his face don't appear on them - they often seem happy when we see them surrounded by their church or those they minister to. But when we ask their story, those same words are repeated. **Lonely. Judged. Tired.** When we get to know them, we hear the sound of defeat in their voice - we feel the pain from years of silent struggle.

Through your support, we are able to fight in the trenches for our pastors, ministry leaders, missionaries, and their families. We passionately pursue fellowship amongst these leaders so they can develop authentic relationships to help them grow in Christ. We provide resources to battle the judgemental comments and prying eyes so they can focus on their identity in Christ. We provide silence and solitude retreats, getaways, and opportunities to recharge so they feel refreshed and ready to serve others.

Our hope, desire, and mission is to walk with them in relationship and point them back to the truth of who they are in Christ.

By the way, before I said goodbye to Chuck, I asked him what he needed. His response was to wave back at him and he loves Chicken Noodle Soup! That I can do!

A Quick Note

You'll notice this quarter we have moved away from "snail mail" letters and opted to send this newsletter via email. The cost of paper products has increased significantly! Our mission is critical and we want to steward finances well, so in order to keep our dollars focused on service to those in our care, we will be sharing updates via email for 2022. Please know that your partnership is valuable and we love your heart to partner with us. We pray that these stories of hope and updates shared in this newsletter bless your heart and give you joy in continuing your partnership with us.



Pastors Jason Nelsestuen, and Dan Swansen (longest drive) and their foursome.

Hitting the Green

This past month, Romans 12 Ministries sponsored a golf tournament. This wasn't like other golf tournaments where you spend the day raising money for a charity. Our goal with this tournament was to engage each pastor's circle of friends - to invite them into serving their friend, and holding up their arms when they get tired.

We were blessed to have the support of some amazing local businesses which allowed us to provide really nice players packs, golf prizes, and a free lunch that was truly a free lunch. During lunch we were able to speak to the friends of each pastor and present the challenge of caring for their ministry leader for the remainder of the year. We called for them to be intentional in looking after some simple needs they may have. We presented 50 ways they can provide refreshment to the pastor and their family from time to time. Some examples included: dinners, movies, books, getaways, prayer, phone calls, or letters.

Our hope for not only them, but for believers, is that we each find ways to speak life into the lives of the ministry leaders God has placed in our lives.

Please take a moment to read the list of businesses or individuals who made this day of blessing possible through Romans 12. If given the opportunity, express your appreciation for them by either using their business or thanking them for blessing pastors.

- ★ **Steve Cooper and Farmers Insurance**
- ★ **Eddie O'Hair and Paint Kings**
- ★ **Robert Camacho and Tierra Antigua**
- ★ **Scott Genzman and G/R Investment**
- ★ **4 Tucson**
- ★ **Fran Vavala and the Hungry Fox Restaurant**
- ★ **Brian Murphy and Allworth Financial**
- ★ **Sean Furrier and Jack Furrier**
- ★ **Mentoring Tucson Kids**
- ★ **Chris Edwards and Tucson Appliance Company**
- ★ **Dave Drum and J17 ministries**
- ★ **Debbie Kazal and Hacienda Makaria**
- ★ **John Foxworthy and Tucson Insurance**
- ★ **Ken Raley and Big O'Tires**
- ★ **Pacific Insurance**



Pastor Dustin DeJong, New Life Church, winner of 65 inch TV.



From the Desk of Sophia Towne

Director of Women's Ministries

“remind me once again just who I am, because I need to know....” - Lauren Daigle, You Say

I Am Who He Says I Am

At our 3rd annual Breakfast at Tiffany's (this past February), I opened up to 40 women about my past wounds and the false identity I carried around into adulthood. I also shared the freedom I have found in learning and knowing in my heart Who He Says I Am.

Even though we know Christ and what He did for us on the cross, we often don't take the time to learn what He says about us. Our hope at Romans 12 Ministries is that through God's grace and goodness we would relate, refresh and restore ministry leaders AND their families. I represent the AND their families portion, and so much of the work I do is dedicated to helping women learn and celebrate Who they are in Christ. These events make them feel loved, and they provide a safe environment for them to be seen, heard, and build friendships.

After the breakfast, one woman came up to me, weeping. She felt the Holy Spirit prompting her to get up and ask for help but the lie inside her was telling her she was not worth the effort and others needed to meet with me more.

It's heartbreaking to see these wonderful women suffering, but so fulfilling to be given the opportunity to walk alongside them and speak life into them - to remind them who they are in Christ. Because the need is so great, we are looking for women to join our team as "Jonathans." We want women who know who they are in Christ and have a heart to serve other women, to walk alongside them and encourage them as they pursue Jesus.

If you truly believe who He says you are and would like to join our team as a "Jonathan," mentoring a "David" I would love to hear from you.



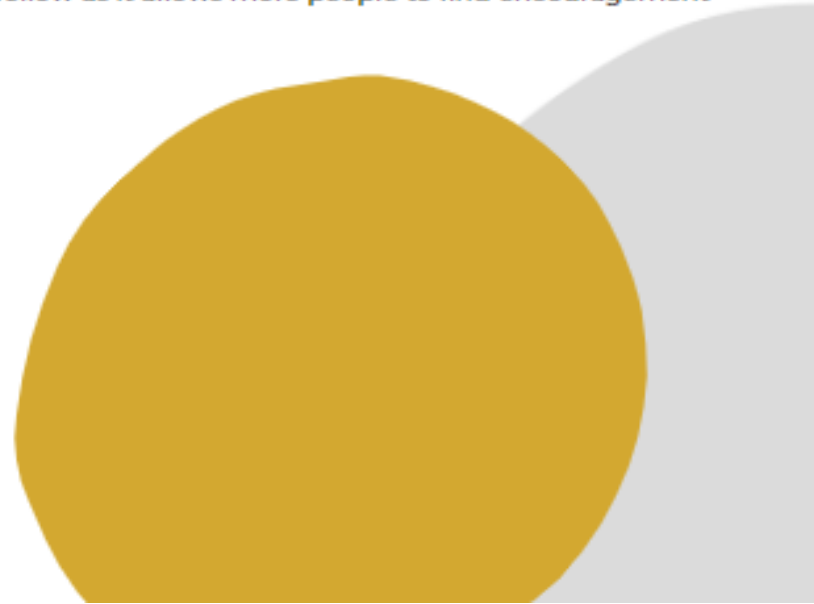
Relate, Refresh, Restore Celebrates One Year!

On April 11, 2021, we officially launched our Relate, Refresh, Restore podcast. Our goal was to share stories of hope from pastors, ministry leaders, missionaries and their families. I honestly wasn't sure if anyone would listen to it (except my mom, of course), but I wanted so badly to share these stories with other believers as a source of encouragement; because life can be really difficult.

I continue to be overwhelmed at how authentic our guests are when they come on. We've shared laughter, and lots of tears as we sit across from each other and talk through some of the most difficult moments they have faced, with intentional focus on how God has come through for them during these hard times.

From porn, to prayer - from marital struggles to dealing with grief- nothing is off limits.

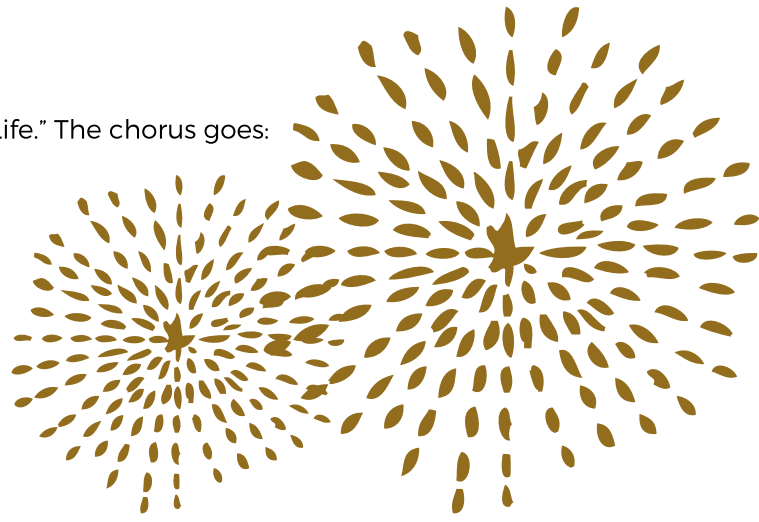
To listen, click one of the links below. Also, please like and follow as it allows more people to find encouragement through our stories of hope.



Back To The Basics

There is an old song by the group 4Him called "The Basics of Life." The chorus goes:

***We need to get back
To the basics of life
A heart that is pure
And a love that is blind
A faith that is fervently grounded in Christ
The hope that endures for all times
These are the basics, we need to get back
To the basics of life***



Give me a call and I'll happily sing it for you!

Sophia and I are in the midst of a two-year process to become certified in counseling through Shepherd's Heart. The goal with this ministry is to intervene in the marriages of pastors and ministry leaders who are on the brink of divorce and let me tell you - it has been both awesome and challenging.

Part of our training requires us to walk through the program and dive deep into topics that can be sensitive, even in strong marriages. It's been such a wonderful time for Sophia and I to get back to the basics of our marriage and really examine our foundation. It's been so helpful to us, and I am so excited to see how God is going to use this to help others when we are finally through the process (this time next year, God willing).

One of the areas we studied is priorities. And I have to tell you, this is such a common minefield in the lives of pastors and ministry leaders - we see this problem arise constantly! But I honestly believe this is probably a problem we all share - myself included!

God's priorities for all of us include:

- God Himself
- Spouse
- Children (minors)
- Ministry
- Family/Friends/Grandparents/Adult Children
- Work

I wanted to take a moment to challenge you. If you're willing, take some time to reflect on this list. How well does it reflect you, or are there categories here that are out of place? After you've taken time to consider this, enter the danger zone and ask your spouse, your children and your close friends how well they think you're doing.

Sophia and I are both nervous and excited about this next huge step for Romans 12. It's honestly humbling and nerve wracking to think about having this level of access to a couple living on the brink of divorce. But I know in our last few years with Romans 12 just how needed this is.

The #1 issue we see is marital problems. It is so common, and so heartbreaking to witness and we know God's desire is to see these couples restored so He can be glorified.

As we move into this season we would love your prayers and continued support. Your donations are making a difference in the lives of these precious ministry leaders and their families. You can help us as we provide support - to relate, refresh and restore those who have chosen to serve Christ by serving His children.