



Publication of the Small Group Ministry

Team

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“ME ~ a name I call myself”

We all remember Julie Andrews in *The Sound of Music* singing the “Do Re Mi” song when she was teaching the Von Trapp family children how to sing. The actual subject of “Me” seems to be very important to all ages, male or female. We don’t really mean to leave God out of the equation but we think we can accomplish things that are truly overwhelming all on our own. We precede both day and night and find ourselves in a nest of anxiety.

Most people live at least part of their lives encompassed with anxiety and some degree of fear. I am the first to admit that I become anxious to everyday things like jobs, economy, obligations, time, schedule, health, and then something always comes up as a complete surprise. One of the biggest worries is about the family especially the children and the grandchildren. This is recognized today as more secular and Christian books are being published about fear. Let’s look at what the Bible says about this fear or anxious feeling that keeps repeating like a cracked long play record.

Don’t worry about anything instead, pray about everything. Tell God what you need, and thank him for all he has done. Then you will experience God’s peace which exceeds anything we can understand. His peace will guard your hearts and minds as you live in Christ Jesus. Philippians 4: 6-7 (New Living Translation)

Why do we so easily forget that we can go to God in prayer about everything? He does care and he wants to have this relationship with each of us each day of our lives. How can this statement be so positive? There is an easy answer, because the Bible tells us so!

Give all your worries and cares to God, for He cares about you. 1 Peter 5:7 (NLT)

We not only have a caring God to whom we pray, but God brings people into our lives that offer us the help we need. Our small groups within our church reach out to those in need or just come along side people who are in need of a friend to listen to their concerns. God is very active in the lives of people that are strangers to us yet end up as “angels” in our time of need. There is a periodical called *Angels* that is full of actual stories in which God has helped people who have called out to Him.

Please, God, rescue me! Come quickly, Lord, and help me. Psalm 70:1

My husband was on a business and I was visiting my folks in Texas with our two-year-old daughter and eight month old son. Life was good. Then the telephone rang and it was for me. The VA Hospital in Salt Lake City, Utah was calling. The voice on the other end said, “You must come at once as your husband is not expected to live!” I was twenty-five years old and my husband was twenty-six. “What happened?” I asked. “We cannot tell you over the phone,” he said. We had been married five years. Our marriage was perfect. No problems. I only worked at home and at our church. My husband took care of me.

As I boarded the plane that night I was running a fever, but I thought nothing of it. I sat next to a lovely woman on the plane and I talked about my husband and what I had heard on the phone. She was well aware of my extreme

anxiety. We landed in Denver and we both had to make connections to other planes. The fever was raging within me and I thought I had the flu. I just wanted to lie down on the airport's wooden bench and go to sleep but I could not miss my connection! This wonderful woman sat down beside me in the waiting room and noted how tired I looked. She suggested, "Just put your head in my lap and rest. I will make sure you get on the plane to Salt Lake City."

I had prayed with my family before we left and I continued to pray as I went through the airport procedures. I prayed Psalm 70:1. Jesus heard my prayer and He sent this wonderful lady to be my companion. In years since I have thought of her as being one of God's angels and I have prayed for her. The reason for my deep concern for her is that the polio virus was rampant in my body at the time of this flight, but I was not aware of it. This is only the beginning of a very long story but with God's grace and much daily prayer both my husband and I have had a long and productive life. Jesus said,

Don't let your hearts be troubled. Trust in God, and trust also in me. John 14: 1

Take time to consider the times in your life when God's grace was more than sufficient to carry you through those difficult anxious days. *The Editor*

Small Group News

The Lenten Service and Soup Dinner

On February 12 the Small Group Ministry Team sponsored an all congregation soup dinner and the beginning of Lent chapel service. Many small groups attended and brought delicious soups, breads and desserts. The team members were available to talk to those of the congregation who were not in small groups and many of the leaders of open groups were there to meet the people interested in joining a group. The food was fabulous and the Lenten service was a beautiful beginning for our six week Lenten study and worship.

Small Group Leader's Input Needed

The Small Group Ministry Team needs for you to input the current names of your group members into the SFC database. Here is all you do:

Go to <https://sfc.cbchurch.com> If you don't have a username or password yet you may click on **Sign Up** at bottom left, complete the form being sure to click **Submit**. Log into your group and click the group participant's tab at the top right hand side of your screen. Enter the names of your group members. Email och@saratogafederated.org if you need assistance and one of the church database team members will help you.

Q Place in the Bay Area

Q Place is Christians all over the world, including our Bay area, whose mission is to mobilize Christians to facilitate group discussions with spiritual seekers so they can find God as revealed in the Bible. The reasons for this group in the Bay Area are these:

- Fifty percent of Americans believe that Christianity is simply one of many faith options to choose from.
- Ninety-three percent of the Bay Area does not attend church.
- Many people want to discuss their beliefs, but don't want others to tell them what to believe.

People who do not attend a church learn best when they discover truth through questions, good listening, and studying the Bible in a caring small group community. There may be someone in your life that has questions about life and God, and wants to explore what they believe, but they will not attend a church to get the answers! They might go to a small group of seekers in a non-threatening atmosphere if they feel safe to ask whatever is troubling them about God, the Bible, or any related subject. If you would like to work with Q Place as a Christian who embraces this mission, or with prayer and financial support, email Sally Bryant at sally@saratogafederated.org.

BOOKS FOR READING



These books and DVD's are recommended for individual or group studies to help in daily living.

So Long Insecurity: You've Been a Bad Friend to Us by Beth Moore (Tyndale House, 2010) No matter your age or status, you can learn to battle insecurity with God's truth.

When God's People Pray: Six Sessions on the Transforming Power of Prayer by Jim Cymbala, Stephen Sorenson, and Amanda Sorenson (Zondervan, 2007) This study is designed to be used with the DVD by the same name, and will be an eye and soul opener to the power of prayer.

Seeking Him: Experiencing the Joy of Personal Revival

by Nancy Lee DeMoss and Tim Grisson (Moody Publishers, 2009) This is a twelve-week study for individual or group use. It has a DVD by the same title that may accompany the study. A revival means a complete transformation of your heart that impacts your home, church, and the world.

The Me I Want to Be: Becoming God's Best Version of You

by John Ortberg (Zondervan, 2009) Life is not about any particular achievement or experience. The most important task of your life is not what you do, but who you become. Your life is God's project, not yours. This book is a must read for both men and women.

Community Outreach Ministries

Your small group has an opportunity to serve these ministries:

Downtown Ministries - Joe and Marilyn Berg (408-867-3299)
or Jim Nichols (408-248-6836)

Advent Ministries Group - Bob Leonard (408-741-0213)

CityTeam Ministries - Jeff Cherniss (408-232-5600)

For an overview of needs and service for this ministry go to

· <http://www.cityteam.org/hr/SJvolunteer.html>

Robin Hood Ministries – Keith Fraker (867-7830)

Community Pregnancy Center - Marjo Spencer (408-354-0958)

Send news to Small Talk Editor, Sue Shannon
E-mail shannon.sue30@gmail.com or call 408-399-9264
DEADLINE FOR THE NEXT ISSUE: 5-1-10