

Dear Friends of Global Orphans,

July 2020

Hello, everyone in "Coronaville!" It is unbelievable we are halfway through this surreal year! I managed to get in three training trips before the lockdown. Since then, my packed 2020 international schedule has come to a screeching halt. The cancellation of a collective six-country European trauma training event with select national leaders was a huge disappointment. I, and others at TCU, had been working on this for three years. It is up in the air if it will ever eventually happen. At times like this, it is hard to make sense of the Lord's ways. It has forced me to go deeper in trusting His goodness, even when it is not apparent. I have been remembering the many other times throughout my life the Lord's plans did not make sense to me. Yet, in the end, they have always been better.

Trauma Resource Filming

I've utilized this stuck-at-home time to continue studying, write more materials, and complete a two-year backburner project with a group of Christian therapists, who possess different trauma specialties and share a common passion for the church to be better resourced. Pastors and ministry leaders are overwhelmed by growing numbers of congregates struggling with various mental health and trauma issues. They feel unprepared to effectively handle the load. Their understandable response is to outsource people to private therapists. However, it is a flawed strategy. For starters, there are not enough therapists out there to meet the growing need. In addition, therapists are expensive and beyond the financial capacity of many people. Most importantly, the Lord has designed and commanded His body to bear one another's burdens, to comfort and love one another in profound and healing ways. We are not all specialists, but we can all learn to be more effective partners with the Holy Spirit to better love and comfort one another in our distresses. While lay parishioners may not be able to help someone out of deep mental health issues, we can all learn to be significant agents in healing.

Our group has partnered with an Emmy Award winning film producer, Five Stone Media, to develop many resources for pastors, lay leaders, and parishioners. The website is due to launch at the end of this month. I have recorded a couple of videos for Five Stone Media and I am currently working on several blog pieces. A video library, webinars, conferences, small group materials, podcasts, and blogs can all be found on the Five Stone Media website at: www.lifesupportresources.org



Minnesota Legislature

The Lord opened a door for me to participate in a weekly intercessory group with legislators focused on prayer for our current situation, locally and nationally. This resulted in upcoming invitations for me to speak with several legislators regarding the effects of current COVID-19 policies on mental health, as well as addressing with them an understanding of the critical trauma component that underlies much of our current civil unrest. It culminated with a request for me to speak to all legislators in both the House and the Senate on a joint Zoom call regarding both of these issues. Knowing the processes of healing have important ramifications for creating better policies. Pray for our ongoing discussions!

I am seeing on a broader scale a trend from every orphan/foster care training. At the core, my training is about a deeper understanding of God's design of our bodies, minds, and spirits; how they are made to integrate, and how they are designed to connect with one another and Him. Caretakers come thinking they are going to learn about the kids, which they do. But without exception, everyone realizes how the model relates to them, as well. One participant told me, "I realize now we all have some type of trauma. This is just a human model. You are teaching us how to be more fully human." So, the Lord is using my previous work now in a whole new sphere. Everything has led me to connections with legislators, non-profit organizations, and black community clergy working together to find a way forward. I have no idea where this is leading. I am surprised, a bit overwhelmed, scared, and excited about these opportunities. I pray for wisdom, favor, and boldness as I go forward. **Your partnership has made it all possible!**

So, my time in lockdown has not been idle, though it feels disjointed. Going forward, I will wait to see whether international training of new orphan care partners will remain in-person or be relegated to virtual training. When I know, I will plan accordingly. Until then, I am attempting to live out Psalm 37.

"Do not fret because of evildoers but trust in the Lord and do good.
Dwell in the land and cultivate faithfulness.
Delight yourself in the Lord and He will give you the desires of your heart.
Commit your way to the Lord, trust also in Him, and He will do it.
Rest in the Lord and wait patiently for Him" (Psalm 37: 1-7).

In these days of uncertainty, I am profoundly grateful for your faithful partnership. May it be said of us that we are delighting in the Lord; waiting, trusting, watching, and working for good wherever we are and under whatever circumstances we find ourselves.

For Mending Brokenness,



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