



January 14, 2011

Dear Friends,

I heard on the radio the other day that they have declared 2010 **“The year we stopped talking.”** Texting, twittering, email, Facebook and other forms of electronic communication have become our primary ways of connecting. As many of you have heard from some of my rants in the past, I think this is a grave turn in our culture and world. I believe it is a deliberate and systematic attack of the enemy of our souls. Now before you write me off as stuck in the past or a harbinger of doom, please understand, I have and continue to use the very forms of “lesser communication” that I rant against. In fact, I’ve recently started using Facebook to promote our upcoming **“Power of Joy”** class.

However, while I see these forms of communication certainly have their place, I am convinced that when used improperly, they contribute to isolation, which is one of the enemy’s most destructive weapons. One of the things we will spend a lot of time on in “The Power Of Joy” is talking about how joy (being genuinely glad to be with someone) is communicated primarily through the eyes and secondarily through other non-verbal cues such as voice tones, facial expressions, etc. You cannot communicate genuine joy electronically. You can communicate pleasure and other pseudo-joys, but it is neurologically impossible to communicate the very joy God designed our brains to run on except by actually being with another person. (Maybe that says something about the importance God places on relationships.)

Because of this truth, I personally value communication in the following order. First, is face to face. In a dialogue with another person non-verbal cues go back and forth. Smiles are shared and most importantly we communicate genuine joy through our eyes, which truly are the windows of our souls. A distant second in the hierarchy of communication is voice to voice. While you cannot see delight in another person’s eyes, you can often hear it in the tone of their voice. Phone calls are a critical part of our recovery model and we have seen how effective they have been to help individuals break out of their isolation. The old commercial jingle of “reach out and touch someone” certainly has much merit beyond successful marketing.

Third, and many miles behind voice to voice comes letters and emails. Of course a handwritten letter carries more sentimental value, unless of course it comes from someone with handwriting like mine and is therefore, unreadable. Both letters and emails have the freedom to be as long as necessary in order to express the intent of our hearts. However, they lack the non-verbal information that brings clarity, and as we have all experienced at some point, have a great potential for misunderstandings.

Fourth, I jumble texts, tweets, internet chat, Facebook comments and any message that gets limited to X number of characters into one very distant and relationally disconnected group. Yes, they are helpful when I need to tell my wife or daughter where the car is parked or what time I will pick them up, but they are almost useless when it comes to communicating relationship. ☺ smileys , ☹ frowns **@** animated curse words and CAPS LOCK may claim to communicate emotion, but they lack the impact of facial expression, voice tones, etc.

OK, back to my point. God created us to be relational human beings connected to one another in the rhythm of joy and quiet. Our enemy, the devil, wants to isolate us and reduce us to mere function. That is why it is so easy to give in to the pull to send an email or text rather than call or stop by. It is why you see so many, at times even someone like me who rants about it, staring down at their phones rather than engaging a conversation. It is why one of my daughter’s friends calls and tells her to get online so they can chat rather than simply continuing the conversation on the phone. Am I saying it is wrong to text, chat, email or Facebook? No, of course not. I am, however, saying it is a subtle attack of the enemy who wants to distract us from experiencing the power of genuine joy and real connection.

Now back to the reason I started this rant. In spite of my resistance, I have given in and chosen to use Facebook as a means of promotion. I think it can be a valuable tool for that purpose. So, if you use Facebook

please look me up and click on the “Power of Joy” event or page and invite your “friends.” **“The Power of Joy” begins on Wednesday, January 19th** and I am getting more and more excited about it every day.

We also have a web page up at www.newhope4si.com/pojw.html for more information. If you have ever considered coming to New Hope for one of our classes, let me encourage you to come to this one. It is going to be great. It would also be a great time to introduce new people to New Hope, as it will have a very positive life focus rather than an addiction focus. I plan on teaching for the first 30-45 minutes each week and then use the remaining time for different exercises we have learned through the Thriving materials and elsewhere. It is open to individuals and couples and all the activities will be done in the safety of groups of three or more.

On Sunday, January 30th, in connection with the Power of Joy, I am going to present my **“Immanuel Process”** teaching during the sermon time here at New Hope. I’m doing this as a preparation for doing Immanuel Processing the first Wednesday night of each month. It is a teaching I did at my seminar at Life Church last year that, in hindsight, I wished we had filmed. If you are curious, intrigued, or even put off by the Immanuel process, I would encourage you to join us as I will lay out the Biblical foundation as well as explain the practical, step by step process we have found so helpful in dealing with old traumas.

The annual **“Men Of Valor”** and **“Women of Virtue”** conferences will be in KC January 28th & 29th. I will teach two new classes this year. One for the new teen track that I’ve titled “The Green Hornet” which will play off the superhero movie that has just hit the theaters. My men’s class, “The Problem of Pain” is a one I’ve wanted to teach for quite some time. It will address what the brain does with pain, ways to process it and the freedom that comes from healing old wounds. Hopefully they will both get recorded well and we will have copies available at New Hope. If you want to attend you can get the group rate through New Hope for \$25. There is a sign up list on the table downstairs or you can register by sending a \$25 donation through the website and just include a note that it is for MOV/WOV. (<http://newhope4si.com/donations.html>)

Kim Jones will be starting **two new women's groups** in Feb/March timeframe: one in the Kansas City area, one in Lawrence. These groups are for single or married women struggling with relational and/or sexual addictions (pornography, fantasy, same-sex attractions, etc.). Kim has 9 years experience leading various recovery groups and received a Certificate of Completion for Treating Sexual Addictions from AACC (Association of American Christian Counselors) in August 2010. You must contact Kim prior to attending either group at 913-381-3192 or kimberjones@everestkc.net.

Please pray for the pastors who are and will be reading my article in **Leadership Journal**. It was supposed to be mailed out on January 13th so it should be hitting church offices about now. Please pray that those who need to seek help will and that we can minister well to those who contact us.

Since the New Year is a time many evaluate their finances and their giving we humbly ask you to prayerfully consider making New Hope a regular and consistent part of your giving to God’s kingdom. We consider each and every gift a blessing. If it helps, you can even set up a monthly subscription gift on our website by clicking on the “donate” button at the top of most pages and following the instructions.

We are in need of a **laptop PC**. If anyone has one they would like to donate to New Hope, we would gladly write you a donation letter. It doesn’t have to be new or even very powerful. There are just a few tasks that it would be nice if we had a PC for instead of my Mac. (Which I love by the way and won’t ever go back)

Finally, as always, thank you very much for your continued prayer and financial support of New Hope. It has been quite exciting to go to the mailbox lately as many of you have sent year-end gifts to the ministry while others have continued their regular support. Your faithful giving helps us do what we do. Thank you!

Because of the resurrection,



Darrell Brazell

PS Last call for the **THRIVE Immanuel Conference**: March 30-April 2nd. The deadline for the early registration discount is January 20th so contact me if you want to register with me for the group discount as well. Go to <http://www.thrivetoday.org/Immanuel2011.html> for more information about the conference and call or email me as soon as possible.