



Message from Jenny and Eric Johnson, M.Div.

We had a great evening celebrating God's grace to adults at our September Event. I described how our ministry seeks adults who have left the familiar church, have lost their way in faith, are listening for the first time, or are leading their friends to faith. We engage over 160 adults weekly through belonging to communities where they are discovering and enjoying faith with friends. We have 15 relationship groups and plans to start 3 more. Our fiscal budget is \$120,000 and we have raised \$80,000 to date. This leaves us with a need for an additional \$40,000 this fiscal year. We are very grateful for those who have already invested with us. Please consider a monthly investment to help us fulfill the vision God has given us to relationally engage adults with His love and grace.

Gospel Message

In our last letter, I explained from Genesis how God created mankind in His own image and displayed our need for relationships. The Triune God is a community in Himself as God the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. He is a relational God. He is complete in Himself. It was out of an abundance of joy and satisfaction within Himself that He created man in His image, thereby giving mankind the capacity to enjoy such relationships. *But* when Adam sinned, the Genesis account

makes it very clear that the immediate and most grievous consequence was a breakdown in relationships...those that Adam and Eve had enjoyed with God and the relationship they had with each other. That is why even today, though we were made for relationships, they are not easy to form and maintain. Looking to God's Word about what He intended from relationships should give us understanding and hope from the Designer Himself.

Three kinds of relationships the Bible teaches we need to be fully human.

First, we were made to be in a deep personal relationship with God. The Apostle John reflecting on Genesis wrote about Jesus and the relationship believers experience with Him, "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things were made through him, and without him was not anything made that was made. In him was life, and the life was the light of men.... And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth.... For from his fullness we have all received, grace upon grace."

Second, we were made for meaningful relationships with other human beings. Just as mankind was created with a vertical need for God's companionship, we were also created for the horizontal companionship of other people. Mankind needed friends even in Paradise. Spiritually we are drawn to other believers whom

God can use in His process of conforming us to the image of His Son. Wise people invite others to help them to see how they look, sound, behave, think, or believe.

Third, we need deep relationships with people who are not like us. In Genesis, when God said, "It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make a helper fit for him," we are also told, "So the LORD God caused a deep sleep to fall upon the man, and while he slept took one of his ribs and closed up its place with flesh. And the rib that the LORD God had taken from the man he made into a woman and brought her to the man." God created for our good and blessing the institution of marriage. God brings to Adam not an animal, not a male, but a woman. Why? He knows the deepest fundamental need of both man and woman will not be met by finding people just like them. We need people to stretch us beyond ourselves. We need people like us, but also not like us.

The Gospel transforms this third need in relationships by affirming the goodness of single life. So, this third need for people like us, but not like us can be met through relationships on the other side of gender, racial, cultural, class, and spiritual barriers.

In our next letter, I will describe how we get these kinds of relationships. We are thankful for your friendship, prayers, and investment.

Sincerely,
Eric
Eric Johnson, M.Div.

Grace Opportunities:

- Recommend us to a friend
- Join one of our 15 groups
- Help us start another group
- Financially invest with us
- Pray for us



November 2018

Ministry Update

Adult Life is a tax-exempt 501(c)(3) non-profit ministry relying on private support – and your generosity. Your gifts are investments in the biblical counseling, discipleship, and evangelism of people who may have little hope, and need more faith. Please consider joining us now with a monthly investment. Adult Life is now doing business as Vantage Point Ministries – Enjoying Life from the Vantage Point of God's Grace. Use the enclosed envelope and make checks payable to "Vantage Point" or "Adult Life." Thank you!

Eric Johnson, M.Div.

Prayer for local mission with adults...

Eric and Jenny Johnson
Extending God's grace to all adults and helping them explore and mature in faith.
Men and Women meeting in relationship groups will grow in grace.
Our ministry to the prisoners at Northampton County Prison. Thankful for your partnership in this important ministry with adults.
New groups to begin.

Contact

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A Woman's Story who attends one of our groups:

“In 1998 my family moved back to Bethlehem and immediately joined a church. We were active in K groups, and for 20 plus years taught and helped build curriculum for Sunday school. We organized camping trips, hayrides, sleepovers, helped with Vacation Bible school, youth group and mentored. I loved it. My relationship with God grew and I would say my faith was strong.

In 2015 our church began to crumble, friends began to argue, sides formed, my church was divided, and then split. Nothing felt right. There was no comfort in going nor staying. I was confused, lost, and just really sad.

My community was gone, my church was gone, and my relationship with God dissipated.

We tried to stick it out. I tried rebuilding what I thought was a strong faith in God, but what I actually had come to realize was that I had a strong faith in my church, and that was gone.

The past 2 years meeting with Eric, Jenny, and my friends in a small group, has helped me build, not rebuild, but build a new kind of relationship with God.

One of the things I love most about our group is I feel safe saying things like, ‘I don’t get it’ (which is often), ‘I don’t agree,’ or ‘It doesn’t make sense.’ We show up for each other, sometimes in pajamas, but we show up. The time we spend together is intentional and meaningful.

I’m not ready to jump in and recommit to a traditional church, I may never be ready. But I can commit to my small group and I look forward to spending time with them as we all learn and grow in our faith in God, together.”

~ **Anonymous**

The Adult Life Ministry