

QuietWaters

C O M P A S S

November 2019, Volume 21, Number 1

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QuietWaters Ministries

Volunteer Opportunities

God's got this!

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SOUL
of Latino ministry

SANTA
BIBLIA

R E N E W I N G C H R I S T I A N L E A D E R S

QuietWaters

could not function without the vital ministry of our many volunteers.



Host Couples:

Volunteer hosts stay at the Retreat Home for one to two weeks at a time to prepare meals and serve and care for our guests during their Leadership Intensives.

Grocery Shopping:

Volunteers buy groceries and deliver them to the Retreat Home for our hosts and guests.

Events:

Event teams help us raise awareness and funds for QuietWaters. We have hosted dinners, comedy events, silent auctions, and golf tournaments.

Airport Volunteers:

These individuals pick up guests and out-of-town hosts from the airport and drive them to the Retreat Home and back.

Office Volunteers:

Volunteers gather several times a year to stuff and seal envelopes for our direct mailings. We have opportunities to help with other office tasks too, such as database entry and paper shredding.

Retreat Home Volunteers:

Volunteers take care of all kinds of maintenance around the Retreat Home, from painting and fence repair to bleaching sheets.

Prayer Team:

Our Prayer Team gathers at the office monthly to pray for the ministry and other needs in our community. Those who cannot come receive requests via email.

Interested in joining this amazing group of volunteers?

We need you!

Contact us at info@QWaters.org or 303-639-9066 if you're interested!



from the Director of Counseling and Team Training
Dave Ragsdale, MA, LPC

We are excited about this edition of *Compass* after taking a break for a couple of years. In this issue we hear from two of our Intensive Counselors, Christine Denlinger and Dr. Hud McWilliams.

As Director of Counseling and Team Training for the last 19 years I have had the privilege of recruiting and working alongside some of the best counselors in the country. Our team is not just comprised of good therapists but highly effective leaders in their own spheres of influence. They sacrifice much of their valuable time driving to our Retreat Home to provide on-site counseling to our leaders coming for support. This allows our clients to fully rest and decompress as they soak up all the care our loving Home Hosts provide during their stay. While they consistently do an effective job as clinicians, our counselors are Spirit led and prayer dependent, not just relying on their skill for results but seeking God for transformational change with each client they serve. I cannot say enough about how proud I am to work with this group of servant leaders!

You will hear first from Christine Denlinger, who has been with our team since 2007. She is passionate about facilitating personal growth in leaders and strategic change in their churches and missions. She believes that all leaders can gain insight and learn skills that will help them live more joyfully and with greater resilience. Denlinger is a Licensed Professional Counselor in the state of Colorado and a member of the American Counseling Association and the American Association of Christian Counselors.

Along with our other Spanish-speaking counselors, Vioneth Villatoro-Ramirez and Mauricio Carbone, Denlinger has the ongoing challenge of providing the best intensive counseling services to an ever-growing number of Latino Christian leaders. As she seeks to bring understanding and empathy to their cultural identities as well as their individual personalities, she is uniquely qualified to bring wise counsel. In this article she reveals many unique challenges faced by Hispanic ministers. For example, many Latino pastors living in the United States have secondary employment to make ends meet, which puts a significant burden on them as leaders. She says, "While zealous for the work God is doing among them, these leaders are frequently overextended and under-resourced, leaving them vulnerable to high levels of stress. Not managed appropriately, this stress can lead to burnout, marital and relational dysfunction, and ultimately resignation or termination from ministry." As we seek to step up as an organization expanding our sphere of influence to serve more Latino leaders, we need your prayers and support. QuietWaters is indeed a safe place where they find rest and renewal, but our organization will need to strengthen its own cross-cultural intelligence, dual-language resources and financial base in order to serve them even better. Pray for our Spanish-speaking counselors as they serve these Christian leaders worldwide.

In the second article we hear from Dr. Hud McWilliams, who joined our team in 2009. Along with providing Intensives to pastors and missionaries

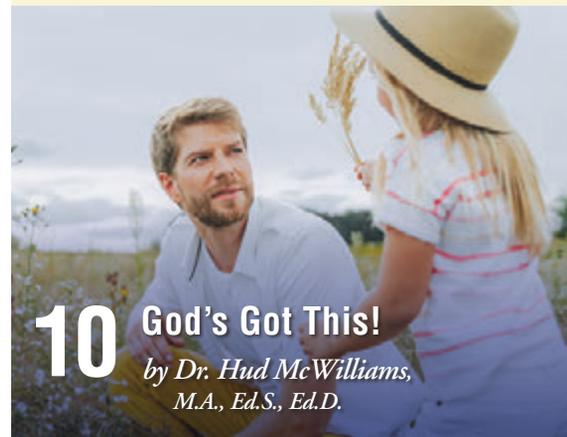
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at QuietWaters, McWilliams is currently serving as the Senior Resource Pastor for Christian Associates, a church planting organization focused on Europe. McWilliams has been in private practice for over 40 years and like all our counselors, balances his other ministries while serving us so well at QuietWaters. He brings sage wisdom to leaders around the world and we are fortunate to have him on our counseling team.

In his article, “God’s Got This”, Dr. McWilliams describes two kinds of grief that people experience. One grief is built on regret and despair that keeps people stuck in the past; the other grief calls the sufferer into the next stage of growth and development. The first results in a loss of hope and heart, the second kind of grief draws us closer to

Christ and leads us to the true hope of a future based on Him. As leaders who must lead people through grief and loss, this offers us sound guidance to journey with those who suffer dark nights of the soul and perplexing valleys of doubt that challenge their faith. McWilliams invite us to embrace the losses that accompany change as healthy developmental chapters of our lives. “Each movement of development means we must face leaving the last stage and entering the next... [This] requires paying attention to the designed gift of grieving that can free us from the past and celebrate each forward movement life brings.”

As an organization, QuietWaters is in a major chapter of development. As the Interim Executive Director from April to July 2019, I was able to see all our

gifted coworkers and volunteers contribute to our growth. You may know that we have now hired a new CEO, whom we’re excited to introduce here! Our transition has brought both the grief of loss as well as the promise of renewal. We are leaning into it believing, “God’s got this.” In this journey of growth, we seek to be a wholehearted and unified group—our board of trustees, our operations staff and our counselors all co-laboring for the cause of Christ together. We seek your prayers that we may navigate these transitions well. Pray for everyone involved in the ministry of QuietWaters, that we will fulfill our own mission internally, we ourselves being restored, renewed and strengthened as we serve Christian leaders. ■

Introducing New CEO of QuietWaters Ministries



Rosa Huber

Rosa Huber joined QuietWaters in early July from a robust background in non-profit leadership and ministry experience. She most recently served as Director of Development and Communications for Families First in Denver, having filled many roles since she started there in 1995. She was responsible for major and minor gift acquisition, volunteer management, communications activities, and building external relationships for the agency. Her wealth of leadership experience in donor development, marketing, and strategic planning is an incredible asset

to QuietWaters, especially during this season of rapid growth.

Rosa grew up on the western slope of Colorado with parents who genuinely enjoy caring for others and instilled the value of supporting pastors and other Christian leaders. “I have been heavily involved in serving in churches since I was a teenager. I’ve served in a variety of capacities, including youth leadership, a pastoral search committee, worship teams, mission teams, and small group ministry,” Rosa shared when asked why she was interested in serving as QuietWaters’ CEO.

“Through this work alongside church and other ministry leaders, I have seen all too often the hardships that leaders face. They are ‘on’ continuously, have others’ burdens unloaded on them, and are called to serve others but are sometimes unable to care for themselves and their own family relationships.

I’ve learned through my professional experience with families the importance of having a place to seek help when needed, restore and rejuvenate. I decided long ago that I would do my best to support our Christian leaders on a personal level. Being a Christian leader is one of the hardest and most complicated jobs in the world, and we want to see leaders energized and excited by the lives that are changing in their ministries instead of worn out and discouraged. QuietWaters provides a place that is safe, caring, and integral to the success of our Christian leaders, and I am excited to be part of such an amazing ministry!”

Rosa lives in Castle Rock and enjoys running, reading, involvement in her local church, and spending time with her husband, two young adult children, and many extended family members. We are thrilled to have her at QuietWaters! ■

Strengthening the **SOU**L of Latino ministry

By Christine Denlinger, M.A., L.P.C.

The Latino world has always been near to my heart. I was three years old when my parents took me to Costa Rica where they studied Spanish to prepare for service as missionaries with a protestant mission organization in Central America. I lived there until I was 17. Spanish became my second language, rice and beans my favorite meal. I was welcomed into my best friend's family, a Costa Rican girl with Spanish and German ancestry, as if I were one of them. I became well acquainted with all her aunts and uncles and cousins. I learned to dance salsa and worship God with a lot more passion and energy than I saw in the U.S. churches we visited during our "home assignments." I attended Spanish-speaking schools during my elementary years and learned history from a Latin American worldview.

My husband and I served as church planting missionaries in Caracas, Venezuela. As an adult, my nostalgia for all things Hispanic gave way to a deeper understanding of some of the challenges facing this population as well as their opportunities for reaching a larger world for Christ. And then in 2002 we moved back to the United States. I wondered how God would

Latinos are the largest ethnic minority group in the United States (US Census, 2016) and have a tremendous influence in contributing to, shaping, and enriching all aspects of this country. You don't have to look far to see how all sectors of our society, from food to politics to religion, have in some form been impacted by Latino culture.

use my experience in Latin America in our new context. It wasn't long before I began to see that the Latin world was deeply intertwined with other cultures in my new environment. I saw that God was going to use my gifts as a counselor and my ministry background in Latin America to allow me to minister to Latinos in a unique way. I continue to learn, serve and receive blessing, from and to Hispanics in my private practice as a professional counselor and as I counsel Latino ministry leaders during QuietWaters Leadership Intensives. The same is true in my personal life, through good friendships and the impact Hispanics have on the culture at large.

Latinos are the largest ethnic minority group in the United States (US Census, 2016) and have a tremendous influence in contributing to, shaping, and enriching all aspects of this country. You don't have to look far to see how all sectors of our society, from food to politics to religion, have in some form been impacted by Latino culture. There is much diversity and variety in this population, so we run the risk of overgeneralizing or stereotyping "Latino" or "Hispanic." In fact these words represent a multitude of peoples from Spanish-speaking countries, all of which have their own subcultures as well as generational differences. This article focuses on some of the unique challenges and opportunities Latino ministry leaders face based on the current literature as well as my personal experience counseling Hispanic ministry leaders.

According to the Pew Research Center, about one-fourth of all Hispanics living in the United States identify themselves as Protestant or Protestant Evangelical Christians (pewforum.org). There is rapid growth in many churches serving this population, creating new opportunities as well as significant challenges for the ministry leaders shepherding them. While zealous for the work God is doing

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There is rapid growth in many churches serving this population, creating new opportunities as well as significant challenges for the ministry leaders shepherding them. While zealous for the work God is doing among them, these leaders are frequently overextended and under-resourced, leaving them vulnerable to high levels of stress. Not managed appropriately, this stress can lead to burnout, marital and relational dysfunction, and ultimately resignation or termination from ministry.

among them, these leaders are frequently overextended and under-resourced, leaving them vulnerable to high levels of stress. Not managed appropriately, this stress can lead to burnout, marital and relational dysfunction, and ultimately resignation or termination from ministry. While younger generations of Hispanic ministry leaders in the U.S. often prefer English to Spanish, many continue to minister in Spanish.

Providing the best counseling services for these leaders must include an understanding of their cultural identities as well as their individual personalities. Regardless of ethnicity, it is vital that ministry leaders be valued as unique individuals with their own personal histories and ministries. Many Hispanics living in the United States continue to have ties back to their families' countries of origin. Often relatives living in Latin America are receiving money, visits, and information from family members living in the United States.

Given our current technology and accessibility to travel, these connections between the United States and Latin America remain strong. QuietWaters is seeing this pattern as our services to Hispanic ministry leaders expand and reach further into Latin America and the Caribbean. This is happening as personal stories of healing and transformation are shared with family and friends, colleagues and parishioners.

With all this in mind, here are just a few of the issues facing Hispanic ministry leaders in the United States and the many countries that comprise Latin America.

Under-resourced and Underfunded

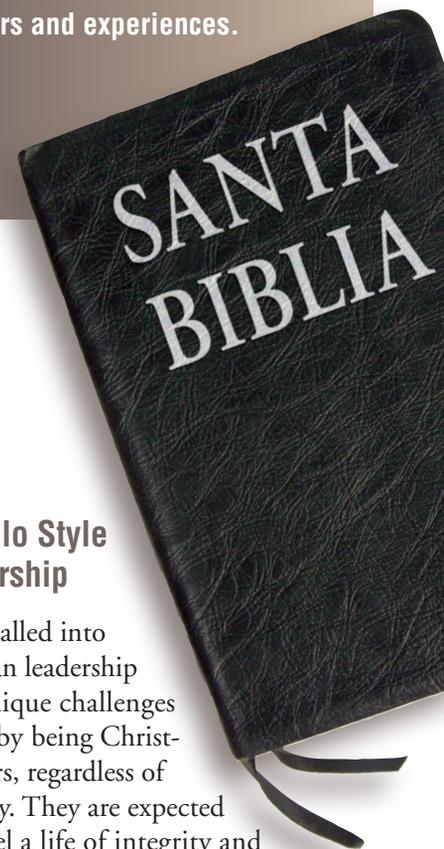
Hispanic ministry leaders as a whole typically have less formal ministry training, financial resources and organizational support than their non-Hispanic white counterparts. Those ministering through larger and more established denominations such as the Assemblies of God and the Southern Baptist Convention, or those under the umbrella of a larger English-speaking church, may be exceptions. Many Latino pastors living in the United States often have secondary employment in order to make ends meet. Their congregations are frequently a mixture of people with modest incomes and basic educational training and those living in a lower socio-economic environment. Due to lack of sufficient funds and quality ministry resources in Spanish, operating with significant limits has become the norm. While God continues to expand His kingdom in spite of our limitations, this deficit becomes burdensome and discouraging for leaders who desire to minister to their congregations in helpful ways.

Those called into Christian leadership have unique challenges simply by being Christ-followers, regardless of ethnicity. They are expected to model a life of integrity and care for the needs of those they shepherd. This includes giving spiritual vision, training, and direction to groups of people who are at different life stages and have a huge variety of life stressors and experiences.

Caudillo Style Leadership

Those called into Christian leadership have unique challenges simply by being Christ-followers, regardless of ethnicity. They are expected to model a life of integrity and care for the needs of those they shepherd. This includes giving spiritual vision, training, and direction to groups of people who are at different life stages and have a huge variety of life stressors and experiences. Cultural

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context, though, presents unique challenges for those desiring to emulate Christ's example of servant leadership. Caudillo leadership is a leadership style seen frequently throughout the Latino world. Caudillo, originally a military term, literally translated means "warlord" or "strongman." The caudillo leader might be a benevolent dictator or an authoritarian leader who rules with a heavy hand. The caudillo style ministry leader may surround himself with family members or close confidants who support him and are willing to protect him regardless of decisions that may not be in the best interests of the congregation or may even be unethical. This self-elevation, preservation and protection of the leader creates opportunities for corruption, entitlement, and abuse of power. The Hispanic ministry leader who seeks to function from a biblical framework and adopt the counter-cultural approach of servant leadership can face challenging obstacles in the context of this culturally accepted leadership style.

High Value of Relationships

The high value given to close interpersonal relationships is an admirable aspect of Hispanic culture. However, this can also create ministry dilemmas for the Latino Christian leader. Often ministering in small communities, the leader faces sometimes opposing personal agendas of family members or close personal friends making it difficult to act for the overall good of those under their ministry care. Learning how to navigate relationships both within and outside the church without compromising biblical standards is a pressure regularly faced by Latino ministry leaders.

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Historically in Latin America, women have come to Christ more readily than men and have tended to be more committed to the local church. This presents several issues for pastors who are trying to lead effectively within their cultural context. It is not uncommon, particularly in churches that adhere to a more Pentecostal theology, to have a husband and wife pastoring together in the same congregation. This model, which does not always have clearly defined boundaries around leadership roles, can create marital tension and power struggles for the ministry couple. Sometimes whole families are in leadership roles in the church which can present power struggles within the family system as well as allow for fewer leadership development opportunities among parishioners.

Boundary Complications

Individualism, clear boundaries, and self-sufficiency are highly valued among the majority culture in the United States. These life principles come from our country's early history and to some

degree have been assimilated by minority groups. However, most cultures in the world do not hold these values as priorities. Latino cultures are no exception and are described as collective societies, meaning that the good of the group is more important than the good of the individual. Therefore, Latinos mainly operate from the expectations of others, whether of family, congregation, friends or authority structures in their lives. While able and willing to express their own opinions, they are careful about the impression others may have of them, wanting to please others or the group so as not to create conflict or tension. The Hispanic ministry leader who desires to live by biblical truth also faces pressure to honor the expectations and desires of others and minimize the potential for conflict which could be divisive in a group. This pressure creates vulnerability for unethical practices, which could ultimately compromise the leader's integrity.

When a Hispanic leader faces a crisis and seeks help, he or she is naturally concerned about privacy, confidentiality, and anonymity. Whether they hold a very public platform such as itinerant evangelist or megachurch pastor, or a less visible role as worship pastor within a moderately sized congregation, the need for a safe help environment looms large. A Latino pastor attending a QuietWaters Leadership Intensive stated, "We're here at QuietWaters because we don't trust counselors in our town. Our churches often use lay counselors in our congregations for counseling needs, but sometimes these people don't have the right qualifications or training to help us and also may not completely keep confidentiality. We come from a small community where everyone knows everyone's business. I don't trust that confidentiality will be

**“En verdes pastos me hace descansar.
Junto a tranquilas aguas me conduce; me infunde nuevas fuerzas.”
Salmo 23:2-3 NVI**

honored. It’s hard to find a Christian counselor, let alone one whom I can trust completely. I don’t feel there is a safe place in the Christian community where I can work through our problems without the fear of being exposed.”

While this may be true for some Latin contexts, particularly in some places in Latin America, confidentiality is carefully protected by licensed counselors in the United States in part due to U.S. laws that protect those we serve. Places like QuietWaters become invaluable resources for those who worry that their vulnerabilities and leadership struggles might be used against them because of careless exposure by those who are supposed to be “safe” people. The counselors at QuietWaters are trained counseling professionals, with a strong Christian faith, ministry experience and cultural sensitivity.

Other Concerns

These are just a few of the issues facing the Latino ministry leader today. Other front line concerns that are beyond the scope of this article include the challenges surrounding immigration, the millennial generation of U.S. Hispanics who are more assimilated into the broader culture, and the political and economic crises in several Latin American countries, affecting Latinos both in and outside of the United States. There are also areas of congregational concern that are not specific to Latino culture, but are challenges for all ministry leaders, such as immorality, addictions, parenting concerns, local and global social justice, reaching those who don’t know Christ, and ongoing challenges of developing congregations with deepening love for God and others.

Ministry leaders, regardless of ethnicity, need a place where they can be led into deeper relationship with the One who has entrusted them with a high calling. They need a place where they can feel safe, recover from their wounds, receive renewal and re-tooling for the road ahead. They need a place where the unique challenges of the cultural context in which they minister are understood.

Hispanic pastors and ministry leaders are vital to God’s kingdom work. All leaders carry battle scars from the enormous responsibility of shepherding the people of God. They grow weary and need a place where they can find rest, renewal, and restoration. In his book *While Shepherds Watch Their Flocks: Forty Daily Reflections on Biblical Leadership*, Dr. Timothy S. Laniak recounts his yearlong experience living among nomadic shepherds in the Middle East, drawing biblical leadership insights from his journey. He writes, “We have reflected often on being shepherd leaders, but the Twenty-Third Psalm is a reminder that we are both shepherds and sheep. Biblically, leading always involved being led. Followership is the beginning— and end— of effective leadership” (p. 199).

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the unique challenges of the cultural context in which they minister are understood. As the psalmist declares of the Good Shepherd—who speaks Spanish as well as many other languages—“En verdes pastos me hace descansar. Junto a tranquilas aguas me conduce; me infunde nuevas fuerzas” (Salmo 23:2-3 NVI). “He makes me lie down in green pastures, he leads me beside quiet waters, he restores my soul” (Psalm 23:2-3 NIV). ■

Note: This article was originally published as “Ministering to Hispanic Leaders: Opportunities and Challenges for the 21st Century” in the October 2011 edition of *Compass*. Christine has updated her original article for reprinting here.



Christine Denlinger, MA, LPC

Christine and her husband served as church planting missionaries in the Philippines and Venezuela for 14 years. She received her M.A. in Counseling from Denver Seminary in 2005 and currently works in private practice as a Licensed Professional Counselor in the Denver area as well as on our Quiet Waters counseling team. Christine is passionate about facilitating growth in others, helping people find reconciliation in their relationships, and deepening their understanding of the larger social and cultural context in which they live. She and her husband have two adult married children and three grandchildren.

GOD'S GOT THIS!

by Dr. Hud McWilliams, M.A., Ed.S., Ed.D.

Over two years ago we stopped watching the news on TV. We get the news in other ways that are not so toxic and negative. In short, we were seeking a more life-giving rhythm to our lives. However, and there's always a however, we can't avoid a world that is a mess. Our situation is not that different, I suspect, from yours. In recent months, we have grappled with several forms of violence to humans. Cancer qualifies as violent and, in this case, led to death. This was followed by a suicide. Then a school shooting which involved a friend's child. The story continues, the litany goes on and the sorrow remains. Random evil continues. So where is the good news—the gospel? Why is life so disturbing?

This morning I listened to a gospel music album that reminded me of several songs I grew up with. Often, I don't listen to the words. This morning I did. Each song carried the same seminal message: Hope. The good news that is offered to Jesus followers is profoundly found in a future which greatly impacts our present. Most of the lyrics, laced with longing and lament, pointed in that direction. This all got me thinking that because death and loss are so present, **it is easy to face the wrong direction and get stuck in a closed system where there is no hope.** Essentially, we can get stuck and focused in the past. Grief and loss pull us in, along with sorrow. When

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we're mostly focused on the past, grief generates despair and is demoralizing and depressing. We often find in scripture the repeated sentiment to not lose heart and to not grow weary. Yet I suspect this loss of hope is much more of a challenge in a world with no margin for reflection or creativity and with morals unmoored from God.

Toward Hope

I often tell people that my favorite book in scripture is Ecclesiastes. Seldom am I asked why. I know, you have not asked either, but here is part of the reason. Ecclesiastes tells us that our search for eternal life, rest, joy, and justice moves us *beyond* creation's subjection to futility and *toward* Christ. We don't see this movement to Christ directly explained in Ecclesiastes; rather it is revealed. The futility of everything that is not of God is described as life under the sun. Throughout Ecclesiastes we are shown other answers, other solutions, other wisdom from the world's attempts at providing satisfaction, contentment, and fulfillment. The dissatisfaction in Ecclesiastes calls us beyond our obsession with the things

we can know, to believe something we do not see. Remember the garden lie? The serpent told Eve, "when you eat from it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil" (Genesis 3:5). Remember that the Apostle Paul, speaking to the Corinthians, tells us to live by faith/belief and not by what we can see. (2 Corinthians 5:7)

Being able to go outside of what we see and experience, to believe that there is more going on than we can see—this allows us the only access to hope. And in surrendering to the truth of the Gospel and embracing our finite humanity, we reject the serpent's lie: We acknowledge that we are NOT God, we are NOT all-knowing, and we can find freedom and hope in putting our faith in God, who we cannot see.

Grief, Death and Hope

On our last ministry trip, we were gifted with a presentation of the life of Jesus in a stage production. I know the stories, but on this occasion, one stood out in a manifestly different manner. In John 11 we read the story of the death and resurrection of Lazarus. There are some takeaways I want to share with you here that I find quite settling in the very unsettled world in which we are living.

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The litany goes on and the sorrow remains. Random evil continues. So where is the good news—the gospel? Why is life so disturbing?

Let me begin by saying I believe that there are essentially two forms of grief in our world:

1 The first is part of original design and has mainly to do with what it takes to be a true learner. Humility is a central part of learning, helping us to understand that there is always more to learn. This learning and growing process is freighted with constant loss and change. Each movement of development means we must face leaving the last stage and entering the next. If we refuse to do the work that grief demands, then we will drag the outworn past into the present and find ourselves stuck because we have not truly left the space that the past occupied. Moving toward learning and growth requires paying attention to the designed gift of grieving that can free us from the past and celebrate each forward movement life brings. The person moving from first grade to second, dealing with an empty nest, getting married, or growing old is only freed by grieving well the losses built in to life. A researched fact is that the healthiest family systems are those that handle grief well by celebrating endings as they launch family members into the next stage of living.

2 The second is another kind of grief, not part of the original design but instead brought on by the fall of man and therefore heinous and obscene. Death, for example, produces this kind of grief.

So, let's return to the story of Lazarus and Mary and Martha who John says Jesus loved (John 11:3,5). The Biblical message is so beautiful because we need a concrete, personal hope in the face of death that explains why Jesus orchestrated the Lazarus event the way he did. He knew what his friends needed

If we refuse to do the work that grief demands, then we will drag the outworn past into the present and find ourselves stuck because we have not truly left the space that the past occupied.

to see. And He knows that we need to see it too: resurrection and real life.

What would you expect of Jesus once he has learned that the one he loves is gravely ill? Isn't it the loving thing to protect your beloved from whatever is hurting them? Verse six tells us that when he heard that Lazarus was ill, he stayed two days longer in the place where he was. He waited. He withheld his power. He did nothing. Why? Verses 14 and 15 hold the answer: "then Jesus told them plainly Lazarus has died, and for your sake I am *glad* that I was not there, so that you may believe". (emphasis mine)

Jesus is glad that the one he loves has died. He is glad that the ones he loves are in mourning. He's glad he wasn't there to do anything about it. Why is he glad? "So that you may believe." His love for them means not preventing all pain but doing what's best for them. What's best for them, as Jesus defines it, is that they believe. And for them to believe—for them to see Jesus for who he is, they need to come face-to-face with death.

Both Mary and Martha greet Jesus with the same charge: "If you had been here, my brother would not have died." Their grief is trapped in regret of the past. Jesus wants it channeled into hope, the future. Martha is not looking to the future when resurrection occurs; she's angry that Jesus missed

the day of Lazarus's death. Her view is in the present looking back to what she's lost instead of in the present looking forward to where hope can be found.

In the Heidelberg catechism the first question is: "What is our only comfort in life and in death?" The answer is: "that I am not my own but belong body and soul to my faithful Savior Jesus Christ."

Belief and Hope

Maybe it would be of some help here to think of us standing in the present with the choice to continually focus on something that happened in the past, which we believe we can see, or to face the future now where hope resides, which we can really only 'see' with the believing eyes of the heart. Hope resides in our belief that this life, with its griefs and losses, is not all there is. Resurrection is coming and fear is rendered powerless.

Hebrews 2:14-15 helps in expressing what Jesus wanted his disciples to "believe" and by implication wants us to believe as well. Remember the disciples were heading into martyrdom (which I assume they did not yet see, but Jesus did). Knowing this, Jesus wanted them to understand and believe the resource he was giving them to access when faced with the viciousness of Rome and the Jewish authorities—He wanted them to listen to the power of the Hebrew writer and live without fear. "Therefore, since the children share in flesh and blood [this is talking about us], He Himself likewise also partook of the same [His incarnation means we can identify with Him because He partook of exactly what our lives grapple with], that through death He might render powerless him

Being able to go outside of what we see and experience, to believe that there is more going on than we can see. This allows us the only access to hope.



who had [past tense] the power of death, that is, the devil, and might free those who through fear of death were subject to slavery all their lives.” Who were those who were fearful of death? Truly all of us and in fact maybe this fear of death is the core source of the power that fear holds. Just as it gripped Mary and Martha, so it grips us... unless we “believe” what the writer of Hebrews is stating. Fear is gone and thus its attachment to loss, replaced by grace and the ability to see all of life as a gift. The martyrdom of the disciples was in essence their believing what Jesus wanted them to believe: That the world or the devil has the power to kill us and we have the power to die!

In 1 Thessalonians 4:13, Paul reminds the church that we do not grieve without hope. Rather, the grace we have received turns us around where we can see with our heart vision that Jesus has broken the power of death and Satan and that we can be free from fear. Believing this, we can access the joy and hope that are inviting us forward into true life now, hope

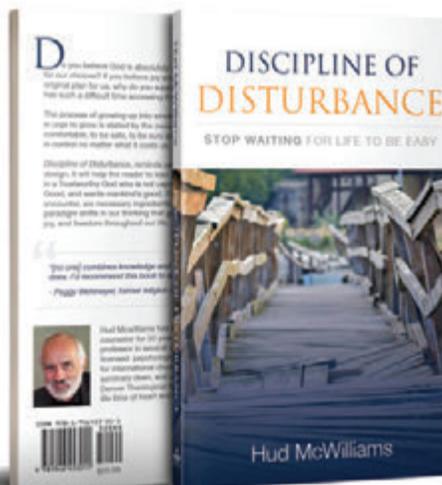
in the present. True joy is a by product of living in Jesus’s presence; it is never dependent on our circumstances.

The title of this writing is, “God’s Got This!” Truly a beginning place for all of us who have chosen to follow Jesus and trust that His grace is thoroughly sufficient. Remember there is always more going on than we can see. More going on than the news can report. And for the person who is relying on the resurrection for hope there is comfort in **believing** just that. ■



Dr. Hud McWilliams, M.A., Ed.S., Ed.D.

Dr. Hud McWilliams received his M. A. and Ed. S degrees from the University of Northern Colorado and his Ed. D. in counseling from North Texas State University. A licensed psychologist, a passionate speaker and communicator, Hud is a pastor to pastors, and serves on the QuietWaters Ministries Counseling team. He enjoys bike riding, reading, squash, racquetball, hiking, cooking, woodworking, and long conversations.



For more on this topic from Dr. McWilliams, check out *Discipline of Disturbance: Stop Waiting for Life to be Easy*, released in 2018.

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QuietWaters Ministries offers Christ-centered Leadership Intensives held at our Retreat Center in Parker, Colorado. Pastors, missionaries, and parachurch leaders come to QuietWaters seeking help with spiritual formation, leadership coaching, burnout, church/ministry conflict, relationship concerns, sabbatical preparation, retirement guidance and many other challenges. All Leadership Intensives are customized to the specific needs and goals of our guests and are available for individuals or couples. Guests spend 15-25 hours working with a Licensed Professional Counselor over a one- to two-week period, surrounded by the peaceful environment of our Retreat Home and cared for by volunteer hosts.



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“He leads me beside quiet waters.” Psalm 23:2

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