



Dear Friends,

Life is about relationship! The great privilege of our life is the involvement we have in the stories of so many. We are so grateful. We learn from you. We are privileged to be a mentor and guide for you. We seek to make the Gospel clear to each of you. We offer a small sample of stories from the various venues God has given us to share His Good News.

**HIGHLAND COLONY MEN'S ROUNDTABLE** = YOU can LISTEN to the Audio of each Thursday morning's Men's RoundTable by going to <http://www.menstable.com/> "*Men's Roundtable was great this morning. Thank you for being real and honest – great trait as a leader. The story you relayed this morning of your issues resounded with me. As you know, I deal with similar issues in my marriage at times where I just do an idiotic thing and go off the deep end. It causes me to feel like quitting, feeling sorry for myself, blaming others. Thank you for sharing. Men's Roundtable is just what I need each week amid the chaos of life.*"

**MEN'S COACHING WEEKENDS** = The Coaching Weekends, affectionately known as "Deer Camp" are amazing! God moves though the community of men who gather at Ebenezer Place - 21.6 acres where there are two cabins, a large outside deck, a pond, and lots of potential for future development. Each Weekend is unique as men share the stories of their lives, receive acceptance from one another, and experience God in a transforming way. "*Wow! I expected the Men's Coaching Weekend to be good, but I was totally blown away, since it was off the top of the chart! I am much better having experienced God through the weekend ... armed with the Sword of the Spirit ... and because of the remarkable bond that was forged among men in such a supernatural way that could only come from our Lord and our God. I look forward to growing in faith through this community as we get to know each other even better.*"

**MEN'S COACHING ADVENTURE – WYOMING 2011** = Phil led 15 men to the Grand Tetons & Yellowstone to explore the beauty of God and develop a deeper community of men. "*Wow! To be in an environment with other men all searching for the way to use their experience both good and bad to grow them into a "Man of God." For me, this past week has given me my breath back, restored my passion for life and renewed my dreams for the future. To be able to laugh, share and relax has been incredible. Sharing the adventures of white water rafting, horseback riding, hiking and exploring the rugged west is a great metaphor that all men need to "come alive. I was able to go on a trek, a journey, into an uncharted land and find that I did not die but just the opposite. I came, I explored and I conquered passivity, fear, grief and my dark side. I came away with a new vigor to continue the adventure of daily life as a husband, father, employee and a Christian. The journey is still a new adventure but to know there is a safe place, a circle of other men praying with me and encouraging me where a source of strength that will last me quite a while, is ever encouraging me onward and upward.*"

**PASSIONATE LIVING COUNSELING** = We continue to offer help to men, women, couples, and families through our counseling ministry. "*Thank You - Thank You - Thank You! Maybe our marriage has a chance NOW ... You have given me HOPE!*"

**RESTORATION WEEKEND** - This November was the inaugural celebration of the first Women's Retreat! After much demand from the wives of the men who have attended "Deer Camp," Karla secured a bed and breakfast in Vicksburg for sixteen women! The weekend exceeded the hopes of many who needed a place to process real issues in a safe and accepting environment! With many on the waiting list, the second retreat is scheduled for the first weekend in March! Contact us if you are interested in attending! "*The Weekend was instrumental in my healing. Being able to be authentic and honest was healing in itself.*"

**EVERY MAN'S JOURNEY – Men's Group that meets every Friday morning.** "Men's group this morning was great! I deeply needed it. This morning with the study of the Exodus 33 passage I found myself willing to share my anger and frustration about my situation. I know I need more discipline and obedience in my life especially fiscally, but I was finally able to express my full range of emotions to God this morning. I was able to tell God today how angry I have been. I felt so free and less burdened to simply pray those words. I praise God for His provision and His ear to hear my frustration. I also praise Him for giving me amazing godly men like you to walk with. Thank you for your leadership, wisdom, and friendship!"

**We would not be able to engage in such a full life without your support – through your prayers, through your financial investments, and through your many words of encouragement.** We are grateful for you and thankful for how you help us fulfill our calling in Building the Kingdom. **THANK YOU!!**

**THE HARDINS- Phil, Karla, Audrey, and Abigail**

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# On The Home Front

How in the world has another year flown by? Certainly each year teaches me that life is fragile and fleeting and yet at the same time rich and rewarding! But even more important it is *eternal* and *evolving*!

Evolving to me is growth that takes into consideration all the ups and downs of life and moves us towards being stronger, wiser, more caring, compassionate, reverent and grateful! In our profession we see the constant struggle of people to evolve instead of shut down, grow numb, bitter, self-protective and self-promoting.

In a recent conversation with Audrey we were talking about how much pain is in everyday life. Her first full year of working retail has grown her and stretched her and she has truly evolved into a resilient young woman. We as Christians do not escape the pain of relationships, hardships, physical challenges and constant stressors. Yet what we can lay hold of that those who don't know Christ cannot, is an understanding of *redemptive* pain. It is pain with a purpose and that only makes sense when life is more than what we see – it is eternal.

Audrey just recently accepted a new job offer with the Mountain Brook Country Club! She was enticed by the job description that included PR, display, organizing, party planning and giving fashion advice in the Golf Shop! The fringe benefits of gourmet lunches, beautiful surroundings and being hailed as Miss America everyday by the patron members has certainly made this new transition easy! Her wonderful roommates, fabulous bible study and church round off her list of things to be thankful for!

Abigail, too, has had a year to remember! This summer at the suggestion of a professor she entered a national contest sponsored by Marie Claire Magazine. Never imagining that she could win such an amazing opportunity – She Did! She was one of four students selected from around the country to produce their own Fashion Show at their campus! The event was a daunting task in the midst of a full academic load, but Abigail had even a greater motivation in that she wanted her show to be a fundraiser for victims of the April 27<sup>th</sup> tornado that swept up homes and lives in Tuscaloosa. The event was a huge success and her event raised over \$5,000 for Project Blessings -which is helping displaced families! To view go to: [http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Smgv\\_41rqB4&feature=youtu.be](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Smgv_41rqB4&feature=youtu.be).

As if this was not enough excitement, Abigail had the amazing experience of creating her own designs then sewing them and sending them down the runway for her Senior Show. With 26 seniors presenting probably a total around 150 outfits, Abigail was shocked the next day when the newspaper showcased only twelve looks from all of them and she had five of her models featured! In addition, the University's yearbook staff approached her about being featured in the yearbook! (Now we will be forced to by one! Ha!!) You can view at: [http://video-1.ua.edu/webct/f41/f41\\_2011\\_stream.mov](http://video-1.ua.edu/webct/f41/f41_2011_stream.mov). She is the 12<sup>th</sup> designer and you can fast forward until you see her name! Abigail showcased more than her designs this year. We watched her face the challenge of being overwhelmed and grow into a woman who fights instead of cowering at the obstacles in her life!

Phil and I are more grateful than ever for *redemptive* pain. Because of it, we are evolving. We encourage you to embrace it in your life as well!

**“So we're not giving up. How could we! Even though on the outside it often looks like things are falling apart on us, on the inside, where God is making new life, not a day goes by without his unfolding grace. These hard times are small potatoes compared to the coming good times, the lavish celebration prepared for us. There's far more here than meets the eye. The things we see now are here today, gone tomorrow. But the things we can't see now will last forever.” II Cor. 4:16-18 *The Message***