

Wellspring

February 2011 – May 2011 Isaiah 58.6

All things are possible with God
[A publication of Broken Yoke Ministries, Inc.]



Becoming Clean

By Jill Rennick



Jill Rennick was recently named Co-Director of Broken Yoke Ministries at our November Board meeting.

My earliest nickname growing up was “dirty gerty” and I didn’t mind. I lived outdoors: climbing the maple tree in our back yard; riding my bike in the dirt field behind our house; fashioning small cities with dirt roads traveled by match box

cars with my friends Craig and Penny. It never fazed my mom; that’s what baths were for. Unfortunately as we grow older and the dirt in our lives is impossible to clean in the tub, we often begin to hide it. But God’s not fooled. And, when we’re ready to face it, He’s not fazed. That’s what His Son died for.

Facing our dirt honestly is the first step towards becoming clean. This is not easy, especially when our natural tendency is to protect our appearance. However, the reality is that *acting* clean is not the same as *being* clean. God’s plan and purpose is that we would truly be clean from the inside out. Initially though we come as we are, dirty.

When we show up as we are (dirty), we discover two things. We are both accepted as we are and given hope and power to change. In Matthew 9:10-12 Jesus is eating with “tax-collectors and sinners”. When the Pharisees challenged him about this (because they of course were not like “those people”), Jesus says to them, “It is not the healthy who need a doctor, but the sick. I have not come to call the righteous, but sinners.” Jesus is not looking for those who “have it together”. Rather, He comes to those who know they don’t. And He wants to sit at a table with us, even those of us who struggle with homosexuality. By His grace, we are accepted as we are.

In addition (by His grace), we are given hope and power to change. It’s incredibly relieving to know that we can come as we are, but we’d be stupid to want to stay there. Our dirt does not surprise our Master but it’s still dirt. What’s ugly is still ugly and it damages our ability to live and love in the ways we were created for. In Titus 2:11-14 we are told “The grace of God that brings salvation has appeared to all men. It teaches us to say ‘No’ to ungodliness and worldly passions and to live self-controlled, upright and godly lives in this present age, while we wait for the blessed hope—the glorious

appearing of our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ, who gave himself for us to redeem us from all wickedness and to purify for himself a people that are his very own, eager to do what is good.” By and through His grace we can discover and experience change!

The Gospel message, which includes the truth that the work or death of Christ on the cross pays and provides for our “uncleanness,” does two things for those who trust it. First, the Gospel makes it possible for the dirty to “be clean”. Hebrews 10:10 says, “we have been made holy (made clean) through the sacrifice of the body of Jesus Christ once for all. We are washed (past tense, it’s a done deal).” We still sin, but God no longer defines us or judges us by it. In His eyes, we are clean!

The Gospel also makes it possible for the dirty to become clean. Even though Christ’s sacrifice declares us clean, we now enter the process of *becoming* what we’ve been declared to be. II Corinthians 7:1 instructs, “let us purify ourselves from everything that contaminates body and spirit, perfecting holiness out of reverence for God.” Just like a husband or wife can grow into becoming more of a husband or wife than they were the day they married, so we are in the process of becoming what God has already made us to be: His children who reflect His image.

Somewhere along the line, we heard the message that we “shouldn’t be dirty”. We shouldn’t have ugly, dirty stuff happening inside us or at the very least, it shouldn’t spill out of us onto others. In response to that message, we react to the reality of our dirtiness in a variety of ways:

- We live as if it doesn’t exist – denial (“that’s not dirt”)
- We give it a momentary glance of disapproval – apathy (“yuck but oh well”).
- We excuse it – blame (“it’s not my fault so I’m not responsible”).
- We hide it – cover-up (“nobody can ever see this”)
- We beat ourselves up over it – self condemnation (“you’re a horrible mess”)

God’s desire is for us to respond differently to our dirt. Rather than living in denial, God wants us to acknowledge it as He reveals it to us in through His word and by His Spirit. Rather than being apathetic, God asks us to take the time and do the hard work of dealing with it. Rather than excusing it, God wants us to own our own dirt. Even though many of us have had experiences that have impacted us in negative or painful ways, blaming others for our own choices will keep us

stuck in our dirt. One of the sweet truths Christ offers through the Gospel is redemption. This means that He is able to take what should destroy us and bring hope and beauty out of it. Rather than try to hide our dirt, God asks us to admit it to Him and others who will pray for and encourage us. When you try to hide dirt, it usually just gets spread around. And, rather than beat ourselves up over it, God asks us to trust His mercy and grace.

He asks us to deal with everything He reveals—both what we often see as mountains of dirt (the stuff we fight so hard to keep hidden) as well as the dirt clods of daily ugliness: the selfishness, the slight impatience, the small frustrations accompanied by pride, the acts to gain attention, the tendency to be annoyed, the need to be right, the discontentment with my current situation, the habit of not noticing others while taking care of my own stuff. God asks us to respond to these things in the context of relationship.

My response to my own dirt is never supposed to be a solitary activity. God wants me to deal with my dirt in His loving, merciful presence and when He provides, in the presence of His people. Why? Because only He can wash me clean, only He can forgive, only He can remind me that I'm still loved and accepted, only He can bring real change. He is not daunted by my mountains or dirt clods, to Him it's all dirt. And He's been in the business of cleaning up messes since the garden of Eden. □



Our Prayer Corner

Because we care about one another, we pray . . .

- For all those who struggle with same-gender attractions, that they embrace the identity God had in mind for them from the beginning.
- For those who feel dirty, that they will seek the cleansing God wants to bestow on them.
- For those who struggle with same sex attractions, that they will come to understand that the attraction is something they deal with and not who they are.
- For Jill in her new position as co-director of this ministry, that she be blessed and protected as she seeks to serve.
- For pastors and church leaders, that they find themselves willing to both acknowledge and support the goals of ministries like Broken Yoke.
- For politicians, that they not see disagreement with the gay agenda as homophobic rhetoric but as legitimate concerns voiced by those who do not ascribe to current attitudes.
- For the youth of our society, that in times of uncertainty about their identity, that they seek God in the mirror of their lives.
- For parents dealing with a child that struggles or has endorsed the gay life, that their love remains constant without sacrificing their beliefs.
- For the facilitators of our support group meetings, that they feel God's blessings for their efforts.
- For the board of this ministry, that the coming November board meeting will be an opportunity for sharing wisdom and encouragement.
- For the ongoing financial support of this ministry, especially for Jill Rennick, that those who are able will be willing to support us with both finance and prayer.

Wisconsin Ministry Locations

Broken Yoke Mailing Address

P.O. Box 5824

De Pere, WI

262-751-1128

Bob@brokenyoke.org

Meetings: Wauwatosa

Men/Women Support

Group (weekly)

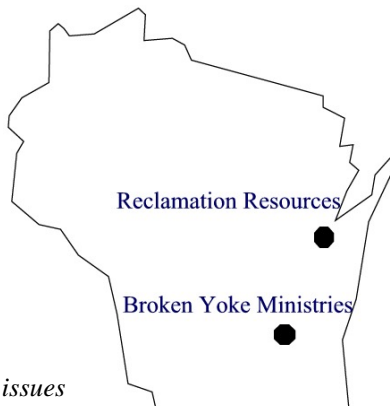
Tuesday, 7:00PM

Website:

www.brokenyoke.org

Jill@BrokenYoke.org

Bob@BrokenYoke.org



This newsletter and some back issues are available in PDF format on our website. If you don't have Adobe Acrobat Reader, there are links that allow you to download that program free.

Reclamation Resources

P.O. Box 1062

Oshkosh, WI 54902

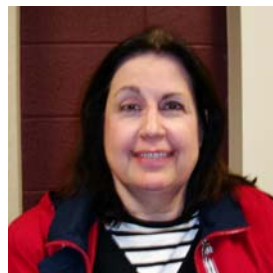
Call 920-303-1041 for meeting information

http://www.reclamationrc.org

Remember, this ministry depends on your donations to produce this newsletter and other ministry-related expenses. All donations are tax deductible.

Reminder: The next *Wellspring* will be published in June, 2011.

Broken Yoke Ministries Board of Directors welcomes Mary Klucarich



Mary Klucarich brings to the ministry an analytical mind that offers solid direction for this ministry. We are pleased that she has consented to serve and we are blessed.

Jill Speaks at Meadowbrook Church



Pastor John Mackett (Meadowbrook Church in Wauwatosa, WI) sharing with Jill Rennick

At the invitation of Pastor John Mackett, BY Co-Director Jill Rennick spoke at three Sunday morning services at Meadowbrook Church, introducing the congregation to the kind of ministry Broken Yoke offers.

Though the focus of our ministry is help for those with unwanted same-sex attraction, Jill shared more on the common brokenness we all have, God's design for our lives, and the need for all of us to trust in God's design despite times of difficulty.

The reception to each of her talks was encouraging and members of the congregation had the opportunity following the service they attended to meet Jill and members of BY. People shared that they really had not thought about homosexuality outside of the context of "born that way," and what Jill shared offered insights for consideration.

Matching Grant Announced

These are, without a doubt, difficult economic times. Household budgets are stretched, pared, and difficult decisions are made every day. Companies continue to lay off workers in an effort to sustain enough profit to keep them in business, but those efforts are often not enough.

Church donations diminish; donations to worthy nonprofit service organizations are cut; and ministries whose existence is tied to the donations of others wonder how much longer they can continue to serve and provide the services they do.

Jill Rennick's salary is determined by the donations she receives from people who want to support her efforts, so her financial stability is rooted in faith that God will provide.

Like all ministries, Broken Yoke does have basic expenses and for the past 22 years has never operated in the red. Our primary expenses (aside from Jill's efforts to raise salary support) are driven by communication—getting the word out. This is done through *Wellspring*, *Into the Light*, correspondence ministry, and internet as well as telephone contacts.

In early January, the ministry was contacted and asked if it would be interested in a matching grant. The donor, who wishes to remain completely anonymous, will match every dollar the ministry receives up to \$5000 in the timeframe of February to July.

We see this as an incredible opportunity to give some stability for at least the immediate future. We ask that you

prayerfully consider making a donation, a gift that will double in size. All contributions to the ministry are tax exempt and recognized with a letter of appreciation.

Donations can be mailed to:

Broken Yoke Ministries

PO Box 5824

De Pere, WI 54115-5824

If you prefer, donations can also be made using the donation link on our website.

www.brokenyoke.org/donations

If you choose this method, however, please understand that a percentage of all online donations is taken by PayPal for its services.

Thank you in advance for consideration in this opportunity. We are blessed by you.



Sometimes I Wonder

Bob Van Domelen

At the risk of sounding like a broken record (and some of the kids today would say "A *what?*"), times have changed. Some changes are definitely for the better and some I

would question. Perhaps we did live in a homophobic age twenty-five years ago but I would argue that the only people who even used that word would have been psychologists/psychiatrists. I will not suggest that there was no hate language used when speaking of homosexuality. Nor will I deny those who made fun of individuals with same-sex attractions. We used a lot of hateful words back then—maybe some still do—but the fact that the words were used did not make them right.

I have also shared that there were very few resources for those seeking answers in the 70s or 80s other than medical tomes filled words I didn't understand. Today we have a substantial library of resources that both encourage and educate anyone looking to better understand same-sex attraction. But we also have a new issue: a push by many not only to deny the validity of these books but also to condemn them.

Simply stated, because I have chosen to believe that I can meet the situations or temptations I face in my life by the grace of God, some would call me homophobic, would demand I be silenced, and would be accuse me of denying others the right to make the choices they make. The last time I looked, I was not condemning anyone.

The mere fact that I believe as I do is threatening to people who presume that my choice is a slap in their face. I don't agree with them. If I did, I would never have made the decision I did to look for help and I certainly would not continue to serve in this ministry as a voice of encouragement for those who want that voice.

When asked, I willingly share that society is moving in a direction that will demand the end to a voice such as mine. Witnesses of those in Exodus-related ministry should be able to see that this is not an either-or but a process of choice. And if people demand that our voices be stilled, then the rights we are meant to enjoy can only be enjoyed when all conflict is eliminated. If that happens, can there really be free choice? Sometimes I wonder.

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A Little Humor. . .

Jacob (92) and Rebecca (89) were all excited about their upcoming marriage. While on a stroll in their Florida retirement community, they stopped at the local drugstore. When it was their turn in line, Jacob said "We are about to get married. Do you sell heart medicine?" "Yes" was the reply. "What about circulation medicine?" "Yes." "Medicine for rheumatism?" "Yes." "Suppositories?" "You bet!" "Medicine for memory problems, arthritis, and Alzheimer's?" "Yes, a large variety." "What about vitamins, sleeping pills, Geritol, antidotes for Parkinson's disease?" "Absolutely." "Heartburn or indigestion?" "We sure do." "Do you have wheelchairs, walkers, and canes?" "All speeds and sizes." "And what about adult diapers?" "Sure." After a brief word with Rebecca, Jacob said "We'd like to use this store as our Bridal Registry."

