



November 2014

The Lowedown

An update on the life and ministry of Dave & Jennifer Lowe

The Giver

Memories. They have the power to move us to action and transform us. Conversely, the absence of memory can divert us from fulfilling our full potential and true purpose.

In the recent movie, *The Giver*, Jeff Bridges plays an elder in a dystopian society where people are devoid of memories of the past and are restricted from any meaningful choices. Everything from birth to death is carefully monitored and orchestrated and only the Giver (Bridges) knows the memories of man's true history. Memories and choices are suppressed because as the chief elder, played by Meryl Streep, explains, "when faced with choice, man always makes the wrong choice. Every time."

In the void of memories and true choice, it's not surprising that this utopian society lacks the ability to establish deep, meaningful connections and fails to fully understand the concept of love. In fact, the word "love" is considered antiquated and without meaning.

The key character in the movie is a young man named Jonas, who is selected for the task of being the receiver of the memories of humanity as he ultimately will become the next Giver. At first, Jonas is exposed to only happy, joyous memories, like riding a sled down a snow-laden hill or seeing people dance and laugh at a wedding. This has the effect of piquing Jonas's curiosity.

But when Jonas experiences the trauma of pain and suffering by witnessing memories of death and war, it's as if something that was dead inside has finally been awakened. Jonas realizes that the existence that everyone has been living in this highly ordered community fulfills only a shell of their true potential and purpose for life.

I wonder if that is not part of God's purpose when we experience trials, pain and even suffering in this life. Perhaps these experiences are designed to awaken us to our true purpose and to remind us of our frailty and brokenness and nudge us toward our Creator.

A few months ago I received an e-mail from my friend Tony, who lives in Davis. Tony is a Radiologist and he e-mailed to ask for my help.

A few years before, Tony had treated a young man named Nick who had a brain tumor and was given a very slim chance of survival. Amazingly, Nick survived his treatment and made a full recovery. Nick

graduated from college and got a very lucrative job in the Bay Area. For some reason though, it all seemed meaningless to Nick, so he quit his job and moved back to Sacramento.

After several years of working various jobs and searching for meaning and purpose, Nick recently had the opportunity to reconnect with my friend Tony. After hearing Nick's story, Tony suggested to Nick that his experience with a brain tumor had likely awakened in his heart an awareness that there is a greater purpose to life and that what he was really searching for was God.

Nick thought for a moment and then responded, "I think you hit the nail right on the head!" Nick agreed to meet with Tony again later to talk further.

Tony had scheduled a lunch appointment with Nick and wanted to share with him how he could experience a relationship with Christ but Tony was unsure about how to go about doing that. So Tony e-mailed me to see if I could help him prepare for this conversation about God with Nick.

Over the phone, I was able to give Tony a crash course training in evangelism and encourage him in how to share his faith with Nick. I armed him with a few resources, some key questions to ask and some helpful tips and then I prayed for him and encouraged him as he took a step of faith to do something that quite frankly, was a bit scary for him.

Not long after that, I received a text from Tony that simply said, **"Praise God! Nick accepted the Lord today!"**

Please pray for Nick and his new relationship with Christ.

Pray that he would be firmly rooted and would grow in his new faith. And please continue to pray for us as we continue to navigate health issues. Pray too that we would experience God's ultimate purposes for our lives and that our experience would nudge us toward our Creator!

As we enter this holiday season, it is our sincere hope that you will remember that Jesus is the true Giver. He alone gives us physical life and He alone can save us from the wrong choices that we make. And He alone imparts spiritual life to those whose hearts have been awakened to the greater, truer purpose of our existence - to know Him!



Nick (left) was awakened to a greater purpose in life after experiencing a brain tumor. With the help of Tony (right), Nick was introduced to a relationship with Christ.

*Love,
Dave & Jen*