

Just last week a friend was visiting in New York City. As he was walking down a sidewalk he came upon a notebook which someone had apparently dropped. He picked it up and after looking for a name and address and finding none was about to throw it in the trash when something on that first page caught his eye.

It turned out to be someone's diary. Since there was no name and address to which he could return the diary, and since he had no clue who had written it, he felt it was not an invasion of privacy to read some of it. What he read turned out to be a candid and chilling glimpse into a day in the life of a nameless woman, who for some reason had decided to record her thoughts. Perhaps it was her way of coping with a life that by almost anyone's standards is tragic, to say the least.

Following are a few of the true and actual entries from that diary:

January 5th

"The day started with a big blowup... I broke down, crying, raging, nearly hysterical... felt such despair... hopelessness.

Michael's first day back at school and he ended up in the office...they have requested a meeting.

It seems he stomped on a girl named Anna, and hit her in the face. He is back to chewing on his shirt (put a hole in it and its brand new!) He says Anna bit him first and he did it for fun. I have such feelings of desperation...How can I socialize this child... I am lost and afraid that Calhoun will abandon me too!

When I got home I asked Sara to move her backpack out of the kitchen...she refused, says she has no room in her room. I finally shoved it out the door. I took out the garbage... the cabinet doors won't shut... they are just cheap ****! I have tried to fix them... they just won't work.

Michael has been screaming at me to make him a paper fire extinguisher...then he was screaming because I wouldn't buy him fries at McDonalds... he'd already had doughnuts... after lunch he asked for a fruit roll up and started screaming again.

The house is a mess again. Simply cannot keep up with it... space is too small. Kid's are always wanting more... I'm almost suicidal. God, it is so hard to be told what to do by a 10-year-old, especially since my life is so fragile right now.

I can never catch my breath... staying up late to do the housework... constant worry about money... and Michael... I need to get a job... am going through menopause... I am getting big wrinkles and always look tired... lonely... alienated. Can this really be happening to me? Am I really almost 50 years old and I have virtually nothing to my name... no money... no real possessions... no solid, supportive friends... a dysfunctional family who I can't rely on? Where is the fun? Where is the

joy? Where is my life?"

Your reaction to these excerpts is probably like mine. How horrible for this woman to be caught up in a life filled with despair, loneliness, frustration, and hopelessness. If only one of her Christian friends would take the time to see, to reach out, to care. If only she had included a name and address, at the very least she could be contacted and offered help to get her back on track. But today she remains nameless, helpless, and hopeless thinking there is no future and no one who cares.

I wonder if she ever considered Jesus? Maybe she had but it just didn't work out. But Jesus does speak to her specifically. Jesus said, "Are you tired? Worn out? Burned out on religion? Come to me. Get away with me and you'll recover your life. I'll show you how to take a real rest. Walk with me and work with me-watch how I do it. Learn the unforced rhythms of grace. I won't lay anything heavy or ill-fitting on you. Keep company with me and you'll learn to live freely and lightly." Matthew 11: 28 ff (MSG)

Jesus does provide the answers. The answers, of course, are in His word. But His word is most often delivered today through PEOPLE. That means helping people out of despair, depression, helplessness and hopelessness is the job of CHRISTIANS! Each Christian must get involved in people's lives! We need to not only sing about amazing grace, but begin to show it as well! Ah, there's the rub!

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