



Vol. 7 March 2021

Discovery of Paula's Hope

My Journey...by Lindsey Drain

It was a chilly Saturday in February back in 2019. I was attending a women's event at a local church where I knew no one. My husband and I were new to northwest Arkansas. I accidentally got there thirty minutes early (*which never happens to me--I'm usually late!*) I sat there awkwardly by myself at a table, hoping that someone would sit with me. "Bring the right ladies to me, Lord. And if no one comes, I'll just spend the day with You," I whispered in prayer. Boy, did God ever answer that prayer! It wasn't long before a whole table full of center volunteers descended upon me! As I was getting to know these women, I was struck by two thoughts: One--these women were SO much fun! They were so full of joy and God's presence. I could be myself around them and immediately felt accepted--like I was one of them. (*Little did I know--I truly was!*) Two--these women had a mission. They were answering a call that God had put on their lives. They weren't just TALKING about doing something, THEY WERE DOING IT! They were loving hurting women. They were meeting very real needs in a very tangible way. They were making themselves available to be the hands and feet, EARS and arms of Jesus.

These four ladies--Sheryl, Linda, Misty, and Teresa -- became my good friends over the next year. In the fall, I went through the Discipleship Counseling training that Paula's Hope offers because God had placed a desire on my heart (*a long time ago*) to reach out to hurting people. It seemed like he always brought hurting women across my path. I figured that it would only help me know how to help them if I went through the training, whether I ever became a volunteer with Paula's Hope, Inc. (*PHI*) or not. In the sessions, we covered the center's Mission Statement: "**To educate and encourage others to know their identity in Christ and to experience the freedom He has for them.**" I was hooked! We took personality tests, learned about how discipleship counseling differs from secular counseling, examined mental health issues, learned how to be healthy ourselves, and talk about important procedures like confidentiality and bathing everything we do in prayer. Other topics were covered--like communication and setting boundaries in

Philippians 2:13

"for it is God who works in you, both to will and to work for his good pleasure."

NEWSLETTER

The WORD

by Sheryl McAfee



Our Identity in Christ

Our words can make a great impact on others, and on ourselves.

We say things like "I'm always going to be (*an angry person, depressed, edgy, lonely, stupid, broke, ugly, unlucky, overweight, etc.*)" or "I was just born this way." One thing we all need to understand is that we **will** have adversity as long as we live on this earth. There are three things against us:

1. The World
2. Our Flesh
3. The Devil

For us to understand how to handle adversity, we need to know who we are in Christ. Question: Is who you are determined by what you do? Or is what you do determined by who you are? Your growth as a Christian is based on your understanding of who you are...your identity in Christ as a child of God. Your understanding of who God is and who you are in relationship to Him is the critical foundation for your belief system and your behavior patterns as a Christian. So who are you? You are a child of God, a divine masterpiece, a citizen of Heaven. "So you are no longer a slave, but God's child; and since you are his child, God has made you also an heir." Galatians 4:7 (NIV)

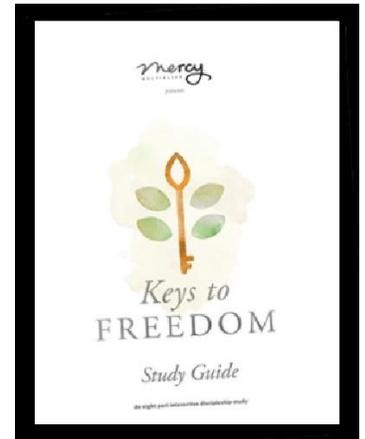
relationships, and common issues we all deal with like guilt, shame, forgiveness, stress, and finding healing. Amazingly--all this was packed into a one-day training! A beautiful resource binder was provided, which has been wonderful for reference purposes.

The next step on my journey to discover Paula's Hope was to participate in the study that all of my center friends were raving over--The Keys to Freedom. This study was developed by Nancy Alcorn who is the director of Mercy Ministries International. While this curriculum was first used in a residential setting for troubled young women, it is perfectly applicable for ANYONE of any age or gender (*teens and up*). The thing that stood out to me most about this study is that it is TOTALLY driven by the Holy Spirit. The participant is given lots of space to journal and is encouraged to ask God specific questions which lead to so much personal revelation and life-giving moments with the Lord. It is an 8-week study with about 15-20 minutes of "homework" for 5 days per week. The scriptures that are used each day became a part of me. The discussions my group had each week were so meaningful because we weren't just giving rote answers to questions-- we were sharing the things God was personally ministering to us in real-time. The keys cover commitment to Christ, renewal of our mind, finding healing for life's hurts, choosing to forgive, breaking generational patterns, and choosing freedom over oppression. These are all basic concepts, but as a Christian of 40+ years, I found it life-changing to revisit all of these areas. One woman in my group gave me permission to share that the counseling and "Keys" class helped her to find victory in an eating disorder with which she had been struggling. She has lost 48 pounds so far, gotten off diabetes medications, and lost three sizes! Knowing who we are in Christ is so important. It touches every aspect of our lives!

Once a person finishes the Keys to Freedom study and the Discipleship Counseling training, he or she is able to counsel and/or lead a Bible study or support group, if God leads them in this direction. I am currently leading my first Keys class via Zoom and have witnessed the power of God to take my little lunch sack of fish and loaves and multiply it. He is doing such a work in the women in my group. I'm just along for the ride! We are so thankful for the team that God is bringing to Paula's Hope. We now have a male counselor on staff, so that opens up double the ministry potential! We can minister to the whole family!

If you have stuck with me through this whole description of my journey--first, thank you! (*I'm a talker!*) Second, if God is putting it on your heart to become a part of Paula's Hope in any way, please don't hesitate to contact us! You might be a person who could benefit from some free counseling sessions (*I am ALL for personal counseling--it's amazing!*) You might be someone who would like to become a part of a study. Perhaps you want to go through the Discipleship Counseling training and just pray about what God has for you pertaining to volunteering in the future. Maybe you want to volunteer in one of the positions that don't require any advanced training. I guarantee you that God has put tools in your hands that could be useful here at Paula's Hope. Some of the needs we have right now are: Staff Volunteers, Office Receptionist, and Discipleship Counselors and more. We partner with other great ministries in the area, so if you need help that they offer or would like to serve in that capacity, we would love to connect you.

I'll close with this scripture-- **Philippians 2:13** "For it is God who works in you, both to will and to work for his good pleasure." He has the perfect place for you. It is His work, and I am so thankful that He invites us to join Him in it. What a joy and privilege!



Lindsey Drain

Staff Volunteer @ Paula's Hope

(Be a VOLUNTEER at Paula's Hope, go to: www.paulashope.org
Sign Up for "Keys To Freedom" @ www.paulashope.org)

Thank you for considering us in your giving!

You can also give online at: <https://www.paulashope.org/donations.html>

**PAULA'S HOPE
PEOPLE OF PRAYER**

**JOIN US IN
PRAYER**

**March 16th & 30th
AT 10AM-11AM @
PAULA'S HOPE
CENTER**



Jeremiah 29:11 "For I know the plans I have for you," declares the LORD, "plans to prosper you and not harm you, plans to give you hope and a future."

March 2021

Sun.	Mon.	Tue.	Wed.	Thu.	Fri.	Sat.
	1	2 7 Keys Bible Study Begins 12:30 In-Person	3	4	5 7 Keys Bible Study Begins 1:00pm In-Person	6
7	8 International Women's Day	9	10	11	12	13
14 Daylight Savings Time Begins	15	16 Prayer Partners Prayer @ Prayer Rm 10am-11am	17 St. Patrick's Day	18	19	20 SPRING BEGINS
21	22	23	24	25	26	27 Passover Begins at Sunset
28 Palm Sunday	29 Week of Feast of Unleavened Bread Begins	30 Prayer Partners Prayer @ Prayer Rm 10am-11am	31			

["Keys To Freedom"](#)

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