

A Matter of Perspective

By Kevin McCauley

Four men stood together at Niagara Falls. They stood there for a long time taking in the beauty, majesty and power of the place. They were looking at the same sight but each saw something different. The first man was an artist and he was taken in by the beauty. He noted the different shades of blue in the water. The sky displayed even different blues that seemed to radiate through the white and gray clouds. The shades of green in the backdrop of the trees mixed with the gray, black and brown of the rocks brought it all together in his discerning eye. The second man was a farmer. He saw the pure water as a source of life to his fields. He thought of the many crops that would flourish if he could direct the water through canals, irrigation ditches and sprinklers. He thought of the crops and many who could partake of the bounty. The third man was an engineer. Looking at the mighty rush of water he thought of its power and imagined the turbines it could turn and the power generated. He thought of the many homes, factories and cities that would benefit from this force. The fourth man was a simple man of faith. He thought of the beauty, the bounty, the power of the water...but his mind quickly turned to the God who created it all. He thought of the Creator who placed such a river in that place and kept it running century after century.

It seems to me, we can be looking at the same thing and walk away with an entirely different understanding! What do you see when you look at another person? Do you see gender? Age? Ethnicity? Or are you able to see the person created in the image of God, and dearly loved by Him?



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When thinking of the four men standing at Niagara Falls, I realize much of our understanding is based on our perspective - our view - the way we see things! Seeing things differently serves a purpose, and as we share our perspectives, there is help for others to appreciate what we see. Let's be different from most of this world. Rather than focusing on the things that divide, let us understand the similarities and commonality we share.

How good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity!

Psalm 133:1

Are You Connected?

By Ray Wolff

You hear that question asked in many different ways and in many different settings these days. On the television, it ranges from a desperate need to know if you have cable or a dish and "Can hear me now?" or "Can you hear that?" to whether you carry Capital One or some other credit card. Are you in? Are you on? Have you left home without it? And by the way, what's in your wallet?

In a church setting, often you'll hear it asked if you're connected, plugged in or hooked up to a small group or ministry. Sometimes people ask if your church is a church of small groups or a church with small groups. Regardless of the answer to that question, what is of real importance is: **Are YOU a member of a small group?** Because it's in small groups that members of a church, of any size, truly get connected, connected to each other.

Relationships are, in my experience, are the center of the Christian life. It's our personal relationship with God the father, through His son Jesus Christ, that brings us salvation and the gift of the Holy Spirit living within us. It's that relationship that binds us together with each other in the family of Christ. And personal relationships with each other bring us together as members of a church, the Body of Christ.

It's pretty tough to develop and maintain tight personal relationships with more than a handful of people at any given time. In order to have even that many requires a considerable investment of time, certainly more than 5 to 10 minutes a week. When we limit our interaction with others at church to the time before service starts or after church, before heading off to lunch or wherever, we are relegating those relationships to a superficial status. It's through small groups that we can elevate those relationships to something more.

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In a small group setting we have the opportunity to share on many different levels: learning together more about God's will in our lives, learning about the struggles and blessings in each other's lives, praying for and being prayed for on a weekly basis by and for one another. As we participate in a small group or ministry, we begin to establish close personal God-centered relationships that have lasting value in our lives.

There are many small groups and ministries here at Hope. If you're not already part of one, take the plunge! Some may say, "Now is not a good time for me to join a group" but I say that now is **THE** best time to join in. I believe it is God's desire to see close personal relationships being developed and maintained through sharing in caring communities within the Body of Christ, as we grow together in God's word and the love of Christ. If you're not sure where to start, just ask Pastor Kevin and he can hook you up.

So, the next time someone asks you if you're connected, I hope you'll be able to say, "Why yes, I am! Are you?"

"As iron sharpens iron, so one man sharpens another."

Proverbs 27:17 NIV (1984)

An Interview with the Tostados

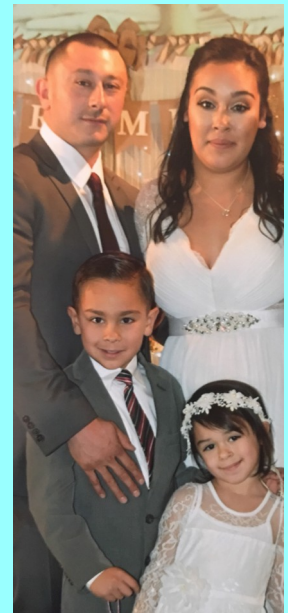
Who are the Tostados

Francisco (Pancho) was born and raised in San Jose. Currently we live in Santa Clara. He works as a metal stud carpenter. I (Felicia) was born and raised locally. I became a stay at home mom after we had Isabel in 2014. Both children go to a parent participation school so I'm in a classroom setting 8 hours a week. I recently got hired at Russell's school as the yard duty person. Russell is 6 years old and in first grade. Isabel is 3 years old and in preschool.

What is your church background?

Felicia: Growing up in a big family, my family has always had a home church where we would get together. I have always had a personal relationship with God but I never was a regular attender of church until I became a mother.

Pancho: When I was younger I would spend my summers in Mexico. My family in Mexico are Catholic. I practiced the Catholic religion when I was younger.



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What initially brought you to Hope Church?

Felicia: My Aunt Tammy and grandparents were regulars at Hope church. My family would have our family gatherings at Hope. After attending many Easters at Hope and other family gatherings, I decided to start attending Hope with my family. It is important to me as a mother to have my children know who Jesus is.

Pancho: Felicia and her family.

What was your first impression of Hope?

Felicia: Hope has always felt like home and it is such a family environment.

Pancho: Everyone is very welcoming and not judgmental.

What do you like most about Hope?

Felicia: We have a great Pastor. Pastor Kevin is always willing to take time and speak with you if you need him. The church does so many things with the families. Dehana is a one of the kindest persons. She goes above and beyond for the children and families at the church. We have an amazing fellowship here.

Pancho: I can be myself. The men at the church are very inspiring. Also my children love coming to Hope church.

At your time at Hope, have there been any meaningful experiences you would like to share?

Felicia: In 2014, after coming to Easter service pregnant with Isabel, God spoke to me and told me that Hope was where I should be. Shortly after my family and I started coming to Sunday service more often. In 2017, Pancho and I decided to put Jesus first in our lives and got baptized by Pastor Kevin. On Mothers Day of 2017, Russell and Isabel got dedicated. In 2018, Pancho and I got married by Pastor Kevin. Hope church is such a part of me.

Pancho: Getting baptized was very meaningful. It really changed my life for the good.

Why did you decide to make Hope your home church?

Felicia: I always felt a strong connection with Hope Church.

Pancho: I saw a positive change in Felicia, and my kids love the church so much. God really opened my heart and showed me that Hope is my church.

What groups at Hope are you involved with?

Felicia: I love being involved with VBS. Monday night bible studies is a group of amazing, knowledgeable, and supportive women.

What gifts or special talents do you think God has blessed you with?

Felicia: God has blessed me with understanding and working with people in all walks of life and ages. I love serving people.

Pancho: God gave me the gift of working with my hands.

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How do you see yourself serving God at Hope and/or outside of Hope?

Felicia: I went to school to become an addictions counselor. When I decide to go back to work, I want to work with a faith based program.

Pancho: At work there are a lot of men who don't believe and I pray that I can show an example of God. When I first started my trade I had a lot of difficulties understanding things. I pray everyday and God guided me through it. I hope I can show someone else the power of faith and trusting God.

Do you have any message for people who are seeking God or striving for a closer walk with Him?

Felicia: Seek and pray for personal relationship with Jesus and he will provide that relationship. HE will provide a sense of peace within you. Everything thing in life won't be easy, but with God he will provide.

Pancho: You don't have to be perfect to come to Jesus. Jesus accepts you no matter where you are in life. No matter what happens in life or what you go through, keep your faith in Jesus and he will work miracles

Story of the White Carpet

By Elaine Peterson

Mrs. X wanted a white, fluffy carpet in her living room; she dreamed about it. Finally, one day her husband agreed, and the carpet was installed. She vacuumed the carpet going backwards in order to keep it free of footprints. That afternoon the children came home from school excited to see the beautiful carpet and ran into the living room. Mrs. X was horrified by all of the smudges and trample marks. She instructed the children to get out and never wear their shoes in the living room again. The following day, the children took off their shoes and ran into the living room.

Mrs. X still did not like the way the carpet was trampled and forbid the children to play in the living room. This upset Mr. X, so he would not go into the living room, and the visiting friends saw how uncomfortable Mrs. X was when they were in the living room, and starting asking to sit in the family room, instead.

Mrs. X would sit in her living room alone, but eventually was not happy because there was no one there and it was too quiet. She decided that having family and friends enjoy her living room was more important than a fluffy, white carpet.

Hope Christian Church feels the same way. We would rather have family and friends feel comfortable in God's *Living Rooms*. But that does not mean that the rooms are messy or dirty. The goal of the Levite Team is to have the *Living Rooms* of Hope clean for the family whenever they come.

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If you would like to help keep Hope (God's house) comfortable for the family, there is always a ministry on the Levite Team. Contact Elaine Peterson at 408 246-2313 to offer whatever time you have; some of the positions are only once/month.

Some upcoming events at Hope Christian Church

Easter Service – Sunday, April 1, 9:45am

Join together with the family of Hope as we celebrate the Risen Christ! This will be a morning of praise, worship, and teaching, helping us to remember Jesus and His victory over the grave!

“What’s it All About?” Class – Sundays, April 8, 15, 22, 29, 11:45am – 1:15pm

This 4 week class will help you better understand Hope Church, the Bible, and how we are to follow Jesus. Pastor Kevin will bring a short lesson and give time for Q&A about the topic of the day. This is a good place to explore more of Christianity and life! Lunch will be provided.

Hope Workday – Saturday, April 14, 8am-noon

Come help us take care of our buildings and grounds. There is always something that needs to be done around our campus – and working together make it so much more fun! You can come for part of the time or stay the whole time. All skill level are welcome! Coffee, bagels and warm fellowship provided!

A look ahead at Sunday Messages

Apr 1	John 3:16
Apr 8	Luke 9:51-62
Apr 15	Luke 10:1-24
Apr 22	Luke 10:25-37
Apr 29	Luke 10:38-42

Hope Christian Church

Pastor: Kevin McCauley

Music Director: Ray Wolff

Children's Director: Deahna Rosch

Youth Group Leader: David Rosch

Please submit all articles/news for the next Hope Notes by Monday, Apr. 23th, 5pm.
Send to: Ed Auria
eauria@sbcglobal.net



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