



S.M.I.L.E.—Samaritan Ministries Imparting Letters of Encouragement

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And the Gift Goes On....

By Heather Hoffman



Endless yuletide feasting, caroling and generous distribution of gifts wrapped and unwrapped blessings of the sort came from various sources.

Appetites went from starving to stuffed within two hours at the backroom of Golden Corral on December 22, 2014, as Samaritan Ministries treated their clientele of single mothers and women to Christmas dinner with an abundance of food and fellowship.



There was plenty to go around to make for an ideal holiday atmosphere, as eleven families blended into one.

In addition to hidden treasures beneath the restaurant's elegantly displayed tree, two of the three groups of gift donations were contributed by Shepherd of the Coast Lutheran Church: First, through toys raised through a Cantata held and second, new clothes and shoes bought through a Thrivent Financial grant.

Kelli and Lori McDonnell, along with friends and family, chose to give rather than to receive on this

year's wish list. Another delicious surprise were small chocolates and tiny homemade favors assembled with love by Sara Engh.

To witness the smiling faces and exclamations of joy, you could not help but acknowledge the gratitude felt in volumes by kids of *all* ages throughout the room.



And just in case anyone doubted Who orchestrated this event, a small miracle took place:

There were 16 year old twin boys who each were given gifts from people who had never met them and knew nothing about them. Each received a different sports-related piece of equipment-and each piece of equipment matched the individual recipient's athletic area of involvement and proficiency!

God always provides. He is a Father to the Fatherless and a Defender of the Widow. Perhaps God meant to include our modern day single mothers when writing Psalm 68:5. ☆

HAPPY FOURTEENTH BIRTHDAY SAMARITAN MINISTRIES!!!!

Fourteen is a HARD age for adolescents. Similarly, this ministry is going through growing pains too. We are again evaluating our PRIORITIES, adding to the Board, and seeking to increase our effectiveness.

On January 22nd we turned "14". As requests for assistance increases, we ask for your prayers, as well as any opportunities to come share our Vision with you whether in a church, civic group, or home. Please contact Samaritan Ministries at 386-437-4372 to request a presentation.

Blessings!

The Samaritan Ministries Board of Directors



IF IT'S TOO GOOD TO BE TRUE IT USUALLY ISN'T

Reflections from information gleaned and the life of Sherry A.



You can't think of anything but "him" and really don't want to. After all- you've been in a dry season regarding relationships with the opposite sex for months and he's everything you've been waiting for and more. It's almost unbelievable how he knows all the right things to put a smile on your face. Finally you've met Mister Right! He even gets along well with your family and loves your kids. Talk about being compatible, he loves doing the same things you like to do right down to watching chick flicks with tears streaming down his cheeks.

He's so polite! Opens doors for you, pulls out your chair and lets you order first at your favorite restaurant which he insisted upon going to, his treat. He loves to laugh and keeps you laughing because he's so funny and others think so too. Your friends are wishing their man would be more like him. He has everyone under his spell. He has you convinced that he's the real deal and that he doesn't want to live life without you one more minute so he pops the question...."Will you marry me?" You jump at that opportunity even though you've only known him a short time and not realizing you are about to put yourself, your children and others in harm's way.



Directly after the perfect wedding things start to go sour. He is mean to your children and he's slapping you around for no reason. He has changed into a monster right before your eyes. How could this wonderful man become so dangerous 'overnight'? Chances are he might be what is called an "emotional predator". They look for opportunities to reel a woman in by using all the things a woman wants. To you they are all that. To them you are their next victim.

They're pros at what they do and love what they do. They enjoy tormenting and in many cases killing their victims. It's a game to them. They may be considered a psychopath or a sociopath. These people are extremely danger-

ous. They are male and female with one goal in common. Zoom in for the kill and try to destroy you and your life. Often times it takes years of counseling and healing to recover from being ensnared with such a person. Some traits are there right from the start. Pay attention to your "gut feeling" or red flag center. Proverbs 20:27 states that "The spirit of man is the candle of the Lord". God can shed light on things if we are open to it, and our vision not already clouded by emotion. If the alarm is going off don't try to love this person. RUN! It could be lifesaving to you, your children and other people in your family- even friends. How do they operate? They go for those who wear their hearts on their sleeves and spew out all of their heart ache and other personal information about themselves on the shoulder of the abuser. The predator gathers the information and then starts becoming the dream man. They know exactly what will please you and the game is on. You've paved their way to destroy you. Learn the difference between players and the real deal. Don't compromise when it comes to your standards. You cannot change a person. There are very nice men out there. Sometimes we have to raise our standards and self-esteem. People of all walks of life get ensnared by these kinds of people because they are so likable. Unfortunately, these people fly under the radar and go undetected by the average person. Meaning, if you don't know about mental illnesses, you could get hooked by one of these people. Get educated regarding these types of people. There are several makes and models and you need to know how they all operate. They all have traits and given enough time they will surface. Take relationships slow and pray for the LORD'S help. ☆



LORD'S help. ☆

