



# UNDER THE TABLE

*Putting together God's puzzle while searching for ways to help the hurting*

**By Dawn Gould**

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Reaching out and helping the disenfranchised and broken-hearted is not for the faint of heart. It can be challenging, gut wrenching and at the same time the most rewarding experience we will ever have this side of heaven.

Earlier this year, I was reading my alma mater Seattle Pacific University's quarterly magazine and I

stumbled upon an article about racial reconciliation that had broader implications than just race. It really spoke to the heart of God for those that sit outside the fellowship of believers. The author wrote, "Our goal is to create a family who comes together through the blood of Jesus Christ and who one day will worship at the throne, as in Revelation 7:9, and who will be a testimony to the image of God for all eternity. I think we've got to ask ourselves who

is not at the table, and I think we've got to feel frustrated, eager, and anxious to find them.

Think of a puzzle. Imagine each person carries a piece of a puzzle that's the full image of God. If we had 36 or 37 pieces of a 40-piece puzzle together, we wouldn't just look at the 37 pieces. We would be under the table, and saying, "What happened to that piece?" We'd be shaking the box, because we didn't feel finished. We'd focus on those pieces that are not there."

As I look about me I see puzzle pieces...God's children hurting under the table. Perhaps they don't feel worthy to be at the table. Perhaps somebody at the table has looked down their nose and excluded them, but for

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whatever reason they are incapable in their own strength to get back up on the table. What would it take to help them feel welcome at the table? What would God want us to do? What is our role to play in bringing healing. In Acts 9, we read about Saul's conversion and how Ananias was told by Jesus to go to Paul, place his hands on him and restore his sight. Ananias was understandably afraid because Paul's violent reputation preceded him. But Jesus said to him, "Go! This man is my chosen instrument to

carry my name before the Gentiles and their kings and before the people of Israel." Paul was an unlikely choice to carry out the Gospel since he had just persecuted thousands of believers. Additionally, it was unlikely that Ananias, a leader of the church would have been the one to bring healing to a violent and abusive man like Paul that had murdered so many followers of Jesus. But sometimes God calls the unlikely to be His chosen instrument of healing in the life of another.

Most healing takes time, insight, honesty, gentleness and patience. Healing can be fostered best in community. But what does it take to heal well? How can we extend our hand to those under the table from a position of strength and grace? At Competent to Minister 2014 we are going to learn how to help the broken-hearted so that all God's children are at the table reflecting the full of the Body of Christ.

**Walking with the Brokenhearted Workshop & Luncheon**  
**Friday, Jan. 17, 2014**  
**9am-2:30pm**

Professional Christian Counselors, Allen and Terri Haley will provide tools, tips, and techniques for helping those who are hurting.

**Tickets \$25, 707-823-4508,**  
**www.mtgilead.org**

