**DEMENTIA AND GRACE CARE**

Introduction

In the fall of 2017 during family time of Thanksgiving it was observed some serious memory issues in my wife by family members. She also was noticing her memory wasn’t what it had been. It was by God’s design that we had to change family physicians. So when the new doctor asked if there was anything he might need to be aware of, we both looked at each other and knew we needed to bring it to the Doctor’s attention. That is what started the process that lead to the diagnosis of dementia. As we were informed, probably Alzheimers. But in order to determine conclusively a biopsy would be need to be taken. No one wants to volunteer to do that. It really wouldn’t help with the care of this disease any how. Brenda’s Grandmother had dementia. We had both stated hoped we would never develop it in our older years. But here we are. We also knew this was by God’s design and purpose in our service for Him. So we didn’t get upset with God, but we did begin to educate ourselves on how God would have us grow through this. We wanted to look at this through God’s eyes. We began to search for someone that had experience with the disease and could share with us how we could respond to this challenge in a godly manner. God lead us to a book written by Dr. John Dunlop. His ministry as a physician was with dementia; “Finding Grace in the Face of Dementia”. This is where we began our education in facing this in a godly manner. This was so encouraging and helpful. We then began looking for a faith church based ministry that provided education and training for those with dementia and their caregivers. There may be something out there, but we couldn’t find it. We decided we would develop a ministry that any church could use to educate and train the church family and provide grace care to the person with dementia and their care family. So this Grace Care Ministry is the out come of what God has been teaching us to be passed on to Churches that want to use this to minister to their own within their church that have a need and then use it to reach out to their community to provide graceful help for families in need.

We have also been introduced to “Positive Approach Care” by Teepa Snow. She is an expert on dementia care with respect and dignity. Her DVD’s will be used in education and training with Dr. Dunlop’s book and a Bible study that has been developed from his book.

**The purpose and goal of the teaching and training for this Grace Care Ministry**

1. Dementia is part of God’s plan, so we must learn to view it from His perspective.
2. Believer's with dementia can learn to face it with God’s Grace and glorify Him.
3. For those who are called upon to provide care learn how to do so with grace, thus growing in their relationship with God Himself.
4. There will be those in our communities that will need education and training to help their loved ones. The church can reach out and provide this for these families.
5. We desire to have this made available for any church that wants to minister to those in need.