

SUCH AS SHOULD BE ADDED TO THE CHURCH



(FROM 35 TO 225)

(a fictionalized version based upon true factual experience of the author)

Jesus died to pay for your sins. This was not so you could gain dissatisfied members from a church down the street (or across town or down the road). Jesus did not die so your church could have a youth group and/or have the best programs. Jesus did not even die for good praise and worship. Jesus came to earth and died for ONE reason. HE, the just and innocent, died on the cross so men who are immoral, guilty and on their way to a devil's lake of fire, could be rescued from a path leading to eternal torment in hell. God is not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance. *For God so loved the world, that He gave His only Begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life*

A Lion of the Tribe of Judah, Publication

Given by God to: Brother J. R. Hughes, Jr., educated as an Attorney, called to be a Soul Winner, Bible Teacher, Defender of the Faith. He asks this NOT BE Copyrighted by Anyone at Anytime.

Scrivener: Brother J.R. (James Russell) Hughes, (Jr.) has been known as J.R.; Russ; Jay; Sluggin; Attorney Hughes and other names. The name he most treasures is *Brother Hughes*. He has had many vocations in his lifetime. His main occupation ("tent making" job) was/is that of attorney and counselor. He has also been a farm hand, tree trimmer, mason's mate, weigh master's mate, disc jockey, precision tool grinder, amateur actor, campaign worker, college student, bus boy, golden gloves boxer, insurance adjuster and investigator, public school teacher, federal reserve worker, trust officer, business machine salesman, personnel recruiter and census taker. Brother Hughes has also been active in his church as a visitation worker, bus ministry worker, Sunday school teacher (mostly Jr. High boys or Adults). He has substituted several times in every Sunday School class from primary up to adults (and took a turn or two in the nursery). Brother Hughes served as Assistant Sunday School Superintendent, Superintendent, and Christian Education Director. He has been used of God as a soul winner and defender of the faith. He has read the Bible from cover to cover several times (about 20) and other portions of the Bible many more times. God has used Brother Hughes to write several Biblically based articles. God has also motivated him and equipped him to write articles and booklets covering many subjects. (*"Such as Should be Added to the Church"; "Christian Life and Witnessing"; "Sharing your faith with Courage"; "Taking the Shield of Faith";* and many pamphlets.) God has also allowed him to be published by The Litigation Section of the State Bar of Michigan, The American Bar Association, secular newspapers, church newspapers and newsletters.

SUCH AS SHOULD BE ADDED TO THE CHURCH (ones called of God)

(a fictionalized version based upon true factual experience of the author)

A Lion of the Tribe of Judah, Publication

INTRODUCTION

This story is fictional but is largely based upon the experiences of two thirty year old men, a pastor and two teenage boys. However, names and locations were changed so no one is exalted or offended.

Before we begin we must warn you that being a Pastor is only for those who are called by God. This is not the way to become a pastor. That is up to God and to you. God will call you. But, God will not force you. But, we ALL are commanded to be His witness or to 'win souls.' (This is defined as seeing others go from being on their way to eternal torment, to having the assurance of eternal life).

The Lord Jesus directs: *Go ye into all the world, and preach my gospel unto every creature.* (Mark 16:15) And if you have received true salvation, the Holy Spirit living in you. HE will empower you to be HIS witness. *But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto ME, . . . in Jerusalem . . .* (Acts 1:8) Since HE has directed us and the Holy Spirit has equipped us, we have no excuse, we must be His witnesses.

This then, is a simple "How To" explanation. You will soon learn that anyone, who is willing and available can and will be used of God. If doubts arise within you, they are not from God. If you are told in your mind that you are not good enough, that is not from God. God wants to use you. Would God command you to do something you cannot do? NO! Of course not. You will find out how uncomplicated it is to be faithful to God, to join Him in His work of rescuing men from the path leading to eternal death and eternal torment in the lake of fire.

There will be odd hours. There may be calls in the middle of the night to come to a hospital or to a jail or to a place where the dead are identified or babies are born. But, there will always be the joy of being

used of God. You will be allowed that awesome opportunity of joining God in His work.

WHAT IS THAT WORK? It is joining God in His work of saving man from eternal torment in the lake of fire prepared for 1) the devil, 2) his fallen angels and 3) all who continue in sin, without repenting. But, the gift of eternal life in heaven is offered in place of eternal torment. It is available to all men who have sinned. What must a man do to be saved from eternal torment? Believe on, trust in, and receive the gift of God provided by Jesus Christ on the Cross of Calvary. There He died for the sins of all mankind. Peace with God comes only through our Lord Jesus Christ. There is no other Way. God is not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance (a place where they know they are guilty, but forgiven). Those who accept the gift of eternal life from Jesus Christ, will be with God instantly and forever when they leave this world. Isn't God good to us? Don't you want to see everyone come to Him? But how, you may ask, is this accomplished?

WE must look unto Jesus, Who *joyfully* went to the cross. What made Him joyful? Jesus knew His death was to be a payment for all men's sins. Jesus knew that all men who accepted His death for their sins would escape eternal torment and be with Him forever in heaven. (HE loves us that much!) Also, after His death He was going to be alive forever more with God the Father. *Who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God.* Hebrews 12:2.

WHAT IS OUR MISSION? Jesus (in whom Pilate found no fault) came and died to pay the death penalty owed by every man who has sinned. Jesus came to reclaim, reconcile and make peace between all who sin and Holy God. Jesus death for your sins was and is everything that is necessary for a man to escape eternal torment. When Jesus was going back to the Father, on the night He was betrayed (by one of His own twelve) HE prayed to God the Father and established our mission on earth. We **are given the opportunity to join Him** in His mission. Jesus died for all, we ask men to receive His gift of eternal life.

In John, Chapter 17, we see Jesus giving **to us** the ability to join Him in His mission. HE sends us into the world to be His ambassadors or representative upon earth.

17) *Sanctify them through Thy truth: Thy word is truth.* 18) *As Thou hast sent Me into the world, even so have I also sent them into the world. . . .* 20) *Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on Me through their word;*
JOHN 17:17-18,20

Jesus died to pay for your sins. This was not so you could gain disgruntled members from a church down the street (or across town or down the road). Jesus did not die so your church could have a youth group or go roller skating or have the best programs. Jesus did not even die for good praise and worship. Jesus came to earth and died for ONE reason. HE, the just and innocent, died on the cross so men who are immoral, guilty and on their way to a devil's lake of fire, could be rescued from a path leading to eternal torment in hell. God is not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance. *For God so loved the world, that He gave His only Begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life.*

So, if winning souls and seeing others grow up in the Lord is not your "first love", then you may want to examine yourself and see if you are in the faith. All believers are **commanded** to be His witnesses. God intended for His disciples to build the body of Christ. They kept traveling to new places and winning new people (see Book of Acts) Yet, most seminaries now teach graduates how to have a successful "church-club" with membership, dues (tithes and offerings) and activities (youth group; roller skating; trips; specials). Prior to the later part of the 20th century, a common thread of all successful churches was a pastor, used of God to lead men, in the mission of saving and rescuing men who are on their way to the lake of fire. (Wesley, Spurgeon, Moody, Roberts, Hyles-Anderson, Towns, Fallwell) We should Not Strive to Build A "Church Club!" Labor to build the Body of Christ. How? Ask men to accept *THE* gift of eternal life.

WHAT IS THE SECRET? Years ago Dr. Cho was asked his secret for success of building the then largest church in the world. He smiled and said, "**I PRAY AND I OBEY.**" Then Dr. Cho leaned his head back and laughed. Therein is the secret. Men that God truly uses are men of prayer who obey God. They have to know the Word to obey it. And the reason Jesus came was to die in our place, so we could join Him in

heaven. We join Him in His work by merely asking men (who are on their way to eternal torment) if they would like to be rescued and receive the gift provided by Jesus. All they must do is receive His gift. Most men want to be rescued and reconciled to God. Jesus left us here to be His representative, His ambassador. You must join God in His work of reconciling men back to Him. **If you PRAY AND OBEY you can be His witness. You can help build the body of Christ.**

This then is the story of a pastor who prayed and obeyed. He was willing to build the Body of Christ and go to men who were not in church, men who were headed toward the place of eternal torment, the lake of fire. To obey, he had to know God's Word and plan. So, he read his Bible. By joining God in His work of saving and rescuing men, this pastor was obedient. The Lord did a quick work in the local church over which God had set him. That local church did not at first, grow rapidly but soon the Lord opened the windows of heaven and poured out a blessing of learning, a blessing of other like minded obedient persons. Then in a few months, when all was in place, But, perhaps I am getting ahead of the story. So, I invite you to read on as you learn how you and I can join God in His work, if we will **PRAY AND OBEY**

HINT: The purpose of a active believer in Christ is to be a witness for Jesus. The purpose of a congregation of God is to teach, equip and produce His witnesses.

CHAPTER ONE

HAVE YOU TAKEN LEAVE OF YOUR SENSES?

The shop superintendent/manager of the large automotive supply company read his morning e-mail and US Postal mail. He came across an envelope with his name written in pen, no address, no stamp. Curiously he opened the envelope and read the following letter:

Dear Mr. Shatterly:

It is with much regret and much joy that I write this letter to you inform you of my decision to leave the company.

This company has been very good to me and my family providing all of our physical needs. The benefits in the form of health care insurance were a tremendous help to our family, especially when our daughter was in that serious automobile accident. I shall also always be grateful to the company for advancing and paying for us the \$2,500 deductible on the major medical expenses. I have been saving money now for two years. With this letter you will find a certified check in the amount of \$2,500 fully reimbursing the company for its payment of the deductible expenses.

The retirement plan provided for the employees would have allowed myself and my wife to spend our 'golden years' well maintained. This is true even if the government did not continue to provide benefits at the time of my retirement. But I have made a decision that might at first, be hard to understand. Please allow me to explain.

You indicated to me that you noticed a difference in my behavior. You thought that it was because of my daughter's accident, I had become a more sober and a diligent employee of this company and

a better family man. I should have explained. Although my daughter's accident played a part, a few months earlier I had begun to visit a fundamental church. You see, sir, I was searching for something to fill an emptiness in my life. I didn't know it then, but I was searching for peace with God.

Do you remember the night my daughter was injured? I remembered the way I thought which was to me so different. Instead of cursing the man who caused the accident, or asking for more details about what happened, I heard myself saying out loud, "God save my little girl." I did not want to know who had done this to her. I did **not** want to fight with anyone. We only asked for God's help. You have known me for quite sometime and I'm sure you must also admit that was a change within me.

By the time my wife and I started from our home, I remember backing out of the driveway and a peace coming over me. I turned to my wife saying, "Everything is going to be fine." She said, "How do you know?" I said, "I just know." You may remember how confident we were even when my daughter was still unconscious. That is because I had assurance from God. And you may ask, "What does this have to do with this resignation?"

At the hospital, I met many other people who had friends, relatives, sons, daughters, brothers, and sisters in the Intensive Care Unit. After a while, people started coming over to us and asked us to pray for their loved ones. We did. That is where I met Sister Shirley who was there with the White family.

Sister Shirley had been a pastor's wife. Her husband had died a few months earlier. Sister Shirley said they could not find peace among the people in their small congregation about someone to come take over the responsibility of leading their church. She asked me to come and pray with them at the church. I did that.

When I arrived at the church, she also asked me to tell the people what had happened to my daughter. When I stood to speak, I was surprised with the confidence that God had given me and the assurance everything would be all right. Then my voice said a very strange thing.

"Even if God should take her to Heaven tonight, I would still trust that it was His perfect will for her life."

Well, sir, to make a long story short, two years ago, Sister Shirley asked me to take her place teaching the adult Sunday School class at the church. She said it would be good to have a man teaching as they continued to search for a pastor. After a week or so I had accepted the opportunity. I began teaching. Then one evening only about four months ago, a most unusual thing occurred. They had tried one interim Pastor who decided God was not calling him to that church. They were to vote on a visiting pastor, whether they wanted to ask him to come and lead the church as their pastor. Secret ballots were passed out to all the members. Although I was not a member, they asked me to vote also. The people were asked to write whether or not they wanted to call this man as pastor, by writing his name for yes and no name or No meant, no. I felt I could not take part in the vote, so I folded my ballot in four and passed it in with the others. As they sang a song called "Have Thine Own Way Lord," Sister Shirley began to laugh, then cry tears of joy as she and another counted the ballots.

As I watched her two things occurred. I knew they had decided upon a new pastor. A still small voice kept saying inside me, "It is My Will. It is My Will."

After counting the ballots, Sister Shirley stood up and asked me, "Brother John, is this your ballot?"

It was the blank ballot. I smiled, blushed and acknowledged that it was. She said, "I thought so because all the other ballots have written on them **YOUR NAME**. We want you as our Pastor."

I was stunned!

Mr. Shatterly, I know you may not understand my decision. I prayed about it and was assured by God that He would be with me. I have accepted their invitation to pastor that church.

I understand I am two years away from vesting a full pension with this company, but God is the best security plan. If I trust Him, He promised, He will provide for me.

The company will, I trust, understand my decision. Please know that I have appreciated the opportunity of working with this company. Of course, I will stay on as long as you believe you need me to make a smooth transition, but, not for more than ninety (90) days.

With deep appreciation,

John Roth

G.P. Shatterly sat back in his overstuffed leather chair. He was numb with disbelief. A man thought of so highly by the company was thinking of giving up his position. "After all, didn't he know, I was grooming him to replace me?" thought Mr. Shatterly. He pushed on the intercom button and said, "Ms. Anderson open a channel out to the plant." Then Plant Superintendent Shatterly roared over the intercom system:

"John, have you taken leave of your senses? Please report to my office immediately!"

CHAPTER TWO

SEND YOUR LABORERS

One 60-watt electric light bulb, from the back of the church, was all that illuminated the entire auditorium of the frame church sitting on a block basement. The night was dark and cold. The wind whistled and one could see the snow swirling through the windows on each side of the seventy-two foot auditorium.

He prayed, "Lord raise up from among this your people laborers to go to the people around the church and tell them of You. Send us into Your harvest."

In spite of the fact that the membership was 35, there were twenty-four wooden pews (each of which would hold six). Twelve rows of wooden pews were on either side of the single center aisle. The pews were well spaced so one could possibly double the number of pews. The floor was hardwood except for the thin well maintained red carpeting that came down the center aisle. The walls were plaster with four windows on each side. There were lamps on each wall between and in back of the windows. On the wall on one side a white sign with black letters read:

'COME UNTO ME ALL YE THAT TRAVAIL AND ARE HEAVY LADEN AND I WILL GIVE THEE REST . . . '

On the other wall opposite the first sign an identically sized sign read:

**'FOR GOD SO LOVED THE WORLD THAT HE GAVE
HIS ONLY BEGOTTEN SON**

The carpeting down the center aisle, splashed outward in front of the first row of pews. It rolled to both side walls and forward to the edge of the platform (elevated stage area) where people knelt to pray. Seven men and two teenage boys would go to the right side when they prayed. The twenty-six ladies (ages 12 to Sister Shirley's about 70) would go to the left side. Tonight the church was empty except for the relatively new pastor, who knelt on the floor in front of the altar and the pulpit. He cried out to God. His prayer which had lasted almost one hour could be summed up in:

Lord, I have been in this church now for seven months. What am I doing wrong? I tried almost everything **I know** how to motivate these people to go out and be a witness for You. I have even tried some things with which I am not sure You were well pleased, such as giving away things to have people come to the church. However, Lord that only seems to last as long as there is something for them to receive. Oh, Lord, what have I done that is wrong?"

As the pastor laid before the altar area on his face before God, he began to think back and question in his mind. Had he really heard from God or was it only he that so wanted to help these people? Was it only him or pride that had called him to this pastorate? As he lay there, GOD allowed his thoughts to drift back to the important meeting at the plant.

- - -

Shortly after John announced his resignation to G.P. Shatterly, he received an urgent phone call at 8:00 in the evening. Mr. Shatterly asked him to come down to the plant immediately.

After he dusted the last of the new fallen Spring snow off his windshield, he had gotten into his vehicle and driven down the slippery streets to the plant, 25 minutes away. When he arrived, he noticed the office lights were on, especially in the big conference room. Even though the snow was lightly falling, he thought he had seen the two brothers who owned most of the stock in this family owned company. He parked his car and walked in.

He was greeted by several employees who teased him good-heartedly, "Good evening Preacher," said one.

"Is that your Bible?", asked another.

He smiled thinking to himself, a few years before he would have been the last person of whom those questions were asked. He hung up his coat and hat. John walked into the office area, heading toward Mr. Shatterly's office at the end of the building.

Mr. Shatterly intercepted him half-way down the hallway and took him to the board room. The brothers, who owned most of the stock in the company, had asked to personally speak with this man when they heard his letter of resignation read before the board. The brothers were similar in stature. Except for the fact one had a balding head, the other a paunchy stomach, it was apparent they had been "cut from the same cookie cutter."

"Sit down, sit down," they said to the then newly appointed pastor.

The older brother asked,

"We would like to know what kind of an opportunity you have been offered to submit your resignation?"

The other brother nodded his head, sucking on the eraser end of a lead pencil as was his habit.

"Well," John began. "May I speak freely?"

Hand gestures and nods from the men in the board room indicated: "Yes he could."

He stood and said, "Gentlemen, this company means a lot to me. As you know, I had a varied background before I came here. This was the first place I could put together all the talents God had given me: public speaking, computer skills, and the ability to work with my hands. After being here a short time, perhaps six months to a year, I knew that unless the company discharged me, this was going to be my work place until retirement. I was proud to be associated with this company, its products and its ethical standards. The work is always the highest quality. It was our inspectors, not someone else, who found the errors, when errors were made."

"I was so very impressed one time within three months after I arrived. We had received an order from a large company. They gave us a tolerance level. We did not think that tolerance level was sufficient. We greatly reduced the tolerance level.

Then, because of a mistake, the last one-third of the product was out of tolerance according to our specifications. However, it was within the tolerance of the ordering company's specifications. I asked Mr. Shatterly what we should do. He told me then that we could not pass on an inferior product to someone else. If it did not meet our specifications, we would do that part of the job again to meet our specifications. I reasoned with him that we had met the other company's specifications, thinking maybe he had forgotten. He looked at me and said,"

"When we set specifications, we meet or better them, or we do not ship the product."

I thought: "What a wonderful way to do business."

"A few months later, we received a large order from that company because our product was the only one that was lasting. When we told them our tolerances they said 'perhaps they may have made an error in the tolerance judgments.' So I saw that looking out for the customer, even when he did not know it, was not only good ethics, it was also good business."

"I was given every opportunity to progress in this company from machine operator, to group leader, to assistant foreman. I was trained. You paid for schooling. We began to feel like 'family'. I thought, It doesn't get much better than this."

"Then later, my wife fell in love with the company because Mr. Shatterly noticed I was putting in too many hours after my second promotion. He told me the best employees were employees with a good family life. He said they were very happy with my effort, but were worried I might be neglecting my family.

When I told him I was worried the work would not be produced, Mr. Shatterly said:

Let's look at the big picture. You are usually a week or so ahead of schedule, right? And the reason you are ahead of schedule is because you put in long hours, right? And when you do this, you neglect your wife and family, right?

I sat there and thought as he talked and I had to agree with him. Then he said, 'For the next two weeks, I don't want to see you putting in one hour of overtime. Got that?

I smiled and said, "Yes, sir."

That was the beginning of new discovery for me. I discovered family life with my children, a wife that I had loved, but had taken for granted. I fell in love with her all over again.

"You know, this resignation was partly the company's responsibility," John said smiling, then continued: "Because my wife asked me to go to some church function. For the first time I was able to go and I was able to sit and really listen to what was being said instead of worrying about when I could get out and back to work."

A visiting minister was speaking at church. A big man with a deep voice. I will not soon forget that day. That minister said:

What shall it profit a man if he gain the whole world and lose his own soul? And what shall he give in exchange? These are the words of our Lord Jesus. Many of you are involved in business or school, trying to become the

biggest success you can become. No matter how much success you gain, you still search for more success and more success. You have an emptiness within you that you need to fill. You try to fill it with success. The more you fill it, the more you need more success.

I thought to myself, "Has my wife been talking to this man before church?" I looked over. She was looking intently at the speaker. I wondered then why he was speaking so clearly to me.

The visiting minister, continuing, said:

"Every person who is born in this world is born into a sinful world. Furthermore, he or she is born with a sinful nature. The sinful part causes a separation from our Creator, and an emptiness inside. We long to have peace with God to be reconnected to our Creator. We try to fill the emptiness.

Some of you may say, I'm not such a bad person. I don't cheat on my wife. I provide for my family. I even go to church. ' But if you are honest you must admit there is an emptiness way inside you."

I thought, "He is talking to me."

The visiting minister continued:

Are you tired of a life NOT fulfilled? Are you tired of searching to find success that seems to elude you? Do you want to fill the emptiness? Is it time for you to admit that your life is a life of frustration and lack

of purpose? Are you trying to do things your own way?

I thought, "Well, yes, but I do a pretty good job."

Immediately the visiting minister's words responded to my thoughts.

Jesus said "BECAUSE THOU SAYEST, I AM RICH, AND INCREASED WITH GOODS, AND *HAVE NEED OF NOTHING*;"

He paused . . .

Does this sound familiar? Do you think or even say **you don't really need God?** Hear these words:

"BECAUSE THOU SAYEST, I AM RICH, AND INCREASED WITH GOODS, AND HAVE NEED OF NOTHING; . . . AND KNOWEST NOT THOU ART WRETCHED, AND MISERABLE, AND POOR, AND BLIND, AND NAKED; I COUNSEL THEE TO *BUY OF ME GOLD* TRIED IN FIRE, THAT THOU MAYEST BE RICH; **AND WHITE RAIMENT**, THAT THOU MAYEST BE CLOTHED, AND THAT THE SHAME OF THY NAKEDNESS DO NOT APPEAR; AND ANOINT THINE EYES WITH EYE SALVE, THAT THOU MAYEST SEE. AS MANY AS I LOVE, I REBUKE AND CHASTEN; BE ZEALOUS THEREFORE, AND **REPENT**.

Then he became soft and quiet as he read from Revelation 3, verse 20.

BEHOLD I STAND AT THE DOOR AND KNOCK; IF ANY MAN HEAR MY VOICE AND OPEN THE DOOR, I WILL COME INTO HIM AND WILL SUP WITH HIM, AND HE WITH ME.

The preacher said:

"Jesus offers to fill the emptiness in your life. It can only be filled by finding peace with God. The Bible says: WE HAVE PEACE WITH GOD THROUGH OUR LORD, JESUS CHRIST.

Jesus said, I AM THE WAY, THE TRUTH AND THE LIFE. NO MAN COMETH UNTO THE FATHER BUT BY ME."

Finally, the reverend said,

The Bible says, ***There is a way which seemeth right unto a man, but the ends thereof are the ways of death.***

And I do not speak of a kind of death where you close your eyes and go to sleep. I speak of the kind of death spoken of in Revelation, Chapter 21: the second death. A place called the Lake of Fire which burneth with fire and brimstone which is the second death.

You see if you are born once and are never 'born again' you will die twice. The second death is a conscious eternal existence in a place called: Lake of Fire. **BUT** if you're *born again*, . . . you will never die. You will go to be with God in heaven the moment you pass through that death portal and leave this earth.

Jesus wants you with Him. Jesus said, 'I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go to prepare a place for you, I will

come again and receive you unto Myself that where I am there ye may be also.'

The Creator of the universe and all mankind, your Redeemer and Savior wants to have you with Him for eternity!

Are you ready to replace your prosperous, but purposeless life that cannot fill the empty space within you? With all you try to do, you are still empty. Why not admit that **your way** is wrong? Why not tell God you have tried it **your way** and failed? Tell God you are a person with no fulfilling purpose. Tell God you want your great emptiness to be filled with His love?

At that very moment I felt something hot and wet rolling down the right side of my face; then on the left side of my face. Something that had not been there, but once since I was a child. (It was when I saw our first born). But, I did not permit anyone to see me at the hospital. Now here I sat with tears flowing down the side of my cheeks and was not ashamed.

The visiting minister concluded:

The Bible says: ALL HAVE SINNED AND COME SHORT OF THE GLORY OF GOD. That does not read you have to be a murderer or a bank robber. It can mean you have been trying to do things your own way. You have failed. Doing it **your way** is saying 'I do not need YOU God.'

HE created you. HE sustains you. Can the fish say to the water I have no need of you? Can the plant say to the sun you need no longer shine? Can you, oh arrogant man, tell the ONE who sustains you and all life, I have no need of

YOU? This is sin. The sin of pride is the most grievous kind. Pride is the sin which most displeases God.

A sinful person will be in the Lake of Fire, unless he trusts as Savior, Christ our King. Jesus, the Messiah and Savior of Israel and all mankind, will save you from eternal punishment. He paid for your sin by being the sacrificial Lamb of God. Our Savior took your death penalty. He prepared a place for you. **BUT** to be with *HIM*, you must admit you are an arrogant prideful person, who is tired of doing it your way. You are in search of peace with God. If you want God to fill your emptiness: stand to your feet right now!

As I hesitated, my wife began to stand and I sprang to my feet, as though shot from a canon. The visiting minister looked at us with compassion. Happiness in his face said he knew, from the time he started speaking, we should stand.

Well, to make a long story shorter, that was the day I admitted I was separated from God. Although I had been faithful to my wife and provided for my children, I tried to do things without God. **I did not think I needed God.** That day I understood the Creator of the universe is the One Who made me; the One who manufactured me, cared for me, loved me, and had a wonderful plan for my life. I was settling for second best.

As Isaiah had prophesied, God had come as Messiah, in the form of a man and was wounded, bruised and battered for me. HE endured the nails and the death on the cross to grant me eternal life. This Jesus or Yeshua came to be Messiah of Israel and all mankind. I was one of those for whom HE died.

I asked God to forgive me for having spent so many years trying to do things *my way*, saying to God, 'I don't need You. I was acting as if His great love for me and His death for me, was . . . nothing.

Within weeks after that encounter with the Messiah of all men, people at work started calling me weird. I did not do the things I used to do. However, I did not give up anything I wanted to do. My desires changed. Some of the old things which I had thought fun or important in the past, flirting, telling off color stories and other things, I no longer desired to do. There had been a change inside of me, which I could not explain, absent the conversion by God.

I began to spend more time with my family and doing things at church. I started visiting people in nursing homes and in jail. I started home Bible reading. Sometimes I would start reading it at night and could not put it down for hours. I read of the God of Abraham. God's miracle that brought a son, Isaac, to a couple much too old to give birth to children. The God of Isaac gave him twin sons at sixty. Jacob, later named Israel, fathered the twelve sons who were the fathers of the twelve tribes of Israel. Then when famine came, God preserved His people in Egypt through Joseph. And after Joseph died, they were put into slavery in Egypt. But when they cried out to God, God brought them out by a mighty deliverance through a man named Moses. God's power allowed the people to cross the Red Sea on dry ground. God then drowned the army of pursuers in the exact same area where Israel had crossed. The God of Moses and Joshua vanquished all the peoples in Canaan for Israel. The mighty judges who, although having weaknesses, were used of God to defeat the enemies of Israel. I read the love story of the great grandparents of King David, Ruth and Boaz. This mighty King David wrote telling of Messiah's death in Psalm 22; and how

to find peace with God in Psalm 51. David's son, King Solomon, built the holy Temple of God. He prayed that beautiful pray in 2nd Chronicles chapters six and seven. . . .

When John finished speaking, the older brother looked at the younger brother and said,

"We should have him come down and speak at Synagogue." They all laughed.

Then they allowed Mr. Shatterly to take the opportunity to present a tempting five year offer. It would have phased Pastor John into stock ownership in the company as Plant Superintendent. John's already very fair salary would be almost tripled in three years and John would become a part of the profit sharing plan of the company.

Without wavering, Pastor John said, "Gentlemen, you compliment me more than I can express here in words. You also encourage me. If my worth to this company is much greater than I had supposed, how much more can God use me in His service?"

The older brother turned to the younger brother and said,

"I would have really been disappointed had he accepted our offer."

Then he looked at John and said,

"You almost have persuaded me. . ." And his voice faded.

CHAPTER THREE

PRAYER CHANGES THINGS

As Pastor John lay there before the Lord in front of the altar, that dark cool winter night, his mind emptied. Then he heard a voice inside him. It was as real as if his wife had spoken. "PRAY THE LORD OF THE HARVEST WILL **SEND HIS** LABORERS."

Suddenly Pastor John smiled as he realized he had again been trying to do things his own way. **John** wanted to raise up people through **his own** effort. God was telling John he should pray for God's way. He repented again for trying to do things without abiding and trusting only in Christ Jesus. He smiled. He stood to his feet. John raised both hands in the air and said,

"Lord, I have been in this church now for seven months and I have been doing almost everything wrong. Lord I repent, my ways failed. I now surrender. I pray for YOU to **SEND YOUR LABORERS.**"

And then Pastor John heard himself add this:

"And Lord, get me out of the way.

Please be my only Teacher!"

Released from seven months of frustration, Pastor John began to enter into the joy of the Lord as he taught the people how to love one another and their neighbors as themselves. Yet, something was missing. He could not quite understand what it was. Then one day it happened, God began to answer his prayer to be his only Teacher. God spoke in an unusual way.

Pastor had been listening on his car radio to a seminary man who talked disparagingly about a man from Australia. This man, he said, was 'very irritating.' All the man did was go out on the street near where he lived and ask people a very aggravating question, which he called *The Big Question*. This street housed a shopping area where tourists would come for local shopping and very low prices. So the seminary man happened to be there.

Something inside Pastor John, said, 'Pay attention.' 'Listen!' 'This is important!' So he pulled off the road into a closed gas station lot and turned up his car radio.

The seminary man explained that this gray-headed, older man came up to him with a half smile and asked:

May I ask you a question?

Who me? Eh, sure. What is it?

IF YOU WERE TO DIE THIS MINUTE, DO YOU KNOW, WITHOUT ANY DOUBT, THAT YOU WOULD GO TO HEAVEN?

“Obviously,” the seminary man replied, “you do not know I am a teacher at a great seminary in the United States of America.”

“Oh!” the man, replied, “*That is wonderful, BUT IF YOU WERE TO DIE THIS MINUTE, DO YOU KNOW, WITHOUT ANY DOUBT, THAT YOU WOULD GO TO HEAVEN?*”

Well NO! I guess I am not one hundred percent certain.

Would you like to know for sure?

Can one know? the seminary man asked.

That irritating man had asked him to say a simple prayer after him, which he admitted he had done. And then the older man asked the seminary man if he knew Romans, chapter ten, verses nine through thirteen. [fn¹]

¹ ⁹ That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. ¹⁰ For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation. ¹¹ For the scripture saith, Whosoever believeth on him shall not be ashamed. ¹² ¶ For there is no difference between the Jew and the Greek: for the same Lord over all is rich unto all that call upon him. ¹³ For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved. Romans 10:9-13

When the seminary man said he did. The older man asked him to confess back to him, what he had just done. Then when the seminary man told him back that he had just prayed a prayer so Jesus could make him certain that he was going to heaven, the older man smiled an angelic smile and asked:

And how did you feel when you made your confession of faith to me?

The seminary man said he felt lighter and fuzzy inside.

The older man, now smiling a great smile said:

Then congratulations, sir, you have just become one of those Jesus rescued from the lake of fire. And since you were sincere, I can now tell you that one day we will meet in heaven.

The older man shook the seminary man’s hand, saying:

Be sure to go to church this Sunday at a church were they preach from the Bible and train others to be witness for Christ.

The seminary man, at first, said he thought little about that encounter. But, when he got back to the United States, the words of that man haunted him. Therefore, the seminary man said he felt he had to share them with the radio audience.

Pastor John “heard” a thought that said: **That was for you.**

Pastor John started up his car realizing that God had just spoken to him from a man in Australia. A man he would never have met before he got to heaven. But, God used this seminary man, to whom pastor seldom listened, to be the conduit to get this important training to the man of God.

Suddenly it was clear. The church said they loved others and wanted them to be saved, but they were not obeying the Lord's command to be His witnesses. It was because they did not know how simple it could be. They did not have to memorize *The Four Spiritual Laws* or take a six week course in soul winning. All they had to do was learn this simple, effective method of being God's witness. Pastor John knew he would never be the same again.

Pastor John continued teaching the members of the small flock to love their neighbors, for whom Christ died.

"And if you love them you will want them to be ready to go to heaven." So, Pastor John began to teach the congregation evangelism and the use of "The Big Question."

IF YOU WERE TO DIE THIS MINUTE, DO YOU KNOW, WITHOUT ANY DOUBT, THAT YOU WOULD GO TO HEAVEN?

That question, pastor taught, focuses on the reason for which Jesus came to Earth. It is a simple but most profound question. It cuts out all debate. The way the person answers the question indicates to you if that person has been prepared by God the Holy Spirit to receive Jesus as Savior.

THE REVELATION: Oh, pastor thought, so we are not supposed to be concerned with building the membership of this church, we are to build the Body of Christ, by telling those on their way to the place of eternal torment, how they can be rescued by the love and sacrifice of Jesus. But it was in the form of a simple question.

IF YOU WERE TO DIE THIS MINUTE, DO YOU KNOW, WITHOUT ANY DOUBT, THAT YOU WOULD GO TO HEAVEN?

No longer was Pastor disappointed in the people or himself. He no longer felt any condemnation from the accuser of the brethren [fn²]. He now understood how to join God in God's work. He was allowing God to teach him. He now knew God would use him and some at the church to expand the Body of Christ, to reclaim sinful men for God Who loved them and died for them. They had to accept this gift of God. He also knew God would send him co laborers, either from within the body or from outside of the church body. A person or persons would willingly join him in the labor of God's harvest.

Prayer requests became centered around lost and hurting people. Such things as whether to carpet the church, pad pews or how to raise finances through various sundry means (other than tithes and offerings) faded into obscurity.

GOD'S WORD: Pastor John had also enrolled in a correspondence Bible course learning scripture. It showed in his preaching more each week. Before he realized it, he was averaging ten to twelve scripture references in each message,

² ¶ [There is] therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. Romans 8:1

besides his main text. God's Word would affect them for good. (God's Word will not return unto Him, void, but will accomplish what God pleases - Isaiah 55:11)

One thing seemed strange to pastor and his wife. The church had worked so hard to persuade John to be their pastor. Once he was their pastor, they had begun to **'see'** all of his flaws **(both the real ones they had overlooked and some they imagined) or take him for granted.** From talking to others in the ministry, they found out (unfortunately) this was "normal".

Sister Shirley at first, delighted in writing down the extra Scriptures and looking them up to see if she could catch pastor in a mistake. At first she had come to him with pride: she had found a mistake. As the pastor developed, Shirley became proud to come to him and say, "*Pastor, I did not find any mistakes.*" She began to have the pride of a mother. Sister Shirley was a mature woman, and very mothering. She became pastor's strong ally, his staunch supporter. She was informed about the latest church rumblings and was able to pray them away or visit them away or put a stop to things that might hurt the pastor or his family. God was working in her. God was working through her.

With Sister Shirley now encouraging pastor and his wife, service for the Lord at the little church had again become joyful. Furthermore, the pastor had more time for prayer and study of the Word. (God's Word will not return unto Him, void, but will accomplish what God pleases - Isaiah 55:11)

PRAYER: He rose early in the morning, about 5:30 AM and prayed by name for each member of the congregation and the needs of their families. He also prayed the Lord would **send HIS laborers** into *HIS* harvest. Later in the morning more prayer was offered with his family. Usually this prayer was before breakfast.

Unless there was a special need, such as a test for the children or an event for the pastor or his wife, they would pray for the people on the church prayer list. Prayers were also offered for missionaries supported by the church. But, they prayed most enthusiastically to be used by God in God's work of rescuing and delivering people from the lake of fire.

After a few weeks, Pastor's children surprised him as they began praying for someone in the church or outside the church who could come and help Dad go door to door in the neighborhood. Then, his son volunteered. Pastor John said,\

"Son I want you to help, we can go privately, but, it is not time to announce this at the church. God is continuing to work on some people and bring other things to pass."

Pastor thought, ***I'm glad he didn't volunteer when I was doing it my way. We would have announced it, then gone out and kicked spiritual sand in the faces of the congregation.*** He knew God's shepherd should not do that to God's flock. They needed to be guided, protected and loved as he led them into God's service.

At the evening meal, the family would try to pray thanksgiving prayers together, thanking God for the day's events, the food and for God's great glory. Sometimes Dad was on an emergency. Then the family would ask the Lord's blessing for the food and they would pray specifically for the situation. Prayers of thanksgiving were left for the end of the meal. Dad (Pastor John) almost always joined them by then. Pastor began to tell the family about people he had asked *The Big Question* and then prayed with them to receive Jesus Christ and be delivered from the penalty of sin. Seldom did those people ask him what he did. Most of them already had a church affiliation.

Then there was evening prayer about 9:00 p.m. The family gathered and prayed for people they knew at school or other places, for things of the next day, for friends not at the church or for any emergency locally or around the world. Soon, Pastor John found his prayer habit joyful. A longer time in the morning (forty-five minutes) then a few minutes at breakfast with the family. Again a short time of family prayer at supper. Evening prayer was the longest family prayer time (twenty to thirty minutes). This frequent prayer time (four times each day) kept him (them) in touch with God often. In the evening, pastor would usually close with a thanksgiving for laborers God was preparing to send into God's harvest around the local church.

BIBLE READING: Scripture study was both a time of private study early each morning of about an hour, then regularly reading with the children at breakfast time about 7 AM. This was in addition to the time he spent preparing three messages a week for the “flock” over whom God had placed him. Bible Study and regular prayer several times a day changed the pastor from a man “not certain” to *a man with a mission*.

Yes indeed, he thought: **prayer changes things. Or was it the Bible reading?**

Then he decided, no, it was taking advantage of the awesome opportunity of spending time with the Creator of the universe: Almighty God. And learning to join God at His work of saving men from eternal torment.

But, since he had heard of the little irritating man on the radio, pastor had not been the same as before. Pastor John was now being used by God to make God's offer of eternal life available to people with whom he was in contact on a daily basis.

And whenever Pastor became discouraged or thought God could not answer his prayers, he reminded himself of the teaching he had received from a man in Australia, by a seminary man, on a radio thousands of miles later. Now Pastor John was beginning to understand in another way that with God all things are possible. God did answer his prayers.

CHAPTER FOUR

I WOULD ASK OUR VISITOR TO STAND

That Wednesday evening a man no one knew came to the Bible study. The church had visitors from time to time, usually a member of someone's extended family or people who were invited from other churches. However, to have someone no one knew come through the church door was an unusual event for this little congregation. The people were not sure what to make of it. The pastor was excited! Was this his answer to prayer?

After opening the service with two hymns, the song leader sat down and the pastor stood up. Pastor John said, "I see we have a visitor in our midst tonight. You are a guest of whom, sir?"

The stocky, strong, younger man, smiling, said, "The Lord I suppose."

"Could you stand and tell us how you came to your faith and belief in God as your Savior, my brother?"

The man stood and said he was Brother Adam. He spoke of how his mother had taken him to church as a child. Yet, he did not accept God's plan for his life. He liked cars so became a mechanic. His true conversion to Christianity was only five years earlier. Someone challenged him about where his children would go when they died. He had admitted he was not living a life pleasing to God. Then one of the men asked him if he now wanted to make his life right with God, for his family's good. He had crawled out from under a car and prayed with that man. His life, he said, was dramatically changed. All the beer and other

drink disappeared from their house. Television viewing changed. His language was no longer filled with cussing and swearing.

Later his wife realized he was not just 'faking it' for some reason. He really had changed. This led to her conversion, as she now wanted what God had given to her husband. He and his family had been searching for a church in which he could worship God and be of service in God's mission.

After the service he talked with pastor. He confided to Pastor John he was saddened at what happened where he was attending. The pastor and three of the five deacons refused to go to people who lived around the church. They also voted to suspend visitation to non-members. He knew they were targeting him since he was the only one who was being a regular witness.

The mechanic said, "God said HE was not willing that any should perish in hell and the lake of fire but that all should come to repentance. God also told us we would be His witnesses and He told us to go tell others. So, I had to make a decision as to whether I wanted to stay in a church that did not want to follow the Lord's commands or find another place of service. That night I began to pray and the Lord impressed me to re-read St. John 14. I thought maybe HE wants to remind me that HE is the Only Way. I kept reading. *He that hath seen ME hath seen the Father.* But, then I came to the passage that reads: "*If ye love Me, keep My commandments.*" "Well that was it!" he said smiling. I cannot stay in that church and obey the commands in Matthew 28, Mark 16, Luke 10, Luke 24:48, and Acts 1: 8.

I do not know much about your church or about you pastor, but something kept urging me to stop. "So", he smiled and said,

"Although this is not one of those large, big city ministries, I decided to stop fighting God. I've come to see what the Lord had to say through you to me."

Pastor, was excited. Was this an answer to his prayers? Explaining his vision, pastor said: "You may be the first fruits of God's answer to my prayers."

Two weeks later, Sunday morning, Brother Adam, the young man who had visited on Wednesday Bible study, opened the front door of the church. His wife and three children entered. They marched down the middle aisle of the church. They sat on the fifth pew on the left hand side as you look toward the pulpit.

The pastor **began to thank God** for answer to prayer. He sensed kindred Spirits in Adam, the mechanic, and his family. However, he felt it was not yet time to start going door to door, as a church. Why Lord? He asked in prayer. But, he obeyed.

The next week a teenage boy, Ronald, age 14, showed up and asked if he could start attending church. A week later, Ronald came back with two friends.

The pastor looked out at the three young men and said to the first one, "**I would ask our visitor to stand.**"

As Ronald introduced his friend Eric, pastor heard another thought that said,

"These two are My laborers."

The pastor thought, two teenage boys? Am I glad I got 'me' out of the way of God's selection process. I would not have chosen Ronald or this new boy Eric to have been laborers in God's harvest field. Now, God assured him it was time.

CHAPTER FIVE

FROM THE CHURCH!

Two weeks later, after Wednesday Bible study, ten people sat on the second and third pews on the right hand side as one looks toward the pulpit. Pastor was standing in front of them.

"As you know, brethren," he said to the mechanic, older deacon, six teenagers, Sister White and sister Shirley, "God desires us to be His witnesses. That means that we are to go out, knock on doors in the neighborhood, tell people about God, His plan of salvation and His local church. We will **personally** invite them to this church. So they **know** they are welcome. But, more importantly, we need to give them each the opportunity to have eternal life in Christ.

But, you may ask, what does the Bible tell us about witnessing to others? Who can go? Is it just pastors and evangelists? The Bible says Jesus sent out the seventy other disciples in Luke 10, two by two. They were not the twelve. They were not ordained ministers. They were just men like you and I. Jesus gave them special power. If you want to read about it, read Luke, chapter 10, verses 1-20. However, later Jesus spoke to at least one hundred twenty (120) persons whom HE told to wait in the upper room for Holy Spirit power. Jesus said in Acts 1:8:

BUT YE SHALL RECEIVE **POWER**, AFTER THAT THE HOLY GHOST IS **COME UPON YOU**; AND YE SHALL **BE WITNESSES** UNTO ME BOTH IN JERUSALEM AND IN ALL JUDAEA, AND IN SAMARIA, AND UNTO THE UTTERMOST PART OF THE EARTH.

This is the last thing Jesus said to the disciples before He was taken up out of their sight. Jesus was not speaking to just the 11. He spoke these words to whomever was there and we know that one hundred twenty (120) of that number had remained for several days to be in the upper room when the Holy Ghost was sent into them. Therefore, we can be fairly certain Jesus spoke to men and women and promised them power to be His witnesses. So we know that we can take that particular promise and directive as a promise and command to each one of us who says he is a Christian.

That verse teaches God the Holy Spirit **comes upon you**. Why? God gives us **power** so we can **go witness** or tell others about Him and what God has done for us. I propose to start visiting or witnessing this Saturday. Please arrive here one half hour before we go out. Today, we need to talk and pray. Saturday I want you to plan to spend two hours in the neighborhood talking to people before we return to the church. This must be done following prayer. I have learned if we try to do it in our own strength, we will only fail. We will be discouraged.

Remember we **are going out** to join God in His work. God told us to be His witnesses. But, HE prepares us and HE goes before us. HE has made Himself responsible for the results. HE asks us to join Him in His work. The results are up to God. We are going out to be a witness and invite people to join the family of God. We will be seeing them as God sees them. They are on their way to a place of eternal torment. God wants us to help rescue them. God has empowered you and me to be His witnesses. We are not going out just to invite them to come to this church. If we join God in His work on a regular basis; if we have a proper motive and trust God for the results; God will bless our efforts. We are His ambassadors or representatives. We are to

ask them to accept His gift of eternal life that only comes through Jesus Christ our Lord.

So, we need to ask them “The Big Question.”

IF YOU WERE TO DIE THIS MINUTE, DO YOU KNOW, WITHOUT ANY DOUBT, THAT YOU WOULD GO TO HEAVEN?

I have had some things we call “tracts” printed. (Pastor held up a small piece of yellow-gold paper with bold black letters. The papers were about 2 1/2 inches wide by five and one quarter inches high). The front side asks the Big Question and the reverse side has on it a prayer. It read:

BIG ? QUESTION

***“IF YOU WERE TO DIE THIS MINUTE,
do you KNOW (WITHOUT ANY DOUBT)
THAT YOU WOULD GO TO HEAVEN ?”***

How can you know?
(Turn this over)

At first, you introduce yourself. You just say, Hello, my name is . . . I am from the . . . Christian church. We are going through the neighborhood to personally invite you so that you will know that you are welcome at God’s . . . Christian church.

They will respond with a “that is nice” or some other pleasant remark. If they ask a question such as about service times or if we have Sunday School answer that first, but then you are to ask them.

Sir (or Mam) may I ask you a question?

Ninety-five percent will say, “Surely” or “Okay.”

You then ask them:

***IF YOU WERE TO DIE THIS MINUTE, DO YOU
KNOW, WITHOUT ANY DOUBT, THAT YOU
WOULD BE IN HEAVEN?***

Most of them will say that they do not know or that they would like to know or that they hope so. Those are all answers which allow you to follow up with:

“Would you like to know for sure?”

When they say, “yes.” Ask them to repeat this prayer after you. You say about two or three words and then pause so that they can repeat after you.

Heavenly Father, I know that You love me and have a wonderful plan for my life. Lord, I do not know for sure that I would go to heaven when I die. I want to know. I confess I am a sinner. I admit my sin separates me from You and from Your great love for me, Lord. Please forgive me of my sins. I turn from sin to You, Lord. I need help giving up sin. I give up my right to sin. I ask Jesus Christ to live in my heart. *I now receive Jesus Christ into my heart and life.* Thank You for forgiving me. Thank You for cleansing me. Thank You for saving me. Thank You for coming into my heart. Thank You for delivering me from every demon of hell. In the Name and Authority of Jesus, I pray. Amen and amen.

Then you say: “Tell my witnessing partner or someone in the house what you just did. Did you pray and *receive Jesus to be your Lord?*” (Romans 10:9-10, 13)

After they tell someone, ask: “How did it feel when you told them that you had just received Jesus as your Lord?”

You will have a wonderful time welcoming them into the family of God. Then tell them all about this . . . Christian church. And welcome them here, but that is not the main reason we are going out to speak to them. We are going out to tell them about the gift of God, which is eternal life through Jesus Christ.

That is about it. We will go over this again briefly on Saturday. But, I ask that you take this Big Question tract with you and use it on family and friends as practice.

A hand went up. “Yes, Ronald?”

“Pastor, can us teenage boys come out?”

“Ronald, I am counting on you!”

Ronald smiled. “I will be here pastor.”

Another hand went up and asked, “Pastor what do we say when they ask who is there?”

Pastor smiled, “Just say,

we are . . . *from the church!*”

I will tell you some more on Saturday. Let us close with a word of prayer.

CHAPTER SIX

GO BEFORE US HOLY SPIRIT

The next Saturday, the mechanic arrived at the church with his five year-old intelligent daughter. The Pastor was busily talking to the teenage boys sitting on the front pew. They wore dress shirts which was unusual for them. Although no one had told them how to dress, they had come dressed appropriately. They dressed to be representatives of God to the neighborhood.

The Pastor looked up at the mechanic and smiled. He tipped his head to the side, as he noticed the mechanic's pretty kindergarten aged daughter.

The mechanic said, "She wanted to come. Is it all right?"

The Pastor replied, "Does she want to go out and invite people to become followers of the Lord Jesus Christ and then to be invited to His church?"

"Yes, if that's all right with you. I told her I would have to ask you, but I thought she's never too young to start serving God."

The Pastor thought, "Well, it says God can use anyone. " (Smile) He walked toward the mechanic, shook his hand, patted him on the shoulder. He knelt down on the ground in front of the little girl. She wore a long flowered dress. Her sparkling blue eyes were full of anticipation. Her hair was combed back and was gathered at the back in a ponytail. Pastor John asked her, "Honey can you read, yet?"

She nodded and said "Yes, sir."

The Pastor said, "See these tracts with the title, *The Big Question?* and '**Smile Jesus Loves You ?**' "

She smiled and nodded, again saying "Yes, sir."

"Okay," the Pastor said, "You see these light blue flyers?"

The little girl nodded.

He said, "Now, I know you can count to ten, can't you?"

She nodded her head and smiled again, "Yes sir."

The Pastor continued, "I would like you to make up several stacks of ten. Ten of the blue papers inviting people in one stack; ten of the *Smile Jesus Loves You* tract in another stack. Then I want third stack of ten "*Big Question*" tracts. You will have many stacks of ten. Can you do that, honey?"

She smiled and nodded her head. "Yes Sir."

Pastor took her to the front pew. There she began to set out stacks of ten of each tract, and ten of half page blue flyers inviting people to come to this church.

The mechanic smiled. He knew Pastor was saying, "I don't think she should go outside at such a young age in this cold weather, but we will give her things to do around the church." The mechanic observed Pastor's wife and preteen son were present.

By now the church had approximately one fourth of its regular attenders present. Pastor happily thought, "I hope this same ratio of people willing to go out continues when the Lord later grows this local church."

Pastor John had set up an older overhead projector (rather than his computer) which he now turned on. It projected itself onto a blank light wall that was in front of the small church. It had on it the title, THE PURPOSE OF A CHRISTIAN [foot note ³] and [End Note ¹].

Pastor said, "Let us begin with a word of prayer. **Brother Ronald**, will you open in a prayer for us?"

Ronald stood, blushing. He cleared his throat and the teenage boy began to pray.

"Help us Lord this day to go out and invite people to be saved from hell and come to You. Help us to know how to use the Big Question tract. Help us to do it the best we can while depending totally on You. And please go before us Holy Spirit. We need you. I ask this in the Name of Jesus. Amen."

-
- ³ THE PURPOSE OF A CHRISTIAN
1. WITNESS (Draw Close to God; Give Answers: Tell Others About HIM.)
BUT SANCTIFY THE LORD GOD IN YOUR HEARTS: AND [BE] READY ALWAYS TO [GIVE] AN ANSWER TO EVERY MAN THAT ASKETH YOU A REASON OF THE HOPE THAT IS IN YOU WITH MEEKNESS AND FEAR: - I PETER 3:15
 2. EVANGELIZE (Start where they are and take them to Jesus, the Messiah.)
34) AND THE EUNUCH ANSWERED PHILIP, AND SAID, I PRAY THEE, OF WHOM SPEAKETH THE PROPHET THIS? OF HIMSELF, OR ANOTHER MAN? 35) THEN PHILIP OPENED HIS MOUTH, AND BEGAN AT THE SAME SCRIPTURE, AND PREACHED UNTO HIM JESUS. -ACTS 8:34-35
 3. MAKE DISCIPLES (Join a Bible teaching church so as to **obey** God.)
19) GO YE THEREFORE, AND TEACH ALL NATIONS, BAPTIZING THEM IN THE NAME OF THE FATHER, AND OF THE SON, AND OF THE HOLY GHOST: 20) TEACHING THEM TO OBSERVE ALL THINGS WHATSOEVER I HAVE COMMANDED YOU: AND, LO, I AM WITH YOU ALWAYS, [EVEN] UNTO THE END OF THE WORLD. AMEN. - MATTHEW 28:19-20

The PURPOSE OF A CHRISTIAN is printed out as a full page document with scriptures as an End Note 1. It can be copied and handed out or scanned or copied and used as an overhead or computer projection.

CHAPTER SEVEN

THE PURPOSE OF A CHRISTIAN

Pastor spoke, "I will spend a few moments on three diverse Scriptures. They will help you understand our purpose for going to invite people to come to into God's family and then into His local church house to grow up in the Lord."

"The first scripture is 1st Peter, chapter 3, verse 15. Let's read together from the transparency reflection on the wall. We will stand to read GOD's Word"

15) BUT SANCTIFY THE LORD GOD IN YOUR HEARTS: AND BE READY ALWAYS TO GIVE AN ANSWER TO EVERY MAN THAT ASKETH YOU A REASON OF THE HOPE THAT IS IN YOU IN MEEKNESS AND FEAR:

"We are told we are to sanctify the Lord. Sanctify means set apart or separate the Lord God in our heart and us unto the Lord. Where? In our hearts or inner most being. Then we are to be ready (prepared, eager). Ready for what? Ready to give to every man an answer. An answer of what? Our "hope" or the "expectation" we as Christians "expect." We expect: eternal life.

As much as I want God to build this church, that is not our purpose in going out to talk with the people. We must understand our purpose. It is God who died to pay for all sins, so all who accept His gift could go to heaven, not us. If we can quote one hundred scriptures and we quote all one hundred, unless that person has been prepared by God, nothing will happen. The scripture will be effective. But they will not come to God unless

HE has already prepared them to receive His gift of eternal life. God invites us to join Him in His work. He is God, not us.

When you go to the door in a neighborhood, we are going as a representative of God. But, what are you to do?

First of all you knock or ring the doorbell. If they do not answer the first knock or doorbell ringing, then knock again. And remember not everyone has a doorbell that works. I always knock at least twice and usually three times.

They may shout through the door.

"WHO'S THERE?"

You answer: "From the church."

Most will have their curiosity aroused and come to the door. When they open the door, you just say:

Hello my name is . . . I am from the . . . Christian church. We are going through the neighborhood personally inviting people to come to church so you will KNOW you are personally welcome.

With that you are just letting them know you are there for a good and Godly reason, but remember, we are not there to build up our local church with more people. That would be nice, if that happens, but that *is not* why we are out there. We are out joining God in His work of saving people on their way to a place of eternal torment. We are merely asking them, as God's representative, the Big Question.

Thus, you next ask them? “Sir (or Mam) may I ask you a question?”

More than ninety (90%) percent will say, “Yes” or “Okay.”

They have just given you permission to ask them any question in the world. So, ask them the most important question that a man has to answer in this world. You then ask them:

IF YOU WERE TO DIE THIS MINUTE, DO YOU KNOW, WITHOUT ANY DOUBT, THAT YOU WOULD GO TO HEAVEN?

Now there are three kinds of people you will meet: 1) the Proud; 2) the Saved; and 3) the Ready. Now, remember you are joining God in His work. We are looking for the ones who are *Ready* to receive Jesus Christ and His new life and be born again.

PROUD: The Proud will justify himself or herself. “I am a good person.” “I pay my bills.” “I don’t cheat on my wife.” “I don’t skip school.” Or some other thing that lets you know that this is not a heart that God has prepared to receive Him today. We *do not* debate or try to make them ready. Remember, that is not your job to make them ready or to tell them they are sinners. God the Holy Spirit will convict and convince, not you. So you say something like: “That is nice sir (or Mam).” Then, you invite the *Proud* to church. You offer them transportation for them or their children, but you do not pray with them to receive Jesus at this point. Remember, join God in His work. You are God’s harvest workers. I have found that when I try to convince them they need Jesus, which they do, they want to debate you and justify themselves. So then after you ask the Proud one if he or she has any prayer requests that he wants the church to remember. And

if they are not really terrible or hard, prayers, pray with them right at the door. Invite them again to church.

Before you leave the Proud, ask them for their name and address and write it down. Additionally indicate the prayer need. Also show if they are married, single, divorced, any children.

SAVED: The second type (the saved) claims he or she is Saved, Born Again, On their way to heaven. Many who say this are honestly right with God. But many who say this ***are not*** in a right relationship with God. It is not your job to find out if they are saved. Remember, we are joining God in His work. We are His laborers for the harvest. God knows their ‘heart’ or inner beliefs and their readiness, a lot better than do you. This one is saying to you he or she is not ready today to pray to receive Jesus. God has given to Himself the task of making men ready to receive Him.

It is not your job to tell the one who says he or she is saved or on their way to heaven that they are going to hell. Not even if they have a beer in their hand and are dressed immodestly. God the Holy Spirit will convict and convince them, not you. So you say something like: “That is nice sir (or Mam). You invite the Saved to church. You offer them transportation for them or their children, but you do not pray with them to receive Jesus at this point. Remember you join God in His work. You are God’s harvest workers. Ask the Saved much the same you asked the Proud one. Ask if he or she has any prayer requests that he wants the church to remember. If the requests are not really terrible or hard, take their hand and pray with them at the door. Invite them again to church. Write down their name and address and indicate the prayer need. Are they are married, single, divorced, any children?

READY: Finally you will find that the majority of the people you talk with are the Ready. They will admit that they do not know if they would go to heaven. Or they will say, "***I will not go.***" These people are honest and humble before God. These are the ones God has sent you to visit and pray with today. Ask them:

Would you like to know for sure that you are going to go to heaven when this life is over?

Any affirmative answer by them is an invitation for you to pray with them. Take them by the hand (as if shaking hands). Ask them to repeat after you. Say just a few words at a time. And then they repeat the words.

Heavenly Father, I know that you love me and have a wonderful plan for my life. Lord, I do not know for sure that I would go to heaven when I die. I want to know. I confess that I am a sinner. I admit that my sin separates me from Your great love for me, Lord. Please forgive me of my sins. I turn from sin to You, Lord. I need help giving up sin. I give up my right to sin. I ask Jesus Christ to live in my heart. I now receive Jesus Christ into my heart and life. Thank You for forgiving me. Thank You for cleansing me. Thank You for saving me. Thank You for coming into my heart. Thank You for delivering me from every demon of hell. In the Name and Authority of Jesus, I pray. Amen and amen.

Then you say: "Tell my witnessing partner or someone in the house what you have done. *Did you just receive Jesus to be Lord?* (Romans 10:9-10, 13)

After they tell someone, ask:

"How did it feel when you told them that you had just received Jesus as your Lord?"

You will have a wonderful time welcoming them into the family of God. Then tell them all about this . . . Christian church. And that they are welcome here.

We are out there to join God in His work of telling people the good news that they do not have to pay for their sins by their own eternal death. We are not out there just to build up this local church body. I know that may sound new to you. It is a turning from the practice of the past, but it is Bible.

Are there any questions?

Several shook their heads no.

"You all heard me speak about us joining God in His work before. Since you were paying attention then, I should not have expected you to have any questions," Pastor said with a big simile.

"Let us look at two verses in Acts 8, verses 34 & 35. If you have your Bible, please turn to Acts chapter 8, verses 34 and 35. Let us stand to read GOD's Word."

34) AND THE EUNUCH ANSWERED PHILIP AND SAID, I PRAY THEE, OF WHOM SPEAKETH THE PROPHET THIS? OF HIMSELF, OR SOME OTHER MAN? 35) THEN PHILIP OPENED HIS MOUTH AND BEGAN AT THE SAME SCRIPTURE AND PREACHED UNTO HIM JESUS.

The person the Bible is speaking of is called a eunuch. A eunuch is a man who has had his ability to father children taken away from him. He is given special service. He was a servant to the queen of Ethiopia. Most likely he was a black man.

The Lord sent Philip, a deacon and evangelist to him to speak to him about what he was reading. Philip heard him read from Isaiah 53. The eunuch asked Philip, "Of whom is the prophet speaking?" This man, the eunuch, did not know.

Notice, the eunuch was religious. He read Scriptures, but didn't understand them. Philip opened the scripture in Isaiah 53 and expounded about Jesus. This example is used to help us to understand our main focus is to be on Jesus. I don't expect anyone to preach a sermon. But, if they have a question from the Bible, just remember Jesus is found in the Bible as the Person of GOD the Son from Genesis to Revelation. If there is a question about Jesus, tell them:

"JESUS is God the Son. HE is eternal. HE is the Second Person of the three Persons in the one God."

This answer about Jesus is given only so they will know we are not of some 'cult' that speaks of another Jesus.

But, do not use the Bible to show the Proud ones they **are not** right with God. God will do that. And do not argue with those who claim they are Saved, but you do not see any evidence of it. The conviction of men is the job of God the Holy Spirit. Do not try to do God's job. You will mess up. Just join God by asking the

Ready if they want to *KNOW* that they can go to heaven. (Pastor smiled) Okay?

So, the only purpose of sharing these scriptures with you is so you understand that **wherever** a question starts, get back to Jesus. If they talk to you about their old maid aunt who has been overlooked by GOD, tell them Jesus wants her and them to have the abundant life. If they tell you the bad shape of the world and people involved in wars, tell them Jesus loves them."

"Whenever someone tries to get me off on some subject, bring them to Jesus, I usually say something such as:

'Isn't it wonderful GOD so loved you and me, that He was willing to give His only begotten Son? God gave His only Son, the only One He had, to come down to this world. So Jesus took on the form of a man. Jesus lived His life without sin. Jesus went to the cross to die then to rise again to demonstrate to you that HE had power over even death. So HE will raise us up and give us eternal life with Him.'

As you noticed, I paraphrased John 3:16. I am convinced if you have a testimony of what GOD has done for you, and know John 3:16, you know enough Bible to bring one to the question of all questions:

If you were to die this minute do you KNOW (without any doubt) that you would go to heaven?

Do we all understand? The point is: we should go out and invite people to receive Jesus? We are commanded to be His witnesses. We are not told to build our little segment of the body of Christ, called our church. We are to join God in His work of

winning those prepared (the Ready) for Him. Oh, yes we invite the Proud and the Saved to the church so they will know they are welcome here, but we are out as His laborers, in His harvest field. We are called to harvest those God has prepared. We are to ask the READY to pray to receive Jesus. Please do not get off of Jesus. Please do not allow them to get you into a “debate.”

Do we all understand?

Several heads nodded, including the head of the little kindergarten girl. Pastor was glad to know that she understood.

“Good. Good!” said the Pastor.

“Let us turn to the last scripture, found in Matthew 28, verses 19 and 20.”

“As you’re turning to that scripture in your Bible, I want you to realize that this is one of several passages where Jesus tells people what He **expects** them to do. If you’ve found your place in the Bible, let’s stand and all read together Matthew 28, verses 19 and 20. JESUS speaks:”

19) GO YE THEREFORE, AND TEACH ALL NATIONS, BAPTIZING THEM IN THE NAME OF THE FATHER, AND OF THE SON, AND OF THE HOLY GHOST: 20) TEACHING THEM TO OBSERVE ALL THINGS WHATSOEVER I HAVE COMMANDED YOU: AND, LO, I AM WITH YOU ALWAYS, *EVEN* UNTO THE END OF THE WORLD. AMEN.

“You may be seated again.”

As we read this passage, Jesus had died on the cross but here **He was risen from the dead.** Isn’t that powerfully awesome?

Jesus had thus proved He has ultimate power over the ultimate enemy: **death.** Here HE stands THE RESURRECTED JESUS. He speaks to the eleven disciples. Jesus is not necessarily speaking **to** just the eleven disciples. What HE is saying to them something is for all to read, or God the Holy Spirit would not have included it in our Bible.”

First we go. We join God in His work. We ask the Big Question and invite the Ready to pray and receive the gift of God that keeps them from the lake of fire and eternal torment. We do not pray with those who are not ready. We do not try and do God’s job of conviction and convincing. We do invite all to God’s church here. We want them to feel personally invited and totally welcome. But, we leave the results entirely up to God. We join Him in His work. That is what God commands.

“**Go**” is first. Evangelize, instruct (but not as in the office of teacher) is second and baptize (to make disciples) is third.”

Most Christians want to skip the **Go**. Then if someone comes to the church they will teach them, but the minute they find out they are saved, they want to baptize them and put them into an office.

“What is Jesus asking them to do? To teach them their ABC’s? To teach them their numbers?”

Pastor laughed as he saw the mechanic's daughter vehemently shaking her head, No. He said "That's right, honey. What is HE telling us to go teach?"

The little five year old girl said, without hesitation, "Show them how to love Jesus who died for them."

The Pastor smiled, saying " WOW. Yes. Yes! Teach them to love Jesus. That can only happen if a person is born again. Born again is a phrase that Jesus uses in John Chapter 3 to tell Nicodemus that religion is not enough. You must be born again to enter into heaven. The Big Question, the sincere prayer and the confession of faith will do that for them. We are, therefore, to join God in His work of rescuing all men from eternal torment.

Today we are going out to invite them first of all into the Family of God. To do that we use: The Big Question. Only after they have prayed or said they did not want to pray do we invite them to . . . Christian Church. Only after they have received Jesus, will it then be the church's responsibility to first show them how to grow up as a Christian, and identify with Jesus, by being baptized. After identifying with Jesus, the Bible says to teach them to observe all things Jesus told us to do. In other words, we are to make them into disciples who are equipped to go and share The Big Question with others.

"The important point I want you to see is that we don't go out and try and get someone cleaned up, first. They are not taught how to act like a Christian first. No, first you become a Christian by praying to receive Jesus. But, whomsoever you meet, whether they pray to receive Jesus or not, tell people, they are

personally **invited** to come." "Do any of you have any questions?"

The mechanic put his hand up.

The Pastor said, "Yes, sir Brother."

The mechanic stood and said, "Pastor, I'm a relatively young man. However, I had a relatively sin filled life. I was a drunkard and as you know, experimented with use of drugs. Are you telling us it's all right to invite someone to church who is either a drunkard, or is using drugs?"

The Pastor answered with a question, "What would Jesus do?"

The mechanic still standing said, "Why, I believe HE would invite anyone who wanted to come, to come.

The Pastor said, "Then you have your answer?" But first we are to ask them The Big Question and offer them the chance to pray to receive Jesus.

The mechanic nodded, smiled and sat down.

The robust Sister White, with her long brown hair, her peaches and cream complexion and smile on her face, raised her hand and said (without standing),

"Pastor, my husband comes from a long southern tradition. He is at best a very nominal Christian. He is concerned about our children in their teenage years. One of the reasons he has

allowed us to come to this church is because, Well, frankly he is worried about a large youth group with many **different kinds** of people in the youth group. We might lose him if we start inviting peoples of **different** backgrounds, especially teens of” (She seemed embarrassed)

The Pastor replied, “Sister White, if you are saying you are concerned about your husband’s salvation, and perhaps the salvation of your teenage children, that I can understand. But, tell me, do you believe Jesus came for just one color of people or one ethnic group?”

Sister White shook her head no.

“But,” she said, “I’m worried about my husband. I don’t want us losing him from the church. I just don’t want to lose him from the church.”

The Pastor replied, “Sister White, neither do I. But, more importantly I want him to see Jesus in us so he wants to receive Jesus the way you and others have received Him. Jesus loved those most unlovable people of His day. Jesus reached out to the Samaritans. Jesus healed the lepers. How would your husband react to this ministry and to the Jesus, we say we represent, if we said we were going to invite only some people? And it is based upon their color or their ethnic background, or perhaps where they work or the amount of money they can give?”

Sister White nodded and said, “You are right, but ...”

Sister Shirley interrupted:

“Sister White, I know your husband very well. I’ve talked with him. And he would be very disappointed if this church did not allow the gospel to be presented to every person. As a matter of fact, years ago when my husband talked to him, he said it was the first time anyone had ever talked to him from a church. He said he felt church people believed they were too good to speak to him. How would he react if we start acting **too good** to speak to certain people?”

Sister White said, “You know, Sister Shirley, I have never really thought about it that way.”

- - - - -

“Okay, then we agree. We go into all the world, and preach the Gospel to everyone?” Pastor asked, smiling.

Sister White smiled and nodded her head.

The Pastor said, “Great, Great!”

Then the Pastor said,

“You know, we are going to go out for a couple of hours in this cold weather. My wife is going to prepare for us some soup and sandwiches. Now, you’ve all come out here to go out knock on doors. I was wondering?” The pastor asked, looking at the five year old girl. “Is there one person who would volunteer to stay behind with my wife and maybe my son? I know she will need help with the luncheon and the hot chocolate.”

Up went the hand of the five year old girl.

Pastor said, “Oh. Good, honey. I’m glad you agreed to help my wife.”

The Pastor’s wife smiled.

And so that first day they were going to finish the door to door training and then go out on the streets equipped with the knowledge that they had learned about the purpose of a Christian and how to ask *THE BIG QUESTION*.

Before the final training, the deacon, the mechanic and Ronald were asked to each say a short prayer. Then Pastor closed in prayer:

“Help us to remove ourselves and allow You, God the Holy Spirit, to produce Christians. Help us to join You, Lord in Your work of saving men and women. We want what You desire. We want to be used of You. Please go before us Holy Spirit and prepare hearts to come into Your kingdom. Watch over us as we go in obedience to You Lord to tell others about You. That is our purpose as a Christian. We thank You God for allowing us to join You in Your work. We thank You, Jesus for dying on the cross that we might accept what You did for us and be on our way to heaven. We thank You, God the Holy Spirit for coming into us. Guard our mouths that we may only speak Your words. Guard our hearts that we may see them as You see them, a person for Whom Christ Jesus came and died. And help us not to get into a routine of doing it by memory. But use us differently with every different person. Use us each we pray as we ask The Big Question. Then prepare those with whom You want us to pray. We will thank You, we will give You all the glory for the results. We ask this all in the Name of Jesus. Amen and amen.

CHAPTER EIGHT

WHAT DO WE SAY, PASTOR?

Before they left, Ronald raised his hand and asked, "When we go and knock on someone's door and they ask, **Who is it?** What so we say?"

Pastor: "I always answer that question by saying '**From the church!**'"

"Usually they will not ask what church. Because they HAVE SOME RELATIONSHIP with a church, or have had a relationship in the past, they usually come to the door. They know you are not a dangerous person."

Ronald: "Okay, what do we say when they get to the door?"

Pastor: (Thinking to himself, I thought I just covered this? He was listening. I wonder where I failed to communicate?)

"Ronald let me use you as an example, okay?"

Ronald: "Okay"

Pastor: "Knock, knock, knock."

Ronald: "Who is it?"

Pastor: "From the church."

Ronald: "I'm opening the door now."

Pastor: "Hello, my name is Pastor John." "And I'm from . . . Christian Church."

As he said that he handed Ronald a flyer and said:

"I would like to personally invite **you** to worship with us at God's church services over here (pointing to the blue flyer) at God's little Christian church."

"Services are on Sunday morning beginning at 9:45 a.m. for Sunday School for all ages, nursery through adults. 11:00 for Worship Service. Now if you sleep late on Sunday you can come and be with us at our services at 7:00 p.m. Sunday evening. We also have midweek services, Wednesday at 7:00 in the evening."

Pastor: "It is only after I have sort of at least introduced myself, that I would then ask."

Sir, may I ask you a question.

If he was one of the READY. I would go to the question: "Would you like to really be sure you are going to heaven?"

Pastor: "Young man, may I ask you a question?"

Ronald: Certainly, Sir.

Pastor: *IF YOU WERE TO DIE THIS MINUTE, DO YOU KNOW, WITHOUT ANY DOUBT, THAT YOU WOULD GO TO HEAVEN?*

Ronald: I'm not sure.

Pastor: "Would you like to know for sure?"

Ronald: That would be nice to know.

Pastor: (Reaching out as if to shake hands) Take my hand and repeat this prayer after me.

Then we pray with them a few words at a time, the same way I did when I came over to your mom's flat.

Ronald: Pastor, if we do not remember the prayer like you do, can we read it off the back of The Big Question tract?

Pastor: Of course, Ronald don't make it hard for yourself. Just say a few words and then have them repeat after you. Such as, Heavenly Father,

Ronald: Heavenly Father.

Pastor: I know that You love me.

Ronald: I know that You love me. Oh, I see. (Ronald smiled). This is going to be easy.

Heavenly Father, I know that You love me and have a wonderful plan for my life. Lord, I do not know for sure that I would go to heaven when I die. I want to know. I confess that I am a sinner. I admit that my sin separates me from Your great love for me, Lord. Please forgive me of my sins. I turn from sin to You, Lord. I need help giving up sin. I give up my right to sin. I ask Jesus Christ to live in my heart. / now receive Jesus Christ into my heart and life. Thank You for forgiving me. Thank You for cleansing me. Thank You for saving me. Thank You for coming into my heart. Thank You for delivering me from every demon of hell. In the Name and Authority of Jesus, I pray. Amen and amen.

Pastor: Ronald now tell my witnessing partner or someone in the house "*I just received Jesus into my heart and life.*"

Ronald: (looking the pastor in the eyes) I just received Jesus into my heart and life.

Pastor: "How did it feel when you told them that you had just received Jesus into your heart and life?"

Ronald: That really felt good.

Pastor: (Shaking hands) I want to personally welcome you into the family of God. And I want you to know that you are more than welcome at our . . . Christian church to come and grow with us in the love and knowledge of Jesus.

And of course we want to include your entire family. Do you have any children here in the house?"

Ronald: "Yes, I have a sister who is five and a brother who is ten.

Pastor: "Why, that's wonderful. We have Sunday School services for people of all ages. And if the children need to get to the service, we can certainly arrange for them to have a person walk with them or if they are very little, ride to the services. Now we are not a baby sitting service, but we do pick the children up around 8:30 in the morning. We don't return them again to you until around 1:30 in the afternoon. So on those mornings when you can't come with them to church, they can still have a real good time."

Ronald: "Okay I think I understand. Let me try you."

The Pastor smiled,

Pastor: "Okay Ronald, you come knock on my door."

Ronald: "Knock, knock, knock."

Pastor: "Who's there?"

Ronald: "**From the church**"

Pastor: "I'm opening the door now."

Ronald: "Hi. My name is Ronald and I'm from the

. . . Christian church. I would like for you to come and worship with us in the services. We have church at 9:45 on Sunday for Sunday School for everyone, and 11: 00 for Morning Services and 7:00 for evening services.

Ronald: Sir, could I ask you a question?

Pastor: "Yes. By the way, what is that blue thing you have in your hand there?"

Ronald. (Laughing) "Excuse me, I forgot to hand you the blue flyer, didn't I?"

Pastor: "Ronald don't worry you're doing fine. Slow down, a little. Okay? Okay. Continue Ronald."

"Hey" pastor thought to himself, as he smiled, "I'm going to see whether or not Ronald learned the lesson from earlier this morning."

Pastor: "I hear that church down there has people in it that don't vote the same way I do."

Ronald replied: "Uh, well that's probably true, but," (then suddenly Ronald smiled and said) we all love Jesus and that keeps us loving each other. And since you said I could ask you a question, sir,

IF YOU WERE TO DIE THIS MINUTE, DO YOU KNOW, WITHOUT ANY DOUBT, THAT YOU WOULD GO TO HEAVEN?

The other people could not help but laugh, even clap their hands and exclaim: "Well done!" The deacon said, "Amen!"

So to the reader of this chapter, it's fairly simple. Ronald, age 14, and of good average intelligence, was able to communicate on his first attempt. If Ronald can learn and do at 14, and a five year old understood, you can do it too. Just remember when you knock on the door and they ask who's there? Answer by saying:

"FROM THE CHURCH."

Then allow God the Holy Spirit to take over as you join God in His work. And of course the main reason we go is to be used of God to ask them *THE BIG QUESTION!*

AFTER INTRODUCING YOUR SELF AND THE CHURCH, YOU ASK: SIR, MAY I ASK YOU A QUESTION. AND WHEN THEY SAY YES, ASK:

IF YOU WERE TO DIE THIS MINUTE, DO YOU KNOW, WITHOUT ANY DOUBT, THAT YOU WOULD BE IN HEAVEN?

CHAPTER NINE

HOME MISSIONS

Many people think about being a foreign missionary and taking the gospel to the people in native lands that have never heard. They fail, however, to recognize the mission field in their neighborhood. So, they are not always ***faithful to God*** here at the local church. And it is foolish to think that some Mission Board or group of people will invest thousands of dollars in you because you say you want to go to some foreign country that you will not do at home. Remember the Bible tells us to start at our Jerusalem. (Our local community) to be witnesses unto Jesus.

So, over the next three months, the people who regularly attended Saturday witnessing would drop to as few sometimes, as four: ALWAYS the pastor, the mechanic and two teenage boys were faithful. They asked many the Big Question and prayed with several each week, yet, they did not see much of a growth in the local church or in the neighborhood evangelism program. But, the pastor noted that the people of the church seemed more faithful as they now saw themselves as a part of the Lord's real work. Even those who did not go out, were able to respond to the Jehovah's Witnesses who knocked on the door and asked them "Who else do you know who is going out door to door?"

Our church goes out every week door to door.

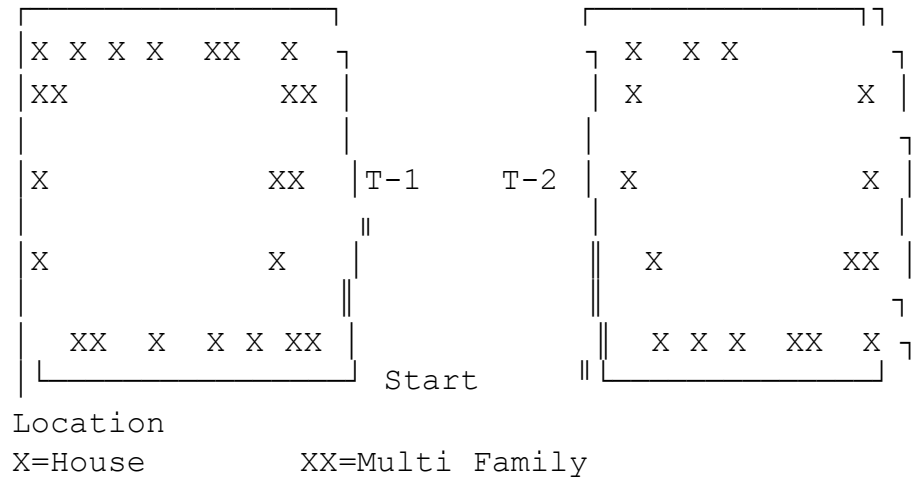
Usually, when they returned back to the church on those cold winter days, Pastor's wife, or Sister Shirley was waiting for them. There was HOT chocolate for all. The mechanic's five year old came about two out or four Saturdays to help with supplies and with refreshments. The pastor told the mechanic,

Brother Adam that he wanted to get his daughter on the street witnessing, when it was warmer and dry.

The mechanic replied proudly: She already asks “The Big Question” to her cousins. Then he laughed his “hee hee” laugh.

Although they had refreshments, they did not believe in having food in the sanctuary of the church. The pastor said the church was a place of prayer and service to God. Food was even kept out of the basement Sunday School rooms. There was however, a small kitchen and fellowship room at one end of the basement and that is where they enjoyed hot chocolate. They hoped to build a “fellowship” hall next to the church and move the kitchen there.

Over those next few months, (fall and winter) they started going to the neighborhood around the church. They started at the house next door and worked their way around the block. They worked on both sides of the street. That way one witnessing team could always see the other witnessing team or notice that they hadn’t come out of a particular house. No one ever went into a house alone. If the first team (T-1) was not out of the house by the time the second team (T-2) finished its side of the block, then team two (T-2) crossed over and worked backward until they found the other team. The teams went in twos, so each person in the team was responsible for the other person. Also, one team was responsible for the other team on their block. Every week at least a handful of people prayed to receive Jesus. And visitors became regular and God was being glorified and His Body was being built, but, as we said earlier, the church membership did not seem to be growing. It was as if the church was just being used, at the present as a “birthing station.” God had not seen fit to use them as “*DISCIPLE MAKERS.*”

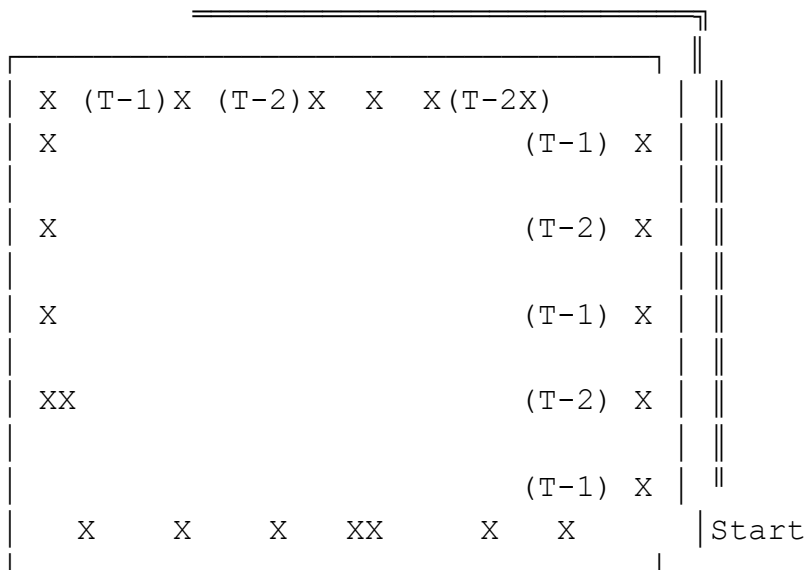


The pastor, mechanic and two boys learned many things about the neighborhood, but they also learned something about God and His faithfulness. It was one week when it was cold and damp, but they went out anyway. They seemed to have a rough time witnessing. Only two people prayed the prayer and no one promised to visit the church. But, they had been faithful, so God was faithful. That Sunday (following one of the worst witnessing Saturdays of the winter) there were five brand new people in church. When pastor reviewed the visitors cards and asked around, he discovered these people were not relatives of anyone in church, no one from church invited them. God sent them in. We were faithful, God was faithful. God was keeping His blessing flowing. Even when the praying with and inviting of people was not going so well, God brought visitors into the church to keep us encouraged. God is an awesome and faithful God. (smile) Isn’t God good? Be not weary in well doing. God is your ‘rewarder.’

After a few weeks, it was learned that this method of walking on the block across the street and only meeting up at the end of the block was not the best method when both teams were working **around a single block. If** they were covering one block **and going around all four sides** of almost all single family houses, then the best method was the "Leap Frog" method.

Two teams work on the same side of the street. The first team (T-1) goes to the first house. The second team goes to the second house. Then the first team (T-1) goes to the third house and so on (as illustrated).

Leap Frog Method (same side of street)



Once they had gone around the church working four blocks outward, they had covered twenty four (24) blocks on their witnessing map. **[As illustrated in End Note 2]** Every house was

within six blocks of the door of the church. For two reasons it was decided that now, other areas could be covered.

- 1) More than six blocks was not a realistic walking distance for most people in the community.
- 2) In the relatively small community, they decided God could find them another place for visitation. They knew they would now just repeat themselves in the 24 blocks. They thought it too soon to go back over the same area.

However Pastor John said he wanted to cover every house three times this year, if we could. The houses remain the same. However, 1/4 of the residents would change houses each year. That was the national average. They had concluded this area was average. Thus, some would have moved in three months and many would move in a year. And those who remained would see a church concerned about their area.

Second Mission Field: A couple of miles away there was a housing project or group of apartments. The apartments were available for all people of all income levels. One paid rent according to the amount of money earned. If you had a very low income, the government subsidized your housing. Low to low-middle income people would receive some help. For those with income in a higher range, you would pay the full rent yourself. The rent was reasonable so people from low income to middle class lived in the apartments. They were people of all ages. They cut across social and economic lines. There were single mothers who had never been married. There were grandparents who had been married for forty years. Also, every color of the human race was represented there. There were Americans of African descent, Americans of Spanish descent, Americans of Northern European descent, and of course native Americans of American descent.

“It was,” the Pastor thought,
“a great mission field.”

(Scrivener’s Note: Almost all communities with population of more than two thousand have a lower income area or an area where people are concentrated or dense housing area, as public housing or a trailer park. However, in smaller communities [500 or less] you could walk over the whole town in about two weekends. In rural Kansas, New Mexico, rural Michigan or Montana visitation is accomplished by a combination of walking in the small community where the church is housed and riding in a pickup (or car) to the outer areas along the main roads. In Kansas, the preferred ‘ride’ is *the Kansas Cadillac* (it must be a 4x4 pickup, preferably diesel with a club cab). So, if your town is five thousand or larger you have the methods, but if your town has five hundred, this walking method will also work, but will have to be coupled with other transportation along the main roads. Remember, the loneliest house or area has a person for whom Jesus died.

(♪ *When HE was on the cross, I was on His Mind* ♪)

CHAPTER TEN

THE BEGINNING OF GOD’S BLESSING

Before going to see the manager of the Apartments, the Pastor prayed:

"GOD guide my thoughts and my words that I will not say too much, but will say enough that You will be able to open the doors of opportunity for us to go and tell others about You. This I ask in Jesus Name."

The Pastor then drove over and personally contacted the manager of the apartment complex to ask him if they could come visit the people.

The apartment manager, Roger, asked “Are you Jehovah Witnesses?”

Pastor said, “Well, no. We’re Christians here to **ask the Big Question and invite people to our church.**”

The manager asked, “What do you think of Jehovah’s Witnesses?”

Pastor John wanted to explain that Jehovah’s Witnesses were a cult leading people astray, and damning their souls for eternity since they believed in another Jesus Who they falsely claim is not God nor “the” Son of God, but is in fact Michael the archangel, “a” son of God. But, pastor felt a warning from within his Spirit man and so he said: “Most people say Jehovah’s Witnesses are way off the mark. One thing you have to admire is them out knocking on doors every week.”

The manager, (Roger) said, "Yeah I know, I was raised a J-W, but took up smoking, and was thrown out."

Then Roger exclaimed: "You know, most people just come and never ask. I'm impressed with you asking. Even the Jehovah's Witnesses think they have a right to be here. He paused.

"Sure, sure, why don't you come to the complex. There aren't any enclosed hall ways. The doors are on the outside. I can't see any law against it, 'specially when you ask first. You aren't coming to start trouble, just to invite people to go to church. Correct?"

Pastor: "Yes, we just want to come to invite the people to church. And ask them The Big Question"

The Pastor wanted to tell this man the error of the Jehovah's Witnesses and that the man was fortunate to have been thrown out, but pastor thought someday he would have that opportunity. However, he had come over to obtain permission to come and witness. God had answered his prayer. He had obtained permission. So he knew he had accomplished the Lord's mission to be able to join God in His work of praying with those who have already been prepared by God the Holy Spirit. He stayed focused on that mission and left.

(Later pastor discovered that if he had said bad disrespectful things to manager Roger about Jehovah's Witnesses, Roger would not have then been able to listen. The manager was allowing this group to come since Jehovah's Witnesses had been there. He also later said he had family in the Jehovah's Witnesses and thought that allowing this church to come would make it okay for more

visits by Jehovah Witnesses. God protected Pastor's mouth and "self" from doing it a man's way. And . . . well read on about God's results.)

That next Saturday was spent at the apartment complex knocking on the 34 doors. More than three fourths (3/4) of the families were home and answered the doors.

There were all greeted by,

"Hello my name is _____ and I am from the . . . Christian Church. We are in the neighborhood asking people to come to church (handing them a blue flyer).

The next question was:

Sir, (Mam) may I ask you a question?

When the person agreed to be asked, they asked:

IF YOU WERE TO DIE THIS MINUTE, DO YOU KNOW, WITHOUT ANY DOUBT, THAT YOU WOULD GO TO HEAVEN?

There were 25 personal contacts. We had all adopted the mechanic's habit of carrying 3 x 5 inch cards in our shirt pockets. When someone prayed to receive Jesus or showed an interest in church or had children they wanted to go to church, out would come a 3 x 5 card. The team member would ask:

"And your name is?"

When they responded, it would be written down. Sometimes there were questions and one had to honestly explain the purpose for the questions. One such conversation (with 3 x 5 card and pen in hand) after the usual "From the Church" introduction might have been:

Team Member: And what is your name, please?

Resident: Ephrie Adair. Why are you asking that?

Team Member: Oh this is for our records so we can pray for you or pick up the kids or notify you of special events at the church.

Team Member: (for those who prayed to receive Jesus)

And we want to put you on a special prayer list of recent converts. The church will pray for you at least twice a week for the next three months. And we will assign your name to a particular person to pray for you during their prayer time during that same period.

Resident: Oh. Okay.

Team Member: Are you married, sir?

Resident: Yes to Tiffany Rene Adair.

Team Member: (Writes wife's name) Your address is (looking at house numbers) 1234 . . . ?

Resident: Harrison Street

Team Member: Middle Town?

Resident: Right.

Team Member: And your zip here is that 111 ... ?

Resident: 11111.

Team Member: And **a phone number to reach you** is?

Resident: Why do you want a phone number?

Team Member: OH (smiling) so we can call you if we need to reach you. Or to tell you about something coming up at the church. Also, sometimes pastor asks us to do phone follow ups for prayers.

Resident: Uh. ... OH? Okay ? 555-555-5555

Team Member: And you said you had three children?

Resident: Right. Tommie, *she's* 8.

Team Member: T-o-m-m-i-e daughter - age 8?

Resident: Right and Ernestine, - she's 6.

Team Member: E-r-n-e-s-t-i-n-e, daughter - age 6?

Resident: Yes. And Willa Mae; she's 4 and ½.

Team Member: W-i-l-l-a M-a-e daughter - 4 and ½.

Resident: My wife is pregnant with our first son, I hope.
(He smiled a big toothy smile)

Team Member: Sir, would you like us to pray for a safe pregnancy for your wife?

Resident: Yes. Thanks. And could you pray for a boy?
(smiling)

Team Member: Let me write that all down. You never know what God will do. He is able. He surely knew we would be out today and that you would ask us to back date a prayer, didn't HE? (Smiling)

Resident: (Smiling) I appreciate that. Where did you say that church was located?

Team Member: (Pointing to the blue flyer) Here on the paper I gave you is the name of the church. Here is the address, It has a small map, the Pastor's name. Here is his church phone and his home phone number.

Resident: Your Pastor is giving me his home phone number?

Team Member: Right! And here he invites you to call him with any Spiritual problem, day or night.

Resident: Wow! Does he get crazy nut calls in the middle of the night?

Team Member: Well, that depends on what you mean. He had a homosexual man call him two weeks ago that was going to kill himself.

Resident: What happened ?

Team Member: Pastor prayed with him, told him God loved him without having to abuse him. He asked him if he wanted to have Jesus in his life?

Resident: And...

Team Member: Well Pastor couldn't tell us anymore than that because he considers it confidential, and he only told us to ask the church to pray for him.

Resident: And. . . What else?

Team Member: Well I prayed for him every day for about a week and a half now. I suppose others at the church are praying for him also.

Resident: And your pastor didn't call the cops or mental health or . . .

Team Member: How could he? The man called and asked for help with a Spiritual problem and that is confidential.

Resident: Wow ? Do you suppose we could call if we have a problem?

Team Member: Pastor wants to help you if you have a problem that Jesus can solve. He says Jesus is his Boss. That is who he works under. So if it is a Jesus problem, yes.

Resident: And is family trouble something for Jesus to solve?

Team Member: Yes it is. And if you call Pastor John, he will tell you how. But, you really ought to come to the church and hear God speak through him. *You could meet the people.* You'd like them. They are just **common folk**, honest and sincere.

Resident: You know maybe we will. Anyway, be sure to stop for the girls Sunday. What time?

Team Member: If you can have them ready about 8:45, we'd be here before 9:00 and have them to church for Sunday school at 9:45.

Resident: Okay . . .

Team Member: My name is Ronald. Lord willing, I will be here in the morning to pick up Tommie, Ernestine, and Wila Mae. I will either be with this man Brother Adam or Brother John the Pastor.

Resident: Okay Ronald. See you then.

Team Member: Oops. Almost forgot. Do you want to be on the church mailing list for special events, things like Vacation Bible School, Child Evangelism and if somebody comes to speak?

Resident: Yeah. Yes, please.

As you can see you write down the information and ask them to confirm it. You then have a card filled out with a name address and telephone number for future reference. When you ask the people, "Would you like to be on the church mailing list for special events?" If they said yes write down (R-JC=Received Jesus Christ; M.L.+Mailing List ;Sp. Ev. = **special events**)

Other information such as three children and their names and ages were written down. On the back side we write the prayer requests. Then this is no longer a 3x5 card, it becomes 'a person.'

CHAPTER ELEVEN

PREPARATION AND MEN

With the twenty-five (25) home contacts in the apartment house, the teams prayed with fifteen (15) to receive Jesus. They obtained 14 cards. Seven (7) children needed rides to Sunday School. Other parents promised to come or get their children to Sunday School. The teams had returned to the church excited again. And this time it was as if GOD had opened the very windows of heaven (and He had) and poured out a blessing as that Sunday most of them kept their word. Sunday School was filled. Couples or men teachers were in each class to welcome the new students. This was the first "big" blessing we saw with our eyes. (We had previously felt the joy of God's blessing our efforts) but we were now in our fourth month of faithful, every weekend witnessing. The pastor thought back to that first month of witnessing with many praying the prayer to receive Jesus but not many were becoming members of the church. Pastor was, at first, puzzled. So, he prayed and asked God to allow him to know what was the answer.

He received a two separate word answers:

PREPARATION

MEN

What, Lord? Who needs preparation? And the pastor thought on those things and this answer. Within a week the pastor could see from the circumstances that the *preparation* needed was directed at three levels: 1) himself, 2) people at the church and 3) the people who prayed to receive Jesus needed Christian training that they might better obtain elsewhere.

So, pastor explained to the mechanic and to Sister Shirley, Sister White and other people of prayer in the church the answer he had been given. He asked them to pray about it. And he asked them to become more Spiritually prepared.

About a week later his wife came to him and said,

John, the Lord has been taking me on a Bible study into First Timothy and I didn't understand until I heard a radio show also. Now I believe God is showing me that we need men in leadership. So, we need to ask God to raise up saved male leaders and born again male teachers.

She then explained that she had been listening, to a men's ministry on the Christian radio. A question came up about church. The moderator said, "Men are not attracted to 'church.' Many, who are just coming out of the world of sin, are driven away by dainty, feminine, table covers, soft seats and 'womanizing' of the local church." "The church was," he said, "founded by the strongest and most manly *man* in history.

And pastor's wife asked him, "John, do you know who that would be?"

Pastor replied, "I hope they said the Lord Jesus."

"YES." She exclaimed, then continued. "HE WAS A MASCULINE MAN. HE WAS SURROUNDED BY MEN IN MINISTRY ROLES."

"And" she excitedly declared, "Do you realize also that when a father brings his family to the house of God and to the Lord, that the percentage that stay in church is

staggeringly high, compared to single moms or families where mom only goes to church or just the children go???"

She continued: "John you need more men in your ministry team. You need men, called to teach."

Pastor was so glad that God had spoken to his wife about this. Pastor was confident that if God spoke to his wife, God was also speaking to other women in the church. And he asked,

Dear do you think the women in the church realize how special they are to God. How God placed the man here first so that he could be ready to love, protect, lead and guide his wife. Then when God had showed man all of creation, he prepared for man the ultimate gift. Eve. And you and every other woman in the church is a gift from God. Something that each man needs and without which no man is complete?

"John," his wife asked, "Am I your gift from God?"

Pastor John smiled and said, "Without doubt!"

His misty eyed wife, came over and sat very close to her husband, who, putting his arm around her, said.

"And you are also correct, when you say or think, men need to stop building the church on the backs of women. Men expect women to do all the work."

"Men need to step into their leadership roles of leader, protector and guide. And each man needs to admit that their wife is God's gift to them."

The second bit of information was more easily understood from the circumstances around the church. The men were not ready to be teachers of new babies in Christ. Nor were the new babies in Christ ready to take on the awesome task of leadership in the church.

A *novice* (new convert, one who has recently become a Christian) is not to be thrust into leadership. The disciples had walked with Jesus for three years before HE left them on their own. And still one of them (who had the rest fooled) was being used of the devil. (Judas Iscariot). I Timothy warns that a novice could be lifted up with pride and fall into condemnation (because) of the devil (and his evil intention). I Timothy 3:6

Pastor John knew that we needed to grow up men in the things of God. That would require men to become closer to God and to KNOW God and be able to recognize Him and His Ways. (For God's Ways are not like man's ways of doing things nor are God's thoughts the same as man's thoughts and ways Isaiah 55:8) HOW LORD? Pastor John had said to a Saturday morning men's prayer breakfast, "We need to move as quickly as possible to raise up Godly men who know God's ways. And know how to follow God's direction."

Pastor John proposed that every family be reading the Bible daily. And to be through it in less than a year. Pastor John explained.

"The Bible has eleven hundred eighty eight (1188) chapters. If one reads four chapters a day, he is through the Bible in about ten months. If he reads six chapters a day, he is through the Bible in less than seven months. We need every man to read through the Bible. We need to get to know what the Lord God is saying to each one of us so that we can build His Body and instruct His people."

A few of the men agreed to begin preparing themselves to be leaders by daily reading of the Bible and daily prayer. As men of God, we needed to be prepared. And as we prepared and joined God in His work there should be less and less mistakes as we begin to view things from God's perspective: eternity. Life is not over at death. Life has just begun.

Now on this outreach to the apartments with some of those men who were preparing to be leaders joining in to the out reach and the response, it was clear that God was in charge and was the Author of the blessing. It appeared God might have now seen them as ready to be used of God. HE was going to allow us the amazing privilege of beginning to instruct His new converts. God knew and we knew and now understood that it would require our total dependence on God. We must depend totally upon Him. Jesus said:

"I AM the Vine, ye are the branches: he that abideth in Me, and I am him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without Me ye can do nothing." (John 15:5)

We now were beginning to really *comprehend* that without God we could do nothing. We thought there had been only one reason to start at the church, but found out there are at least two reasons to work out from the church:

First: it is Scriptural to start locally (Acts 1:8) and

Secondly: it prepares you. The people living close to the church often know the church. The few mistakes made, while learning, are more likely to be understood and forgiven by the ones closest to the church.

Now with the first period of training, by God, was going on His mission field; reading His Word and regular daily pray. Were we prepared to begin to "teach" others?

However, by now the teams (the core of which was *four* men) had learned to pray over the efforts. First, they asked God the Holy Spirit to *go before* them. Next they asked God the Holy Spirit to *go in* them and *communicate through* them. Thirdly they asked God to allow them to join Him in His work of saving the lost and loving all God's creation. Finally they thanked God for the results. They asked Him to keep the evil one away so that he could not steal the seed of God sown in the hearts of the ones with whom they spoke. They asked God to protect those who had prayed, so that the evil one *not be permitted* to steal by worldly circumstances, friends, or other agents of the devil.

That day when they returned from the apartments, the mechanic closed in a simple prayer. It was as if he was reaching up to God's throne. God was being honored. God's glory was coming down to earth. He prayed a simple, God honoring prayer:

Almighty, all powerful God. Creator and protector of all humanity. You know that we prayed and asked You to have Your way today. We have tried to do it Your way. If we have failed You in any way, God please forgive. If You are pleased at all with our efforts to try to do Your will then please protect these people with whom we have spoken. And with those who prayed to receive You, oh God, please go to them. Please protect them from the evil one and his demons. Do not permit the devil or his agents to hinder these people. Please do not allow them to be confused. And please do not let them be deceived. Bring these Your creation and now

also Your children into Your church. And Lord if some come here to this local Body, prepare us to teach them. Lord have Your way. Grant salvation to those who visit a church, who did not pray to receive You, today. Help those who did ask You into their heart and life, to better understand You and Your Ways. Also, for those who need healing, grant Your healing. Meet all needs spiritually, emotionally and physically. We need You Lord. We want to do it Your Way. Not our way. Have Your way Lord. We claim for You, Your victory! Without You, we admit we can do nothing. We need You Lord. Lord prepare each one of us to be fit vessels for Your use. We surrender ourselves unto You. We say, Here am I, Lord use me. And Father we ask this all in the Mighty Name of Jesus. AMEN and amen.

CHAPTER TWELVE

THE SECRET OF CONTINUED SUCCESS

Pastor John stood and said:

GOD IS GOOD! He tells us in His Word that we are to be His witnesses. He will use us as we join Him in his work. God has seen fit to bless your efforts in this church as you ask others The Big Question and watch as God the Holy Spirit does that transformation of men's lives, right before our eyes. GOD is so good!

Remember when you named me Pastor of the church two and one half (2 ½) years ago. Our total membership was 35. On a good Sunday we had 30 in church. Now the entire church is filled even the extra pews and the extra chairs we set up. Look at the Attendance Board in the back. It's not for Worship Service, but for Sunday School: "185"; last week: "179"; one year ago "72". Brother Ephrie, two years ago today was the Sunday you had Brother Ronald worried when he came to your house to pick up the girls. You said they wouldn't be needing a ride. When he asked you why not? You put the smile back on his face. You said because you and your wife would be bringing them. Brother Ronald came into the church building that morning literally shouting for joy.

Ronald: "Pastor John! Pastor John!" Out of breath, he continued. "God is so good!"

Pastor: Yes HE is Ronald.

Ronald: No I mean *really* good!

Pastor: Okay. What do you mean?

Ronald: This man from the apartments!

Pastor: Which man? . . . Ronald settle down.

Ronald: He's coming. He's coming.

Pastor: Good Ronald. Good.

Ronald: Pastor, we'll have more than SEVENTY today for Sunday School.

Pastor: Well that's good we have been running as high as 57. Right?

Ronald: No. 52 two weeks ago.

Pastor: Oh, Right.

Ronald: Well the 52 will all come back and I know that we have at least 10 coming from the Apartment complex. Mr. Adair is bringing his pregnant wife, his three girls and his brother Taylor: five plus him that's six. Well seven with the baby inside. (smile)

Pastor: We already had four children in the station wagon. You are right Ronald. If the other six attend we will have ten or more visitors from the apartments.

Ronald: Pastor, they all need Jesus. I prayed last night. People who prayed with us to receive Jesus are going to understand. Others are going to be saved. Wow! Well Pastor I have to get with Eric so we can go pick up our walking group from around the church. I think the James family is about to come also. **Glory to God!!**

As Pastor, I just stood there smiling. We watched Ronald just about float out of church and hurry toward the families he and Eric always walked with to church. As Pastor I thought, "It will be good to have more than seventy (70) in Sunday School."

"Maybe we had better start thinking about larger class rooms," He thought.

"You see, Ronald's infectious good happy spirit spread to me."

"That was two years ago and we had 72 in Sunday School that morning. The next week we had gone back to the Apartments. That was the day the manager, Brother Roger, told me he was going to check us out. He said he was a friend of Taylor Adair who claimed he had been saved. Taylor told Roger the reason Taylor wasn't smoking or drinking anymore that week was he prayed to receive Jesus. And many remember **that morning** when Brother Roger came forward last year. He came forward following the invitation after the message God allowed me to preach entitled: **I AM ALPHA AND OMEGA.**"

"Those who were here this Friday evening for family prayer heard Brother Roger. He told us that God had kept him free of

tobacco, alcohol and drugs for one year. He looks different doesn't he? To God be the Glory. Amen?"

"Then we prayed about it. The agreement of the witnessing team was God leading us to start at the church and work outward again. We did that. We covered the 24 blocks again. Although we had many more church brothers with us now, it took us a little longer the third time through. The people were getting to know us. They would invite us in. They would ask us to pray with them and for them. Almost every week, it was the original group, plus most of the men teachers and Taylor Adair and Eric's older brother Petros. Others have been faithful to visitation when their work schedule allowed them to come. God gave us consistently five or six witnessing teams. We are really being able to become ministers to the people around us."

And anyone can be trained. We are going to have a special training session this next week and as always we will use *The Big Question*. And we will join God in His work. We will be after those who are the what . . . ???

"The READY!" Several voices replied.

Yes, those who have been prepared by God the Holy Spirit who are 'Ready' to receive Jesus. God has to draw them. If we try to do it we will fail. BUT WITH GOD all things are possible.

"Then a funny thing happened. Well, it is not funny or strange if you think about it in the context of God. Although we had mild success in having many people from right close to church come, God started sending people from other areas and church growth was slow, but steady."

"We first had more than two hundred (200) at the church Christmas play. Most of the neighborhood came. Then more than two hundred fifty (250) attended this past Easter. Every Sunday we were growing a little more."

"Each Sunday it still is the goal of the Sunday School to have more Bibles in Sunday School this year than we had people in attendance last year. Almost always God does that. THANK YOU, Lord!"

While we were and are still witnessing in the neighborhood or at the Apartments or elsewhere every week. God blessed those efforts in His way. Then God's prepared teams drove up to Other Town about fifteen (15) miles away and for six weeks in a row we covered that town. We have established Wednesday Bible study groups up there. And perhaps God will establish a second . . . Christian church. When? When God says . . . NOW!

Another unusual thing happened. This time God sent in people from closer to us or from very far away. We started to have unannounced visiting missionaries or native pastors. Remember Brother Curry from Brazil? Or Brother Pacleb from the Philippines? The Brothers from Haiti, the one from Tobago?

Then this past Christmas we didn't keep an accurate count. However, more than three hundred fifty (350) were served at the fellowship dinner at the hall in the church up the street that we used for a neighborhood Christmas program. That is the church Brother Ephrie says is ours. He claims it by faith. He told the Episcopal church that they were going to give it to us.

We now open the Fellowship hall Tuesday through Friday after school. We have put up two sets of baskets in the parking lot. It has become apparent we needed a larger Fellowship Hall.

We had been praying. So first we asked God what HE wanted us to do? HE told us to first give more money to foreign independent missionaries. WE DID. But, the more we gave, the more our offerings increased.

When more people were coming over after school and in the summer, we prayed again. God asked us to first count the cost. We decided its cost had to be separate from regular offerings. We began to take up special collections. We prayed God would take our little and add to it. We became impatient and prayed again. We asked God if we should borrow. We didn't believe that was His way. Finally we felt led of God to do our project in pieces, as we were enabled by God's provisions. We agreed as soon as we had enough money for the pouring of the cement slab floor, we would do that. Oh, yes, that property next to the church those five vacant fifty by one hundred (50 x 100)foot lots have been given to us. When that happened, people could see the vision coming to be. We poured the slab in less than two months. Quite by chance it has become a basketball floor of the youth in the neighborhood. Okay, yes, I like to take a shot or two. (Smiling).

Next we started a collection for the materials to construct the walls. We prayed and agreed on cinder walls. Then we discovered Brother Roger and Brother Taylor Adair both lay block. We believe God would have us later build a frame with siding around the outside of the blocks for insulation.

So, we prayed again. A month later, on a Sunday there, behind the church was material for ten course of cinder blocks. Also roof trusses and shingles. God has made that a virtual reality. The idea of a separate Fellowship Hall for this church which began with Sister Shirley's husband's prayers. Later Brother James and Sister Aggie prayed for a place for youth

group activities. God has seen fit to allow it to come into existence. GOD is good to us! And NO! We are not moving from the area. So, if you feel called to another area, we will help you get a church started by going out with you for a few weeks and training others. And as long as you have six men who will pray and obey, WATCH GOD work through you!

Also the house next door on the other side of the church parking lot belongs to a Christian man. He will sell at a low price as we need to expand in the future. But we need to pray again. As I mentioned, I am warned by Brother Ephrie, he believes God is going to give us that church building up on the corner of Main and River just a few short blocks away. He says the denomination hardly ever uses it. He says It already has a gym for the neighborhood kids. There is a stage for the regular staging of plays, instead of just our Christmas and Easter plays. He says **he believes** God would have us show Christian movies and invite the neighborhood into receive Jesus. We need to pray again. We then have to wait and see what GOD has for us. Right? Remember everything by prayer and permission from God. We pray and we obey!

Before my message on **HE IS WORTHY**, here is my chief mechanic and friend Brother Adam with the announcements and offering.

Brother Adam: "ANNOUNCEMENTS":

DO NOT FORGET SATURDAY WITNESSING PROGRAM! WE ARE STARTING OUR FIFTH TIME AROUND THE 24 BLOCK AREA. PLEASE CONTINUE TO PRAY FOR US AS WE CONTINUE TO START OVER AGAIN AT OUR CHURCH FRONT DOOR. WE WILL EXTEND OUTWARD FROM OUR COMMUNITY THIS TIME COVERING 30 BLOCKS. AFTER

THAT WE WILL GO AGAIN TO THE NEXT COMMUNITY. EVENTUALLY WE WILL FINISH GOD'S PLAN THAT HE HAS LAID OUT FOR THE PURPOSE OF A CHRISTIAN AND SUMMARIZED IN THE BOOK OF ACTS, CHAPTER 1 VERSE 8.

YE SHALL RECEIVE POWER AFTER THAT THE HOLY GHOST HAS COME UPON YOU AND YE SHALL BE WITNESSES UNTO ME IN JERUSALEM, JUDAEA, SAMARIA AND UNTO THE UTTERMOST PARTS OF THE EARTH.

CHANGED LIVES: The Bible says: "Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold all things are become new."

Sister Shirley sat in the modest twenty-eight (28) person choir. It had been started with six people last year. She was beaming at Pastor John. But she was thanking God for her fellow choir members. One of the men had been a selfish and mean person that ended up in prison because of his violence. Now, he was kind and helpful, always concerned about others. His wife said that he had stopped beating on her and his oldest son said it must be God who had made such a major change in his Dad. Another young lady who had started down the path of crime and sin had now consecrated her entire being to be a sanctuary to God. She stopped dating anyone for months. Now a young man from the church had been inviting her to his family events. And, Sister Shirley thought, 'The miracle there was that the young man's family had taken this girl in, realizing that she was a new creation in Christ Jesus. It was good to see that the former black Muslim family could accept a white girl as their son's friend. I wonder, she thought, what will come of this?' (She smiled inside and out). These changed lives all began with the Big Question.

As Pastor nodded to the ushers to prepare for offering time. Sister Shirley nudged Sister White who smiled as they both looked over the now almost all full forty (40) pews (twenty each side of the aisle). At the back, where a new blood red carpet began and covered the center isle, stood Sister White's husband (the one that she thought might leave). He was joking with a very dark skinned man Brother Mose (Eric's father). Later, she learned that her husband was saying the only time he questioned Brother Adam's Christianity was when he took up the offering. Brother White thought Brother Adam "just enjoyed it too much." Brother White handed Brother Mose an offering plate, as they both chuckled. The two waited for the signal from Brother Adam to come take up the offering. Changed lives: lives being totally transformed by that life changing encounter with Jesus were having their minds renewed and reconciled to God.

Brother Adam finished the announcements about the witnessing, prayer meeting, Bible studies, witnessing classes and new believers class. Then Brother Adam said to God's people of every background and kindred:

Smile at your neighbor. Shake their hand. Tell them you are glad they are here in the family of God. Make everyone feel welcome as we prepare for a happy time when god's choir will sing, our ushers will come and you can all be happy at offering time, "BECAUSE THE LORD LOVES A CHEERFUL GIVER." He said with a big smile and a happy chuckle. "God allows us to test Him. In Malachi God says if we tithe, see if God will not open the windows and pour out a blessing that there shall not be room enough to receive.

“But then comes the preaching of God’s Word that can, ... has. . . and will change your life radically!!!” Brother Adam still smiling, began by the offering by saying:

AND NOW THAT WE ARE SO MANY NEW IN CHRIST JESUS, HE SHOWS YOU . . . A MORE EXCELLENT WAY. . . . THE WAY OF LOVE OR CHARITY (God’s Agape Love). WHEN YOU GIVE IN THIS CHURCH, YOU GIVE TO HAVE THE GOOD NEWS OF JESUS CHRIST GO TO THE LOCAL NEIGHBORHOOD WHERE WE ARE BEING HIS WITNESSES AND ASKING THE BIG QUESTION: *IF YOU WERE TO DIE THIS MINUTE, DO YOU KNOW WITHOUT A DOUBT THAT YOU WOULD GO TO HEAVEN?* YOU CAN KNOW AND THAT IS WHY WE GO OUT EVERY WEEK TO TELL OTHERS ABOUT JESUS AND HIS SAVING POWER. AND SINCE GOD HAS BLESSED US, WE NEED TO GROW PHYSICALLY AS YOU ALL GROW SPIRITUALLY. AND THEN AFTER YOU GIVE A PART OF WHAT GOD HAS GIVEN YOU, GOD ALSO BLESSES YOU FOR GIVING. WHAT A DEAL!!! SO TEST GOD AND SEE!

THE BEGINNING

By the way, could I ask you a question:

IF YOU WERE TO DIE THIS MINUTE DO YOU KNOW, WITHOUT ANY DOUBT, THAT YOU WOULD GO TO HEAVEN?

**THE PURPOSE OF
A CHRISTIAN**

1. **WITNESS** (Draw Close to God; Give Answers: Tell Others About HIM.)

BUT SANCTIFY THE LORD GOD IN YOUR HEARTS:
AND [BE] READY ALWAYS TO [GIVE] AN ANSWER
TO EVERY MAN THAT ASKETH YOU A REASON
OF THE HOPE THAT IS IN YOU WITH MEEKNESS
AND FEAR: - I PETER 3:15

2. **EVANGELIZE** (Start where they are and take them to Jesus.)

34) AND THE EUNUCH ANSWERED PHILIP, AND SAID, I PRAY THEE, OF WHOM SPEAKETH THE PROPHET THIS? OF HIMSELF, OR ANOTHER MAN? 35) THEN PHILIP OPENED HIS MOUTH, AND BEGAN AT THE SAME SCRIPTURE, AND PREACHED UNTO HIM JESUS. -ACTS 8:34-35

3. **MAKE DISCIPLES** (Join a Bible teaching church, to obey God.)

19) GO YE THEREFORE, AND TEACH ALL NATIONS, BAPTIZING THEM IN THE NAME OF THE FATHER, AND OF THE SON, AND OF THE HOLY GHOST: 20) TEACHING THEM TO OBSERVE ALL THINGS WHATSOEVER I HAVE

COMMANDED YOU: AND, LO, I AM WITH YOU
ALWAY, [EVEN] UNTO THE END OF THE WORLD.
AMEN. - MATTHEW 28:19-20

END NOTE 2. A MODEL OF THE AREA COVERED BY CHURCH
WITNESSING PROGRAM OUTWARD FROM
CHURCH.

