

**General Topics :: Your ministry****Your ministry - posted by MJones (), on: 2008/11/8 13:01**

When I saw Willo's 'Journal of a Journey' thread that contained many posts of one journey, I thought it would be good to start a thread in which many journeys are briefly described.

In general, Ephesians 4 states that God has given gifts to His church for the purpose of building it up. When each person does their part, the whole body is joined and held together by every supporting ligament.

So the thread:

One or more postings that describes what you do.

One or more postings that describes the highlights or struggles (to keep it real) in the ongoing of what you do.

A posting of how what you do came about.

This may be edited over time, but this should be enough to get things going.

I will post this and then post my ministry separately.

**Re: Your ministry - posted by MJones (), on: 2008/11/8 13:41**

I have been a Christian for 30 years and have been active in my church for many of those years. So much so that I got burned out. A few years ago, I backed out of all my duties and simply sought God for myself and what He might do through me.

I decided to journal my thoughts as I studied and had my time with God. It is a blend of journaling and communication with God. Writing helps me to stay focused on the issue and thereby helps me to clarify my thoughts. It is a very rich time through which ministry has come.

Spending the time I do with God, I literally feel as if I am filled with Him. Where before, I knew about abundant life and thought that it was available to us, I had never known it as I do now.

As I sensed that all I was experiencing was for a purpose beyond myself, part of my seeking was for a discovery of that purpose. I began to notice that as I talked with individuals, I looked for opportunities to work Him into the conversation. As it was often a very good experience, I began to pray for more opportunities. Today, I find I have many opportunities per week to talk with individuals regarding spiritual matters. Some come as a name comes to mind and I call them to meet me for breakfast or lunch. Others just happen in the course of a day.

There are other things, but in an attempt to keep it brief, I will end here and post more another time.

**Re: - posted by MerleW (), on: 2008/11/8 13:45**

In light of your testimony, I believe you will find the following link very interesting.

<http://christreformed.wordpress.com/2008/10/24/2008-revival-conference/>

**Re: - posted by MJones (), on: 2008/11/8 13:55**

MerleW,

I did visit the site and I did find it very interesting. I often say that in the past, I worked for God; now I walk with Him. There is no comparison.

MJ

**Re: - posted by KingJimmy (), on: 2008/11/8 23:43**

I often say that in the past, I worked for God; now I walk with Him.

That blessed me wonderfully. One sister tried to get me to see that years ago, but it did not "click" until you said it now. She said she had come to the place where it was no longer her desire to be "used" by God as if she were some tool. The young pup I was in the Lord at the time, I did not comprehend that. I was burning on fire, ready to tell the world about Jesus, and greatly desired to be "used" by Him. Indeed, but it is not about being "used" by Him, but rather, simply "walking" with Him. Enoch walked with God, and had a wonderful prophetic ministry, being the first of the prophets to foresee the second coming of Christ. But we don't read about that ministry until Jude, several thousand years after the fact. For the thing that set apart Enoch, was not the dynamic prophetic ministry that he had-- though he most certainly did have that-- but rather, the thing that set him apart was, "that he walked with God."

**Re: Hudson Taylor's Spiritual Secret - posted by JoanM, on: 2008/11/9 1:56**

Hudson Taylor labored many years (16) in China before he discovered a "secret" in 1869.

*"In 1869 Hudson was influenced by a book called "Christ Is All" by Stephen H. Tyng given to him by a fellow missionary. He referred to his new understanding of abiding in Christ for the rest of his life. He was quoted by fellow missionary Charles Henry Judd as saying: 'Oh, Mr. Judd, God has made me a new man!"*  
([http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/James\\_Hudson\\_Taylor](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/James_Hudson_Taylor)) Wikipedia

The Old Paths, Issue 6, page 16-17, describes some of this in the article  
([http://www.sermonindex.net/mail\\_si/oldpaths/oldpaths\\_july2007.pdf](http://www.sermonindex.net/mail_si/oldpaths/oldpaths_july2007.pdf)) "J. Hudson Taylor's Spiritual Secret"

One of my precious possessions is a copy of a 50-year journal/collection of quotes on the secret you have discovered. The collector kept it under his bed and read from it before sleep nightly. The wife of his youth read to him in the last few days of his life (90+). His last words to her when she finished reading and added a blanket, were deep appreciation. She said she was uncertain to whom he was referring: to her, the author of the passage she read, or his beloved present Lord.

**Re: - posted by MJones (), on: 2008/11/9 11:33**

I will try, in response to your good comments, to relate our mutual appreciation for the life of Hudson Taylor, an experience I had regarding the book, 'Hudson Taylor's Spiritual Secret', and another piece of ministry I feel God has given me.

First of all, I appreciated as much as any, his comments on the passage in John where Jesus said if anyone is thirsty, let him come and drink. It was a turning point in his life as he realized he could and should come often and that if he did, it would be like springs of living water welling up in him. I had found the same to be true and could relate to his discovery.

Secondly, God has worked in me a passion to write in order to convey the truths I have learned from Him. One of the forms of writing I enjoy is poetry, which led to the experience I had with Hudson Taylor's Spiritual Secret.

Thoughts had begun to stir regarding the rest I had found in God. Usually when that happens, I feel compelled to convey thoughts in poetic form. As I was thinking of doing that with these thoughts, which I do in my leisure, I felt compelled that particular day to play instead. My wife and I went into town for an early dinner and then to the bookstore to kill a little t

ime.

While there, 'Hudson Taylor's Spiritual Secret' caught my eye. I picked it up and could not believe my eyes when I saw the 4 line poem that begins the book. It inspired a poem that I will include in this post.

'Thy Work - To Rest in Me'

My thoughts were turned toward His rest;  
I thought a poem to write.  
Would have labored long and hard I guess;  
Would have tried with all my might.

But I guess to emphasize the point  
Of resting more in Him,  
He bid me play in my free time,  
Which lead me to this gem.

I like to put my thoughts to rhyme;  
It's just the way it is.  
But it seemed to please Him in this case  
To show me some of His.

Had I written my own I'm sure,  
Been twenty lines or more,  
But He said it all and made the point  
And it only took Him four.

'Bear not a single care thyself,  
One is too much for thee;  
Thy work is mine, and mine alone;  
Thy work - to rest in Me.'

Unknown

**Re:, on: 2008/11/9 12:10**

That was a good comment by that sister.

Both Caiaphas and Judas were 'used' by God, but only those who walk with God can have a 'use' that is commended of God.

Most people see or hear of God using others for good, and want the same for themselves. What they don't realize is that person that was used for good has walked with God, and so God used them. False religion sees this 'use for good' as somehow redemptory and wants it for themselves.

The desire to be used of God has in most cases become a cart before the horse event.

**Re: Hudson Taylor - posted by crsschk (), on: 2008/11/9 21:24**

Really appreciate the things you all are sharing here. Did some searching and found that there is a free version of Hudson Taylor's book at CCEL:

([http://www.ccel.org/t/taylor\\_jh/secret/home.html](http://www.ccel.org/t/taylor_jh/secret/home.html)) Hudson Taylor's Spiritual Secret

The version available there requires Microsoft Reader if you do not already have it, it can be downloaded here;

(<http://www.microsoft.com/reader/downloads/pc.msp>) Microsoft Reader for Desktop and Laptop PC

**Re: Your ministry - posted by MJones (), on: 2008/11/10 22:11**

I started this thread to encourage as many posters as were willing to do so, to give a brief discription of their ministry and the unique way, out of their relationship with God, that He has initiated ministry through them.

In this post, I would like to convey a thought, regarding our specific ministry, that came to me from Hebrews 11 and 12. Many times I have read the story of Abraham and have been inspired by his faith to seek God and would always hope He would speak to me as clearly as He did Abraham. He wouldn't; my faith would fizzle; and then I would get back to life as normal.

I have been inspired and stirred by many of the stories that Hebrews 11 highlights. I have read 12:1 many times and in light of 'such a great cloud of witnesses', have been stirred to believe God for great things. The focus has always been on the great things that this cloud of witnesses had done that I aspired to emulate.

Not too long ago, I noticed a different part of the verse; 'the race marked out for us'. The inspiration is not to do the things this cloud of witnesses did; they simply ran the race that was set for them. I believe they were able to run their race because of what is said of Moses in 11:27; 'he persevered because he saw Him who was invisible'.

The inspiration from the cloud of witnesses is that we should first see Him who is invisible so that we might discover the race He has set for us and then persevere in it.

**Re: - posted by MJones (), on: 2008/11/10 22:20**

'The Cloud of Witnesses'

Consider the cloud of witnesses  
Who spur us on to faith,  
Who've witnessed God enough to trust  
And enter in His race.

Consider the land that Abraham left  
For land he did not know,  
But he knew his God and trusted Him  
When He told him he should go.

Consider Hudson Taylor  
And the race that was set for him;  
He sought his God and heard Him speak  
'Nothing this faith can dim'.

The challenge though before us all  
Is our own race to find;  
Can we talk to Him enough to know  
The thoughts He has in mind?

God has a plan for all who'll stop  
And set their own aside,  
But to find it we must walk with Him  
Before He will confide.

MJ

**Re: Your ministry - posted by boG (), on: 2008/11/15 2:17**

I think we are missing the heart of this thread. As much as it is enjoyable to hear about Hudson Taylor's ministry; what of our own personal ministries?

When I consider my own ministry, and it is a calling of God, this I do not doubt, it appears to be a small thing and of little worth in value for provoking others unto the good works wherein Christ has predestined each of us to come and follow Him. However, let us not so consider even the meekest of services sanctified unto the Lord to be without our Father's praise.

In my own life, I wait at a crux. For several years now I have desired to up and go! Yet, I have never felt free to do so. This is not to say there are not opportunities or things I could be committing myself to, both home and abroad. I have considered (as from reading a bit of Hudson Taylor's biography and from the admonitions of many other pious pastors from church history -- I highly recommend Richard Baxter's book, ([http://www.reformed.org/books/baxter/reformed\\_pastor/](http://www.reformed.org/books/baxter/reformed_pastor/)) The Reformed Pastor) ways in which to live as a true pilgrim and sojourner in this world, as though I am already a missionary. And during this time of waiting for the restraining hand of my Shepherd to lead me on, I have devoted my time to reading and studying and praying and meditating on the high and necessary things of the Christian faith; generally of late: the Gospel; particularly: the love and hatred of God as well as I can understand it from Holy Scripture as opposed to Webster's dictionary. I believe I am in a way comparable to being in a time of a wilderness and obscurity, as Ravenhill has said of the apostle Paul, becoming spiritually pregnant with the epistles -- epistles not only written on paper but on the hearts and lips of converted men.

I work part-time because I need no more financial substance to support my flesh. Indeed, I have confounded a few people with my diligent and careful labor without exhibiting any selfish ambitions. Most of my time working is in isolation -- not unlike being the only person in a crowded room. So during that time I exert myself to prayer and meditation; indeed, most of the seeds of my sermons and revelations are formed in me during this time; and likewise, when I am laying in bed trying to get those last few feeble hours of sleep before an early shift and the Spirit stirs in me and the words of Scripture seem to flow so freely, even though I am exhausted I listen and lay quietly awake (I'll just have to take a nap after work!)

From this place do I go out and about my local area. Obviously I live in Las Vegas, if you haven't noticed my profile location. If you are wondering, I personally do not minister on the Strip (the local term for the street where most of the casinos are) and it is seldom that I ever go there, except when I head down near UNLV to fellowship with a college group that meets at a Methodist church. My main focus of ministry is with the college aged Christians, or at least those who go to church. There was a time I had the privilege in assisting with ministering to some youth kids but the main pastor thought it better if I did not come to "hang out" but that I should only come if I was specifically asked to teach. That whole situation was just strange to me and not to mention has given me reason to pray. I also try to take one or two days out of the week to give service at a local homeless shelter, the Las Vegas Rescue Mission. They serve food and give out clothes as well as offering a little sermon inbetween; but the big focus down there is the rehabilitation program. They not only give to the needy but they seek to strengthen their hands! Ah, I tell you what, not but a week or so ago I was talking with some of the residence there and they invited my brother and I to stay later to attend their "commencement ceremony." Dude, that was hardcore! To see these down-broke-n-busted sinners coming in off the streets likely still spinning out on whatever drug addiction they had and now after being disciplined through the Rescue Mission's rehabilitation program walking up to the stage microphone sharing their testimonies and preaching the gospel! It was beautiful.

When I am able to attend a church meeting or prayer meeting or bible study or home group or college group or just hang out with some friends I am not interested in just "hanging out." I don't want my ears tickled, I don't want to feel good about myself, I don't want to pray like the pagans, I don't want to play xbox, I don't want to just go here or there or just know a bunch of people -- I am making it my purpose like Paul to know Christ and Him crucified. My focus is God and my aim is the salvation of souls. When I find myself in these different places, if I do not see an earnest desire for holiness then I will find the individual there who does. If there are none, I will go where I can find them. My main ministry is to find those Christians, old or young, babes in the faith or mature, and edify and be edified in our faith together with Christ in our midst. I thank God that He is raising up, as He is me, those precious few who are hungry and thirsty for righteousness. And it is these that I attach myself to. Curious enough, my brother's main focus of ministry seems to be towards evangelizing those who are not hungry and thirsty. And to tell you the truth there is no one else I would ever so much desire to labor with in this good work than my brother -- I can trust his prayers.

I wonder if I am making this sound so exciting; the flesh is so dull, but the Spirit quickens all things. I consider at times the life of Jesus, how He so walked in the earth. Truly there were great and wonderful miracles, but what of the humbleness of the washing of feet and the blessing the children and His teachings and sharing a meal with His companions by th

e sea; no great miracles in these, but Jesus was there and He only did what He saw His Heavenly Father doing.

So for these past several years I have devoted myself in my youth to somewhat obscurity, hidden in my room or writing on this internet forum, or hanging with my buddies glorifying God and speaking of the most holy faith and bearing one another's burdens and praying the prayer of faith together and holding each other accountable and disciplining one another unto maturity and a sound mind. It might not seem as "exciting" as the world but this simple way is life to my soul. And whatever, Lord willing, I shall do in the years to come I won't be ashamed of these years past. But all the same, I shall take this simple way with me and continue to preach the gospel and serve and counsel the hungry and thirsty heart in the wisdom that is able to make one wise unto salvation: that there is a hope that excels and forgiveness of sins and fulness of Life because Jesus Christ lives.

**Re: - posted by MJones (), on: 2008/11/15 9:47**

Quote:

boG wrote:

My main ministry is to find those Christians, old or young, babes in the faith or mature, and edify and be edified in our faith together with Christ in our midst. I thank God that He is raising up, as He is me, those precious few who are hungry and thirsty for righteousness. And it is these that I attach myself to.

Now that's what I'm talking about.

I thoroughly enjoyed reading your description of how God is using you. Though 30 years separate us in age, we are being used in exactly the same way. A few years ago I got burned out from being up to my eyeballs in church work. I backed out and decided to simply seek God for myself with the hope that in that seeking, He would provide an opportunity for ministry that was tailor made for me that I could once again get excited about.

I decided to lay aside all I had come to believe to that point and start over. I decided to journal my thoughts. I developed a passion for writing. This proved very valuable in helping me to clarify my new beliefs that were based solely on what I discovered in His word. It has been an exciting journey.

As I became filled up with God and new life, I found I could not contain it when I talked with people. It just came out. I used to struggle with talking to people about God because I was not sure of how to approach it. Now it just comes out.

I have had the opportunity to combine my passion for writing with my heart for individuals by writing letters and emails to people. This site, which I have only recently discovered, is like a diamond field of opportunity to share with people of like faith and especially, just last night, in the thread labeled as 'lust', to be able to go one on one with one who needed help. It is like everywhere I turn, God gives opportunity for me to hook up with individuals. In some cases they are my equals, such as yourself, Kingjimmy and brokenone. In other cases, such as with joeSOC, I have had the privilege of offering help.

A few weeks ago, I was conversing only with those in my small town; a few through email a little further away. As a result of this site, I have had the privilege of talking with someone from Las Vegas and now with joeSOC, someone from Australia. To me that is cool.

To think that this is not a legitimate ministry is a thought from Satan himself. As more and more individuals get full of God, we have the potential of doing more to disciple other believers than all the mega churches combined. There is actually no substitute for the ministry we have.

So I thank you for your post. I am encouraged by it and hope that others will be as well.

**Re: - posted by MJones (), on: 2008/11/24 20:19**

The overall purpose of this thread is to give people opportunity to briefly describe their ministry. The intent is that others might learn and be encouraged by those who have discovered ministry opportunity.

This post is a request for help. Does anyone have experience or otherwise helpful information regarding neighborhood Bible studies. The specifics are as follows:

- 1) Mostly low income and apartment housing
- 2) Equal mix of blacks, whites, hispanics
- 3) Heavy foot traffic
- 4) Small storefront space available to rent at hub of area
- 5) Thought is to have small scale service on Fri. or Sat night. Time to hang out afterwards.
- 6) Possibly an additional mid week bible study.

Very beginning stage of idea. Definitely feel God initiated it. Looking for helpful information.

**Re: - posted by MJones (), on: 2008/11/26 6:23**

The fullness of God...breeding ground for new ministry.

**Re: - posted by RobertW (), on: 2008/12/22 15:23**

One ministry I am involved in is taking the Gospel to Nursing Homes. I am currently involved in just a single location but have been involved in several over the last 14 or so years.

The services begin by the staff bringing the people down to a gathering area. The object is to prayerfully come together and share what the Lord puts on our hearts. I typically ask to begin with what songs folk would like to sing. We make a list and sing them. They are typically the older hymns. We sing a capella.

The idea is participation. We want folk to contribute what they feel the Lord would have them share. We have a time of sharing in between the singing. I will typically bring a message that is on my heart. Since I have been at this location for a while I am able to build on the simpler messages of the early months. I go out once a week.

Sometimes I have help and sometimes I do not. As long as the staff helps with the people you can manage.

I have been afforded the opportunity to minister to several people that have since passed on these last two years especially. Some have only been in their 40's. There are all types of people in long term care. There are ministers of the Gospel that have been faithful for decades and are now in need. Many Sunday School teachers and other types of ministers are suffering.

Should God lay such a thing on your heart and you would have any others questions I'll try to answer them.

**Re: Ministry - posted by Theophila (), on: 2008/12/22 17:18**

God bless you, MJones, for starting this thread.

A few years ago in a time of prayer, the Lord told me He would send women to me; that I was to minister to them and He would show me what to do. Imagine my surprise when I began to meet those women and He loved them through me! Furthermore, I love to call folk back to the faithfulness of God's word. I also help the worship team on occasion.

I'm not sure who lamented the dearth of brethren who love to share God's word instead of 'useless' hanging out session s but I feel you. The Lord has provided some out-of-state like-minded brethren for me...they are priceless! Thank God for telephones and the internet.

**Re: Ministry Opportunity - posted by JAPP, on: 2008/12/22 18:48**

Early 2006, after consistent weekly prayer with two of my friends, we felt the need to allocate an extended period of time to prayer. Specifically, we decided to retreat for an extended weekend. I scheduled our first retreat for May 2006. Eighteen women attended that retreat and God met us in glorious ways. We realized that it was a divine setup and planned to "come aside" twice each year. The number of women has progressively increased to as many as 79 women calling upon the name of the Lord and rejoicing in His Presence. What times of refreshing we always have and such opportunities for encouraging and praying for each other! This has been used by God to impact our lives and to keep us ablaze. We are excited each time we meet to see what God has in store. We cover this ministry with intense prayer because it is clear that God is using it as a vehicle to strengthen the Church. Truly, opportunities for ministry are all around us and, oftentimes, God launches these ministries in the most "incidental" manner.

**Re: - posted by BrokenOne (), on: 2008/12/22 19:24**

Quote:

-----Should God lay such a thing on your heart and you would have any others questions I'll try to answer them.  
-----

Hi Brother Robert,

I actually do have some questions about the nursing home ministry.

- 1 Â– Who do you contact at the nursing home to get permission to meet with the people? And do you find that they are generally open to having Christian groups come in?
- 2 Â– Do they put any type of limitations on what you can do? For instance, are you allowed to pray with the people, go room to room, and things like that? Or are you limited to the people who come to the meeting room?
- 3 Â– What is the ideal length of time for a meeting in a nursing home, taking into account the physical and mental limitations of the residents?
- 4 Â– When you say participation Â– do you mean participation from the others who go with you to minister? Or do you mean participation from the residents?
- 5 Â– In what ways do the staff help with the people?
- 6 Â– What part of your meetings does it seem that the residents enjoy most?
- 7 Â– What advice would you have for someone who is interested in getting involved in this type of ministry?

Thank you for your help.

Danielle

**Re: - posted by jiyouk, on: 2008/12/22 20:42**

What a good post.

I thought I would share a little of what the Lords doing in my life.

After coming to know Jesus, I would have these urges to evangelize on the streets. Sometimes, I would obey and overwhelming joy would be with me. Sometimes, I would obey, and the people sneering at me would disappoint me.

I would tell the Lord, "Father.. I'm not spirit filled enough to do this. I will evangelize when you have transformed my heart so much that I don't have any fear of men and can transform these people through your spirit every time I talk."

After accepting Jesus, I have been trying to fulfill what I considered to be the essence of Paul's faith, Gal 2:20. I would try to kill the self. I constantly was battling with me trying to give glory to ME! If I preach and pray hard, I found in my heart a whisper of pride telling me, "Hey! I did a pretty good job! Hey God used ME!" When I shared something spiritual, I sensed in myself a desire to be acknowledged for my spiritual discernment. When I preached (which wasn't quite often) inside me, I would find a small pride in me that I preached only the essence of the cross with zeal. I would be very nice to others, but my heart would sometimes, despite my niceness, condemn and judge others.

So I could keep the whole law, but my heart was always off track.. It was always secretly sinning. Truly being a lover of Jesus, this was quite hard for me. No matter how hard I asked for forgiveness, and how many times I was refreshed by t

the Holy Spirit, the effects would stay for 1 week to 3 months, but after that, I found my heart was still in it's sin.

I heard one person describe it like this. "If you have a "sin tree" and it's bearing fruit like adultery, pride, idolatry and so on, one of the best ways to get rid of the tree is by killing the flowers before so that it doesn't bear any fruit. We often in the christian circles call this person a "saint" cause he has sinned little. However, the so called "saint" has to always suppress the fruit and always killing flowers. A saint then is a flower killer, and he finds that he always has to kill the flowers. How can he solve the problem so that there won't be any flowers to bring with? The only solution to put the axe at the root of the tree."

And so I realized that after the fall, "life" in me was totally connected with "sin" that it was one. That no matter how hard I tried, I could not escape from it. The only way was to die to sin, which would be the same thing as dying to the self. This is when Romans 6 came to my understanding.

"If we have been united with him like this in his death, we will certainly also be united with him in his resurrection. For we know that our old self was crucified with him..."

I understood that Jesus Christ didn't just die for my sins.. I died on the cross with Jesus Christ. This is a biblical fact that Paul is trying to point out. It is by faith that I am united with him in his death, and by faith that I am raised with him.

Gal 2:20 "and the life I live in the body I live by FAITH in Jesus Christ"

Ephesians 3:17 "so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through FAITH..."

So Jesus died, and the bible claims that I am dead with Him. I only have to claim this by faith in every aspect of my life.

Before all this, I had many experiences of utter repentance. It wasn't repentance of the fruits of sin, but repentance of my self because I and sin are one. But these experiences didn't last long as I mention. However, through this, I realized that I need to live this life by faith.

So then I began to profess myself dead (instead of trying to die) and Jesus living in me through almost everything.

I would go to the subways and preach. Sometimes I wouldn't "feel" like it. But hey! This old self has been crucified. It won't change if I try to "fix" the old life. This old self is dead! So I will go and preach. And so I go and preach and am filled with the knowledge of truth. As it's written in Romans 6: 17 "...though you used to be slaves to sin, you wholeheartedly obeyed the form of teaching to which you were entrusted. (Thus) You have been set free." This teaching of course was the Gospel.

So they obeyed the gospel by faith and experienced truth and became free from sin.

I and Christ are one. What he did on the cross, his death, his resurrection, even his ascension (Ephesians 2:6 "seated us in the heavenly realms with Christ) I was there with Christ by faith.

So this is my ministry now.

I meet people whenever I can and talk to them about Jesus.. To the believers who haven't met Jesus, that they need to come to Jesus and that they have to admit themselves to be the man of sin. That they have to cry out until they meet him.

To the believers that have met Jesus, to die on the cross with Jesus Christ so that they may live with him.

So I obey the gospel and also evangelize in the street no matter how I feel. Most of the times, the Holy Spirit will fill me with great joy when I don't obey the old self and put on the new self of Jesus Christ by faith.

So now, everything I do, it has been done by faith in the cross.. There is no boasting.. There is no pride.. If condemnation comes to me, I hold on to my death by faith. If I don't want to do the dishes, I profess myself dead with Jesus, I let Jesus do the dishes through me with joy. Hope this truth is as amazing to you as it was to me.

Re: - posted by RobertW (), on: 2008/12/22 21:43

Hi Brokenone,

Very good questions!

Quote:  
-----1 Â– Who do you contact at the nursing home to get permission to meet with the people? And do you find that they are generally open to having Christian groups come in?  
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Typically you will need to contact the Activities Director. Nursing Homes are always looking for volunteers. If you want to have services then arrange that. If you want to do a bible study, you can arrange that. If you want to talk to the people as a sort of one on one listener, etc. you can do that also.

Quote:  
-----2 Â– Do they put any type of limitations on what you can do? For instance, are you allowed to pray with the people, go room to room, and things like that? Or are you limited to the people who come to the meeting room?  
-----

Typically there are lots of people in a nursing home willing to talk to you. Because most get very few visitors, many residents take quickly to people that take an interest in their life. It has been a long time since many of them really felt loved. Just being an expression of the love of Christ can be a major influence.

Quote:  
-----3 Â– What is the ideal length of time for a meeting in a nursing home, taking into account the physical and mental limitations of the residents?  
-----

That depends. If you ask a well person they will typically tell you the residents can't handle much, but really that is more their preference. The residents don't usually get a lot of activity in their life so you are usually ready to go home before they are. ;-) That is, unless you arrive after 6:30 PM or so.

Quote:  
-----4 Â– When you say participation Â– do you mean participation from the others who go with you to minister? Or do you mean participation from the residents?  
-----

The residents and the people that might come. I believe strongly in body ministry. I believe that God may want to use a resident to share something that will edify the people. I encourage them to spend time with the LORD through the week and come prepared to share anything that the Lord may want them to share. A prayer or a testimony or a song. A scripture or a short exhortation. Some have taken it upon themselves to open the meeting by praying the Lord's prayer. Others may share things that don't necessarily contribute, but they don't hinder either. I believe we honor God by allowing folks to share- no matter what level they are on mentally or in terms of spiritual maturity.

Quote:  
-----5 Â– In what ways do the staff help with the people?  
-----

Staff can be a great help or a great hindrance. Some staff are helpful to bring the residents out and encourage participation. Others would prefer to get the residents to bed so they can relax. Just being honest here. Some staff will help to great lengths and others will test your faith and resolve. Remember that you are on a mission for the Lord and God will give the grace to endure anything that happens. Typically though the owners and Directors want as much activities as they can

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an provide so the staff has to tow that line. It's when the High Up's are out of the building that a staff member may act out, but this is rare.

Quote:

-----6 Å- What part of your meetings does it seem that the residents enjoy most?  
-----

They love to sing usually. Some also love to hear the Gospel! many have not been in a service where Christ was glorified for a very long time. They are discouraged. Many wonder how they could serve God for 50- 70 years and then be abandoned in a nursing home. Many take it very personally and need an encouraging word of God's grace. They need the love of God and an encouraging word to keep the faith. They love to sing the older popular hymns though (Old Rugged Cross, etc.) and that encourages them.

Quote:

-----What advice would you have for someone who is interested in getting involved in this type of ministry?  
-----

Understand that the ministry you are about to take hold of is *pure religion*. I believe the reason for this is because there is no earthly glory in it. There will be no awards and you probably won't get your own radio or TV program. You will likely never be popular and almost none will encourage you or come alongside to help. You will walk alone and see many come along that will help for a few weeks and then leave off.

You will look into the eyes of many that have hours, days, weeks and months to live. I have attended the funeral of several residents already this year. You will be the last person that many have spoken to this side of eternity and the last person to pray for many people. You will be the last opportunity that many will have to respond to Christ before they leave this life for Heaven or Hell.

You will hold the hands of those in the throws of death needing a bold word of faith and hope as they take hold of eternity. You will encourage those who are tempted to furl the sails in the closing hours of this life and proclaim, "Hold on! The end is in sight. Finish the course that you started with God!"

And when you walk outside to your car *alone* and you ponder the experiences of the evening you will realize why Christ has called you. Hell will fight you. Your foes may even be those of your own household. But understand the gravity of your ministry. You are standing between dying men and women and eternal damnation or eternal life. You will see the saints suffer and God will give you words of encouragement or prayers for healing.

There will be few 'amen's' when you minister. You may even have to minister through a screaming resident or a tired and sleepy group. But press on and know that your labor is not in vain in the Lord. It is truly an awesome calling. You are moving into the path of souls headed into eternity...

For God is not unrighteous to forget your work and labour of love, which ye have shewed toward his name, in that ye have ministered to the saints, and do minister. (Hebrews 6)

**Re: - posted by MJones (), on: 2008/12/23 8:48**

It has been good to see these recent responses. As it is the goal of this site for individuals and then in turn the church, to experience revival, once our period of personal revival is full, I do believe ministry will be the God initiated result of that revival.

Knowing that many who visit this site have been revived, I thought it would be interesting to hear the variety of ministry forms that God has lead people into. I can see God in each of the ones you have posted. Thanks for taking the time to do so.

I saw something in one that I had never thought of. It is at the heart of why I wanted to start this thread. That we could all learn from others by what God is doing through others.

Quote:

RobertW wrote:

There are ministers of the Gospel that have been faithful for decades and are now in need. Many Sunday School teachers and other types of ministers are suffering.

Should God lay such a thing on your heart and you would have any others questions I'll try to answer them.

As bad as I hate to admit it, I have always viewed nursing homes as a place to care for people who were on their way out and never really thought much about the individuals who were there. But when I read the quote above, it put it all in a different perspective. Thanks RobertW.

I have not yet read your reply to BrokenOne's questions, but again, exactly what I hoped would happen in this thread. Thanks to both of you.

To 'jijouk', I enjoyed reading all you had to say and could relate to a lot of it. If it would interest you, I would like to meet you on a different thread about one of the main points in your post; the struggle and how to get past it. In 'Articles and Sermons' there is a thread called 'The New Birth - T Austin Sparks'. It is very much about what you have expressed. I will be looking for you there. It might be a couple of pages deep.

Thanks again to all.

Mike

**Re: - posted by RobertW (), on: 2008/12/23 9:32**

Quote:

-----But when I read the quote above, it put it all in a different perspective.

I want to say to qualify something I said in the last post about 'pure religion'. I am not saying that other expressions of our faith are somehow less. I have functioned in several different ministries. But I want to draw attention to James words:

Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this, To visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world. (James 1:27)

There is great affliction among the elderly. There are people that have looked on as their husbands and wives have passed on and often times several children. They are living with many memories and griefs.

Add to that the physical problems of bodies wracked with pain or minds that come and go. The sense of abandonment and the uprooting of ones life from their home outside. Many residents rarely see their family. For most Christians- end of life is the greatest test of their faith of all.

Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching. (Hebrews 10)

I have been called to help make sure that certain of the saints have a means of coming together for fellowship. Specifically I have been called to, ... *lift up the hands which hang down, and the feeble knees*; not just my own, but of those dear saints that have been faithful in the Gospel. It is truly a challenging thing to look at a dear saint that has been in ministry all their life suddenly standing in need. Just like orphans many of the elderly have returned to the helpless state of their infancy. They need the care of a newborn child. They need the comfort of Christ and the assurance that God has not forgot

ten them.

Re: - posted by MJones (), on: 2008/12/24 8:30

Quote:

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RobertW wrote:

Understand that the ministry you are about to take hold of is *pure religion*. I believe the reason for this is because there is no earthly glory in it. There will be no awards and you probably won't get your own radio or TV program. You will likely never be popular and almost none will encourage you or come alongside to help. You will walk alone and see many come along that will help for a few weeks and then leave off.

-----  
I wanted to quote all your closing comments to BrokenOne. I wish everyone here at SI could read them. Instead, I quote this small portion in hopes it would stir many to read the entire post.

I know there are other examples like yours out there, and that is why I started this thread. It is the physical evidence that personal revival has actually occurred. Not to be rushed, but as we seek to know God, a result of knowing Him will come the knowing of what He wants us to do. It is not a seeking of ministry, it is a seeking of God that results in ministry.

Your words are as inspiring as any I have ever read on this site. My hope is that your story and others like them, that I know are out there, would inspire others to persevere in their pursuit of God until, and then because, they see Him who is invisible (as was said of Moses in Heb. 11) that they might run the race that God has set for them.

Whatever that particular race happens to be, is pure religion.

God bless you for the words you were able to share of the race He has set for you. As often as the Lord brings it to my mind, I will pray for you and what you do.