

# 1 DANCING WITH SKINHEADS

**When we arrived in Nuremberg**, Germany, I felt feverish and sick. My head was pounding, and I felt very weak. We were scheduled to play in the Komm. It was the famous headquarters for left-wing Communists and other counterculture groups at that time. It was a hangout for a fascist skinhead youth gang dedicated to violence and neo-Nazi ideas. The rockabillies and psychobillies were into fighting the skinheads and punks. As far as the organizer knew, this was the first time a Christian band had ever played there.

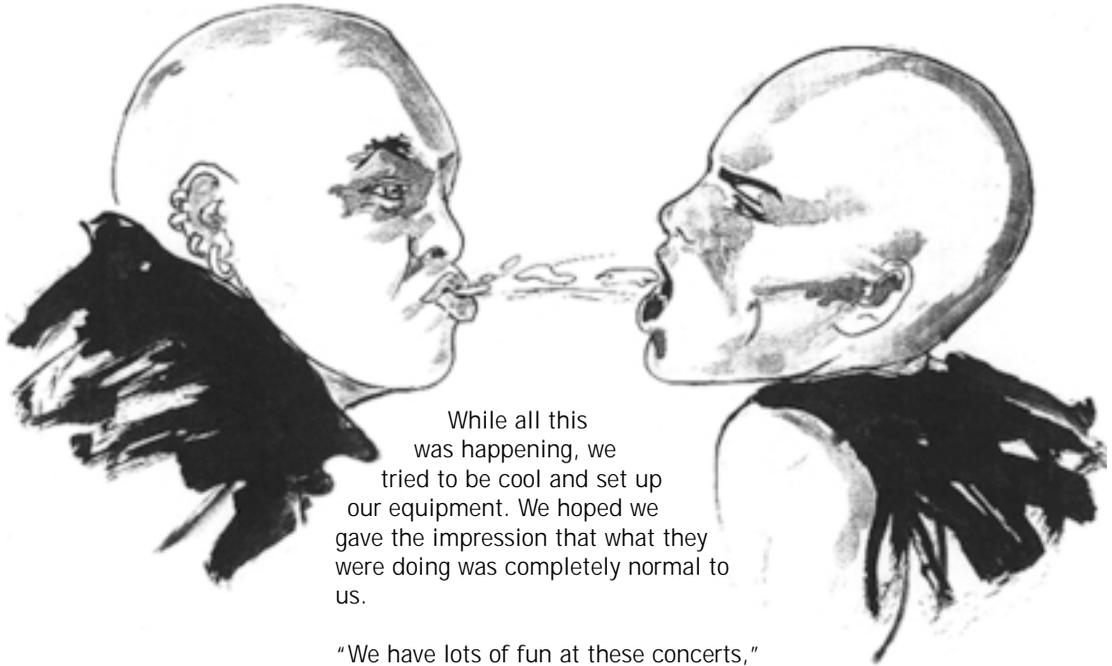
While we were setting up our equipment in the afternoon, a couple of skinheads came in the Komm. They wanted to kill our guitarist at the time, Brian Hayes. It was a common problem that Brian had, people wanting to kill him (see sidebar). Fortunately for Brian, the skinheads changed their minds about killing him. Apparently, they thought he was someone else.

The skinheads both had switchblades and wanted to impress us with how sharp they were. They carved pictures on their arms with their knives, cutting just below the skin leaving a scratch. One of the skinheads drew a triangle. I couldn't tell what the other one was trying to draw. He wasn't as talented as the first.

"Hey, look at what I can do!" said one of the skinheads. He took a beer bottle and smashed it on his forehead. Then they stood about three meters apart, and one would spit and the other would catch it in his mouth.

## **EXAMPLE #111 OF PEOPLE WANTING TO KILL BRIAN:**

**The entire band, including my wife and two sons, had all just stepped out of the van in Wroclaw, Poland. A huge punk from across the road walked over and head-butted Brian. There was no reason; we hadn't done anything yet. This guy was evil looking and mean, and totally unprovoked, he just head-butted Brian.**



While all this was happening, we tried to be cool and set up our equipment. We hoped we gave the impression that what they were doing was completely normal to us.

"We have lots of fun at these concerts," they said. "How's that?" I asked.

### **EXAMPLE #112 OF PEOPLE WANTING TO KILL BRIAN:**

Once, after one of our band practices, we went to a cafe in Amsterdam called the Egg Cream. It was a New Age hippie hangout, and we liked to go there because we could get cheap food. We were sitting there eating, when suddenly, a guy sitting at the table across from us looked at Brian and said, "Do you have a problem? Why are you looking at me like that?" He wanted to fight Brian right there in the restaurant.

"I pick up my friend by the waist," one said. Then the larger skinhead picked up his friend by the waist and started to swing him around. "Then he holds his feet out straight so he can kick people in the head with his boots," he said.

"This is going to be a great concert," I thought to myself.

"Lots of people are coming tonight," he continued. "Skinheads, punks, and rockabillies, and they hate Americans," he added.



It was nearly time for the concert to begin. There were about one-hundred-fifty people in the hall. This might not seem like many, but when they are skinheads, punks, and rockabillies, it looks like a huge crowd.

I was sick as the band gathered to pray before the concert. I was a little fearful, to say the least. The major barrier we had to pass that night, if God was going to be glorified, was fear. I had stood before this barrier many times previously. It's at a time like this that you really put your faith on the line. Something that has helped our band in situations like this is I Corinthians 2:1-5. In it, Paul says:

*"When I came to you, brothers, I did not come with eloquence or superior wisdom as I proclaimed to you the testimony about God. For I resolved to know nothing while I was with you except Jesus Christ and him crucified. I came to you in weakness and fear, and with much trembling. My message and my preaching were not with wise and persuasive words, but with a demonstration of the Spirit's power, so that your faith might not rest on men's wisdom, but on God's power."*

It addresses this whole area of fear. The third verse is particularly important. "I was with you in weakness and in fear, and with much trembling." That is a very good description of how we felt at that moment. But it doesn't stop there. Look at verse four and five. His message was confirmed by God's power.

God didn't want me to live in fear, I realized. That's why we often pray for each other to be set free from fear. God wanted me to be willing to pray another kind of prayer, too. "Lord, even when my knees shake and my voice trembles and I don't know what to say, help me to obey you," I prayed. There will come a time, if God is going to use me in significant ways, when I have to stand up to fear. That's when I start to exercise real faith.

It doesn't take too much faith to look at a situation and say, "This I can handle. This is something I can do." Faith is when you realize that without God's help, you certainly will fail. Faith is standing in a place of weakness, making yourself totally dependent on God. Then people can see God's power, and only God's power will work in these situations.

Our concert in Nuremberg was this type of situation. We needed God to reveal His power. We needed a real Jesus, not a philosophical or theological Jesus.

"Lord, I don't care how sick I feel or how afraid I am; I will not let fear rule me. I will go out in weakness. You have to reveal Your power or we will die."

### **EXAMPLE #113 OF PEOPLE WANTING TO KILL BRIAN:**



**Brian was walking down the street in Amsterdam one day. A guy going by in a van reached out his hand and just bashed Brian in the head for no reason. He then drove on.**

We had all the words to our songs translated in German and projected up onto a screen. As the concert approached, we discussed the best way to start our set. We chose the worship song, "We Worship and Adore You," sung acappella. I knelt on the stage with my eyes closed, and I pictured myself getting kicked in the head by somebody's boot as I sang. Then we began the concert.

**EXAMPLE #114  
OF PEOPLE WANTING  
TO KILL BRIAN:**

**I wanted to kill Brian once. Not for any particular reason, the urge just suddenly came over me.**

Like I said, I was sick and feverish. When we began, I felt stronger than ever. The authority of God was upon us, and I could feel the Holy Spirit in the audience. In this crowd of punks, skinheads, and rockabillies, there was no trouble the entire concert. No fighting, no slam dancing, nothing. They stood quietly and listened to the music and read the words. If you understand this kind of scene at all, you know what a miracle this was.

After the concert, I preached for about twenty minutes while they listened. One punk girl gave her heart to Jesus that night, and many others talked with the members of our band about our message.

I felt strong and full of power during the concert. Afterward, I returned to being sick again. God wanted to remind me that it wasn't my strength, I guess.

We played at the Komm again the following year and experienced much the same. Our drummer led a young man to Jesus after that concert.

## 2 MEANWHILE, BACK AT THE ANARCHY FESTIVAL

**The apartment consisted mainly of a stereo** and a mattress on the floor, and the room had absorbed the smell of marijuana. “Listen to this. You will not believe it — it’s amazing,” Bob<sup>1</sup> said as he handed me the headphones. “But you have to listen to this song with the lights out,” he continued.

I took the headphones and lay back on the mattress as he turned off the lights. The first thing I heard was a beautiful flute in a kind of ethereal New Age-like vibe. I could imagine myself walking through a field of surreal flowers. A woman was singing, “You may never come down, you may never come down, you may never come down.”

It was beautiful music, and I was letting myself be carried away by her seductive trance-like voice. Then I heard mumbling in the background — but just barely. The beautiful voice repeated, “You may never come down.” The background mumbling became louder, and I could understand one of the words. It sounded like, “Ready, ready, ready.” The woman continued to sing, but the mumbling



<sup>1</sup> NOT HIS REAL NAME

started to drown out her voice. I could hear "Ready t-, ready t-" as the mumbling became stronger and overtook the woman's singing.

Finally, the only thing that I  
could hear was

"ready to die,

ready to die,

die,

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While I was listening to this on the bed, I thought, “Wow, this music is great,” though it frightened me a bit. I felt weird shivers going down my back.

**Bob came to visit** me when I was working in the mountains in Colorado in America. We were sitting by a stream, the mountains were in the background, and there was a full moon. Bob had really long hair, and he was playing a sitar. He played a note on his sitar then swung his hair. It started to flow back and forth across his face. The moon made eerie shadows on the stream. Bob hit another note, and his hair swung back the other way. It was almost as if he had his hair trained to go with the music, or perhaps his hair had a mind of its own.



Bob believed that being involved in these things helped him to be more successful and gave him power. He thought it was harmless when he became involved with the occult and spiritism. He thought it was no big deal. And that's exactly what Satan wanted Bob to think.

Actually, Satan doesn't want anyone to believe that he exists. If you are saying, “Give me a break; I don't believe that Satan exists,” that is exactly what he wants. Because if you believe that he exists, then you might believe that God exists.

But if you do become involved in “mystical” things, Satan wants you to think it's harmless, it's a joke, or it will give you power. It is attractive initially, but it always quickly turns into fear. In I Peter 5:8, it says that the devil is like a roaring lion looking for people whom he can devour. So, the first thing that will happen, if you start messing with the occult, is that fear will come into your life.

If you think it is okay to be curious about spiritism and the occult, you are in serious trouble. If you listen to music influenced by this sort of thing, don't fool yourself, you are playing with fire. It is not a little thing in God's eyes; it is spiritual prostitution, and he despises it. Why? Because it gives us a false sense of security and makes us very proud.



## OUT OF HIS DEPP

Close friends of Johnny Depp confide that the actor is having problems with his new Hollywood Hills mansion. It began with Depp's housewarming party on Halloween. The *Ed Wood* star hired a psychic and held several seances that night. The idea was to "speak" with several deceased actors, including River Phoenix, Brandon Lee, John Candy, and the house's former owner, 1931 *Dracula* star, Bela Lugosi. Although there have been no ghostly sightings, the mansion has been plagued with eerie happenings (creaking doors, furniture moving, etc.) since Depp tried to raise the dead.

(Source unknown - When I was putting the book together I lost the source so you're just going to have to take my word for it.)

This pride separates us from God because we start to believe that we have the power within us, that we don't have to kneel to a holy God, and that we are not responsible to him because we are all gods.

A girl, who used to come to our Bible study in Amsterdam, was really into Satanic music. I never could understand why. Many of these bands would invite people to come forward, and when they came close to the stage, the band members would kick them in the face with their boots. They would yell, "We hate you! F— off!" to the audience, who would clap and cheer.

"Why do you go and listen to those bands?" I asked her.

"When I went to the concerts, I was afraid. It made me feel like I was in hell. But you know what? I felt the power attracted me," she said.

Our band, No Longer Music, played at a large concert hall called the Jaap Eden Hall. The next day a death metal band, Slayer, played. The papers called it "Heaven and Hell at the Jaap Eden Hall." At the Slayer concert, the singer invited people to join Satan's army.

On prime-time TV in Holland, as a band played, the lead singer took a sword and cut the guitarist on his arm. Blood poured all over the stage.

T-shirts are printed in Holland that say "I don't love you — (signed) *Jesus Christ.*" Bands sing of the glory of suicide and self-mutilation.

**Our band was invited** to play at an anarchy festival in Antwerp, Belgium. The organizer called himself Farmer Fred. "We heard you sing about what you believe. We think that's great. Could you play at our festival? We have good quality bands there like Suicide Commandos, Dehumanization, The Damn Idiots, and Carbonized Kids. Would you come?" he said.

Farmer Fred went on to explain that they were originally going to have their festival in July, but some hard rockers were there the week before and had destroyed the place. So, they rescheduled the concert for October.

Hardcore punk bands came from Belgium, England, Germany, and Holland. We arrived with our whole group because we wanted our people to pray and mix in with the crowd. I hoped we would be one of the first bands to play because I realized that as the night went on, people would become drunker and crazier.

It was a true anarchistic festival in that nobody knew when we would play. They kept telling us, "Later," and I kept becoming more nervous. Finally, we were told that we would play sixth, therefore, we would be second to last. The band, which played just before us, was the heaviest of the evening. Inch-deep puddles of beer covered the floor. The singer rolled around on the floor screaming obscene things, and you could literally feel the evil in the place.

Even the hardcore punks were afraid of this guy. He appeared to be possessed with a multitude of demons. As I watched, I felt waves of fear come over me. "When we play, we will die," I thought.

As I became more afraid, April, a girl from our group, came up to me. "I have something to say that will encourage you," she said.

"Please tell me. I could use some encouragement," I replied.

"Remember what you said at the Bible study on the boat in Amsterdam last week?" she asked.

"No," I said, "what did I say?"

She reminded me of something I had explained about the final battle between God and the devil. In the end times, the Antichrist is going to gather an army to fight against God. Jesus is going to appear and destroy the Antichrist and his army with the breath of his mouth.

*"And then the lawless one will be revealed, whom the Lord Jesus will overthrow with the breath of his mouth and destroy by the splendor of his coming."*

—2 Thessalonians 2:8

At the Bible study, I had said, "Okay, let's illustrate this." I called Brian to join me on stage. Brian was a weight lifter. "Now, let's suppose that Brian is the Antichrist. He is the man into whom the devil is going to pour all of his evil power," I said.

Then I asked Brian to flex for everybody. Brian started doing different poses for the group while everyone clapped and cheered. "Now let's pretend that I'm Jesus," I continued. (When you are the speaker, you can choose whom you are going to be.) "Okay, Brian, attack me," I said.



Brian started to come for me, and just as he got close to me, I blew gently on him. He went flying backward and landed on some people. (We had practiced this before.)

"This is what the Bible says," I concluded. "The Antichrist and his army were the representation of all the devil's power, and Jesus simply destroyed them all with the breath of his mouth. I may be weak and fearful, but our God is a consuming fire."

### **Meanwhile, back at the anarchy festival...**

I tried to be encouraged by what April had said as I saw the singer roll one more time through the beer on stage. But to be honest, it took all my courage to not run for the nearest exit.

We gathered together and said, "Thank you, Lord. We get to put our faith on the line today."

As I stepped onto the stage, I looked into the smoky, crowded hall full of screaming crazy people. As I knelt and sang through their jeers, I could feel God's power come down on me. As I stood to my feet, I felt so empowered by the Holy Spirit, I thought, "I shouldn't be afraid of you. You should be afraid of me." It seemed to me like the crowd was visibly moved by the power of the Holy Spirit that came from my lips.

Afterward, a guy from a hardcore punk band from Liverpool, England, came up to me. "When we heard that you were Christians, we were going to beat you up," he said. (I am cleaning up his language a bit.) "But as you played, I felt an Energy," he continued. He didn't mean volume of music. He was in a hardcore punk band. He was saying that he felt a power in our music that he didn't have. "You know, I am an anarchist, but maybe Jesus has something. You communicate your message better than we communicate ours. Could we have a demo tape of your music?" he asked.

God was so powerfully with us that the last band got into a fight and refused to play. We ended up being the main band at an anarchy festival. Farmer Fred thanked us and asked us if we would be willing to come back. He even said he might visit our Bible study in Amsterdam sometime.

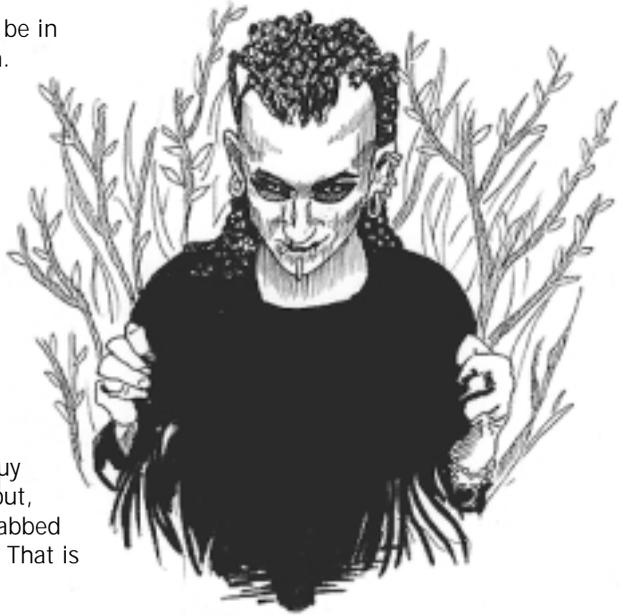
So you see, Jesus is stronger. He who is in us is greater than he who is in the world.

# 3 I WANT TO BE A TRUE REVOLUTIONARY

**I know a guy who is a true revolutionary.** During martial law in Poland, he fought with the police on the streets. Darek led demonstrations against the Communist government. Then the police would come with batons, and they would beat him.

The Communist government wanted Darek to be in the army, so he feigned craziness for a month. He sat on his bed and pretended he was afraid to be off his bed. Darek's mother called up the doctor and said there was something wrong with her son because he was afraid to get out of his bed. Because of that, Darek got out of being drafted into the Communist Army.

A friend of Darek's didn't wash or go to the toilet for a month. Actually, he went to the toilet, but he just went in his clothes. Then he took little razor blades and cut up his gums a bit. He hid in the bushes, and Darek called the police and said, "There's a crazy guy in the bushes." The police came to check it out, and the friend ran out of the bushes. They grabbed him and took him to the local insane asylum. That is how he got out of the army.



On one of my visits to America, it was really discouraging seeing many of my old friends. We went to the university together, and we had all these radical ideas. We were not going to be sucked into doing the same old thing. We were going to be revolutionary and radical.

On that trip, I realized some of my old friends have absolutely no vision and no passion now. I wondered why this happened. Why is it that so few Christians have passion? Why is it that I have to look into the world to see passion?

Our band was preparing to play in a club, and they were playing Ice T to warm up the audience for the concert. Ice T was telling everyone how they should kill this person and that person and f— this and that. I felt two reactions to the music.

First, I was angry because Ice T greeted all his brothers in prison. I thought, he stirs up people to violence so that they are thrown into prison, while he drives off in his limousine and lives like a king. But the thing that disturbed me more was that I felt myself being drawn into the music because of the passion.

Why do so few Christians have passion? Why do so many people who start out with good intentions end up with



nothing? They start out with good ideas of what they are going to do with their lives; they start out with great visions and end with no passion and no vision.

We listen to the media and watch television, and we think that dreaming about it is doing it. If we are not doing something now, we will not be doing something later.

The problem, I think, could be that we are bowing down to an image. Let me illustrate what I mean by this. King Nebuchadnezzar, in the third chapter of Daniel, had this great idea of building a golden image. He brought together all of the rulers and high people of the city and told them he was going to build a golden image. It was going to be the most amazing thing they had ever seen. The rulers and high people told the king it was a great idea.

The king then called together all the people, the nations and men of every language. So this was pretty much a universal thing. King Nebuchadnezzar proclaimed that at the moment the people heard sounds of all kinds of music, they were to fall down and worship the golden image he had set up. He wanted to give them some motivation to get into the golden image; so he said that if they did not fall down, they would be cast into the midst of a blazing fire. This gave everyone motivation to get into the king's idea.

So, at the time when the music was heard, all the people, nations and men of every language fell down and worshipped the golden image. Every person bowed down.

The golden image of today is materialism.

When I was in Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam, I met with a high-level Catholic priest. There was so much suffering there. "What can we do to help the young people?" I asked. I thought he would point to the obvious physical needs that I saw everywhere in Ho Chi Minh City. His answer surprised me. "I am afraid the young people in Vietnam are being seduced by the materialism of the West," he replied.

What are your goals? For what are you struggling? It is not what we say with our lips; it is by our actions that we show what we are bowing down to. Are you bowing down to this golden image to which everyone else is bowing down?

**I had a strange experience once** when I was driving a rental car with my wife and two kids. Suddenly it occurred to me; I don't own anything.

### DANIEL 3

**King Nebuchadnezzar made an image of gold, ninety feet high and nine feet wide, and set it up on the plain of Dura in the province of Babylon. He then summoned the satraps, prefects, governors, advisers, treasurers, judges, magistrates and all the other provincial officials to come to the dedication of the image he had set up. So the satraps, prefects, governors, advisers, treasurers, judges, magistrates and all the other provincial officials assembled for the dedication of the image that King Nebuchadnezzar had set up, and they stood before it.**

**Then the herald loudly proclaimed, "This is what you are commanded to do, O peoples, nations and men of every language: As soon as you hear the sound of the horn, flute, zither, lyre, harp, pipes and all kinds of music, you must fall down and worship the image of gold that King Nebuchadnezzar has set up. Whoever does not fall down and worship will immediately be thrown into a blazing furnace."**

**Therefore, as soon as they heard the sound of the horn, flute, zither, lyre, harp and**

**all kinds of music, all the peoples, nations and men of every language fell down and worshiped the image of gold that King Nebuchadnezzar had set up.**

**At this time some astrologers came forward and denounced the Jews. They said to King Nebuchadnezzar, “O king, live forever! You have issued a decree, O king, that everyone who hears the sound of the horn, flute, zither, lyre, harp, pipes and all kinds of music must fall down and worship the image of gold, and that whoever does not fall down and worship will be thrown into a blazing furnace. But there are some Jews whom you have set over the affairs of the province of Babylon — Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego — who pay no attention to you, O king. They neither serve your gods nor worship the image of gold you have set up.”**

**Furious with rage, Nebuchadnezzar summoned Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego. So these men were brought before the king, and Nebuchadnezzar said to them, “Is it true, Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego, that you do not serve my gods or worship the image of gold I have set up?**

Don't misunderstand me. We have good support; I am not poor. But it is really weird to have a family and own nothing.

Then I had a crisis. Jodi and I had been praying about whether we should buy a house. While we were praying about this, a business man was driving his car, and later he told us that he felt God's presence so strongly in the car that he had to pull over and stop driving. Then he felt that God said to him, “I want you to give David and Jodi money to buy a house.”

When we heard about this, we were really excited. We were going to have a house. Then I started to be nervous about it. You see, I don't want anything to get in the way of God's calling on my life.

I'm not saying there is anything wrong in owning a house. Maybe I will own a house someday. I'm not saying there is anything virtuous about not having things or about not having money. The questions are: What are we going to do with it? What is the purpose for it? Why are we struggling? What is the reason we are putting so much of our efforts into these things? To what are we bowing down?

“God, I don't want a house if it is in any way going to distract me from your will,” I said. “I don't want to ever make a decision about my life because of house payments. I will only have a house if it is not going to be a distraction for me. I would rather live in a rented apartment for the rest of my life than to get out of your will.”

It is interesting what happens when you pray like that. The stocks which that businessman was holding fell, and he had to go back on what he said. So, be careful how you pray!

**Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego were three guys** who were not going along with the system. As a result, some people were angry with them. They went to King Nebuchadnezzar and told him that Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego were not bowing down. The king was very upset. He called the three men and said to them, “Maybe you didn't understand. I told you that if you do not bow down, you'll be thrown into the fire. Obviously you did not listen to me because if you listened and understood the consequences, you would bow down. This is your last chance. If you do not bow down to this golden image, you will be thrown into the fiery furnace.”

I love the response of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego. This is how I want my life to be. They said to the king, “If we are thrown into the blazing furnace, the God we serve is able to save us from it, and he will

rescue us from your hand, O king. But even if he does not, we want you to know, O king, that we will not serve your gods or worship the image of gold you have set up." Even if He does not, no compromise.

At the University of Auckland in New Zealand they call you a Christian if they want to insult you. If they want to call someone stupid or an idiot or something, they say, "You Christian." This is much the same in Europe, America and just about everywhere in the world. People can mock God so easily in our cities because of compromise. We are not

willing to go all the way.



Unless we are willing to go all the way, we will not have the authority of God in our lives that we are supposed to have. No compromise. The choices you make now will last you for the rest of your life.

**Now when you hear the sound of the horn, flute, zither, lyre, harp, pipes and all kinds of music, if you are ready to fall down and worship the image I made, very good. But if you do not worship it, you will be thrown immediately into a blazing furnace. Then what god will be able to rescue you from my hand?"**

**Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego replied to the king, "O Nebuchadnezzar, we do not need to defend ourselves before you in this matter. If we are thrown into the blazing furnace, the God we serve is able to save us from it, and he will rescue us from your hand, O king. But even if he does not, we want you to know, O king, that we will not serve your gods or worship the image of gold you have set up."**

The king, after he had thrown them into the fire, looked and said, "Was it not three men we threw into the midst of the fire?"

"Yes king," they said.

"Look! I see four men walking around in the fire and the fourth looks like a son of the gods," said the king.

This proud king, who before was all arrogant and giving his decrees to these guys, was suddenly humbled. At this point, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego came out of the fire. There were no effects of the fire on their bodies; their hair was not singed nor did they even smell of fire.

Nebuchadnezzar said, "Praise be to the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, who has sent his angel and rescued his servants! They trusted in him and defied the king's command, and were willing to give up their lives rather than worship any god except their own God."

**Then Nebuchadnezzar was furious with Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego, and his attitude toward them changed. He ordered the furnace heated seven times hotter than usual and commanded some of the strongest soldiers in his army to tie up Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego and throw them into the blazing furnace. So these men, wearing their robes, trousers,**

**turbans and other clothes, were bound and thrown into the blazing furnace. The king's command was so urgent and the furnace so hot that the flames of fire killed the soldiers who took up Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego, and these three men, firmly tied, fell into the blazing furnace.**

**Then King Nebuchadnezzar leaped to his feet in amazement and asked his advisers, "Weren't there three men that we tied up and threw into the fire?"**

**They replied, "Certainly, O king."**

**He said, "Look! I see four men walking around in the fire, unbound and unharmed, and the fourth looks like a son of the gods."**

**Nebuchadnezzar then approached the opening of the blazing furnace and shouted,**



This is true revolutionary behavior. To be a revolutionary Christian today is like walking upstream in a raging river.

Everything in the culture today is flowing in the opposite direction. If you think you can be passive about your relationship with God, then you will be swept down the river with everyone else. You have to actively, physically walk up the river against the current. That's what it is going to take to be a revolutionary today.

When I was at the university, a businessman invited me to a really expensive restaurant for dinner. I never had any money, and it was great to be sitting on the top floor of a skyscraper looking out over the city. It was the kind of place where the dishwashers wore tuxes. It was a very good restaurant, and I was there eating all this good food with a young woman.

I was telling the businessman how much I appreciated it. He was a really nice man, but it was funny; he stopped eating and looked out the window at the city all around and said, "All of this can be yours if you want it." When he said that, it was like I was hearing from the devil himself.



**For what do you want to live? Are you bowing down to a golden image? Are you throwing your life away on things that don't matter?**

I can remember when I was in this little four-seater Cessna airplane. Looking out of the window, I saw what looked like a field of diamonds. I told the pilot that it looked so beautiful, and I asked if we could take a better look to see what it was. The pilot turned the plane around, and what looked like a field of diamonds was a junk yard. What looked like diamonds was the sun reflecting off the junk.

How are you going to look at the end of your life? I don't want to have any regrets. I don't mean to imply that I've done everything right and I haven't had troubles and sin in my life; but as I write this, I know that if there was an earthquake and the roof fell in on my head, I can honestly say, I would have no regrets about how I have lived my life.

In these last fifteen years of ministry I have done what God has asked me to do, but my biggest prayer to God is that I can say the same thing for the next fifteen years of my life. When I am an old man, I want to be able to look back on my life with no regrets.

I don't want to bow down to the golden image. I don't want to spend my life on things that don't matter. I want to be a true revolutionary. I want to be a good steward of all that God has invested in me. I don't want to waste what he has given me. I want to make a decision to stand up like Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego.

Some of you reading this may be at a crossroads in danger of throwing away your destiny, and I want to encourage you not to do it. Take a stand and say, "Jesus, with your help, I am going to live my life for you, and I am not going to be swept down the stream like everyone else.

**“Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego, who has sent his angel and rescued his servants! They trusted in him and defied the king’s command and were willing to give up their lives rather than serve or worship any god except their own God. Therefore I decree that the people of any nation or language who say anything against the God of Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego be cut into pieces and their houses be turned into piles of rubble, for no other god can save in this way.”**

**Then the king promoted Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego in the province of Babylon.**





# 4 THE LAST BUS SHELTER

**“Is it true that you are a Christian band?”** Jos asked.

“Yes, it is true!” Brian said. (SEE APPENDIX A FOR FURTHER DETAILS ON BRIAN.)

“I have a brother in England who is on a record label. I was going to send him your music, but since you are a Christian band, forget it!” Jos shouted.

“Well, I guess that’s the way it will have to be,” Brian said.

“Do you mean your message is more important to you than getting on a record label?” Jos said, surprised.

“Why, of course!” Brian replied.

Amazed, Jos walked away while Brian talked with Patrick, the man in charge. Patrick had one side of his head completely shaved and had a barbed wire tattoo on his neck. He obviously was highly respected there [at the concert location] and was very involved in promoting anarchy. “If you want to play, that would be great!” he said. Patrick was even happier when he listened to the music.

“It wouldn’t be a problem that we’re Christians?” Brian asked.



"Well, I don't think so as long as you're 'cool' about it," Patrick said. Brian promised him we would be cool, and he gave us the good news.

We realized that it was a major miracle that we could go there with our band. I was told that it was a place where many gypsies lived. Guys rolled with bare backs on broken glass for money. It was also a hideout for members of the IRA. I knew this was possible, because it was well-known that Amsterdam is a place where



the IRA goes to get away from the police. I was talking to a guy from a hardcore punk band about the place, and he said people there were really into the occult. The place where we would play was called "The Last Bus Shelter." It was located on Squatter Island just outside the center of Amsterdam.

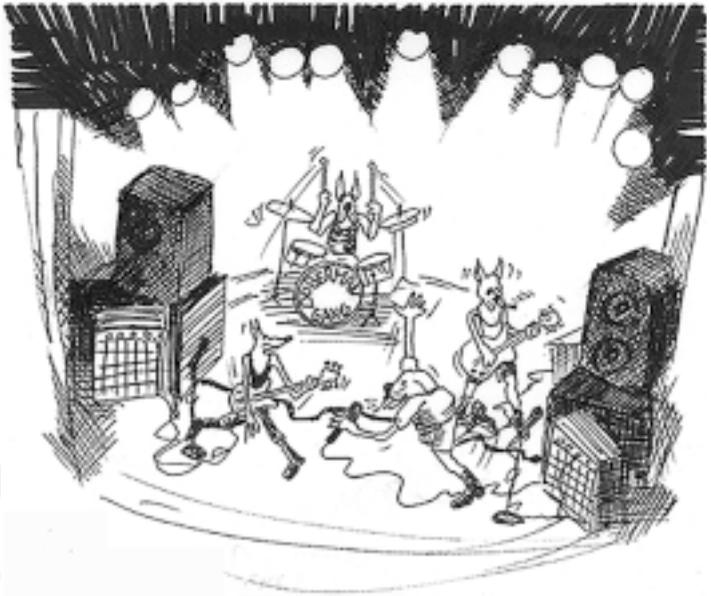
**Before you go** into the lions' den, you want to make sure that the lions' mouths are shut by the angels. We needed a great deal of prayer support if we were going to play there, I realized. One of our teams that works in the infamous red-light district of Amsterdam is full of real prayer warriors. So I asked them if they would come with me to pray and talk with those who would come to the concert. They agreed.

It was dark as we drove to Squatter Island to prepare for the concert. What I saw is really quite impossible to describe. It resembled my idea of the end of the world. Old cars were turned into living quarters; piles of junk made a hut. In the midst of it all was the Last Bus Shelter. It was actually two old buses sawed in half with a roof made of junk piled between them. To enter, you had to go through a door in the bus, and this led to a wooden step down into the bar. At one end was a "stage" next to an open-hearth fireplace made of assorted pieces of mortar and bricks. In the middle was a wood-burning furnace made from junk and old metal barrels. At the end was a bar where drinks and marijuana were sold. Every now and then a gust of wind would send a smoky cloud from the fireplace into the room.

Patrick was there to greet us. He had a crew help us set up our equipment and help hang our overhead sheet where we project the words to our songs.

A band called the Doberman Gang was going to play before us. I always like it when we play with other bands because it makes the contrast in our message that much stronger.

After the Doberman Gang finished their set, we prepared to play. Though we were in a heavy place, I felt real peace. We began our concert with a worship song with no instruments, and then proceeded to play. Everyone in the place looked stunned. They just stared at us. After we finished a song, they wouldn't clap but just looked at us with an amazed expression. This made us feel uncomfortable because we weren't sure if we were getting through. It was obviously a



## **MATTHEW 5:13-16**

**“You are the salt of the earth. But if the salt loses its saltiness, how can it be made salty again? It is no longer good for anything, except to be thrown out and trampled by men.**

**“You are the light of the world. A city on a hill cannot be hidden. Neither do people light a lamp and put it under a bowl. Instead they put it on its stand, and it gives light to everyone in the house. In the same way, let your light shine before men, that they may see your good deeds and praise your Father in heaven.”**

spiritual battle, and our message was tolerated but not completely welcomed.

Before our last song, I thanked them for letting us play and told them that Jesus made it possible for us to be free. Some laughed and jeered; others stared as we played our last song. When we broke down the equipment, the singer from the other band said he really appreciated seeing a band that believed in something. I talked to him for a long time and took him to our boat behind Central Station where we held our Bible studies.

Our group had many great talks about God with people in the Last Bus Shelter that evening, but somehow it seemed like God wanted us to show them some practical love. We spoke of God’s love for them; now they needed to see it. I shared this with our team, and everybody agreed. So we took an offering on the boat at our Wednesday Night Bible Study to buy food for the people at the Last Bus Shelter. We collected three-hundred fifty dollars, which was a great deal for us, and also collected blankets to give to them.

Different members of our team baked cakes and other treats. When a delegation from our team appeared with the gifts, Patrick just about fell over. “This is just like Christmas!” he said. He was obviously touched by it, and since then, people from The Last Bus Shelter have come to our boat.

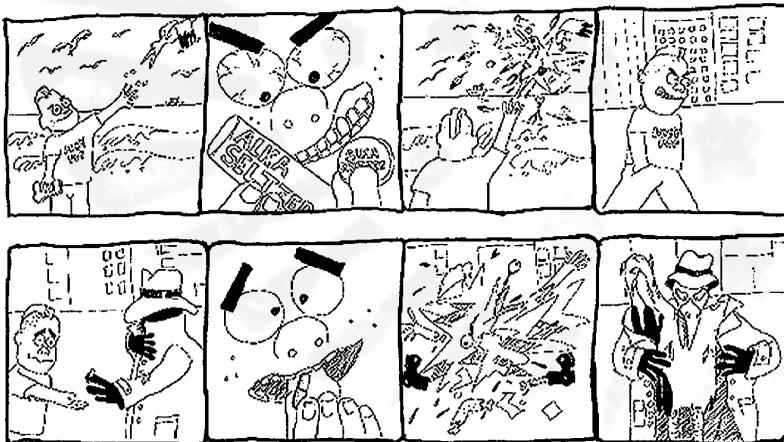
God also reminded me that my love needs to be practical. Jesus showed his love for us, and I need to do the same.



# 5 SIGMUND'S STORY

**I saw something really insane on the news.** They made a film in Norway about the killing of seals there. I love seals, okay. If I could, I would have one for a pet. I don't want to say anything negative about seals. Actually, a seal probably would be a much nicer pet than a dog, especially in the city. It would be a nice change. In Amsterdam, if you had a pet seal, it could live in the canals. So when it pooped, it could just go into the canals. It would be great.

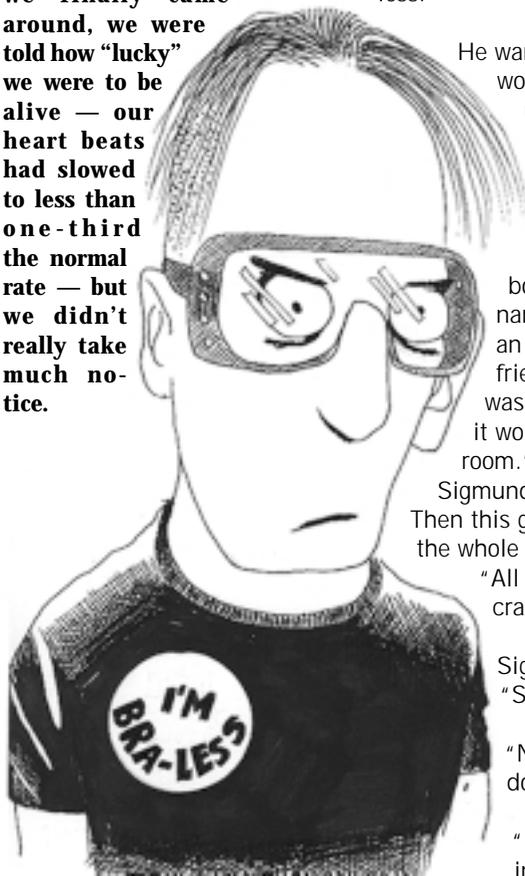
So anyway, they showed this program about killing seals in Norway. The phones rang off the hook. People were so upset that they were killing



## **A WORD FROM JON RUSH, BASS PLAYER FOR NO LONGER MUSIC**

**When I finally regained consciousness, I lifted myself off the bed and saw my two friends lying in the beds next to me. We had intravenous drips connected to us and we had on those hospital gowns that are open in the back. We found our clothes in the wardrobes at the end of our beds and bailed out through a fire exit.**

**We had overdosed on \$750 worth of drugs I had bought after getting out of prison. We went back to our city, and I moved back in with my family. I ended up in the hospital quite a few times. Once my parents found me and some friends in the middle of the night going crazy around our house. The police came and took us to the hospital where we spent another few days unconscious. When we finally came around, we were told how “lucky” we were to be alive — our heart beats had slowed to less than one-third the normal rate — but we didn’t really take much notice.**



these seals. The television representatives said they never had a reaction like that before. They said, “We can kill people and get less of a reaction than when we kill seals. We can talk about people dying, but we won’t have near the reaction we had when an animal has been killed.”

I’m sure that God loves the little seals. But there is something about humans that makes us different from animals, and that is, God loves people more than anything else. I can’t even comprehend how much God loves me.

**I had a friend who really knew** how to have a good time. Sometimes when we went to class, he wore yellow ski goggles just for the heck of it to irritate the teacher. He also wore a pin on his shirt that said “I’m bra-less.”

He wanted to get out of his father’s house. To make things worse, his father was a pastor, so in a way, I could understand his feelings. He wanted to go in another direction. We had many great times together at school. He was always trying to figure out how he could be kicked out of school.

Once, we were sitting in the dorm at school, really bored, thinking what we should do. Sigmund, (his name really wasn’t Sigmund, but I thought if I gave him an alias, I might as well make it a cool name), my friend, had all these firecrackers — a whole bunch. It was a really tiny room. I said to Sigmund, “I wonder what it would be like if we set all these firecrackers off in our room.” So, we shut the door and turned off the lights.

Sigmund put on his yellow ski goggles and lit the firecrackers. Then this guy, who we always hated and acted like the police for the whole dormitory, knocked on the door, came in and said, “All right, you know it is against the rules to light firecrackers in the dorm. What’s your name?”

Sigmund took off his yellow ski goggles and said, “Somebody threw the firecrackers under the door.”

“No, they didn’t. I was standing right outside your door,” he said.

“Do you think we’d be so stupid as to light firecrackers in our own room?” I asked.

Well, anyway, Sigmund started taking pages out of his dad's Bible and using the paper to roll joints, because he said it was the best kind of paper. He had all kinds of girlfriends and got into all kinds of great things. Wild living is fun for a time.

Later, when I was back in America, I wanted to see my old friend Sigmund. I called him up and we met somewhere. He had just been through his second marriage. His second wife had tried to murder him. He was on dope all the time so his mind couldn't think anymore. He went to Atlanta and sold himself as a male prostitute. He was so low that when I got together with him, it was the most depressing reunion I ever had.

This was the guy who was full of life and knew how to have the best time of almost all my friends when I was in that school. I thought, what's happened to him? How could he end up like this?

Sigmund's story is identical to the story that Jesus told in Luke 15:11. There was a man who had two sons. The younger one said to his father, "Give me my share of the estate." So he divided his property between them. Not long after that, the younger son gathered all that he had and set off to a foreign country. There he squandered all his wealth on wild living. Like Sigmund, he was a very rebellious son. To make matters worse, he was the younger son. He was sick of having to live in his father's house. He was tired of authority and responsibilities.

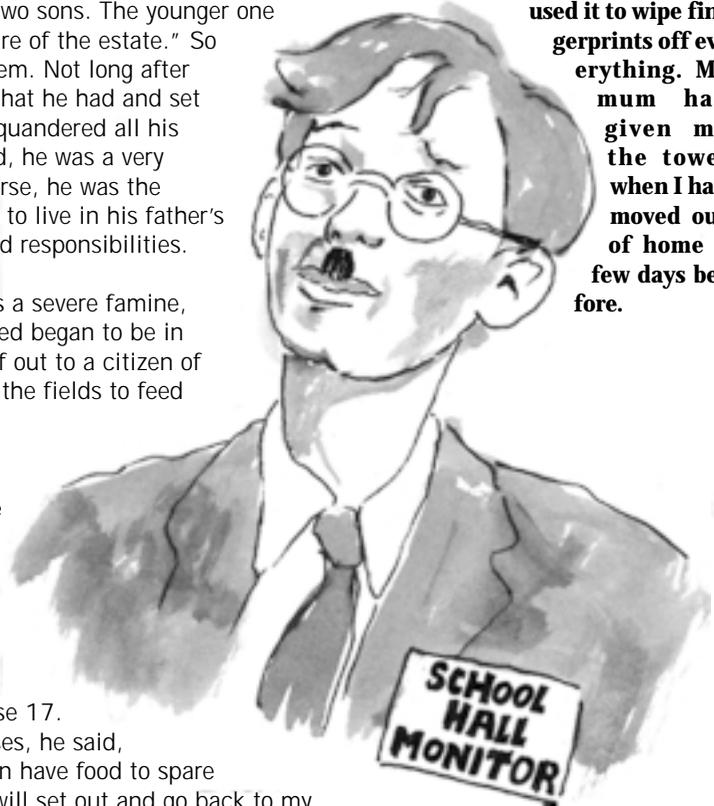
Then, in verse 14, it says there was a severe famine, and the whole country where he lived began to be in need. So he went and hired himself out to a citizen of that country who sent him out into the fields to feed the pigs.

This is similar to the situation that Sigmund found himself in. He, like the rebellious son, found himself among the pigs. He spent everything, and the party was over. He was hungry and he didn't have anything to eat.

But the really important part is verse 17. It says, "When he came to his senses, he said, 'How many of my father's hired men have food to spare and here I am starving to death! I will set out and go back to my

**Life continued like this for the next couple of years, a mix of crime, drugs, fights, close calls, prison and thoughts about what I was doing with my life. I started to get involved with even heavier dudes as well.**

**My car was used in a murder one time. The police hauled me in to show me all the photos of the murder scene and interrogate me. In one of the photos, draped across the victim was a checkered kitchen towel. The guys had used it to wipe fingerprints off everything. My mum had given me the towel when I had moved out of home a few days before.**



**After that, I made a decision to mellow out and lay low from everybody I knew for a few weeks.**

**I had been playing guitar for a while and really wanted to play in a band. My brother invited me to come and live with him in another town. He was really into the music scene there, so I decided to go. He introduced me to a lot of his friends who were Christians, including Ken & Lynley Green who pioneered the Steiger work in Auckland (New Zealand). This was really eye-opening for me because I saw the relationship these guys had with God, and it was so different from what I had seen before. These guys were fun and weren't socially on another planet with God. The guys I met from Steiger loved God but were completely at my level, and they liked the same kind of music as I did, their bands even played it.**

**Eventually Ken told me that the Steiger Auckland band needed a guitar player, and, even though I wasn't a Christian, he asked me to join. I found out later that Ken did this purposely because he knew I was searching and being in the band would force me to be surrounded by Christians.**

father and say to him: Father, I have sinned against heaven and against you. I am no longer worthy to be called your son; make me like one of your hired men.' So he got up and went to his father."

The problem is that some of us never come to our senses when we are in that kind of position. When I met my friend Sigmund, I thought he was beyond hope. He had two failed marriages, he was selling himself as a male prostitute, he had blown himself away with dope, he had so rebelled against God that he was taking pages out of his dad's Bible to roll joints. It would seem like he was beyond the point of no return.

**But Sigmund came to his senses.** He realized the condition he was in. I received a phone call from him a few months after that. He said, "You won't believe what has happened. Jesus has changed my life and set me free. He has cleared up my mind. He has freed me from all the bad things I was into. He has made me a new person."

You see, we are never at a point of no return, unless we don't come to our senses and don't go to the Father. But how do we go to him? Do we have to suddenly change ourselves? Do we have to act differently? Well, that is what the son thought. "I have to make a good impression on my father. I have to change myself. I have to show him where I am at," he thought. So, he put together this speech and prepared to go to his father.

In verse 20, he got up and went to his father. But while he was still a long way off, his father saw him and was filled with compassion for him. He ran to him, threw his arms around him and kissed him.

Now, remember what the son had done to the father. He had demanded his inheritance while his father was alive and had wasted it in a foreign country on drunkenness and prostitutes. But it says that when the father could see him a long way off in the distance, he ran to his son. He put his arms around him and kissed him. Then the son got ready to give his speech in verse 21.

"Father, I have sinned against heaven and against you. I am no longer worthy to be called your son." But the father didn't even hear his speech. He just said, "Quick, bring the best robe." He didn't say, "Bring a robe." He said, "Bring the best robe and put it on him. Put a ring on his finger and sandals on his feet. Bring the fatted calf and kill it. Let's have a feast and celebrate. This son of mine was dead and he is alive again. He was lost and now is found."

So, they began to celebrate. He gave him his best robe, and in that culture, it was a sign of distinction. The father was saying, you are valuable as an individual. I see you as an individual, not a number, and I love you. He put a ring on his finger. A ring at that time stood for authority. He was saying not only do I value you as an individual, but I want to give you responsibility. I want to give you authority in my household. But the most important thing that he did was to give him sandals for his feet. Because that meant that he wasn't a servant, but was part of the family.

God wants us to be part of a family. If God is my father and I am part of his family, then I can go through my struggles and be victorious. Why should I live in a pigpen, hungry and dirty. There is only one thing we need to do and that is to reach out to God. We don't even have to try to pick ourselves up. When one of my sons falls and reaches his hands out to me, he knows that I am strong enough to pick him up. God is strong enough to pick us up out of the pigpen. But he's not going to make us do what we don't want to do.

God is not a dictator. He is not a fascist. He is a father with a broken heart.

#### **LUKE 15:11-24**

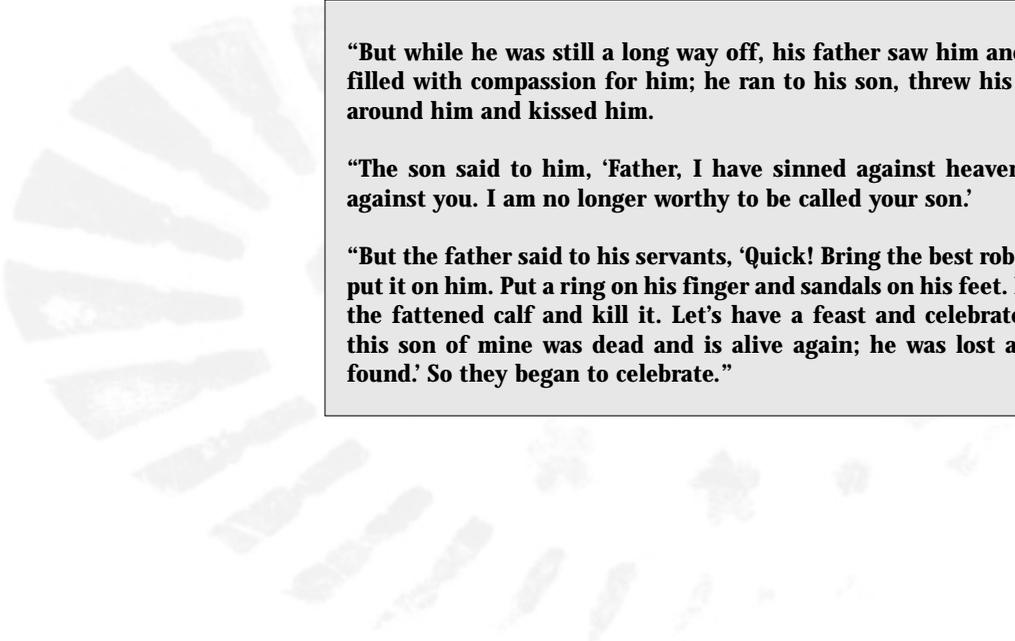
**Jesus continued, "There was a man who had two sons. The younger one said to his father, 'Father, give me my share of the estate.' So he divided his property between them.**

**"Not long after that, the younger son got together all he had, set off for a distant country and there squandered his wealth in wild living. After he had spent everything there was a severe famine in that whole country, and he began to be in need. So he went and hired himself out to a citizen of that country, who sent him to his fields to feed pigs. He longed to fill his stomach with the pods that the pigs were eating, but no one gave him anything.**

**"When he came to his senses, he said, 'How many of my father's hired men have food to spare, and here I am starving to death! I will set out and go back to my father and say to him: Father, I have sinned against heaven and against you. I am no longer worthy to be called your son; make me like one of your hired men.' So he got up and went to his father.**

**Over the next six months, I saw even more how real God was and how pointless my life was. The band was planning to go to Amsterdam to work with David Pierce and his team in an evangelistic outreach, so we were playing in lots of churches to raise the money for airfares. In one of these churches, the pastor gave a very basic evangelistic sermon, one I had heard many times before, but I knew God was speaking to me; so I responded to God, much to the surprise of the other guys in the band.**

**I'm only 24, but as I look back over my life I can really see that God was looking out for me and would only let me go so far away from Him. I am really appreciative now when people tell me they had been praying for me. I know that was really a big part of keeping me out of deeper trouble. Life hasn't necessarily gotten easier, but everything definitely has so much more purpose. The only thing I'm into now is God's plan for my life.**



**“But while he was still a long way off, his father saw him and was filled with compassion for him; he ran to his son, threw his arms around him and kissed him.**

**“The son said to him, ‘Father, I have sinned against heaven and against you. I am no longer worthy to be called your son.’**

**“But the father said to his servants, ‘Quick! Bring the best robe and put it on him. Put a ring on his finger and sandals on his feet. Bring the fattened calf and kill it. Let’s have a feast and celebrate. For this son of mine was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found.’ So they began to celebrate.”**

# 6 TO DO EXTRAORDINARY THINGS YOU HAVE TO DO EXTRAORDINARY THINGS

**We were doing a concert on a bridge** in Amsterdam. We were playing songs and inviting people to our Bible study that was held on an old barge behind the Central Train Station. Just as we were nearing the end of our last song, a group of Satan punks came. One of them took a bottle, smashed it over the drum set, and in the process, cut his hand. Another one came up and spit in my face. They were all screaming and shouting, and a large crowd gathered to see what was going to happen.

“How many of you believe that Satan is in Amsterdam?” I shouted.

“Yeah, yeah, Satan is in Amsterdam,” the Satan punks screamed back.

“How many of you love Satan?”

“Yeah, we love Satan.”

“Well, I have another message for you. God is also in Amsterdam, and God didn’t talk about his love, he proved it for us. He didn’t drive in to Amsterdam in his Mercedes and live in a palace. He came to Amsterdam and fed the hungry and healed the sick. But we said that he didn’t fit into our system, so we killed him. We thought, great, now we don’t have to deal with Jesus anymore.”

The atmosphere was electric as I continued. “But the good news for me and the good news for Amsterdam is that Jesus didn’t stay dead. He

## ACTS 6:8-15

**Now Stephen, a man full of God's grace and power, did great wonders and miraculous signs among the people. Opposition arose, however, from members of the Synagogue of the Freedmen (as it was called) — Jews of Cyrene and Alexandria as well as the provinces of Cilicia and Asia. These men began to argue with Stephen, but they could not stand up against his wisdom or the Spirit by whom he spoke.**

**Then they secretly persuaded some men to say, "We have heard Stephen speak words of blasphemy against Moses and against God."**

**So they stirred up the people and the elders and the teachers of the law. They seized Stephen and brought him before the Sanhedrin. They produced false witnesses, who testified, "This fellow never stops speaking against this holy place and against the law. For we have heard him say that this Jesus of Nazareth will destroy this place and change the customs Moses handed down to us."**

rose from the dead."

I want you to know that when I said this, I have never spoken with more anointing from God. It was as if I could feel the electricity coming out of my mouth. If I have ever preached an anointed message, it was on that bridge. But let me tell you what the fruit of it was. Some of the Satan punks took knives and started to cut the tires of our van. They started to smash out the headlights and rip up the windshield wipers. They tried to throw some of our people into the canals and to destroy our equipment.

I started to pile some of our stuff into the back of the van. One policeman came and said to me, "Drive away."

"How can I drive away when I have three flat tires?" I asked.

"Drive anyway," he said. He was afraid. You know you're in trouble when the police are afraid.

So, I got in my van, everyone from my band had run away, I had dried spit on my face, three slashed tires, and everything was smashed up. I drove away at about two miles an hour, and everyone was laughing at me.

"Are you truly stronger, God? You know, somehow I'm not thinking that you're so strong at this moment. Somehow I don't feel like you're such a conquering King," I thought.

**There are two sides to being willing** to stand in the power of God. A great example of that to me is the story of Stephen in the book of Acts. Stephen was a man full of God's grace and power. He did great wonders and miraculous signs among the people.

Can you imagine the kinds of things that Stephen must have done? Stephen must have been walking in the power of the Holy Spirit. The Bible says that when Stephen spoke, no one could argue with him because he spoke with so much authority. It says that sometimes his face would look like an angel.

Stephen operated in the presence and power of the Holy Spirit. But what was the fruit of that? After he gave a speech to the religious leaders, they were furious and gnashed their teeth. Stephen, filled with the Holy Spirit, looked up into heaven and saw the glory of God, and saw Jesus standing at the right hand of God. "'Look,' he said, 'I see heaven open and the Son of Man standing at the right hand of God.'"

They covered their ears and they screamed, and then they stoned him to death.

Stephen spoke with so much power of the Holy Spirit that they had to cover their ears and scream. That is how strongly God's anointing was upon him. But Stephen paid the ultimate price for being willing to stand in God's power in that they stoned him to death.

We have become the age of instant everything. If it doesn't come easy for me, I don't want it. If things get difficult, then it must not be God's will for my life. In fact, that's the way I know it's God's will, if it goes well, if everything goes easily and if all the doors open for me. That's how God leads us, by opening doors, isn't it?

But you see, the problem is God is not the only one who can open doors for us — Satan can also open doors. Maybe God is asking us to knock a door down.

One thing that Jesus was not impressed by was large crowds. I am! If I have a large crowd, then I feel like I'm successful. But Jesus was not impressed. There is an example in Luke 14 where Jesus had a large crowd of people following him. He thought to himself, "They must not understand. If people understood what it means to follow me, there wouldn't be such a large crowd." So, he said to them in verse 26, "If anyone comes to me and does not hate his father and mother, his wife and children, his brothers and sisters — yes, even his own life — he cannot be my disciple. And anyone who does not carry his cross and follow me cannot be my disciple."

Now, obviously Jesus was not saying that we should not love our father and mother or that we shouldn't love our children. What Jesus said was that we need to make him the number one priority in our lives. Jesus also said that we need to take up our cross and follow him.

But how can we understand what it means to follow him when the cross has become a religious symbol that we wear around our neck? The cross was not a beautiful religious symbol, but an instrument of torture, mockery, and foolishness. It's this cross that Jesus tells us we need to take up, not the beautiful religious one.

**There is a cost.** Do you want to do extraordinary things with your life? If you do, you have to do extraordinary things. It's that simple. It's not by talking extraordinarily that things will happen. If we want to reach the world for Jesus, it's going to cost something. It's not going to come easily; it's not going to come because we have the perfect program or

**All who were sitting in the Sanhedrin looked intently at Stephen, and they saw that his face was like the face of an angel.**

### **ACTS 7:54-60**

**When they heard this [Stephen's speech to the Sanhedrin], they were furious and gnashed their teeth at him. But Stephen, full of the Holy Spirit, looked up to heaven and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing at the right hand of God. "Look," he said, "I see heaven open and the Son of Man standing at the right hand of God."**

**At this they covered their ears and, yelling at the top of their voices, they all rushed at him, dragged him out of the city and began to stone him. Meanwhile, the witnesses laid their clothes at the feet of a young man named Saul.**

**While they were stoning him, Stephen prayed, "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit." Then he fell on his knees and cried out, "Lord, do not hold this sin against them." When he had said this, he fell asleep."**

system. Jesus said to not build the tower until you consider how much it's going to cost. Because if then you start and you don't have enough money to finish, people are going to mock you and say, "Look, you started to build what you could not finish." (Luke 14:28-30)

I think about how the world laughs at us because of all the unfinished towers all over the place. They laugh because we weren't willing to pay the price of seeing these towers built.

**When I started our ministry in Amsterdam,** I had this vision that God wanted to start a church that would have an impact on the inner city of Amsterdam. I felt it should be a church for the twenty-year old Dutch person. At the beginning, it was hard because people didn't understand what we were doing. We were the big joke with everybody, and I mean Christians.

When we started our band, the reason we called it No Longer Music was that everyone said we sounded so terrible that we were "No Longer Music." We had no equipment except one cymbal with a big crack in it. We tied a rope to the ceiling because we didn't have a cymbal stand. When the drummer hit the cymbal, it swung back and forth. Our bass player had a bass guitar that he had "found," and he was always losing his pick. It was pretty embarrassing.

I remember my wife asking if I was sure God wanted me to do this. During those days, someone asked me, "Do you practice singing out of tune?"

We were going out to clubs to understand the people we were trying to reach. Then suddenly, I became really sick. We had just started a little Bible study and the next thing I knew, I was lying in a hospital bed with tubes in my nose. This little Bible study that we fought hard to get going for two years was stopped. Almost everyone on my team had left, including my right-hand man. I was lying in bed not knowing if I was going to live or die.

Suddenly, I felt like I was being tested. I felt as if God was saying, "Are you willing to pay the price to see Amsterdam reached? Are you serious about this or not? Are you willing to take up my cross? Are you willing to pay the price to see my power?"

"God, I will not give up. I don't care if everybody leaves me. I don't care what happens, but if you let me get out of this hospital, I will not quit. I am not going to let go of the vision that you have given to me," I said.

Soon after that I recovered, and we saw a breakthrough in our ministry. But that is not the end of the story about the [Satan punks who trashed our bridge concert]. Approximately two weeks after the incident on the canal, about fifteen punks came to our Bible study. The reason they came was not to repent, but to destroy our place. They came with weapons, and they were going to smash up our boat. We were really afraid, but we prayed and said, "Okay, God, we're going to obey you." We started our music. Afterward, I started to speak, and again I felt the power of the Holy Spirit as I spoke.

This time I talked about the disciple, Thomas. I said to the punks, "Thomas said, 'I will not believe unless I can see the nail prints in your hands or the wound in your side.' Jesus is here right now. He can touch you if you're willing to see him."

I spoke with the power of the Holy Spirit like I did on that bridge. I knew I wasn't speaking of my own authority, but this time the response was different. The punks could not move; they were physically frozen. I remember walking up to one guy and he was shaking like a leaf because of the presence of the Holy Spirit.

There is such power when you are willing to lift up the cross. In 1 Corinthians 2:1-5 Paul said that when he came he resolved to know nothing except to know Jesus was crucified. He came in weakness and in fear and with much trembling. His message and preaching were not with wise and persuasive words, but with a demonstration of the Spirit's power, so that the faith of those who heard him might not rest on man's wisdom, but on God's power.

We need to see God's power. People are sick of religious talk. They need to see the power of God. I'm not impressed with revival that happens inside the church. I'm impressed with revival that happens outside the church in the marketplace. But this kind of power is going to cost something, and we need to be willing to pay that price.

God uses people who will be willing to sacrifice it all for him, who will be willing to take a stand. I believe that God is anxious to show his power in our lives, but it's not going to come without a price. One thing about following Jesus is that it is truly a radical calling. But it's the best. The greatest privilege there is in the world is to follow Jesus 100%. But I can't think of an emptier existence than to follow Jesus half way; it's better not to even be a Christian at all.

### **I CORINTHIANS 2:1-5**

**When I came to you, brothers, I did not come with eloquence or superior wisdom as I proclaimed to you the testimony about God. For I resolved to know nothing while I was with you except Jesus Christ and him crucified. I came to you in weakness and fear, and with much trembling. My message and my preaching were not with wise and persuasive words, but with a demonstration of the Spirit's power, so that your faith might not rest on men's wisdom, but on God's power.**



# 7 LOUDSPEAKERS ON TOP OF THE COFFIN

## **I felt happy to be in my coffin**

on what was a typical cold and dreary day in Amsterdam. The coffin was warm and kept me out of the rain. My only concern was that the guys carrying me would drop me into a canal because they were walking on a wet and uneven cobblestone street.

The plan was to set me down in front of the monument where all the drug dealers and tourists hung out. The monument was across from the Dam square that was located in the center of Amsterdam. We finally arrived at the monument, and they set me down. Situated on top of the coffin was a little loudspeaker. I had a microphone inside the coffin with me. "This is going to be great!" I thought.



"People of Amsterdam!" I shouted through the microphone. The people sitting around the monument, most of them smoking dope, stared blankly at the coffin with the loud speaker on top. But all they could hear was "Pfener uf Afnerdam," because the small speaker was distorting as I screamed from inside my coffin. Finally, after shouting for over five minutes, my neck was starting to get stiff. I just opened the lid, got out, picked up my coffin, and went home.

**The first time I met Jodi** (who is now my wife) was when we were walking from the red-light district in Amsterdam to Vondelpark to conduct an evangelistic outreach. Because I was attracted to Jodi immediately, I was excited that she would see me in action in Vondelpark where I was scheduled to preach. I had the idea that if she could see what a powerful speaker I was, this would make her attracted to me.



We went to the part of the park where many New Age people and anarchists hung out. We formed a little half circle facing everyone. For some reason, I had the idea that you had to scream at the top of your lungs when you preached on the street. Jodi thought I turned into a mad man as I shouted to the poor assembled group of New Agers and anarchists about their need for God. Anyone standing too closely to me had to be careful not to get a spray of spit on them. In retrospect, I think if I had heard someone like me preaching the way I did, I wouldn't have wanted to be a Christian. What was miraculous about the whole thing was that Jodi still wanted to talk to me after the fiasco.

**The reason many people don't want to hear** about Jesus, I think, is because of the foolish things Christians do. What really surprised me, especially in my early days in Amsterdam, was that God was still able to touch people in spite of all the crazy things that I did.

Once, a guy came to my home in Amsterdam. When I opened the door to talk with him, he said to me, "I saw you shouting on the Dam square two years ago. I became a Christian last week. I just joined a church, and I thought I should tell you that."

So, even when we do things God would never ask us to do in His name, miraculously, He is still able to use it in spite of everything. The bad news is that even if we do the things the way God wants us to, we will still look foolish in the eyes of the world, because the message of the cross is foolish.

Another time I did something even worse. I was in San Francisco doing this drama. I had to wear these little knickers and have little red hearts on my cheeks to be in this drama. Can you imagine walking around San Francisco with little red hearts on your cheeks? So, sometimes God asks us to do some foolish things.

**We listen to so many lies**, and we are afraid to tell people about Jesus. In Matthew 10:26 it says to not be afraid of what people will think. *“There is nothing concealed that will not be disclosed, or hidden that will not be made known. What I tell you in the dark, speak in the daylight; what is whispered in your ear, proclaim from the roofs.”*

When the band was doing some concerts in France, we had a press conference. We had about six microphones in front of us and all these cameras, and the reporters were firing questions at us as we sat there. One reporter said, “So, what you are really doing is just some kind of propoganda, right?” It was as if I had to apologize because we talked about Jesus in our concerts.



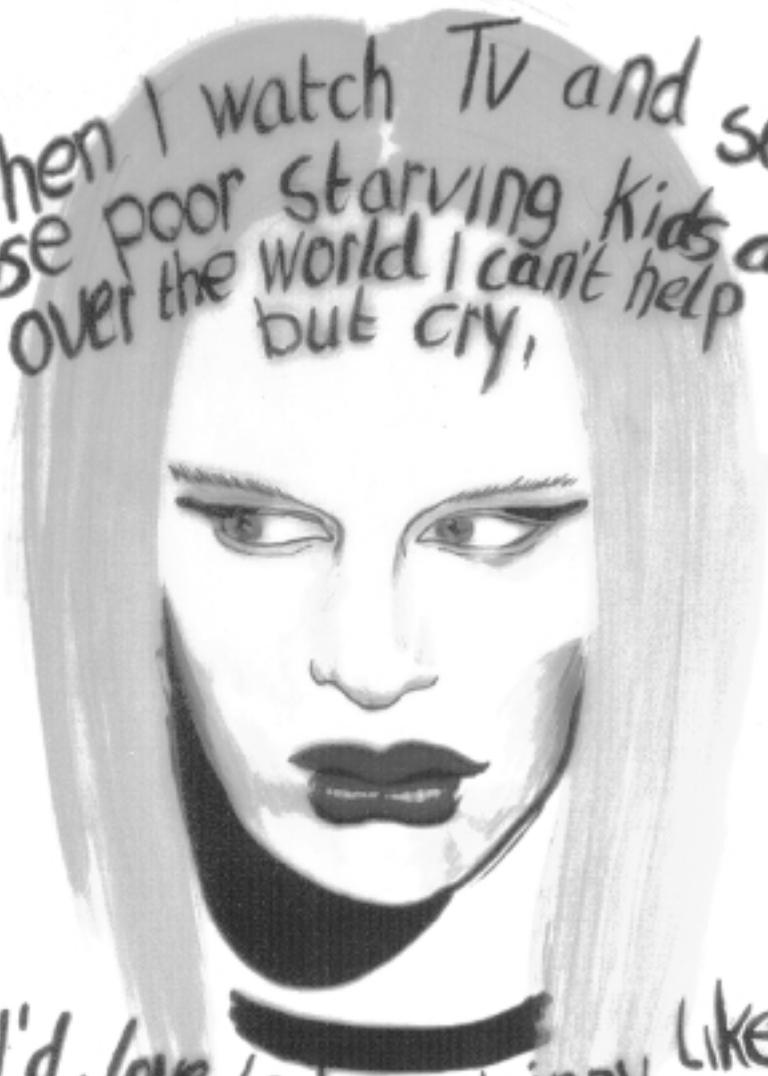
The world tells me that if I say Jesus is the answer, I'm being close-minded or fascist or something.

I said to this reporter. “Why is it that any of these other bands can talk about any of their philosophies, about why they love the trees or whatever, but I can't talk about Jesus?”

Another reason we won't tell people about Jesus is we think to ourselves, “Well, if I tell them, they will laugh at me.”

You're right; they will laugh! If you tell people about Jesus, sometimes they are going to laugh at you. I've had many people laugh at me over the years.

When I watch TV and see  
those poor starving kids all  
over the world I can't help  
but cry,



I'd love to be skinny like  
that, but not with all those  
flies and death and stuff.

We've had concerts where nobody clapped their hands the entire concert. They wouldn't leave, either. We finished a song, and they just stared at us. So, we did another song. If you want to take a stand for Jesus, people will laugh at you and mock you. You have to expect it and be willing to pay the price.

Once, we were invited to play in an alternative club in Auckland, New Zealand, because the owners thought it would be funny to have Christians there. We went to the club prepared for people to mock us and laugh. If people laughed at and mocked Jesus, they were going to laugh at and mock us. Instead, the power of God came down so strong during our concert that those who came to mock us were unable to hold their drinks, because they were literally shaking so hard from the power of the Holy Spirit.

**We often hesitate when God wants us to talk to somebody,** and other times we just don't do it. When we were on the train ride to France, there was a woman who came into the compartment. I felt like I should talk to her about God. Then I thought, "Na, na, that's not right." I did a bad thing, I think. I quenched something God wanted to do.

A reason we might do this, though, is that we are reacting to the bad, superficial things we see people do sometimes. We don't want people to think that we are Jesus machines or are not normal people. We have been around people who are strange. They say, "Praise God, Praise God, Praise God, Hallelujah, Hallelujah, Hallelujah," when we have just said, "It's nice weather today, isn't it?" We are left staring at them, thinking, "Man, what's happening?"

We need to answer people's questions. We shouldn't be Jesus machines. We should be real people. Once, I was at this restaurant in America talking to a guy about Jesus. He was asking me some really honest questions, and I was listening to him and trying to answer them. Suddenly, this middle-aged woman, who had obviously been eavesdropping on our conversation, walked up to us and said, "Excuse me, God said it, and I believe it, and that settles it." Then she walked out. We looked at each other thinking, "What was that?"

Jesus doesn't want us to be like that. He wants us to really listen to people, to talk to people, but he wants us to tell them what the answer is. A friend of mine was very interested in Christianity. We would go into restaurants, and he would say to the waitress, "Did you know this guy believes in Jesus? Tell her about Jesus." I'd think, "I don't want to tell



**EXCUSE ME, GOD SAID  
IT, AND I BELIEVE IT,  
AND THAT SETTLES  
IT**



this woman about Jesus. I just want to drink my coffee.” Because of his persistence, though, I would end up talking to her about Jesus.

At the university, he would take me to a table full of people whom I didn’t know. He’d say, “Did you know this guy believes in Jesus?” Then he would snicker and say, “Tell them about Jesus.” I sat there saying, “Um, well, um…” We saw so many miracles, though. He led more people to Jesus before he became a Christian than most Christians do their whole lives.

**Another lie we listen to** is that we have to know everything. We can’t tell people about something if we don’t know everything. That is such a lie. You are never going to know everything. (The only guy I know who knows everything went to the university with me, and now he’s a lawyer.) If we wait until we know everything and can answer all the questions anyone might have about God, we are never going to be able to tell anybody anything.

Why is this true? It’s because the only thing that makes us different from someone who is not a Christian is that we are the sinners who have recognized our need for God’s forgiveness. Everyone who is a Christian, even though he has been a Christian only a short time, can talk about how he has received this forgiveness from God.

**Another lie we believe** is that it is because of us that God changes people’s lives. My words will never change anybody’s life. It’s the Spirit of God that changes people, and for some reason, he allows me to be part of that. God wants us to see His power.

When we don’t tell people about Jesus, we are missing the kind of power he wants to show us. We dry up. “Well, I’m kind of the silent witness, you know. I have that deep inner relationship. I just want people to see that it’s real by my life.”

It needs to be in my life. If it’s not in my life, then I have no authority to speak. It needs to be real, but we need to speak the Word.

In Romans 10:13 it says, *“Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved. How, then, can they call on the one they have not believed in? How can they believe in the one of whom they have not heard? How can they hear without someone preaching to them? How can they preach unless they are sent?”*

God wants to send us. Jesus is saying, “Who will go for us?” Whom

shall I send?" He wants to send everybody who has made a decision to follow Jesus. The Bible also says, "How beautiful are the feet of those who bring good news." There has never been a time when we needed to take a stand more than today. Yet, we act so meek and insecure about Jesus.

I read about this student activist in China. He was about twenty years old. His parents were officials in the Communist Party. During the 1980's, he led these protests with thousands of people who demanded more democracy in China. His parents pleaded with him, "Please don't do this. You will go to prison." In this interview he said, "But I can't be quiet. I will not be quiet. I don't care what it costs me. I am going to take a stand."

Are we willing to take a stand? Are we willing to be tools that God can use to change the world?

## 8 THE PIGS

*(I wanted to have a scratch and sniff sticker in this chapter, but it cost too much so Ton drew one and it looks good but it doesn't work.)*

**It was very unusual for First Avenue** to have a Christian concert, especially in the Main Room. First Avenue, at the time we played there, was probably one of the most important clubs in the Midwestern part of the United States. All the major bands have played there at one time or another. A friend told me that he saw U2 perform there. Prince used the club for his movie, "Purple Rain."

During the concert, on stage, we showed a modern day crucifixion of Jesus. Two girls came in for a dance party that was going to be held after our concert. Immediately they could tell that we were a Christian band, so they started to mock us and laugh. A drummer, who was from a band that had played before us, saw them and asked why they were laughing. They commented that we were some stupid Christian band. He told them that they needed to be careful because what we were talking about wasn't a joke, and he pointed to the bartender who had started to shake and freak out behind the bar. The bartender shook so hard that it was difficult for him to work. He started to shake even harder when I started to preach after the concert, because of the power of the Holy Spirit that had come into the club. The girls, who had mocked us, were so afraid of what was happening to the bartender that they made their way forward after the concert to pray with the band.



**A month later,** I was in the Bruchsal Prison, a maximum security prison in Germany. All the inmates are there for the most serious crimes, half of them for murder or other major offenses. Many inmates are doing life sentences.

One man, who was doing a life sentence for murder, came forward in front of the other inmates. I gave an invitation to come to the front for those who wanted to pray and ask Jesus to change their lives. He came forward knowing that later he was going to be beaten up by the other prisoners for making such a stand. The power of the Holy Spirit touched him so strongly that he felt God healing him and forgiving him of his past. From that moment on, he became a changed person and an evangelist in the prison. I could give many more examples like this where I have seen the incredible power that there is in the name of Jesus.

If there is so much power in the name of Jesus, why do we feel so powerless? Why does the church appear to the world to be timid and outdated? The world is not silent about what it believes — why is the church? When will the church come out of the closet? We need to be willing to tell people about Jesus and to stand in his power. We need to be willing to risk the passionate life.



**In Mark 5:1-20,** there is a story about a man who lived in the graveyard. This was a scary guy who was so insane and such a trouble maker that the town kept trying to tie him up with ropes and chains. He was always cutting himself with stones and screaming. The town kept trying to chain him down, but he kept breaking the chains. (He sounds like a lead singer in a band that we played with.)

He was like many people today who are branding, piercing, and tattooing themselves. The latest craze in Amsterdam is branding and scarification which I saw the last time that I was there.

So was the case with this guy living in the graveyard. He was frustrated; he was hurt. Maybe he was told, like so many people today, that he had no value. Maybe he never knew the love of a father. He cut himself with stones and was crying out. Because of his hurt, he had opened himself up to demonic forces and was possessed by them.

The man saw Jesus and he broke the chains again and came running and screaming out of the graveyard toward Jesus. So, Jesus saw this crazy guy running toward him. This had to be pretty horrifying to see this insane man with broken chains, blood dripping, come running from the graveyard. (All you would need is a little bit of smoke and it would look like a slasher movie.) Screaming and spewing, he came running at a full gallop toward Jesus.

Now, what would you do if you were Jesus in a situation like this? I think the answer is obvious; you would run away. If we are going to have the passionate life that God wants us to have, we do not need to be afraid of the man in the graveyard. We do not have to fear him.

**One of the stupidest things**, I think, that is being said about spiritual warfare today is that we have to pray in a certain way or a certain order before God can watch over us; or that it is by saying certain kinds of words that we are protected by the evil forces that surround us today.

If anyone is aware of the fact that there are indeed evil spiritual forces at work, it's me. I have often seen how real the spiritual world is.

I can remember one concert when a demonic guy jumped up on stage and started coming toward a band member during the middle of the concert. This made me really nervous because we have had bad experiences with people like that. Sometimes they have made bonfires with our tracts or urinated off the stage. (It wouldn't be so bad if they would urinate on the bonfires because that would make lots of steam and we wouldn't have to rent smoke machines.) Someone from my group walked up to him, looked him in the eye and said, "Be cool in Jesus' name."

Now, where in the Bible does it say to use the words, "Be cool in Jesus' name"? It wasn't because of the words he used, but it was the relationship that he had with Jesus that his words had an effect on the demonic guy. Immediately he stiffened and became afraid. He left the stage without incident.

It's not by saying certain words or praying in a certain way that we have power over the evil forces that we will confront when we are bold for Jesus. It's because of our relationship with Jesus that gives us authority over these evil forces. In God's word it says, "He who is in us is greater than he who is in the world." If Jesus is living within me and he calls me to go somewhere, whether it is in a terrorist club or on stage at an anarchy festival, or whatever kind of lion's den that God calls me into, if I go because he has asked me to go and I have this relationship with

## **MARK 5:1-20**

**They went across the lake to the region of the Gerasenes. When Jesus got out of the boat, a man with an evil spirit came from the tombs to meet him. This man lived in the tombs, and no one could bind him any more, not even with a chain. For he had often been chained hand and foot, but he tore the chains apart and broke the irons on his feet. No one was strong enough to subdue him. Night and day among the tombs and in the hills he would cry out and cut himself with stones.**

**When he saw Jesus from a distance, he ran and fell on his knees in front of him. He shouted at the top of his voice, "What do you want with me, Jesus, Son of the Most High God? Swear to God that you won't torture me!" For Jesus had said to him, "Come out of this man, you evil spirit!"**

**Then Jesus asked him, "What is your name?"**

**"My name is Legion," he replied, "for we are many." And he begged Jesus again and again not to send them out of the area.**

**A large herd of pigs was feeding on the nearby hillside. The demons begged Jesus, “Send us among the pigs; allow us to go into them.” He gave them permission, and the evil spirits came out and went into the pigs. The herd, about two thousand in number, rushed down the steep bank into the lake and were drowned.**

**Those tending the pigs ran off and reported this in the town and countryside, and the people went out to see what had happened. When they came to Jesus, they saw**



him, I will not be afraid, like Jesus was not afraid of the man in the graveyard.

**So, Jesus immediately** started to cast the demons out of the man in the graveyard. The demons asked to be sent into the herd of pigs. Jesus said, “Okay, go into the pigs then.” All the demons left the man and went into a herd of pigs that were nearby.

In Mark 5:13, it says that the whole herd of about two thousand pigs rushed down a steep bank and into the lake and drowned.

What do you think the people’s reaction from the town was? Wouldn’t you think they would be happy? After all, this crazy guy — who kept them awake at night, who scared all their children, who kept breaking all his chains, who lived in the graveyard — was now fully clothed and completely normal. You would think this would make them happy. But their reaction is not what you would predict.

Instead, in verse 17, it says that the people started begging Jesus to leave their part of the country. They weren’t asking Jesus to leave; they were begging Jesus to leave.

Why is it that they reacted the way that they did? I think the answer is obvious. They loved pigs more than they loved people. So the question you need to ask yourself is: What are you more concerned about — pigs or people?

Now, I know that many of you who are reading this are relieved at this point because you are thinking, well, this chapter doesn’t have anything to do with me because I’m pigless.

Well, there are many different kinds of pigs.

**There’s the relationship pig.** One day, I was walking down the street in Amsterdam, and I got this strong impression that I should go back to my room. This doesn’t happen to me very often, but I really felt this very strongly. So, I turned around, walked back to where I was living, walked up to my room, and I found myself kneeling by my bed, still not knowing why I was there.

The next thing I knew, I started praying, and I felt like God wanted me to pray that I would be willing to be single for the rest of my life. With as much honesty as I could, I prayed and told God that I was willing to be single for the rest of my life. Three days later, I met Jodi, who ended

up being the woman whom I would marry.

Now, I know many of you who are reading this want to put the book down and try this for yourselves. But the point is, the relationship pig has to go.

How many people have thrown away their spiritual inheritance because of the relationship pig? How many friends do I have who, when at the university, were full of dreams and vision and passion for the future, but because of the relationship pig, their lives are in utter ruin?

Many people have given up the incredible life God has in store for them because they were unwilling to deal with the relationship pig. God has a great spiritual inheritance, and we have to be willing to submit our relationships to God, or we endanger losing the inheritance.

Some people get into the idea that they can fool around with a non-Christian boyfriend or girlfriend, and that they will somehow influence him or her into having a serious relationship with God. Or perhaps God is calling you to the mission field, and you are getting involved with someone who doesn't share that calling. You think that somehow he or she will catch your calling eventually, and it's okay for you to develop a serious relationship with him or her. Beware. You are in danger of throwing away your inheritance for the relationship pig. Let the relationship pig go off the cliff.

**The security pig.** If you want to have the inheritance that God has for you, the security pig has to go off the cliff. You have to be willing to step out of your comfort zone and go anywhere God asks you to go. I've had many people come up to me and say that they wanted to do God's will for their life if He would... and then they give me their whole list of things that needed to happen: to be near their family, to be in the country or the city, to play their music, to work with this group of people or that group of people. But until we are willing to do anything God asks us to do, we are in danger of throwing away our spiritual inheritance.

When I first went to live in the inner city of Amsterdam, it was a very difficult thing for me, especially in the early days. Sometimes I would lay in bed and feel almost a physical pain; I was so lonely for my family back in America. If I were going to have all that God wanted me to have, I had to be willing to be insecure at times and pay

**the man who had been possessed by the legion of demons, sitting there, dressed and in his right mind; and they were afraid. Those who had seen it told the people what had happened to the demon-possessed man — and told about the pigs as well. Then the people began to plead with Jesus to leave their region.**

**As Jesus was getting into the boat, the man who had been demon-possessed begged to go with him. Jesus did not let him, but said, "Go home to your family and tell them how much the Lord has done for you, and how he has had mercy on you." So the man went away and began to tell in the Decapolis how much Jesus had done for him. And all the people were amazed.**



the price to see God's will in my life. The security pig had to go off the cliff.

**The pride pig.** When Jodi and I started our life together in Amsterdam, we had very little support. God provided us with jobs as house cleaners. On my visits back to America, I saw my friends getting into their careers, buying their homes and cars. I went back to Amsterdam to my small rented apartment where I was a house cleaner with my wife so that we would have enough money to buy food.

Sometimes I became frustrated, and I prayed, "God, I went to the university to earn a degree, and Jodi went to the university, and here we are in Amsterdam being house cleaners. Is this what I went to school for — to be a house cleaner?" I saw in my mind all the things that my friends were doing back in America. I felt God speaking to me and saying, "Are you willing to be a house cleaner for me if that is what I want for you to do?"

The pride pig has to be willing to go off the cliff if we are going to find our inheritance in God.



**The acceptance pig.** If you're going to find the best that God has for you, then be willing to be spit on, laughed at, mocked, and ridiculed. If the acceptance of people is the most important thing in your life, you will never be able to accomplish great things for God.

How many people do you know who have settled for second best because they were not willing to let the acceptance pig go off the cliff?

**There's the my-kind-of-people pig.** "If God would only call me to my kind of people. Obviously God wouldn't want me to work with them because they are not my kind of people with whom I feel comfortable." If you have these kinds of thoughts, you may be stopping God from doing great things in your life.

Dresden, Germany is one of the centers for the Neo-Nazi movement in Europe. Do you know who has one of the most effective ministries with the

Neo-Nazis in Dresden? A grandmother! She doesn't look like a punk or a skinhead. She wears grandmother dresses and has grandmother hair. She has one of the most powerful ministries among the Neo-Nazis and punks in Dresden, Germany.

How many people have stopped God from doing something fantastic in their lives because they have said, "Those are not my kind of people," instead of saying, "Whatever people you want me to go to God, I am willing — just show me."

The question is not how I feel about people who are lost; the question is how God feels. Am I willing to have a part of his broken heart for whomever he sends me to? The my-kind-of-people pig has to go off the cliff.

**The money pig** — see chapter 3.

**The privacy pig.** You will never be able to experience all that God wants you to if you are not willing to let the privacy pig go off the cliff. When Jodi and I first moved to Europe after we were married, we were living in a tiny room that had only a blanket for a door. We had to share a toilet with fifty other people who also lived in the building. People just came into our room because there was no door to knock on. I could have said, "No, God, I'm just newly married, and I need to have my privacy. Obviously you are not asking me to do this." I could have said no. But Jodi and I had to be willing to let the privacy pig go if we wanted to have what God wanted to give us.

Many people are not willing to say yes to God because they are not willing to let go of their privacy. If I would have said no to God because of the privacy pig, I never would have experienced the incredible life God wanted to give me.

What pig is stopping you from telling people about Jesus?





## 9 THE TOILET BOSS

**I was standing in the great hall** of the Krasnapolsky Hotel in Amsterdam. A famous healer from South Africa had chosen me to stand on the stage. I was feeling quite proud of myself because he was going to call people forward to be healed. Because he obviously couldn't pray for everyone who would respond, I was one of the chosen whom he would pray over to receive the gift of healing so that I could pray for those who would come forward. I figured he must have picked me because he knew I was one of God's chosen few and more spiritual than many others. I enjoyed standing on the stage looking out at the audience, until he started to pray for people on the other end of the stage.

As he was praying, they started falling over like dominoes. I started to panic. What if I don't fall over? What if everyone falls over on the stage and I don't? I will look like an idiot. It will look like I am not one of the chosen people! How am I going to pray for the people unless I fall over? They kept falling —

**BOOM - BOOM - BOOM.**

I kept becoming more nervous. Then I said to myself, "Wait a minute, I'm not going to fall over for this guy or anyone else, or even because of the pressure of this situation. If God wants me to fall over, he can make me fall over."

**Whenever I read in the Bible** about the Pharisees, I always comforted myself with the fact that I knew I was not one of them. After all, Pharisees were fat, bald men who wore long robes and were self-righteous. This obviously was not something that concerned me.

As I started to think honestly about whom the Pharisees were, I started to see a lot of Pharisee type behavior in my own life. So, don't comfort yourself with the idea that you couldn't be one too.

This is the official "Are You a Pharisee?" checklist. (And, no, it doesn't mean that you're safe if you are not fat, bald, or not wearing a robe. It might actually be kind of cool if you were fat, bald and wearing a robe, but that has to do with style, and I don't want to talk about that now, maybe later.)

## **MATTHEW 6:5-6**

**And when you pray, do not be like the hypocrites, for they love to pray standing in the synagogues and on the street corners to be seen by men.**

**I tell you the truth, they have received their reward in full. But when you pray, go into your room, close the door and pray to your Father, who is unseen.**

**Then your Father, who sees what is done in secret, will reward you.**



### **1. DO YOU USE A DIFFERENT VOICE WHEN YOU PRAY?**

Have you noticed that in a group everyone prays like the leader? I mean, if he prays really enthusiastically and says Hallelujah a lot, then everybody does that.

Once, I went to a group where the leader was really mellow, as if he were on drugs or something, and you could hardly stay awake when he prayed. Everybody prayed just like him, really quietly, as if they were on drugs too. It was really relaxing, and I got a lot of sleep during the prayer times.

### **2. DO YOU PRAY TO GOD?**

You're in a prayer meeting and a guy, whom the leader thinks is really cool, begins to pray. When he prays, he becomes more worked up. He starts sweating and shouting, and it's one of the coolest, most powerful prayers, and everything fits together, and it just amazes you. You're sitting there thinking to yourself, "Oh man, how am I going to beat that? I'm not going to pray after that because my prayer will sound so wimpy." Suddenly, it occurs to you that everyone in the room is praying to each other and God isn't even there. It's like this: You pray, and afterward you think, "Hey, that sounded quite good. I'll bet people were really impressed with what I just prayed."

### 3. DO YOU CHANGE YOUR WORD ORDER WHEN YOU PRAY?

Can you imagine if I talked to my wife like I sometimes talk to God? "Well, it's been a nice day today, Jodi, so be it. And I really would like to say that I've had a good day, and I've enjoyed the meals, so be it. And I just want to thank you so much for this great meal, so be it, so be it, so be it."

She'd say, "What's wrong with him?"

And what if I didn't wait for her to talk to me? If I asked her things, but then I would leave before she could answer me.

"Jodi, would you tell me what you think we should do tomorrow? So be it, so be it, so be it, hallelujah." Then I'd leave. She'd be ready to tell me and then I'd be gone.

We do these formulas and we wonder why God doesn't speak to us; but we really don't want him to speak to us, and we don't really believe he's going to speak to us.



### MATTHEW 6:7-8

**And when you pray, do not keep on babbling like pagans, for they think they will be heard because of their many words. Do not be like them, for your Father knows what you need before you ask him.**

### 4. DO YOU NOT MAKE A CONNECTION BETWEEN YOUR PRAYERS AND YOUR ACTIONS?

I was watching a band on TV. They were in a back room getting ready to go out on stage. They were getting all psyched up and shouting. The leader said, "Okay, we gotta pray now." Then a guy prayed (I don't know if he was in the band or what.) He could have been a Baptist minister. (If you don't know what that means, don't worry about it. I'm not being negative about Baptists.) He prayed, "Be with us now, help us to go for it, and give you the Glory, in Jesus' name," or something like that. Then the singer went out on the stage in his yellow underwear and sang an obscene song. So, there is a lot of religious stuff going on.

Or if you've seen "Rocky," before he fights, he crosses himself. Then he goes in and bashes his opponent's head.

### MATTHEW 23:1-4

**Then Jesus said to the crowds and to his disciples: "The teachers of the law and the Pharisees sit in Moses' seat. So you must obey them and do everything they tell you. But do not do what they do, for they do not practice what they preach. They tie up heavy loads and put them on men's shoulders, but they themselves are not willing to lift a finger to move them.**

**MATTHEW 23:5-7**

**Everything they do is done for men to see: They make their phylacteries wide and the tassels on their garments long; they love the place of honor at banquets and the most important seats in the synagogues; they love to be greeted in the marketplaces and to have men call them 'Rabbi.'**

**5. DO YOU DO THINGS SO THAT YOU WILL GET RECOGNIZED?**

When I was six years old, one of the most coveted positions in my school was that of the toilet boss. The toilet boss got to wear a badge and lead all the boys to the toilet and make sure they washed their hands. This was a very prestigious thing to be.

When I worked with YWAM, Youth With a Mission, they had a group of leaders in Amsterdam called The Council. I thought to myself, this is like being a toilet boss, only there are no badges. So I made it my goal to be on The Council so that I could have the prestige that went with the office.

Pharisees always seek to sit at the head of the table and be recognized by men. Ask yourself this question: Are you able to do something for God without telling anyone about it, or is it important for you that everyone knows about it?

My father once told me that real service for God is doing something for him that nobody knows about except you and God. This is unacceptable for a Pharisee. He wants the approval of people.

**6. DO YOU FIND YOURSELF SITTING IN A RESTAURANT TALKING ABOUT ALL THE THINGS THAT YOU ARE DOING WHEN IN REALITY YOU ARE SITTING IN A RESTAURANT**

**TALKING ABOUT ALL THE THINGS YOU ARE DOING?**



Let's imagine that an angel appears in your room and puts a piece of tape over your mouth. Could anyone tell by your actions that you follow Jesus? Would anyone

know by your behavior in your school, or in your work, or in your neighborhood that you are different from everyone else? Because a Pharisee is not concerned about actual behavior, but about form and words.

Consider this, have you noticed that some of the most animated and best discussions about spiritual sacrifice and fasting occur over big meals in restaurants?

**7. DO YOU GO FORWARD AND ASK JESUS INTO YOUR HEART EVERY TIME YOU HEAR A GOOD SPEAKER?**



Do you get scared when you hear people talking about Jesus coming back, and you've had experiences where you come home and no one is there, and you think the rapture's taken place and you've been left behind?

If you are a religious person, you are always trying to earn God's love. I really didn't want to go to Hell, so I figured if I told somebody about Jesus, he would certainly not send me to Hell. See, I didn't want to follow God, but I didn't want to go to Hell.

Once when I was in high school, I was at an airport and I had this little book; it was a book to help tell people about God. I went up to a guy and read the little book to him. Afterward, I thought, now I know if Jesus comes back, he will take me.

**8. DO YOU PRAY EVERYDAY THROUGH THE 10-40 WINDOW? \* SECRETLY, YOU DON'T REALLY CARE, BUT YOU DO IT ANYWAY BECAUSE YOU KNOW YOU SHOULD.**

There is a Tarzan movie where these natives are in a village, and they have dug a big pit. A giant ape lives in it, and every once in a while, the giant ape jumps up and down and makes all kinds of noise. The natives start to panic because they know they need to find someone to feed to the ape or else the ape will jump out of the hole and eat them. They go into the jungle and find Jane and take her back to the village to be fed to the ape. Just as they are throwing her into the hole, Tarzan comes and saves Jane. Meanwhile, the ape gets out of the hole and eats everyone in the village.

Pharisees are always making sacrifices to God because they think they need to earn his love.

**\* The bulk of the unreached people in our world live in an area bounded by a rectangle that sits 10° north to 40° north of the equator.**



## 9. YOU DEFEND WATCHING MOVIES LIKE *PULP FICTION*.

No explanation necessary.

**IF YOU FAILED** the “Are You a Pharisee?” check, read this next section. **If you passed, you can skip it and go to the next chapter.**

A wonderful tour with our band was set up for us in Budapest, Hungary. We were going to be playing in some of the biggest clubs in the city, and I was excited about it. Just before we were going on the tour, I started to feel sick. When I went to the doctor, I learned that I had picked up hepatitis from a restaurant in Amsterdam. We would have to cancel our tour, and I wouldn't be able to do anything for a month.

This was the first and only time that we ever had to cancel a tour, so I started to pray and ask God why. I was sure that it had to be because of some kind of sin in my life that God allowed me to be sick. I prayed and said to God, “What did I do wrong that you allowed me to get hepatitis? So many people would have heard about you in these clubs in Budapest. Show me what sin I have committed so I can repent and make things right.”

As I was crying out to God in my bed, I felt like God spoke to me and said, “The reason I allowed you to get hepatitis is not because of any sin, but because I wanted to spend time with you. I knew that this was the only way I could get you to slow down enough so that we could spend some time together.”

“Well, do you want to show me some new things? Is there some new revelation that you want to give to me?” I said.

“No, I just want to spend time with you,” I felt God say.

“God, you must be kidding. You just want to spend time with me? You don't want to rebuke me? You don't want to tell me where I am doing something wrong? You don't want to give me a new vision?” I said.

“No, I just want to spend time with you.”

“Okay, I'll spend time with you.” So that's what I did a lot during that month. I just spent time with Jesus. He doesn't want us to be religious. He wants our friendship.

# 10 NO RULES

**When I was growing up,** one thing I didn't like was rules. The first thing I did when I moved away from home was to not have any rules. I moved into an old apartment with a few of my friends. We decided it would be cool to have no rules. The rule in our house was "no rules." It was great. If you didn't want to do the dishes, you didn't. No rules.

We had an oven, and I wanted to make a baked potato. I had never made a baked potato before. But I wanted to make one, so I put it in the oven and did what I thought I should do to make a baked potato. The potato blew up in the oven. But no rules, and I wasn't into cleaning the oven. So I didn't. No one else was into cleaning the oven, so no one ever used it again. We just weren't into oven cleaning.

Eventually the dishes in the apartment all were dirty. No one was into washing the dishes. So the dishes stayed dirty. To eat, we literally had to go to restaurants. I'm serious.

I can remember walking by the sink and seeing green mold all over the place. It became a ritual for us to see what new forms of life were being produced in our sink. You know, it wasn't that great living without rules. But we wanted to live with "no rules."

**When I became a Christian,** I wanted to have "no rules" again, because I was so into having no rules. We had a house at the University



of Minnesota. We called it Everybody's House. No rules. We were all going to just live together and love God. No rules. It was great. We had 24-hour parties. But in the end, the house blew up like the potato.

Many people were hurt. They started thinking that maybe there needed to be a few rules. So I started thinking, "Who is going to make the rules? Are you going to make them? I don't think so. I'll make them. One thing for sure, I don't want to live under your rules."

Well, Jesus gives us good news.

The ways of men lead to death. Proverbs 14:12 says, "There is a way that seems right to a man, but in the end it leads to death." That doesn't sound like good news, does it?

That is not the good news.

The good news is that the ways of God lead to life. My ways lead to death. God's rules lead to life. That is the good news. And God gave to us a rule book called the Bible so that we would have some rules to go by, to have life instead of death. His laws will make us free.

In Psalm 119:9-16 it says:

*"How can a young man [or woman] keep his way pure? By living according to your word. I seek you with all my heart; do not let me stray from your commands. I have hidden your word in my heart that I might not sin against you. Praise be to you, O Lord; teach me your decrees. With my lips I recount all the laws that come from your mouth. I rejoice in following your statutes as one rejoices in great riches. I meditate on your precepts and consider your ways. I delight in your decrees; I will not neglect your word."*

God's word is not here to restrict or punish us. He gives us His word to liberate us.

**I stood on the stage that overlooked** Russian warships in the harbor. There was a sea of people. We had just played a few songs, and I got the idea that we should give them the Bibles we had with us. This was a ridiculous idea since we only had a few hundred and there were thousands of people in the audience. Our guitarist started handing out Bibles to the people in front of the stage. Suddenly, a great surge of people rushed forward. They started jumping each other, and fist fights broke out as they were trying to get a hold of a Bible.

## **THE WORD IS A SHIELD**

**Once there was a guy that worked with us in Amsterdam who was walking home from our apartment and a guy attacked him with a knife. Fortunately, he was carrying his Bible. It was one of those big Bibles with a big Bible cover on it with a zipper. So he threw the Bible at his attacker and hit him in the stomach with it. This knocked the wind out of him and our friend got away.**

We all thought they were going to kill each other for Bibles. Now, that was not exactly how my attitude was toward the Bible. I wasn't fighting people for it. I wasn't exactly thinking of ways I could steal my pastor's Bible. I didn't even start to read one until I became afraid.

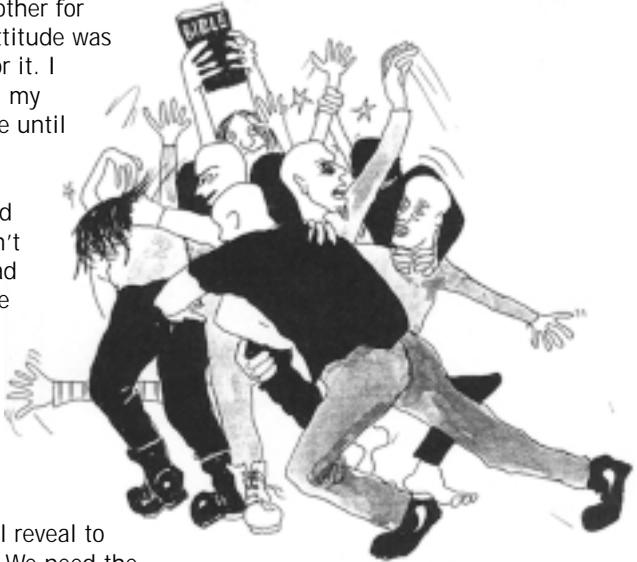
I discovered when I was twenty-one years old that there really was a spiritual world. I didn't discover the good spiritual world, but the bad one. I was so afraid that I started to read the Bible and listen to what it said. My life was changed. I was going to the University of Minnesota to study Philosophy, but I started reading the Bible, and it revolutionized my life. I discovered Jesus in a personal way that I didn't think was possible.

Most of what God wants to say to us, He will reveal to us in the Bible. We need to know the Bible. We need the protection of it. What does that mean exactly — protection? You may be thinking I mean that you carry a big Bible that you can use to hit people. That is not what I mean, but I guess the Bible could be a very good weapon if you have one of those Bible covers with a big zipper on it.

Look at Matthew 24:23. Jesus is speaking: *"At that time if anyone says to you, 'Look, here is the Christ!', or 'There he is!' do not believe it. For false Christs and false prophets will appear and perform great signs and miracles to deceive even the elect — if that were possible. See, I have told you ahead of time."* Basically, it says there will be many false prophets.

When I was at the university, I met someone who told me he was the seventh angel from Revelation. Yeah! And he wanted to meet me! I thought, "That's interesting — meet an angel from Revelation." This angel was into pizza, and so I went to a pizza place. There he was, this angel from Revelation. He had a beard. I thought it was cool to see that angels had beards. Not only did he have a beard, but he also smoked cigarettes. The angel told me that his brother, who was with him, was Jesus. He told me I needed to listen to Jesus.

This was very discouraging to me, because I imagined Jesus would be much more impressive. I thought to myself, "This guy looks like a wimp." But I knew the Bible, and so I read him that verse in Matthew 24:23. Then the angel and his brother decided that they didn't want to



**“WITH EVERYTHING  
THAT HAS BREATH  
PRAISE GOD”  
by No Longer Music**

**Hallelujah. Praise God  
Praise God  
with a compact disc  
and video**

**Praise God with a guitar  
and synthesizer**

**Praise God on the Top Ten  
Praise God in a disco**

**With everything that has  
breath, Praise God.**

**Praise God  
with the stereo full blast  
Praise God  
with the stereo off  
Praise God with bass guitar  
and break dance  
With everything that has  
breath, Praise God.**

talk to me anymore.

**Once, I was on a plane sitting next to a Christian** who wanted to know what I do. I explained it to him and said, “You should come to one of our shows and invite people from your church.” He paused, and with a serious and sanctimonious look said, “Well, I don’t think that’s possible.”

“Why not?” I asked.

“We only do things in our church like it says in the Bible.”

“What do you mean?” I questioned.

“We only worship God *a capella*,” he replied.

Well, I know the Bible doesn’t say that. It says to worship God with all the instruments, and that you can worship God quietly or loudly, with or without musical instruments. With everything that has breath, Praise God.

*“Let them praise his name... with tambourines and harp.”* —Psalm 149:3

*“Praise him with the sounding of the trumpet, praise him with the harp and lyre... praise him with the strings and flute, praise him with the clash of cymbals, praise him with the resounding cymbals. Let everything that has breath praise the Lord.”* —Psalm 150:3-6

I didn’t feel like telling him what the Bible really said, so instead, I gave him the impression that I was learning something new. I responded, “Well, that’s very interesting. By the way, where does it say in the Bible that you can ride in airplanes?”

He didn’t want to talk to me anymore.

**Once, after one of our shows,** we were eating dinner with a group of people, and they had a lot of great food prepared. I helped myself to a nice piece of lamb and passed the platter to the woman sitting next to me. She said, “Oh no, I’m a vegetarian.”

“Oh, are you, why is that?” I asked.

“Because in the Bible it teaches that it is wrong to eat meat,” she

answered.

I could tell by her attitude that she felt superior to all those sitting at the table who were eagerly devouring the meat. (I know that there are many compelling reasons not to eat meat because of the way it is processed today, and for some people it is better to be a vegetarian. To say that it is a spiritual issue, however, is not biblical. A vegetarian is not spiritually superior to someone who is not vegetarian.) I said, "Well, don't worry, I accept you even though your faith is weak."

"What is that supposed to mean?" she asked.

I could tell she was becoming irritated. I showed her Romans 14:1-4:

*"Accept him whose faith is weak without passing judgment on disputable matters. One man's faith allows him to eat every thing, but another man whose faith is weak, eats only vegetables. The man who eats everything must not look down on him who does not and the man who does not eat everything must not condemn the man who does for God has accepted him. Who are you to judge someone else's servant?"*

After that she didn't want to talk to me anymore.

**We need to know the Bible.** Many people are very much into their feelings. They determine spiritual truth by their feelings, and their relationship with God is based on that.

In Galatians 1:6 it says,

*"I am astonished that you are so quickly deserting the one who called you by the grace of Christ and are turning to a different gospel — which is really no gospel at all. Evidently some people are throwing you into confusion and are trying to pervert the gospel of Christ. But even if we or an angel from heaven should preach a gospel other than the one we preached to you, let him be eternally condemned!"*

Isn't that incredible what it says there? If an angel came to you and declared some spiritual truth, and it didn't have a foundation in God's word, then you shouldn't listen to it. But many of us don't even know the Bible, and we are moved by our feelings. We let other people tell us what God says. It's an emotional thing.

I want you to know that a relationship with God is not based on emotions. God cares about our emotions. He knows we are emotional beings, but that's not what makes our relationship with God real. What

makes it real is that it is a fact. Historical fact. Historical and archeological facts show the reliability of the Bible. Is your relationship with Jesus based on the Bible or emotions?

In 1 Timothy 4:1 it says, *"The spirit clearly says that in later times some will abandon the faith and follow deceiving spirits and things taught by demons."*

Why will people do that? Because their relationship with God is based on feelings and not the word of God. It's based on emotions. It is not based on the truth of the Bible. It is based on revelations and visions.

Now, I am not saying that God doesn't want to speak to us in our emotions; but if you don't know God's word, you are in trouble. You are dependent on other people, and you are not going to be able to discern if other people are right or wrong. Some people think that if it is spiritual, it is good, if it is spiritual, it is right. That isn't true.

I was talking to our neighbors who are not Christians. They are very much into New Age thinking. They were telling me about their friend who is dying of cancer. She is also involved with the same spiritual way of thinking. Now she is dying of cancer with a tumor in her throat that might choke her at any time.

They can't operate on it. My neighbor said, "You know, I just don't understand. She knows there is a force greater than just this life. But she is so filled with terror. She is so afraid. She has no security. She has no peace. I don't understand this because I thought she'd be so strong in a time like this."

I could see by the expression on his face that he, too, was worried because his life was also based on the same spiritual emotion and not on fact.

I challenge you to study God's word. I can tell you for a fact that if you do, it will revolutionize your life. I guarantee it.



# 11

## ARE YOU WILLING TO ROCK ON FOR A GOAT?

**One of our concerts that I will never forget** was at a big festival in Poland. There were 15,000 people there. We were using the back line of a band called Helloween. There were Marshall amps and monitors stacked to the ceiling — it was the biggest PA we had ever played on. Because we were playing at night, I couldn't see the end of the crowd. It was an amazing experience. God gave us a great relationship with the audience, and they kept calling for us to come back for encores.

It was quite a contrast to the concert we had the next day for twenty people and a couple of goats. Okay, you're right. I'm trying to make it seem bigger than it really was. Actually, it was one goat tied to a tree and a couple of half-interested people. This was the day after we had played for a crowd of 15,000.

I don't think it was an accident that it happened that way. I think God was trying to say to me, "Whom are you trying to do this for? *Are you doing it for me or for people?*" This question will determine your destiny. It will determine whether you do something great and significant with your life or whether you waste your life.

**In the Bible, Paul was having trouble** with a certain religious group of people. They told him that he really wasn't an apostle. They told him he was not accepting their legalism. They



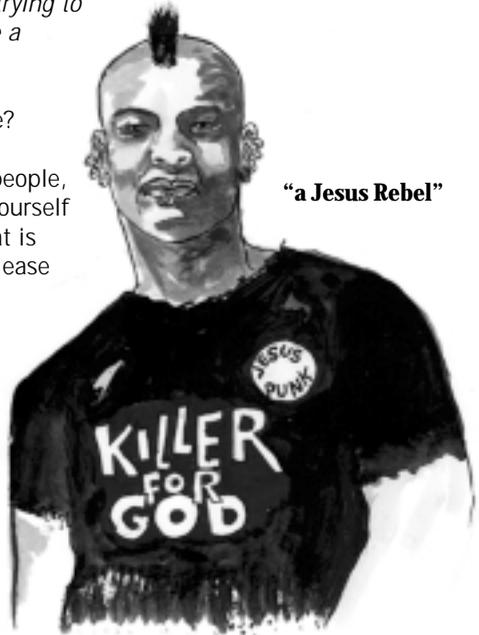
wanted him to follow certain Old Testament rules that Jesus has set them free from. So, instead of compromising with these people, Paul took a stand, and as a result, was discredited by many of the leaders.

In Galatians 1:10, Paul says, *“Am I now trying to win the approval of men, or of God? Or am I trying to please men? If I were still trying to please men, I would not be a servant of Christ.”*

Whom am I trying to please?

If you are trying to please people, you are not worthy to call yourself a follower of Jesus, and that is hard because we want to please people.

I know this truth is appealing to the rebel, and so you have your Christian rebels. They say, “I don’t care what men think. I only care what God thinks. That’s right, that’s all I care about. I am a rebel by nature; I am a Jesus rebel.”



**“a Jesus Rebel”**

The problem is this doesn’t work because when you are trying to please God, his standards are even higher than people’s standards. Often the rebel part becomes more important than the Jesus part.

I can do everything for people and not realize it. James 3 talks about all kinds of people who have religious knowledge and wisdom, but they use it for selfish ambition. I can know God for a long time and have much knowledge of God, and be doing things for God, but I can be using the wisdom God has given me for my own selfish ambition.

In James 3:13 it says, *“Who is wise and understanding among you? Let him show it by his good life, by deeds done in the humility that comes from wisdom. But if you harbor bitter envy and selfish ambition in your hearts, do not boast about it or deny the truth.”*

Isn’t that funny? Why does he say to not boast about it? If I have bitter envy and all that selfish ambition, why do I have to be told not to boast

about it? Wouldn't I want to hide that from other people? I think it's because I don't recognize what this kind of boasting is. Before I'm going to recognize it in my life, I have to identify what those things are. Here are some examples:

- ▶ I am always telling people about my gifts and the great things I am going to do for God.
- ▶ I am concerned that people see the good things I do.
- ▶ I do things so that people will give me the credit for it.
- ▶ I talk about all the mighty things that I am going to do for God, not because I love God, but because I love people.
- ▶ I do this because it makes me higher in the system, whatever the system is.

*"Such 'wisdom' does not come down from heaven but is earthly, unspiritual and of the devil. For where you have envy and selfish ambition, there you find disorder and every evil practice.*

*"But the wisdom that comes from heaven is first of all pure; then peace-loving, considerate, submissive, full of mercy and good fruit, impartial and sincere. Peacemakers who sow in peace raise a harvest of righteousness."*

—James 3:15-18

**If I have selfish ambition in my life** (I am talking about a person who follows God, now), I know the right people to be friends with when I get in a group, church, or organization. I choose friends based on who they are in the group. I tell everyone about my gifts and accomplishments. This is the biggest sign of a person who has selfish ambition and envy in their life. I am always upset and bitter and hurt by what other people do to me. People are always hurting me and doing the wrong things to me. What other people say is very important to me because I don't want affirmation from God, I want affirmation from people.

If people are not always affirming me and telling me how great I am all the time, then I get all upset because people don't appreciate me the way I think they should.

Jesus did all these great things and thousands of people came to him. They said, "Jesus, we want to follow you. We will give you our lives. We will give you everything." Jesus' answer to them is very interesting. In John 2:24 it says that Jesus would not entrust himself to them, for he knew all men. He did not need a man's testimony about man, for he knew what was in a man.

## JOHN 2:24

**But Jesus would not entrust himself to them, for he knew all men.**

Jesus couldn't care less about their praise, because he knew that praise from people really didn't mean that much. When I start to live for the affirmation of people rather than God, I am no longer trying to please God, but people. Jesus was not going to receive their affirmation because he knew it was meaningless.

I have been in situations like this. Someone will come up to me and tell me that they think I am the greatest person in the world, that I'm right up there with Moses. And a few days later, that same person will tell me I'm the worst person on the planet and that I should've never been born. People's opinions of us can change very quickly and we really cannot gain our security in how people view us because people are fickle. What really matters is how God views us.

So, I need to say, "God, how do you see me?" When I live that way, I can give other people a break, too. I am not hurt all the time because I am not depending on their affirmation. I can forgive them and be patient with them because that is the way God is with me.

**I know of a political activist** who, in his early twenties, was put in solitary confinement for a year. He was unwilling to compromise on a principle. He was a very active person, full of energy, full of life, and he was in a cell in solitary confinement because of a principle he believed in. He was willing to stand up against the system, take a courageous stand. That is true greatness — to stand up for a principle.

I don't know if he knows Jesus, but he was in a prison cell because he was not willing to compromise what he believed. God is looking for people who will stand up for him, people who will fear God more than they will fear what the world thinks.

Sometimes people will recognize what you do when you are living to please God. They will think you are great. They will put your picture in the paper and talk about you at meetings. But that doesn't matter, because sometimes you will be living for God and they won't talk about you at meetings. It's whom God recognizes that matters. Maybe you won't be recognized by people your entire life. Who cares?

When I was on stage in front of 15,000 people, I thought, "This is so empty. If I did not have something to say to them about Jesus, this would be so empty." God is calling us to greatness, but it is not the world's idea of greatness. In fact, the world probably won't recognize it. It might even mean failure if the world recognizes what we do. But if God recognizes us, that is it. You know when you come to that in your

life, you are free — you can relax. You don't feel all this pressure any more. You can enjoy it when people affirm you and say nice things about you, but it is not what you live for.

When God asks me to do a daring thing, I can say, "Yes, Jesus, I will do it for you, I am not a perfect person. I am full of faults." If you talk with anyone who has ever worked with me you will know that. But one thing I know, God recognizes me. He believes in me and I want him to receive the glory in my life. Sometimes people want to put me on a pedestal and sometimes they want to put me out with the trash. But what really matters most is for Jesus to be happy with what I do with my life.

Go after the kind of greatness God wants you to have, what he calls great.





# 12 SMALL

**Do something small for God.** Not great, not big. I want to challenge you to do something small for God.

In Matthew 10:42, Jesus said, *“And if anyone gives even a cup of cold water to one of these little ones because he is my disciple, I tell you the truth, he will certainly not lose his reward.”*

There is a reason many people never do anything for God; they want to do something big, so they never do anything. But you will never do anything big until you are willing to do something small. Maybe you turn on the television and there is a documentary about incredible suffering with refugees somewhere in the world. You think that this is too big for you, and you cannot handle it so you turn to MTV. The reason you'd do this is that you are not willing to do something small for God.

You need to say to God, “Look at all these people who have this great need. God, what should I do?” Maybe as you pray, you feel as if God is telling you to pray for these people. And that is all you can do for them — to pray. So you make a commitment to pray for these refugees every day. Or maybe God says to give \$10 to the refugee fund to help them. But instead, you do nothing because you are not willing to do small things for God.

Maybe God gives you a vision. You give your heart to Jesus and you get a great vision about how God wants to use you. God gave me a vision of

planting a church in the inner city of Amsterdam. He gave me this vision in my head, and I had the feeling God wanted me to do something like that. It was a conviction in my heart from God. So what did I do? I started a Bible study in my apartment with four people. Two were a bit crazy and didn't understand what was going on half the time. We didn't have any drums or PA system, so we used a cardboard box and drummed on that. During the singing, people looked in from the window of the apartment across the street and thought we were nuts, because we were.

But I saw in my mind that God wanted to raise something up in Amsterdam. I had to be willing to do the small thing so God could do the big thing. Many of us have big visions about doing things for God, but we will never see it happen because we are not willing to do small, seemingly insignificant things.

**I am in a band**, and I meet many people who want to do their music for God. They want to do it for thousands on MTV, or praise God in stadiums. So God says to them, "Okay, play in this little worship band in your church." They say, "I don't want to play in that funny little worship band in our church."

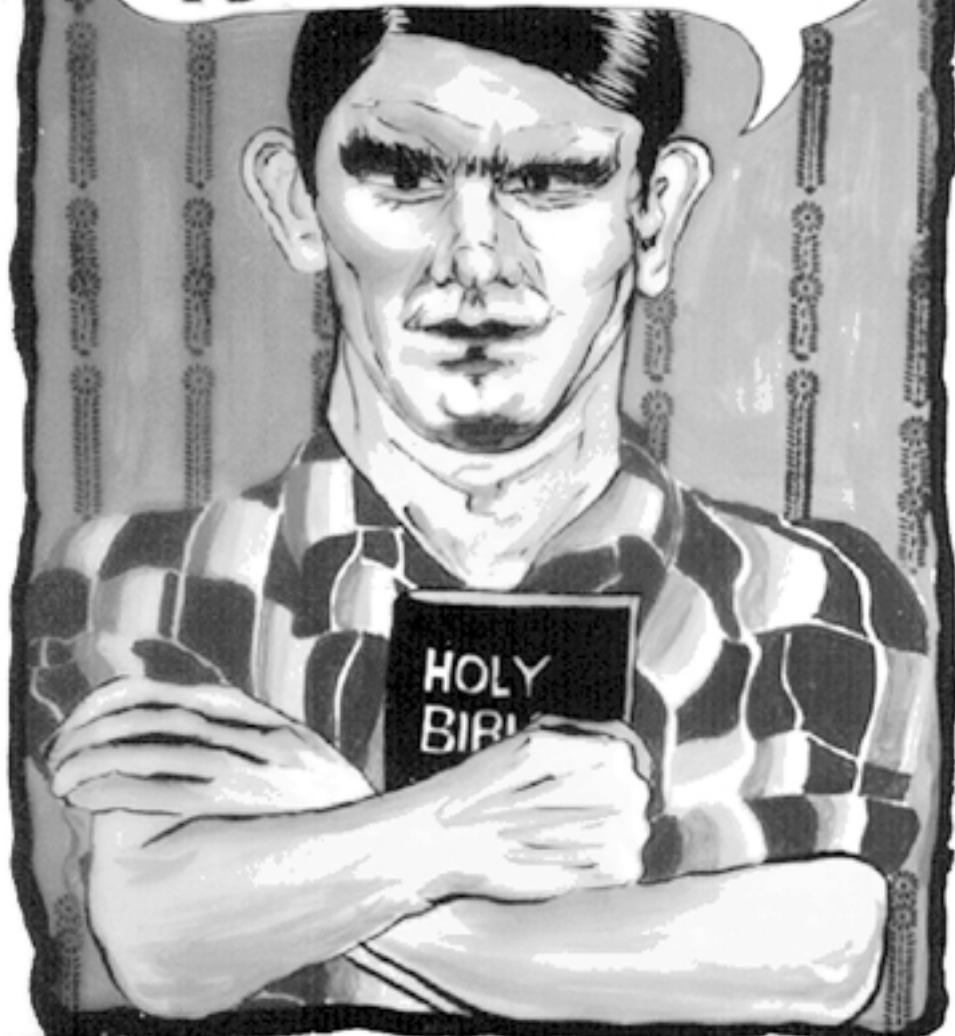
I hear people say, "I feel God wants me to talk to people about Jesus, to preach to large groups of people. God has called me to preach to the multitudes." Well, if that is true, then go out into the street and do it!

"God has called me to teach." Well then, start a Bible study group in your house. You see, it won't happen unless we are willing to start small and foolish. If we are not willing to be in those foolish little drama groups or silly little bands, then we will not see the things God wants to do in our lives.

God wants to get the glory for what we do. That is why God wants us to do the small things — so he can get the glory. In Galatians 3:3 it says, "Are you so foolish? After beginning with the Spirit, are you now trying to attain your goal by human effort?" We know God has called us and he wants us to do something, yet we are not willing to do the small, foolish things that God wants in order for him to get the glory.

**A few years ago**, when I was praying to God about what he wanted to do with our band, No Longer Music, the guitarist told me he was leaving the band. Well, I prayed and I said, "God, is it time for the band to stop? I don't want to do this if the band is supposed to finish." I felt God tell me to keep going with the band. In fact, I felt him telling me

**I THINK GOD HAS CALLED  
ME TO BE AN APOSTLE  
TO THE NATIONS**



that he wanted to do even greater things through the band than he had ever done before. So I said, "Okay, God, I will keep the band going." Then the whole band quit.

After God told me he wanted to do more with the band, the bass player and drummer quit; and I, who could do nothing except sing, was the only one left. I prayed and I said, "God, are you teasing me or playing a joke on me?" I felt like God said, "I want to keep you small, so when I do great things, I will get the glory." Since then, we have seen Jesus do incredible things all over the world. We have seen entire bands in an Islamic republic in the former Soviet Union come on the stage to give their hearts to Jesus.

Not too long after I had prayed that prayer, I was praying again and asking God if he wanted the band to keep going. I asked others to pray too. All those whom I asked to pray told me that they felt God wanted to use the band in even greater ways than he had used it before. So I said, "Okay, God, I will obey you and continue with the band." Right after I made this decision, my new guitarist quit. Then I thought, every time God wants to do more, he makes everyone quit yet now we have greater opportunities all over the world than I could have ever imagined.

**You are *now* what you are going to be.** You see, we dream a lot. We think we are going to do this amazing stuff, and we sit around and drink coffee and dream about the things we are going to do. There are many dreamers in this world, but if you are not doing small things now, even the things that God has called you to do will not take place in your life. It doesn't matter what God has called you to do if you are not taking the small steps he is asking you to take; then you will only dream, and you will wake up an old man or an old woman with many unfulfilled dreams and nothing else to show for your life.

I challenge you to do something small for God this week. Ask God what small, seemingly insignificant thing you can do for him. The great thing about doing something small for God is that it becomes a great thing. It doesn't burden you down, it's not this religious, oppressive thing, but it will bring joy to your life.

It is in the small things that God will do great things in our lives if we are willing to give him the glory.

The most important thing you will ever do for God is the next thing he will ask you to do.

# 13 SEX & ELVIS

**Let's face it — everybody wants to be Elvis.** It's true, I just read an article about Elvis, and he had it all. For twenty years, in every city he went, every girl wanted him. Elvis had it made.

When I was on tour in Russia with my band, No Longer Music, I was in my hotel room at 3:00 a.m., and I heard some scratching on the door. A woman speaking in bad English said, "Open the door; open the door. I want you; I want you." It made me so scared I hid under my bed. So I know what it was like. Elvis and I understand each other.

Anytime Elvis wanted any girl, he could have her. Elvis had to be the most happy and satisfied guy who ever lived. That is why I can't understand what he said before he died, "I would rather be unconscious than miserable," So he took thirty pills a night to make sure he stayed asleep, because he was so depressed.

How could he be miserable? Wasn't he watching his movies? How could Elvis be sad? He was free. They didn't even have safe sex back then. Elvis should have been the happiest guy in the world.

Let's be honest; virginity is something to be ashamed of. I hope no one reading this is a virgin. Marriage doesn't mean anything. That's out of style, isn't it? For old people? We are liberated and free, and we can enjoy ourselves. If it feels good, do it. With a man or a woman, it doesn't matter. With a plant, dog or apple pie, who cares?



I BELIEVE

I BELIEVE  
HAVE SEX  
AS

**in SEX!**

**YOU SHOULD  
AS OFTEN  
POSSIBLE!**



I BELIEVE  
YOU SHOULD  
HAVE SEX  
ALL THE TIME!

This is something I have screamed often in the middle of our concerts after I put on my nightgown, while I stood on the "No Sex" bed. The No Sex bed, with its flashing red lights, sirens, smoking tail pipes, and prohibited road signs, was wheeled on stage.



"I BELIEVE YOU CAN'T HAVE SEX OFTEN ENOUGH," I shouted while I was doing a concert in the K-4 club in Ljubljana, Slovenia. The crowd roared back in approval. I then paused for dramatic effect and shouted, "AFTER MARRIAGE, OF COURSE." The crowd grew quiet with confusion as they tried to decide if I was serious or not. While they tried to figure that out, I laid in the bed and Ton, our special effects man, pushed me around the stage.

Maybe the King was sold a big lie. Maybe the problem was that he was watching his movies. What does reality tell us?

When we were in Slovenia getting ready for the concert in K-4, someone from the television station came to do an interview. She had heard about our song, "No Sex."

"How dare you say things like 'No Sex Before Marriage.' What gives you the right to force your ideas on anybody?" she demanded.

I could tell by her body language that she thought she had me. "Well, let me ask you a question," I said. "Your friends believe that they can have sex with anyone they want to, right? Are they happy? Do they feel like they have good sex lives?"

She paused for a moment, a little surprised by my question. "No, not really," she admitted.

**For a moment, let's forget** what the bands, the television shows, and the movies are telling us. Maybe we will discover the truth when we just look at the facts.

## NO SEX

**This song's for all you girls walking in the buff.**

**This song's for all you students living together, cool stuff.**

**This songs for all you church boys believing the same lies. Your best friend will be your cat and alone you will die.**

**No sex... before marriage.**

**No sex.**

**This song's for all of you crying in your bed.**

**Looking at the ceiling wishing you were dead.**

**The only lover is the pillow in your bed.**

**You run around like a chicken that's lost it's head.**

**No sex...before marriage.**

**No sex.**

**Fierce Pierce is my name.**

**No sex before marriage**

**is my game.**

**Laughing hard.**

**Liberation day.**

**Look around, it's not ok.**

**You're free.**

**Pleasure for a day.**

**How will you feel**

**when you're old and gray?**

**God's wiser. This is true.**

**Let me tell you what's going to happen to you.**

**God sees the unwed mothers.  
The lonely lives and  
all the others.  
Aborted babies.  
The world's insane.  
Jesus cries  
when He sees all the pain.  
This song's for all of you  
practicing safe sex;  
Thinking AIDS is the worse  
thing you can get.  
What will keep you safe from  
emotions that are wrecked?  
The only lasting sex you'll  
have will be with a video  
cassette.**

**No sex ... before marriage.  
No sex.**

***From the NLM album No Sex  
(Chrissong Records, Holland)***

I remember a neighbor we once had. She is probably one of the loneliest people I know. She lived the liberated life, and now she is alone and in her late forties. Sometimes she gets herself so drunk that we could hear her sobbing in her room.

Then there's this old man whom I used to pass on the street. When he was young, he knew what to do. He traveled the world. He had all kinds of women everywhere. Commitment was a word that he never heard of. He was free and he was going to have an adventurous life. Now he sits in his room all by himself and his best friend is his television.

And what about the children with no fathers? Kurt Cobain, from Nirvana, was eight years old when his parents were divorced. "Kurt took the divorce and its aftermath very hard. It destroyed his life," said Wendy, his mother. "He changed completely. I think he was ashamed. He became very inward. He just held everything inside. He was very shy. I think he is still suffering." Instead of the sunny, outgoing kid he once was, "he was real sullen," Wendy said. "Kind of mad, and always frowning and ridiculing." When he was a little boy, Kurt wrote on the wall in his bedroom, "I hate Mom. I hate Dad. Dad hates Mom. Mom hates Dad. It simply makes you want to be sad." A few feet over, he drew caricatures of his mother and father along with the words, "Dad sucks and Mom sucks."<sup>1</sup>

**Love has become lust.** That is what the world means when it says love. They should just say lust because they really mean lust. Lust is fun for a while. The Bible says that sin is fun for a season. Elvis had twenty years of fun. Then he died of a drug overdose when he was forty-two. That's what the lust culture has to offer us.

Now, you have to understand that in the lust culture, superficial things are the important things. Superficiality — that's what counts. That's why it's okay if you become pregnant, and if it interferes with your plans, you can just have an abortion. It's okay. It's the lust culture.

That's why the old are not respected. It doesn't matter that they have more experience. It's being young that counts. It's being inexperienced that counts. Inexperienced people have more wisdom than the experienced people in the lust culture.

Your value is based on very important things like how your hair looks. This is very important. Or if you are fat, you are not as valuable; or if

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<sup>1</sup> *Come as You Are* by Michael Azerrad (Main Street Books, 1993)

you are skinny. It's also important to realize that selfishness is a virtue. To be selfish is a good thing. Ask anybody. You have to think about yourself. To be selfish is the right way to live.

I don't think we have to believe what Elvis believed. God is very angry about the whole situation. You see, God doesn't want us to be lonely. He sees all the desperate people, and it makes him upset. He's angry that people have given up on commitment in relationships. He's angry about how people are prostituting themselves and making themselves hard, so that when they become old, they have nothing left.

The lust culture wants to turn us into slaves. The lust culture tells us what to do, and we obey. We are on a treadmill, like an animal on a wheel, and we are not free.

### **God is the one who invented sex.**

In the Bible, it says that all other sin is committed outside the body, but sexual sin is sinning against your own body. *"Do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit...whom you have received from God. You are not your own; you were bought at a price. Therefore, honor God with your body."*

Sex is a spiritual thing. In the sexual act, the two become one. For sex to be fulfilling, it needs to be in the context of lifelong commitment and love.

For example, you are walking down the street and you see a beautiful woman. You think to yourself, "She'll make me happy; she'll make me



## **I CORINTHIANS 6:13-20**

**“Food for the stomach and the stomach for food’ — but God will destroy them both. The body is not meant for sexual immorality, but for the Lord, and the Lord for the body. By his power God raised the Lord from the dead, and he will raise us also. Do you not know that your bodies are members of Christ himself? Shall I then take the members of Christ and unite them with a prostitute? Never! Do you not know that he who unites himself with a prostitute is one with her in body? For it is said, ‘The two will become one flesh.’ But he who unites himself with the Lord is one with him in spirit.**

**Flee from sexual immorality. All other sins a man commits are outside his body, but he who sins sexually sins against his own body. Do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit, who is in you, whom you have received from God? You are not your own; you were bought at a price. Therefore, honor God with your body.”**

## **EPHESIANS 5:21-31**

**Submit to one another out of reverence for Christ. Wives submit to your husbands as to the Lord for the husband is the head of the wife as Christ is the head of the church. His body of which he is the Saviour. Now as the church submits to Christ, so also wives should submit to their husbands in everything. Husbands love your wives just as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her to make her holy, cleansing her by the washing of water through the word and to present her to himself as a radiant church without stain or wrinkle or any other blemish. Holy and blameless. In this way, husbands ought to love their wives as their own bodies. He who loves his wife loves himself. After all no one has ever hated his own body but he feeds and cares for it just as Christ does the church. For we are all members of his body. For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife and the two will become one flesh.**

feel good; she'll give me what I want." The beautiful woman looks at you and says, "He'll make me happy; he'll make me feel good; he'll give me what I want." And so you get together. It's as if we take two giant straws, put them into each other and start to suck. After awhile, there is nothing left anymore. She doesn't give you what you want; she doesn't make you happy. You shout to the beautiful woman and she shouts back, "You don't give me what I want; you don't make me happy." And so you split up because your relationship was based on taking instead of giving. That is why marriage doesn't work without God. Because I have a friendship with God, my relationship with my wife can be based on giving instead of taking. Instead of looking to my wife to fulfill all my needs, I look to God who gives me what I need. Then I have something to give to my wife. And my wife looks to God for her needs, and as a result, can give to me.

Marriage needs God in order to work. That's the only way it is going to work. We need to receive from God before we are going to be able to give to our husband or wife. According to God's view of marriage, I should love my wife the way Jesus loves me. He died for me; he gave everything for me. My wife should love me the way she loves Jesus. This is an impossible thing for us to do unless we have a friendship with God. If we understand God's view of marriage, then we know it's not based on taking, but is based on giving.

**You don't have to accept such a low standard.** You don't have to show your body to everyone on the street. You don't have to expose yourself to everyone on the beach. You are special. God loves you very much. You don't have to give yourself to everybody so they will want to have a relationship with you.

Sex is not necessary to have a good friendship with somebody. In fact, it will destroy it, because the only way that sex has value is in a committed, lifelong relationship.

We think we can play around with it, and it won't matter. We're young; it's okay. Later we'll be serious and marry. My boyfriend will think I'm weird if I don't do it. We'll practice safe sex.

In the Bible, it says that sexual immorality is like taking burning coals, holding them to your chest and thinking you won't be burned. But the truth is you will scar yourself for life if you listen to the lust culture.

Some of you are saying, "Well, great, I'm not sleeping with anybody so this chapter is not for me." Let me ask you a question: How is your thought life doing?

In Matthew 5:27, Jesus said some very startling things. *“You have heard that it was said, ‘Do not commit adultery.’ But I tell you that anyone who looks at a woman lustfully has already committed adultery with her in his heart.”*

It’s the little compromises that make us fall. You know the movie is not that bad to watch; it only has a few bad parts, a few love scenes, but it’s not that bad. You can handle it.

All right, the music is quite sexual; it’s singing the lust culture’s song. You’re just moving to the music. You’re not listening to the words anyway.

It doesn’t bother you to walk through the red light district. It’s no big deal. Every once in a while, you look through the sex shop windows, but it’s okay. You can handle it.

But it’s in these small compromises that we throw away our spiritual inheritance and quench the spirit of God in our lives. God wants to make us virgins again. God is able to completely set us free from the lust culture. He is able to wash us and make us clean again. We don’t have to keep living this lie.

Why find yourself, at the end of your life, sitting alone in your room with your cat as your best friend, or having most of your conversations with the television set, and the only lasting sex you enjoy is on a video cassette.

## **PROVERBS 6:23-29**

**For these commands are a lamp, this teaching is a light, and the corrections of discipline are the way to life, keeping you from the immoral woman, from the smooth tongue of the wayward wife. Do not lust in your heart after her beauty. Or let her captivate you with her eyes, for the prostitute reduces you to a loaf of bread, and the adulteress preys upon your very life. Can a man scoop fire into his lap without his clothes being burned? Can a man walk on hot coals without his feet being scorched? So is he who sleeps with another man’s wife: no one who touches her will go unpunished.**

### **SAFE SEX FACTOIDS**

**In testing condoms, when you start with 98.5% as the standard, and 7 of 37 (19%) flunked testing, without human error added in, we are already down to, at best, a dismal 79% effective.**

**Consumer Reports conclusion on testing 6500 latex condoms: "Condoms, on average, cut the risk of infection in half." For condoms, the typical rate is about 12% to become pregnant over a years time. Consumer Reports also observed that contraception can occur those few days each month, whereas you can get AIDS and STD's 365 days a year.**

**The Guttmacher Institute survey also showed that rates for girls, ages 15-17, engaging in sex, climbed from 32% to 45% during the peak of the AIDS crisis!**

**Contrary to condom sense education, syphilis can be easily spread. Moist kisses can pass it along, or someone can contract the disease by touching a sore with bare hands. It does not require sexual contact, although that certainly facilitates the spread of syphilis and other related diseases. The diseases cannot be completely prevented by simply using condoms.**

# 14

## FREEZE YOUR HEAD

**“You know, David, you look a lot younger** when you have bangs. Right now you look like an old woman,” said one of my co-workers. Later that day, I looked in the mirror and wondered if I really did look like an old woman. I decided it was best if I didn’t take any chances, so I grabbed the scissors and gave myself the most beautiful bangs in the world. After my brilliant cutting job, I admired myself in the mirror, but thought, “Do I still look like an old woman?” I concluded that maybe I do, but at least I looked like a *younger* old woman.



**Before Bangs**



**After Bangs**

**One thing that I find very comforting** is to know that God loves me even though I have been given a death sentence. Actually, the whole world has been given a death sentence. The environment is dying. The reason for this is that the world has lost contact with the only one who can give life. That is God.

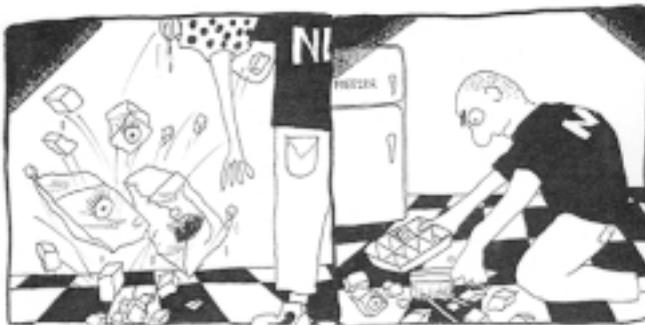
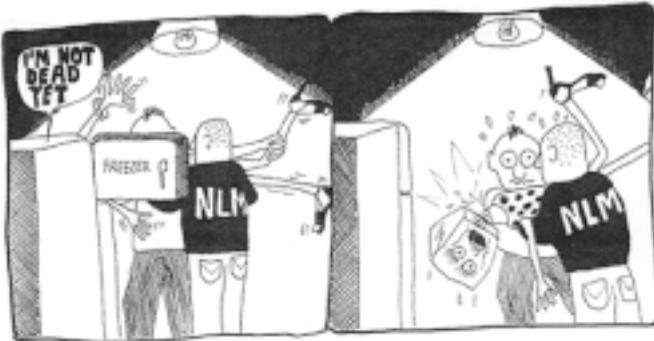
In Romans 8:20 it says that the environment itself is actually looking forward to when it will be liberated from the destruction that it suffers.

*"For the creation was subjected to frustration, not by its own choice, but by the will of the one who subjected it."*

Now, some of you reading this don't believe in God, but you have this feeling that there has to be something more to life than just becoming old and dying. Everyone has this idea that there has to be more to life than just death.

If we think at all, we realize that one day we will die. So the question we face is how are we going to avoid it. Some people actually freeze

their bodies with the hope that someday technology will advance far enough so that they can be "reanimated." Those who can't afford it just have their heads frozen. So, how are we going to deal with death?



**When I was in Switzerland,** I met a guy who had everything going for him: he was a good athlete, he was highly intelligent, women found him attractive, and he came from a wealthy family. But he started to think about death. He started to wrestle with the idea of death. You see, because he was an intelligent person, he couldn't be lulled into living for the next party or skiing vacation. Most people don't like to deal with the reality of death or even think about it.

He had been taught that there was no God. Living in the beauty of

Switzerland, can you believe that he was told that? When he thought of death, he felt hopeless. "What's the point of going on? I mean, after all, there is no God, and this is all there is to this life. What's the point?" he thought. He ended up in a mental institution. He almost committed suicide because he was so afraid of death.

Some people try to run from death, literally. I know people who think if they exercise hard enough, they won't die. I once read an article about an athlete in his twenties who, according to the experts, was going to be the best long-distance runner in the world. He had the idea that he was going to be so healthy that he was never going to die. According to the top sports medicine experts, he had the most well-developed heart and lungs possible.

One day, he was driving his sports car and it flipped. The accident didn't break any bones. It didn't really hurt him. But you know what it did do? The car held his chest down so he couldn't inhale. He suffocated. The man with one of the most well-developed heart and lungs in the world died of suffocation.

**God loves us, even though we rejected him**, we didn't want anything to do with him, and even though we were getting a death sentence. God wasn't happy with the situation. He wanted to make it possible for us to be liberated from death. In Hebrews 2:14-15 it says:

*"Since the children have flesh and blood, he too shared in their humanity so that by his death he might destroy him who holds the power of death — that is, the devil — and free those who all their lives were held in slavery by their fear of death."*

Destroy the power of death in order to free people who are living in slavery to death. Now, I know you are thinking, "That's interesting, but what does it mean?" I think I have an understanding somewhat about what this means.

At one point in my life, I was in the best physical condition I have ever been in. I was lifting weights four days a week, swimming once a week, and walking a lot.

I liked wearing sleeveless shirts when I went out so everyone could see how cool I was. When I was around my wife, I flexed my muscles and said, "Look at my muscles." I said to my two boys, Aaron and Benjamin, "Your Daddy has the biggest muscles in the whole world. Come



feel my muscles." Benjamin, only five at the time, was really impressed that he couldn't put his hands around Daddy's muscles.

"Who's the strongest man in the whole world?" I asked my boys.

"God is the strongest, Daddy," they answered.

"I know, but besides God?" I asked.

"You are, Daddy," they answered.

**One day I was walking down the street**, and the next thing I knew, I was in the hospital. Tubes were in my nose, and I was becoming so skinny that I looked like Ghandi. I was in much pain. I didn't know if I was going to live or die. The doctors didn't know what was wrong with me. They didn't know if I had cancer or what was causing my sickness. I was in the hospital for five weeks like that.

Someone from the hospital staff said, "Well, don't you think you should give him more antibiotics?" I overheard the doctor say, "Yeah, but if we give him antibiotics now and they don't work, then we've lost him." I lay there in pain listening to their conversation. I didn't feel too encouraged at that point.

Six other patients shared the hospital room with me, one of whom was an old man. He had an operation and was recovering. His wife was in the hospital also. A doctor came in one day and told him that his wife had died the night before. He started to weep.

I was in the bed next to him. If I talked, I was in excruciating pain because of the tubes in my throat. I wanted so badly to say something to him. My heart ached for that man. I saw the hopelessness and despair that he felt.

"Well, at least the other guys in the room will encourage him. I can't say anything, but at least they can," I thought. I waited for them to say, "I'm sorry for what happened to your wife," or something like that. They didn't say anything but just started acting like nothing happened and even started telling jokes. They could not deal with death. They had no answers.

The good news is that Jesus tasted death for everybody so that we don't have to be slaves to death anymore. You see, I was laying there worse off than anyone else in the room. I was in pain. I didn't know if I was going to get better. But I was not in despair. I had hope. I knew God

was with me.

I found myself feeling sorry for that man. Not so much because of his pain, but of his lack of hope. Because of what Jesus did, I am not a slave to death anymore.

Jesus promises us eternal life. This means there is more to life than becoming old and dying. There is so much more to it. When I understand that I don't have to be afraid to lose my life, then I'm free to show God's love to a dying world.

*How am I going to take risks if I am not free from the fear of death?*

*How am I going to be bold for God if I'm a slave to death?*

A friend of mine lived in Hollywood. Someone broke into his house and threatened to kill him if he didn't give them his money. In Los Angeles, if someone is threatening to kill you at gunpoint, it is not an idle threat. He looked at the gunman and said, "You can't kill me. I'm already dead." The person holding the gun on him got so thrown by his statement that he ran out of the house without harming my friend.

The point is, *how can we be bold if we are afraid of death? How can we understand what faith is if we are slaves to death?*

When my oldest son was eight years old, we were driving in a car and a tornado was coming. His little cousins, who were also in the car with us, were crying because they didn't want the tornado to hit our car. My son, Aaron, said, "We don't have to be afraid. If the tornado hits our car, we'll just go to be with Jesus."

We need to be liberated. We need to be set free from the fear of death. In 1 Thessalonians 4:13 it says:

*"Brothers, we do not want you to be ignorant about those who fall asleep, or to grieve like the rest of men, who have no hope."*

(Here Paul is talking about those of us who have given our lives to Jesus.) So, we do not have to fear death. We are liberated from death and we can live our lives 100 percent the way God wants us to because death no longer has any hold over us.



# 15

## GOD IS WAY MORE MERCIFUL THAN PEOPLE

**I could see his look of surprise** as the arsenic in the cappuccino I gave him caused him to start convulsing until he fell over into a heap on the table. I began dancing around the room, filled with joy over my revenge.

My daydream came to an abrupt halt with a twinge of guilt. "Wait a minute; I can't do that. I'm a Christian, and I have to forgive this jerk even though I don't feel like it," I thought. The problem I faced was that God demands that I forgive just as I have been forgiven, and God is way more merciful than people.

In Matthew 18:21, Peter went to Jesus feeling very spiritual. Wanting to impress Jesus with that, he said to him, "*Lord, how many times shall I forgive my brother when he sins against me? Up to seven times?*" Peter thought that this would impress Jesus. He thought forgiving up to seven times would make Jesus think he was really forgiving.

But what does Jesus say? "*No, not seven times, but seventy times seven.*" In other words, never stop forgiving.

Now, let me ask you. How many times will you forgive someone? Seven times? Think about that. Think about someone who really has done something to hurt you. I can think of people who have hurt me and how



often I would forgive them. To be honest, it takes everything within me to forgive them once.

I have to wrestle through periodic fantasies of myself shooting those who hurt me. I imagine them being run over by trains and hit by cars. Then I think, wait a minute; I love Jesus, and he tells me I have to forgive them.

I go through this big struggle about forgiving the person and thinking he doesn't even deserve me forgiving him. But I love Jesus, so I try. Then after six months, maybe I am finally able to forgive him. There are some people who have never forgiven anybody once. Jesus said seventy times seven. You see, God is more merciful than we are. And we are lucky He is.

**Isaiah 55:7** says, *“Let the wicked forsake his way and the evil man his thoughts. Let him turn to the Lord, and he will have mercy on him, and to our God, for he will freely pardon.”*

Why is that? Why does Jesus tell us that we need to forgive so many times? Why did Jesus say that God has made a decision that he is going to forgive us as often as we ask? It is because Jesus knew the people for whom he was dying.

In Matthew 9:9, Jesus saw a man called Matthew sitting at a tax office. He said, *“Follow me.”* Matthew rose and followed him. It says Jesus went to his house with many other tax collectors and sinners. Jesus and his disciples joined him at the table, and they ate together.

Now, Matthew was not a nice person. He exploited poor people and was a real jerk. Matthew was not lovable. He worked for the oppressors and didn't care about anything but money. Jesus looked at this unlovable person named Matthew whom everyone hated. He looked Matthew in the eye and said, *“Follow me.”* Why did Jesus say that to someone like Matthew?

Sometimes when I walked around the streets of Amsterdam, I saw people who were crazy eating out of the gutter. When I walked up to my apartment, I saw junkies poking in the cracks with sticks looking for drugs. I looked at them and thought about my two boys. I'd think, that guy used to be a little five-year-old boy. Look at the place he is now. I looked at these crazy people, and I thought they were just like my children. I started to feel a little of God's love for them.

Jesus saw Matthew as a child, and he still loved him even though

Matthew was a terrible person. So Jesus went to Matthew's custom-made house on the lake and had dinner with him and all of his bad friends.

Now, here come the Pharisees.

The Pharisees saw Jesus eating with this terrible person, and they said to his followers, *"Why does your teacher eat with the tax collectors and sinners?"* When Jesus heard this, he said, *"It is not those who are healthy who need a physician, but those who are ill. But go and learn what this means: 'I desire mercy, not sacrifice.' For I have not come to call the righteous, but the sinners."*

We forget something after we have given our hearts to Jesus. We forget that the reason we know Jesus is because of his mercy, not because we are better than someone else. You might get the idea that God looks at us and says, "Wow, this guy really has lots of potential. He'll be a great person to add to my kingdom. I'll recruit him really hard and forget about that guy in the gutter because he is obviously a loser."

This view of God makes me start to feel more valuable than the guy in the gutter shooting heroin in his arm. I forget that I only know Jesus because of his mercy toward me.

**I can remember when I first became a Christian** and began a Bible study group at the university. It was so amazing. We were all excited about this Jesus who was so personal and so real. I was leading the Bible study, and I was becoming more excited about God. I was also becoming more excited about how God could use me.

One day, I went out with my friends to a bar. A guy said to me, "Here, I want you to try this drink." I thought, no thank you. "Come on, it's really good; you have to try this drink," he said. It was Saturday night, there was good music playing, and I thought, it wouldn't hurt me to have one drink. We ended up getting drunk. We held onto each other trying to get back to where we were staying at the university.

I could hardly pull myself up the stairs. Some people from the Bible study saw me like that. They tried to ask me questions, and I didn't know if they were talking to me or the ceiling or what.

The next morning I thought, God doesn't like me anymore. It's over. He trusted me with this Bible study, and I went out and did this bad thing. God cannot use me anymore. I called someone and told him he was going to have to lead the Bible study because I couldn't do it. But because it was so last minute, we were unable to find anyone else to

## **MATTHEW 9:9**

**As Jesus went on from there, he saw a man named Matthew sitting at the tax collector's booth. "Follow me," he told him, and Matthew got up and followed him.**

**While Jesus was having dinner at Matthew's house, many tax collectors and "sinners" came and ate with him and his disciples. When the Pharisees saw this, they asked his disciples, "Why does your teacher eat with tax collectors and 'sinners'?"**

**On hearing this, Jesus said, "It is not the healthy who need a doctor, but the sick. But go and learn what this means: 'I desire mercy, not sacrifice.' For I have not come to call the righteous, but sinners."**

take my place.

## **LUKE 15:20-24**

**But while he was still a long way off, his father saw him and was filled with compassion for him; he ran to his son, threw his arms around him and kissed him.**

**The son said to him, "Father, I have sinned against heaven and against you. I am no longer worthy to be called your son."**

**But the father said to his servants, "Quick! Bring the best robe and put it on him. Put a ring on his finger and sandals on his feet. Bring the fattened calf and kill it. Let's have a feast and celebrate. For this son of mine was dead and is alive again; he was lost and now is found." So they began to celebrate.**

So, I went before God. I told him I was sorry and felt terrible about what I had done. I asked him if he would forgive me. I ended my prayer by saying that I knew he would not want to use me anymore, and I reluctantly went to lead the Bible study.

The crazy thing was that I felt God's power like I never felt it before. It was one of the greatest Bible studies I ever had at the university. I'm not saying it was because I got drunk, don't misunderstand me. I'm not saying God wants us to go out and get drunk every week, either. What I am saying is that he is the Father who is ready to forgive. We forget that it is because of his mercy that we can serve him, not because of our goodness. Jesus knew who he was dying for. He knew that I was someone he would have to forgive one-hundred times or more.

I am not excusing sin, and I'm not saying we should take it lightly. If we play around with sin, it will eventually destroy us. But God is the person who runs to the rebellious son. He put his robe on him and his ring on his finger. God is the one who forgave the thief on the cross. The thief could not do any good works; all he could say was to remember me when you are in paradise. Remember me when you go to your kingdom. Jesus said, "Tonight you will be with me in paradise."

This is the God who takes the violent person, whom no one will forgive, and says, "I will forgive you." The world won't forgive you; your friends won't forgive you, but this God will forgive you.

**HM prison is an ancient prison** located in the center of Belfast, Northern Ireland. There is a tunnel built under the street to the courthouse to bring the prisoners to court because it is too dangerous to take them outside. The courthouse and prison are both reinforced by a wall of barbed wire and security cameras because of the danger of attacks from the IRA.

Jodi and I would go once every few months to the HM prison to visit a friend of ours who was doing a life sentence for his involvement in the IRA. After being the lookout during a couple of murders in a Protestant bar, Trevor fled to Amsterdam to get away from the police. He had to be kept separated from the other prisoners. He was what they called a "supergrass" because he exposed the identities of the others who were involved in the murders.

When he was in Amsterdam, Trevor met some Christians. He gave his life to Jesus. Although there was very little chance of him getting

caught for his crimes, he felt that he should go back to Belfast and turn himself in. He also felt that he had a responsibility to tell about those he knew who would murder again, though it would put his own life in even greater danger. Because of this, he could have bargained with the police for a shorter sentence, but he refused to do that. He cried out to Jesus, and Jesus forgave him. Jesus could forgive him and set him free from this terrible thing he had done.

This is the God who gives people second chances and third and fourth chances. He can take violent, ugly people and make them soft and loving because this is the God who desires mercy in his children.

**Many people today say** there isn't anything worth dying for. But I can tell you that God feels we are worth dying for. Not because of our goodness, not because of anything we can claim, but because of *his* unbelievable mercy and love.

If we don't understand God's mercy, we become legalistic, we become Pharisees. We become this kind of religion that drives people away from God. We lose our joy and start feeling this heavy burden because we are always trying to become good.

We need to find Jesus, and we need to find his mercy. There is nothing good about me that makes God reach out to me. It is only because of his great love and mercy that he did that. Jesus reaches out to me and says I forgive you and I want to give you a second chance when you make a mistake.

Many people doubt that you can have a second chance. They are afraid to go to God and ask his forgiveness — a bit like the prodigal son who was afraid to go back to his father.

But that father is looking at us and saying, "Please take a step toward me. I want to forgive you. I am not like the world. I am not like some of the people you have heard in the church. I am not like those people. I am ready to forgive you. I am ready to give you a new start." Jesus is a God of mercy and compassion, and that is the good news.

God is someone who can help me and save me when I am helpless. That is who Jesus is.



# 21 **BUFFALO FAITH**

**The mayor, dressed in a suit and tie**, was sweating profusely as he introduced our band in the crowded cultural house. “We are happy to have the band, No Longer Music, from Amsterdam, playing for us today. They plan to come back to play here every year.” This was a surprise to me as I never had made such a commitment. “So, let’s welcome No Longer Music!” he continued, and the crowd responded in wild applause.

This was our first concert in Prague in the “suburbs.” Evangelistic activities had rarely occurred here due to the fact that the suburbs are a high-rise, low-income area. Known as a high crime area, most mission groups have chosen instead the beautiful city center.

Boris, our Czech contact and one of the leaders of the small church in the high-rises, invited us to play because the people there were completely neglected and unreached.

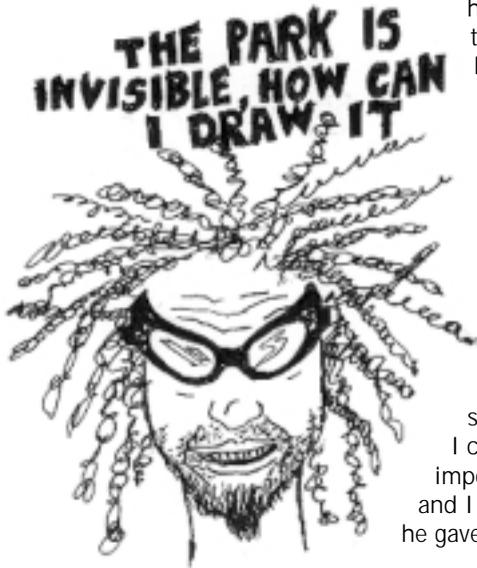
Our first concert was to be in the “invisible park.” It was called the invisible park because the city had promised to build a park there for the children, but never did. We played at a festival with a country night, a folk night, and a rock night. We were the band featured on the rock night and the only Christian band in the festival. It was raining that day, so the concert was moved indoors into the cultural center.

“God is not an energy or a force, but a Father. Because of Jesus, we can

## **VANCOUVER ISLAND GUY**

**I was in Victoria on Vancouver Island, Canada, with a friend of mine, Randy Larson. It was about 2:00am, Randy was with a woman whom he had met in a disco, and I was hanging out in a coffee shop by myself. I noticed two young guys witnessing to this older Native American man.**

**Every time they tried to answer his question, another guy, who was in the booth sitting across from them, would throw in a comment to confuse them. He was a big lumberjack-looking kind of guy — the type who wore flannel shirts before they were considered “grunge.”**



have a friendship with God," I said. Twenty people worked their way forward to give their lives to Jesus. As I was listening to our drummer explain to those who responded about how to have a friendship with Jesus, Boris tapped me on the shoulder. "The mayor wants to talk with you," he said.

"It was a wonderful concert," the mayor said as he shook my hand.

"Thank you," I said. He gave me his address. I could tell that he was moved by what he had seen.

As we were packing up, it suddenly occurred to me that I should have prayed with the mayor. As I reflected on this, I concluded that it was the fact that he was someone important that made me hesitate. I asked God to forgive me, and I said that I would not give up another chance like that if he gave it to me.

**I thought I would go over and talk to him to help the two young guys who were talking to the Native American.**

**One thing that we don't even think about** half the time is how powerful prayer really is. Because if we did understand it, we would use it a lot more.

**I sat down next to the lumberjack guy and said, "I could hear you talking to those two kids, and I noticed you have some questions about God."**

One time, Jodi and I were in a little town in Europe, and there was a man waiting for his wife to buy groceries; I stuck my head in his car window and invited him to a meeting that was going to be held in a church. He looked at me as if he thought what I said was cute and explained to me that he and his wife were not really interested in Christianity. I could tell by his attitude that he thought I was somewhat stupid. I asked him if it would be okay if I prayed for him before I left. His reaction told me that he thought, well, okay, pray for me, whatever. So, I put my hand on his shoulder and prayed that God would reveal himself to this man.

**We started talking, and he asked different questions about what it meant to have a relationship with God and about the Bible. I tried to answer his questions. After we had talked for maybe half an hour, he said, "You know, I'm really interested in what you are saying, but I have to go home because I am taking care of a friend's cat, and I have to let him out. Do you want to come with me?"**

As I did this, I looked at him and he started to cry, and right there and then, he prayed and asked Jesus to come into his life. Meanwhile, his wife had come out of the store and Jodi talked to her. She ended up praying to receive Jesus. They both came to the church that night.

There is nothing more powerful than prayer. It says in James 4:2, "You do not have, because you do not ask God." The problem we have is that we're asking everybody but God, or we use prayer as a formula, or we pray for other people's benefit.

Once we were doing a concert in Germany, and the punk band which played before us was called The Falling Melons. The band was not a Christian band, but I asked them if we could pray with them before their concert. They looked at me as if I were crazy, but they shrugged and said, "I guess so." My band gathered around them, and we prayed that they would have the best concert of their lives.

After the Falling Melons had performed their set, the singer came up to me as we were getting ready to do our concert. He was really excited and had a big grin on his face. He said, "You know, I've never prayed before, but that was the best concert we ever had."

"We'll talk more after we finish our set," I said.

When we finished our set, I invited everyone who wanted to make a decision to follow Jesus to come up on stage in front of their friends. All the members of The Falling Melons came up on stage and asked Jesus into their lives. In fact, it's often been the case that one or more of the secular band members, whom we have played with, have made this decision after we asked if we could pray for them.

Now, when I say pray for them, I don't mean that we acted all strange, closed our eyes, jumped up and down, and embarrassed them in front of their friends. But in a simple, natural way, I've just put my hand on a shoulder, kept my eyes open, and simply prayed, "Thank you for this band and that we can do this concert together. Help them to have a good concert. Show them that you are real and that you love them." That is all I pray. It's amazing to me how God has used this to open someone's heart.

**In Hebrews 11:6 (see page 132)**, it says that we need to believe God exists and that he rewards those who seek him. One person with God can turn the whole country upside down. So why is it that we don't see God doing big things around us?

I think we need to ask ourselves — what are we asking God for? When we first become a Christian, many of our prayers are like this: Dear God, help me not to get drunk this week; Dear God, help me to find a nice girlfriend; Dear God, help me to pass my exam. Our prayers are self-centered, and they all are based on our personal needs. God does want us to come to him about those kinds of things.

When my son, Aaron, was three years old, he would come out of the bathroom and say, "Look, Daddy, I'm pulling my pants up for you." And I would say, "Great Aaron, thank you for pulling your pants up for your

**By this time, it was close to 3:00am, and I said, "Sure, why not." We got in his pickup, and he drove me far out of Victoria, maybe an hour outside of the city. When you leave Victoria, it very quickly becomes wilderness. Finally, we arrived at some remote cabin in the middle of nowhere. I still did not feel insecure or worried, but I did think I was out in the middle of nowhere with this lumberjack guy.**

**When we got out of the pickup truck, he went over to the door and unlocked it. When I went in, he quickly shut the door and locked it. At the same time, he switched on the lights and then off and then back on again. I thought that was a bit strange, but I wasn't too worried.**

**We went into his kitchen and sat at his table. He kept offering whiskey to me, and I kept refusing, but he kept trying to give me some. Finally, he said, "I'm going to tell you something that is going to shock you." I thought to myself that I've heard it all — nothing was going to shock me. I asked him what it was, but I wasn't really too concerned because I didn't think he could say anything that could really shock me.**



He looked at me and said, “I believe that Jesus was a homosexual, and I’m a homosexual.”

I have to admit, I was a little shocked. I was out in the middle of nowhere, no one knew where I was, and I found myself locked in this cabin with a crazy lumberjack guy, and I thought he might kill me or worse.

It was at this point that I prayed. I said, “God, you know why I am here. Maybe it was stupid of me to do what I have done, but I’m here because I wanted to tell this man about you. You have to protect me.” I stood up and said, “I’m leaving.”

daddy.” But if he was a twenty-one year old and saying that to me, I would be a little concerned.

There has to be a point in our relationship with God that our asking doesn’t just revolve around us and our personal needs. What the world needs now is radical asking.

A time that really means a lot to a father is when one of his children asks him how he feels. I can remember a story that I heard once about someone at a university who wanted to be involved in missions. He put a world map out on the floor of his room and said, “God, I’m not going to leave this room until you show me where you want me to go.” This is the type of radical prayer that God longs for us to pray.

In John 14:12-14 it says, “I tell you the truth, anyone who has faith in me will do what I have been doing. He will do even greater things than these, because I am going to the Father. And I will do whatever you ask in my name, so that the Son may bring glory to the Father. You may ask me for anything in my name, and I will do it.”

God wants us to mature to a level in our relationship with him where our asking involves faith.

**Buffalo are different from other animals.** When it is cold, many

animals stand huddled with their heads in the middle and their backs toward the rain and the wind, but not buffalo. When it is cold and rainy, they face towards the wind and rain. They lift their chins up as if to say, "Go ahead and blow and rain on me all you want. I don't care."

Buffalo faith, this is the kind of faith that God wants us to have in our prayers. It's the kind of prayer that says, "God, this is impossible for me, that's why I'm asking you to do it, because when it happens, everyone will know that you did it and not I."



**"Where are you going to go? You will never find your way back," he said.**

**"I don't care — I'm going to leave," I said.**

**Suddenly, he said, "Okay, I'll give you a ride back into town."**

**He let out this crazy laugh as I got into the pickup. He tried to grab my leg, and I pushed him away. He drove me back into town. He dropped me off in front of the parliament building where I was going to meet my friend at 5:00am and warned me to be careful in this neighborhood because there were a lot of crazy people, especially this time of night, and he gave a crazy laugh again.**

**I jumped out of the truck feeling like God literally spared my life. While I was waiting, I was approached by another homosexual who offered me a joint. Just then, my friend, Randy, pulled up in his car. I got in, and we drove away.**

**HEBREWS 11:6**

**And without faith it is impossible to please God, because anyone who comes to him must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who earnestly seek him.**

# 22

## **NO CIRCUMSTANCES, NO BARRIERS**

**It took all my self-control not to scream.** “What’s wrong with you? Don’t you realize he is going to be operated on this morning?!” I said.

“Oh yeah, I guess you’re right,” she said as she read the chart on his bed. “Sorry.”

It was at this point that I realized I could not put my faith in the medical professionals at the hospital where my son was having his operation. After I kissed my son, he was wheeled into the operating room. I told Jodi I wanted to go for a walk, and I went to an inner-city park nearby. I could hardly control myself. I was so angry with the nurse for wanting to feed my son breakfast just before he was to be operated on. I was full of emotion as I prayed, “God, I am in this city because you have called me to be here. You need to take care of my son.” Because I was a father, I was full of emotion. Because my son was having this operation, I was desperate, because he was my son, and I was his father.

God heard my prayers and my son’s operation was a success.

There was a man named Jairus whose daughter was dying, and he, too, was desperate. Jesus was crossing the lake in a boat. There was a large crowd, and Jairus was there. He knew he had to get to Jesus because his little girl was dying. He understood that the only hope he had was Jesus. Jairus knew that if he didn’t get to Jesus and make his request known to him, his little girl would die.

When Jairus saw Jesus, he fell at his feet. He couldn't help himself, I think. He was overwhelmed with emotion. It was probably difficult to understand what he was saying because his voice was so full of desperate emotion.

Much to Jairus' relief, Jesus responded to his desperate pleas and said that he would go with Jairus to see his daughter. Jairus was a man of faith. He understood that though his daughter was in a critical situation, Jesus could help her.

**I'm not trying to make a comparison** between a ministry trip and the death of a little girl, but this story reminds me of a tour we did. I felt for a long time that God wanted us to go to Vietnam. I had talked and prayed about it with others for two years. I had the strong conviction that God wanted us to go on this tour. I went to Vietnam to meet with various officials.

When I returned, we received an invitation from Hanoi saying, "Please come and do a friendship tour in our country." This was historic. Up to this point, no one had ever been invited to do anything like this in Vietnam. I don't mean just Christian groups. No bands from the West had ever been asked to do something like this before.

Although I was really encouraged by the invitation, I had to overcome the next obstacle to go on tour — raising the money. The harder I tried, the less money I raised. For example, I went on a fund raising trip, and after I came back, it ended up costing me eight-hundred dollars. "God, I'm going in the wrong direction," I said. "I believe you spoke to me that we're supposed to go on this tour, but we're losing money." Finally one day I said to God, "I can't raise this money. There is no way I can do it. It is hopeless. God, you will just have to bring this money in. I will respond to any opportunities you give me to tell people about the money we need, but I am unable to raise this money without your help."

Slowly the money started coming in. Miraculously, God provided everything we needed to go. The plane tickets were bought. I felt really happy and excited. Everything was coming together; there were no problems.

We had spent a year in preparation and had people arrange to meet from every corner of the world. Then two weeks before we were to go to Vietnam, I received a phone call from Amsterdam. It was Rocky Rhodes (yes, this *is* his real name) who was helping to set up the tour.

"Rocky," I said, "how are you doing?" Remember, I was happy and

excited. But I was immediately concerned because Rocky wasn't happy and excited. He sounded like someone had just died.

"What's wrong, Rocky?" I asked.

"I just received a fax from Hanoi. The promoters are canceling our tour."

This completely devastated me. Emotionally, I felt like a ton of bricks hit me. In spite of this, I said to Rocky, "I don't feel like we are supposed to listen to this. I think this tour is supposed to happen. Let me call you back after I have time to think about what we should do."

Jodi and I went for a walk on the beach and prayed. Though I had put on a brave face for Rocky, I didn't have any faith at that point. I asked Jodi what she thought. "Let's pray and ask God what to do," she said. "Then let's ask our board and other pastors whom we know to also pray. If they all say the same thing, then we'll know what God is saying to us. If they all say you should go on the tour in spite of the present circumstance, then we'll do it."

It made me angry when I heard that because I thought there was no way that everyone was going to say that we should go on this tour. There was no way it made sense. The government just canceled on us. I was irritated with Jodi, but I reluctantly agreed with her that we would use the counsel from our friends to determine if God wanted us to go.

Miraculously, every person we asked to pray about it thought we should go even though the government canceled the official "Friendship Tour." We felt clearly God wanted us to go, and we told everyone involved to continue with their plans to meet us in Saigon.

When we arrived in Vietnam, it went from bad to worse. I was hoping when I met Rocky at the airport he was going to tell me that everything was okay, and the tour was going ahead as planned. Instead, he told me that Eugene, our promoter from Siberia, had fallen and broken his shoulder. He had to go home early, and Rocky was doing all the negotiations by himself. Also, all of our equipment was being held by customs, and they weren't going to release it to us.

It was at this point that I really started to go through a lot of self doubt. The devil started saying to me, "You know, David, this is just your own idea. You're not doing this for God, but for your own ego. This is just your own self-indulgence."

**It reminded me of a big outdoor concert** that we did in Napier, New

Zealand. We were just getting ready to show the crucifixion and resurrection of Jesus, which was the most important part of the concert. There were many people there. Just then it started to pour down rain, and everyone disappeared and ran for cover. I was standing there ready to start doing the drama, the most important part, and there were no people.

I was frustrated, and I said, "God, you wanted us to come here to do this concert, and there are all these non-Christians here. Right when it gets to the most important part when I tell them about you, you let it rain. What is going on?" I felt as if God said to me, "For whom are you going to do these things? Is it for yourself or for me?"

I started to wonder if Vietnam was a situation like Napier where I was not willing to just do things how God wanted them. Then the devil was saying to me that I was arrogant. Someone in Auckland, New Zealand told me just before I left that I was arrogant because we have this song, "No Sex Before Marriage." (SEE CHAPTER 13, "SEX & ELVIS.") I started to think that must be it. It must be because I am arrogant. But through all of my self doubt, I felt like God was saying to me, "I want you to have faith beyond your circumstances, because this will give me the glory."

The reason we often do not see God do great things in our lives is that we do not have faith beyond circumstances.

**There is a kind of faith we have** when we first come to Jesus that is a kind of baby faith. It says, "God, I will believe in you when it feels right." But this kind of faith is based on emotions. If your faith is based on emotions, you will never do extraordinary things for God, because sometimes you will feel hopeless. Your emotions are going to tell you to give up and go the other way.

If we can't have a faith that is beyond emotion, we will never do great things for God. God is looking for people who will not be deterred by circumstances, who will not care what looks completely crazy, but who will trust God. If there was ever a day in which we need that kind of faith, it is today.

In Vietnam I was in a situation where God was asking me, "Do you have faith in me or not?" All the circumstances were going the other way. I understood that my reputation was on the line. You see, I had people coming from all over the world on this tour. I had been talking about it all over the place. People had given much money so we could go on this tour, and I thought, "God, what are you going to do? Are you going to let everything fail now? Then people will say, 'We knew it. We knew David

never heard from God.' God, what if I then feel like you are telling us to go to Turkey, that we need to do a national tour in Turkey? Then people will say, 'No, that can't be right. We can't support that. Look at what happened in Vietnam.'"

I want you to know that if you want to see God's power, you have to be willing to put everything on the line. That is the kind of faith that God is asking of people today. Everything that they have and their reputations have to be put on the line.

**We were in Vietnam for two days**, and nothing was going right. Here we were in Vietnam with all these people, and everywhere we went they said we were not allowed to play. It was forbidden, and besides that, they weren't going to give us our equipment.

Then I received a phone call from Hanoi. Our promoter there said, "I have one last meeting. There's a possibility that we will get permission from the Ministry of Culture to do our tour. This is our only hope."

Again, we were pleading and asking God. We started to have prayer chains through the night, and we were crying out to God. If I ever understood Jairus' desperation, it was then.

You see, Jesus was on his way to heal the little girl. He got caught up in the crowd helping someone else, and as a result, he was delayed. You can imagine how nervous Jairus felt when he saw how long it was taking Jesus to get to his little girl. Finally, when they were almost to Jairus' house, someone came to them and said, "Don't bother the teacher anymore; your daughter is dead." Jairus had complete faith that Jesus would heal his daughter.

After pleading with God throughout the night, we finally received a phone call from Hanoi saying the official was not interested and to forget it. So according to what we understood, every opportunity was dead. There was no way we were going to be able to do the tour.

Don't bother the teacher. Your daughter is dead. This was the message to Jairus, and this was the message to us. But the question here was not the barrier or the circumstance, but had I heard the heartbeat of God. Because if I had heard the heartbeat of God, nothing would be impossible for me.

It was like the story of the persistent widow. There was a widow who was completely and totally helpless. She had no resources, and no one to plead on her behalf. Not only was she helpless, but she was pleading her cause with a judge who didn't care about justice. This judge could

not have cared less about her or her needs. Even though the judge did not care about justice, he finally gave her what she asked for because of her persistence. Then Jesus concluded the parable by saying, "And when he comes back will he find faith on the earth?"

The question was not about the barriers or the circumstances. The question was, do I hear the heartbeat of God.

I started to think about why I was in Vietnam in the first place. I was reminded of a little boy I met on the street the first time I was there. He reminded me of one of my own sons. He looked about 11 or 12 years old. The boy was trying to sell things on the street to get money to eat. When I saw this little boy, my heart immediately went out to him. I wanted to give him some money to help him. He was blind in one eye and crippled. Because you don't want to carry much money around with you on the streets in Saigon, I gave him the few dollars I had and wished I had more. I went back to my hotel room, and the image of this little boy haunted me. I couldn't get him out of my mind.

The next day I retraced my steps and looked all over the city trying to find him, because I wanted to give him more money. I was unable to find him again. I went back to my hotel room, and again, his image haunted me. I was feeling very upset. I started to cry out to God, "What evil has this little boy committed, God? I'm willing to stand up and say that you are a God of love, but why is it that you let children like this suffer? What did this little boy ever do to deserve to suffer in this way? I don't understand this God." I cried out to God in the hotel room in Saigon. I felt God break into my heart and say to me, "My heart is broken more for that little boy than you will ever know. Little boys like him suffer because you don't care."

"But God, what am I supposed to do? How am I supposed to help all the suffering children in the world? I'm helpless; I don't have all the resources," I cried out. I felt like God was asking me to have a little part of His broken heart. It was then that I realized that I was not in Vietnam because of my ego or self-indulgence, but because God had called me there. So, the band and I cried out to God and asked that He would bring a breakthrough in the hopeless situation we were facing.

### **MARK 5:36**

**Ignoring what they said, Jesus told the synagogue ruler, "Don't be afraid; just believe."**

It was at this point where we needed to hear the words of Jesus in Mark 5:36: "Don't be afraid; just believe." How in the world was Jairus supposed to believe anything now? It was too late; his daughter was dead. The situation was impossible. There was no reason to believe anything. Jesus didn't make it on time, and yet, he said to Jairus, "Don't be afraid; just believe."

JESSE HELMS  
NORTH CAROLINA

## United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510-3301

February 16, 1994

His Excellency Nguyen Manh Cam  
Minister for Foreign Affairs  
Hanoi, Republic of Vietnam

Excellency:

NO LONGER MUSIC is a Dutch rock band led by David Pierce, an American. They have traveled extensively all over the globe. The purpose of the band is to promote good-will and understanding to all cultures. People from America, Holland, Great Britain, Russia, Poland and New Zealand have shown great interest in conducting a tour in Vietnam in March. They see it as an important new beginning in the building of good and lasting relationships. I have been told that the Western media is interested in covering this event.

I understand that the NO LONGER MUSIC Friendship Tour may be canceled because of financial difficulties. If this is the case, the Tour would like to help resolve these difficulties.

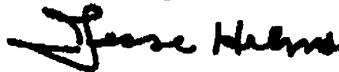
NO LONGER MUSIC has no political agenda - only good will and understanding. The proceeds from the tour will go to a charity organization in Saigon.

Anthony Rhodes and Engeni Kolashev, the director of ROCK ASIA, will be in Hanoi on February 22nd to work out the organizational difficulties. They are very excited about the prospects of working together on this tour and believe it to be the beginning of better things to come.

Thank you for your proper assistance and consideration of this request.

With kind regards.

Sincerely,



JESSE HELMS:g  
Enclosure: copy of VINACONCERT contract

cc: Anthony Rhodes

## **MARK 5:21-43**

**When Jesus had again crossed over by boat to the other side of the lake, a large crowd gathered around him while he was by the lake. Then one of the synagogue rulers, named Jairus, came there. Seeing Jesus, he fell at his feet and pleaded earnestly with him, "My little daughter is dying. Please come and put your hands on her so that she will be healed and live." So Jesus went with him.**

**A large crowd followed and pressed around him. And a woman was there who had been subject to bleeding for twelve years. She had suffered a great deal under the care of many doctors and had spent all she had, yet instead of getting better she grew worse. When she heard about Jesus, she came up behind him in the crowd and touched his cloak, because she thought, "If I just touch his clothes, I will be healed." Immediately her bleeding stopped and she felt in her body that she was freed from her suffering.**

**At once Jesus realized that power had gone out from him. He turned around in the crowd and asked, "Who touched my clothes?"**

Then it says that when Jesus arrived at the home of Jairus, he saw a commotion. People were crying and wailing loudly. Jesus went in and said to them, "Why all this commotion and wailing? The child is not dead, but asleep." The people there laughed at Jesus. This is something you need to be prepared for if you are not going to be bound by circumstances. People will laugh at you and tell you that you are acting irresponsibly and ridiculously. You must be willing to walk through that if you want to see God break through.

Jesus asked all the people to leave. He took the child's father and mother and three of the disciples in to see the girl. Jesus took her by the hand and said to her, "Little girl, I say to you, get up!" Immediately, the girl stood up and walked. It didn't matter that she was already dead. That's the whole point. We serve a God who raises the dead. That is why He doesn't want circumstances to bind us.

**There we were in Vietnam**, and we had absolutely no options left for us. Our equipment was held up by customs. Our promoter from Siberia had injured himself and had to fly back home. Even a letter endorsing the tour by Sen. Jesse Helms from the State Department of the American government did not help. The Vietnamese government had told us there was no way they would let us do any concerts. We were sitting in this cockroach-infested hotel with no idea what to do next.

After one of our prayer meetings, someone felt that we should go to the Catholic church. So, Rocky and I went into town and looked for the biggest Catholic church we could find, which was the Notre Dame Cathedral. I asked someone there if I could see the priest. He led us into the church and showed us the grave of a priest. "No," I said, "I would like to see a living one." He then took us to meet the priest of the Notre Dame Cathedral.

We walked over to the church offices and met Father Nguyen, a vicar of one-hundred-ninety parishes with a combined congregation of half a million people. He welcomed us cautiously, wondering why these foreigners wanted to meet with him.

"Father Nguyen, we need your help." I explained to him how we started praying all day. During this time of prayer, someone felt I should go and talk with him and ask if he would help us. Father Nguyen listened carefully to everything I had to say. "I believe God has sent you to us," he said. "You can play at our church Sunday night."

We were invited to play in the biggest venue in Saigon, the Notre Dame Cathedral. I found out later that Mother Teresa had tried to get permis-

sion to preach in this church and had been turned down. I was the first Westerner to ever speak in this cathedral.

The place was packed, and people were even hanging through the windows. There were thousands of people there. Many came forward publicly to give their hearts to Jesus after the concert. People in the church there didn't believe that could happen. Everywhere we went, we saw God do miracles. We ended up doing nine concerts, more than we originally had planned on the Friendship Tour organized by the government.

One of the last places we were in was so full that there were people hanging in the aisles, all the seats were full, and the front was full. There was no way I could ask people to come forward. So I said, "If you want a friendship with Jesus, I want you to respond by raising your hand with me." Almost everyone in the whole place raised his or her hand. You could feel the presence of God in this place.

Just before I left Saigon, I talked with Father Nguyen. He told me, "I have such a burden to reach the young people of this city — a city of six million people. Can you help us to reach these young people?"

**God does way more than we could ever ask** or expect. Way more.

Nothing of value comes without a fight. God is asking us in these days to do extraordinary things for him. But the only way to do extraordinary things for Him is to do extraordinary things.

If you want to stay in the usual, if you are just going to stay in the area of circumstances, then you are never going to do extraordinary things.

The person you are now is the person you are going to be. Many Christians live in a dream world thinking about what they are going to become someday but they aren't taking the small steps of obedience towards becoming that person. You want to know what kind of person of faith you are? What are you trusting God for today?

This is the day for extraordinary faith. In Vietnam, God proved to me again that I can trust Him. We need to not look at our circumstances, or our limitations, but we need to get on our faces before God and ask, "God, what is your will?"

When I understand what God's will is for me, then I understand that there is absolutely nothing that can stop me. There is no circumstance, no limitation, no barrier, nothing that can stop me if I can hear the...

**"You see the people crowding against you," his disciples answered, "and yet you can ask, 'Who touched me?'"**

**But Jesus kept looking around to see who had done it. Then the woman, knowing what had happened to her, came and fell at his feet and, trembling with fear, told him the whole truth. He said to her, "Daughter, your faith has healed you. Go in peace and be freed from your suffering."**

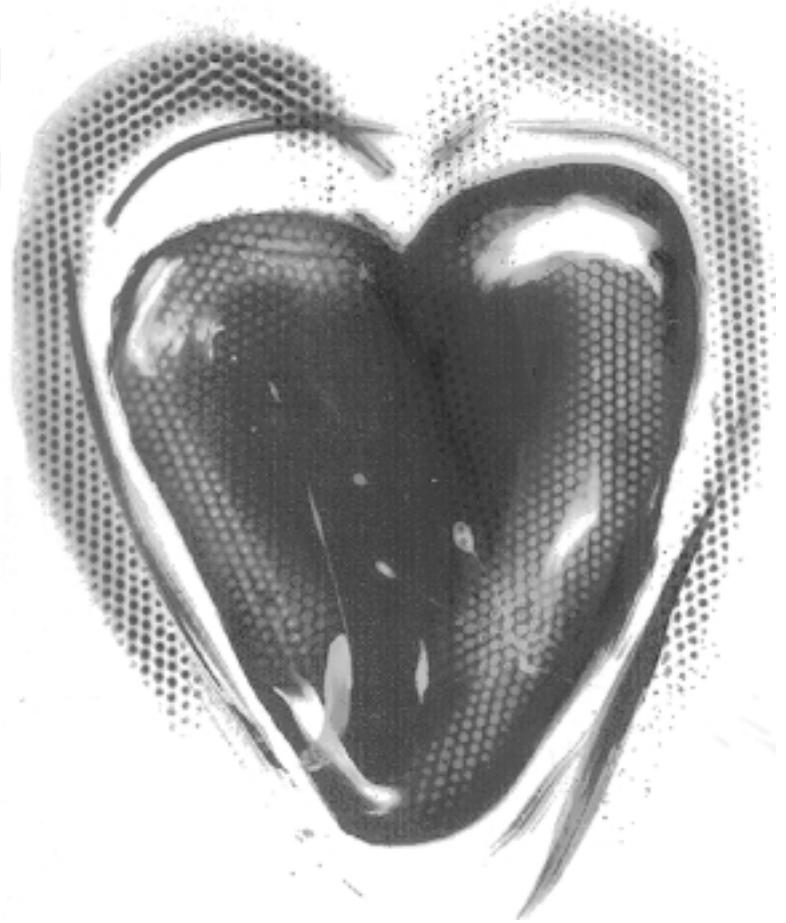
**While Jesus was still speaking, some men came from the house of Jairus, the synagogue ruler. "Your daughter is dead," they said. "Why bother the teacher any more?"**

**Ignoring what they said, Jesus told the synagogue ruler, "Don't be afraid; Just believe."**

**He did not let anyone follow him except Peter, James and John the brother of James. When they came to the home of the synagogue ruler, Jesus saw a commotion, with people crying and wailing loudly. He went in and said to them, "Why all this commotion and wailing? The child is not dead but asleep." But they laughed at him.**

After he put them all out, he took the child's father and mother and the disciples who were with him, and went in where the child was. He took her by the hand and said to her, "Talitha koum!" (which means, "Little girl, I say to you, get up!"). Immediately the girl stood and walked around (she was twelve years old). At this they were completely astonished. He gave strict orders not to let anyone know about this, and told them to give her something to eat.

*...heartbeat of God.*



# DAVID

## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

**David Pierce is the director of Steiger International**, an international ministry of YWAM, dedicated to reaching the global youth culture. Steiger means “pier” in Dutch and comes from the address of the barge where his ministry began in the early 80’s behind Central Station in Amsterdam, Holland.

David and his wife Jodi started a bible study for the punks and non-churched. It was during this time that the band, No Longer Music, was formed as a tool of communicating Jesus to the secular music scene.



From Amsterdam, they began to conduct evangelistic tours throughout Europe, Eastern Europe and Russia. Now Steiger has ministry teams in Singapore, India, Serbia (Yugoslavia), Poland, Germany, Austria, England, New Zealand and America.

David and Jodi have two teenage sons and live in Wellington, New Zealand.



# 16

## WHEN I STOP RECEIVING THE APPLAUSE OF PEOPLE AND FIND MYSELF IN THE DUNGEON

**There are many people reading this** who are afraid of women. Yeah, I know some of you aren't going to admit this, but it still doesn't change the fact that you really are afraid. Unless, of course, you are a woman, which probably means you are afraid of men. We can all relate to being afraid, because we are all afraid of somebody. Are you afraid of people, or are you afraid of God?

Really, the question is not so much one of being afraid, but whom do you mostly want to please. If your goal is to please people, it will eventually destroy you.

There was a guy who was afraid of a woman. His name was Herod. He was married to Herodias. This was her real name, not an alias. He was afraid of this woman.

There was another guy called John who said, "It isn't right for you to take your brother's wife from him and marry her." Herodias was not pleased with John for saying that to her husband. She wanted to kill him. To make her more upset, John kept going around saying that what Herod was doing was wrong.

You have to be sympathetic to Herod's predicament. Herodias was really beautiful, and he didn't want to lose her. He had this conflict. Herod wanted to listen to John, but he also wanted the approval of Herodias, because he was really attracted to her. He was also afraid of John,

### **MATTHEW 14:1-12**

**At that time Herod the tetrarch heard the reports about Jesus, and he said to his attendants, "This is John the Baptist; he has risen from the dead! That is why miraculous powers are at work in him."**

**Now Herod had arrested John and bound him and put him in prison because of Herodias, his brother Philip's wife, for John had been saying to him: "It is not lawful for you to have her." Herod wanted to kill John, but he was afraid of the people, because they considered him a prophet.**

**On Herod's birthday the daughter of Herodias danced for them and pleased Herod so much that he promised with an oath to give her whatever she asked. Prompted by her mother, she said, "Give me here on a platter the head of John the Baptist." The king was distressed, but because of his oaths and his dinner guests, he ordered that her request be granted and had John beheaded in the prison. His head was brought in on a platter and given to the girl, who carried it to her mother. John's disciples came and took his body and buried it. Then they went and told Jesus.**

because he realized the words John spoke were from God. Herod knew that his wife wanted to kill John. So, Herod protected him by putting him in a dungeon. It was as if John was on a witness protection program, except that instead of staying in a five star hotel, he had to stay in a dungeon.

When we are afraid of people, we can allow these little compromises to come into our life. It's not that we reject Jesus, or we reject God. It's not that we don't believe. We make these compromises, because we're so concerned about what other people will think of us.



Herod loved hearing John speak. He liked inviting John up out of the dungeon to talk about God. But when Herod heard John speak, he never understood it completely. It would confuse him.

That is another thing that happens when we start compromising. We enjoy hearing God's word to us, but we don't put it into practice. We think that it's the hearing and not the doing that is important. The Bible talks about this in James 1:23.

*"Anyone who listens to the word but does not do what it says is like a man who looks at his face in the mirror and, after looking at himself, goes away and immediately forgets what he looks like."*

Herod probably thought that because he would listen to John, he was doing a good thing. He deceived himself into thinking that it gave him

some kind of security. It's like when you go to church and you hear someone preach a good message, and you think by hearing it, you're improved and you don't actually have to do anything. But the time came when Herod was to suffer the consequences for not putting the truth he was hearing into practice.

It was a birthday party. Herod invited all his friends and all the powerful and influential people he knew. Herodias' daughter came in and danced, pleasing Herod and his dinner guests. Not only was Herodias good looking, but her daughter was really good looking. She came in and did this erotic dance which excited the king. He said to the girl, "Ask me anything you want, and I will give it to you, up to half of everything I own." He thought this would really impress all his friends, too.

She went to her mother and said, "What do you want me to ask for?" Herodias promptly answered, "I want you to ask him for John's head on a platter." The girl hurried to the king and said in front of all his guests, "I want you to give me the head of John the Baptist on a platter right now."

The important thing to remember here was that John was God's way of communicating to Herod. It was through John that God was giving Herod a chance to repent of all the bad things he had done. It was through John that Herod was having a relationship with God. Now Herod was faced with a choice. Whom was he going to please? The entire time, Herod had been giving in to this thing of pleasing people. First, it was with his wife, and then it was with all these important guests. He was very distressed, because he promised, in front of all these guests, that he would give her anything she wanted.

Herod had crossed the line and now felt he was unable to refuse the request of Herodias' daughter. It would humiliate him in front of his friends. So immediately, he sent an executioner with orders to bring John's head. Because Herod wanted man's approval more than God's approval, he lost an opportunity to have a relationship with God.



For whose approval are we going to live? Are we going to live for Jesus, or are we going to live for people? Though we say we are following Jesus, sometimes the truth is that we are really living for the approval of people. Like Herod, we don't really believe, though we convince ourselves that we do.

**I met a guy named Ben** when I was in America. He was a heroin addict and despondent. Ben went to church in Minneapolis and saw there was something there that he didn't have. He saw that people had fulfillment and peace. Ben wanted that peace in his life. He became a member of the group, prayed the prayers, and joined the activities. As a result, he had more peace in his life than he had before.

Ben did not give his life to Jesus. He gave his life to the group. He recognized God was in the group, and he could see the truth of it, but he hadn't given himself personally to Jesus.

Soon, his old friends were saying, "Man, you're so out of it. You're really stupid and so uptight. What's it going to hurt you to just drink a little bit? Smoke a little coke? What's the big deal?" Ben started to give into their pressure in little ways. Because his relationship was with the group and not with Jesus, Ben soon ended up worse than before. His wife had just left him, and he was all alone.

This is what happens when, rather than giving your life to Jesus, you give it to a group that believes in Jesus. We need to follow Jesus. There is a complete contrast to Ben's story and John the Baptist's story. For John, the most important thing was God. He was willing to put it all on the line. Sometimes John was popular with the people. All different kinds of people went to hear him speak. They would go out to the desert to listen to John. They wanted to be baptized by him. John didn't love the approval of people more than he loved God.

This was very important, because the time came when people stopped applauding John and stopped seeking him out. Instead, he found himself thrown into a dungeon. John had a choice to make. For whom was he living his life? Was he going to care about what men thought or what God thought? Though John knew he was risking his life, he continued to speak the words that God told him to speak. John gave his life for what God told him to say.

That is what Jesus is asking all of us to do. Jesus wants us to be so consumed with Him, whether things are going well or badly, that we will want to obey Him.

The basis for a relationship with God, for some people, depends on their feeling of popularity. It's more an emotion than a relationship. God wants to liberate us from this. He wants us to know him like a friend. God has a spiritual destiny for each of us. He wants to send us out into the world to tell others about Him.

It all boils down to this question: For whom or what do you live your life? If you are living for Jesus, then when you stop receiving the applause of people and find yourself in the dungeon, you will not lose faith. You will know it is for God's approval that you are living. But if you are living for the approval of people, then you will ultimately waste your life on meaninglessness.





# 17 PENCILS IN YOUR NOSE

**I felt like Dorothy in the “Wizard of Oz”** as the man looking at me through the little slot in the door was trying to decide whether to let me in or not. It was about 1:00 in the morning in Amsterdam, and I was trying to gain admittance into The Fizz, which was then the trendiest, most alternative club in the city. It was *the* place to be.

Standing next to me was Brian Hayes. (SEE APPENDIX) Brian understood how important it was that they accept us into this club, and being very fashion conscious, he came up with a new look. He shaved his head completely and was wearing a long trench coat and big army boots. He put dark blue eyeliner around his eyes. (When I looked at him in the cold, dreary night, he reminded me of Uncle Fester from the Addams Family.)

To my delight, the door opened and we were allowed to enter. As you entered The Fizz, there were tables with hair spray and makeup that were free to use if your hair was damaged on the way to the club. This could happen easily since most people in Amsterdam traveled by bicycle and it was often raining. People sat on these tables and made their hair stick up or out again and smeared on the heavy eyeliner and black lipstick. This was important because everybody wanted to be seen at



The Fizz, so everyone prepared their elaborate, most alternative hair-styles to impress each other.

I walked onto the dance floor and started a conversation with someone I had seen there the week before.

"How do you like it here? I shouted.

"I hate it here!" he answered.

"How often do you come?" I asked.

"Every weekend," he said.

The problem is that you go to The Fizz to meet people, but before people will want to talk to you, you have to be really alternative and cool. However, in order to be alternative, you have to act like you don't want to talk to anybody. So you have all these lonely people wanting friendship, alone, acting cool.

### **LUKE 2:10-11**

**But the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid. I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people. Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; he is Christ the Lord."**

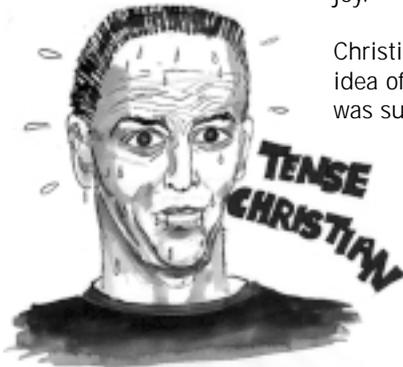
**The world gives a false kind of freedom** as a substitute for the real freedom that God wants us to have. Most people think that the closer to God you get, the less free you will become, but in reality, the opposite is true.

People at The Fizz were not having any fun. But I have found that the closer I get to God, the more fun I have. In Luke 2:10-11, it says that when the angels announced the birth of Jesus, they had good news of great joy and that a Savior was born to them. What people were looking for in The Fizz was joy and friendship. God, not the devil, created music, dancing, art, and color, but Satan substitutes a false sense of joy.

Christianity without joy is not true Christianity. When I was a kid, my idea of a Christian was not always joyful. It seemed the more a person was supposed to be "spiritual," the more he was serious, tense, and dead. Often my friends and I would try to bring a little joy into the church.

During the summer in Minneapolis when I was in high school, there were what they called "Como Hymn Sings." All kinds of churches came together to sing in a big tent on a Sunday evening.

My friend Foy and I wanted to bring a little joy to the Como



Hymn Sings, so we bought a box of M-80's, each of which was a quarter stick of dynamite. We took a cigarette and put it on the M-80's so it would be a fifteen minute fuse. We lit them and then hid them in different places inside and around the tent and then pretended we were singing.

After about fifteen minutes when the cigarettes ran out, the M-80's started going off and people ran around screaming. The police came and tried to figure out who had set off the firecrackers. Foy and I just smiled and sang, glad that we could do our part to make the service joyful.

(OK, you're right. This really doesn't express joy, it's more about adolescent rebellion. But I liked the story so much I decided to use it anyway, so my suggestion is that you ignore the above illustration altogether.)

**I had to go to prayer time** at church on Wednesday nights. Everyone sat at tables to pray. Now, when twenty different people in the church pray simultaneously, it just sounds like a drone of mumbling.

Foy, my other friends, and I all sat together at one table. All at once, we mumbled as loudly as we could. We were just trying to bring a little joy to the prayer meeting.

Our relationship with God should bring an element of joy to our lives and it will affect our behavior. I'm not exactly sure what was affecting our behavior, but in Matthew 13:44 it says,

*"The kingdom of heaven is like treasure hidden in a field. When a man found it, he hid it again, and then in his joy went and sold all he had and bought that field."*

If we understand who God is, it's logical that we are going to behave differently. Obviously, if you find a treasure in a field, you are going to do everything you can to buy that field to get the hidden treasure. Likewise, when we begin to understand what it means to have a relationship with God, it will also affect the way we behave.

### **Have you ever been in love?**

When I first met Jodi, who is now my wife, she was living in another part of Holland and I was living in Amsterdam. Because I didn't have any money, the only way I could get to her was to hitchhike. I can remember one night, it was about midnight, and I was standing in the freezing cold rain in the winter, waiting to get to Jodi. You might ask yourself, was I upset or worried about the rain? Of course not! I was in love! I didn't

even care about the rain, or the cold, or the late hour. I was going to get to Jodi even if I had to walk. The weather or any other circumstances could not lessen my joy over being with Jodi.

Soon after, she moved to Amsterdam, and I didn't have to hitchhike to see her. We both were busy with many activities, and I would get up early in the morning to have breakfast with her. I hate getting up early in the morning. But did I care? No, I was in love, so I got up early to see her. This is how our relationship with God should be. Our love for God should motivate us to do things joyfully that we normally would not like to do.

This is not a shallow, thoughtless joy. One day, I was on the Dam Square in the middle of Amsterdam, and I was talking to someone about India. I had just recently returned from a trip there. I asked the guy whom I was talking to how he was able to deal with all of the poverty and suffering that you see everywhere in India.

"I didn't see any poor people in India," he said with a dazed look.

This is not the kind of joy God wants to give us — a shallow, thoughtless joy. It says in Hebrews 12:2-3,

*"Let us fix our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy set before him endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God. Consider him who endured such opposition from sinful men, so that you will not grow weary and lose heart."*

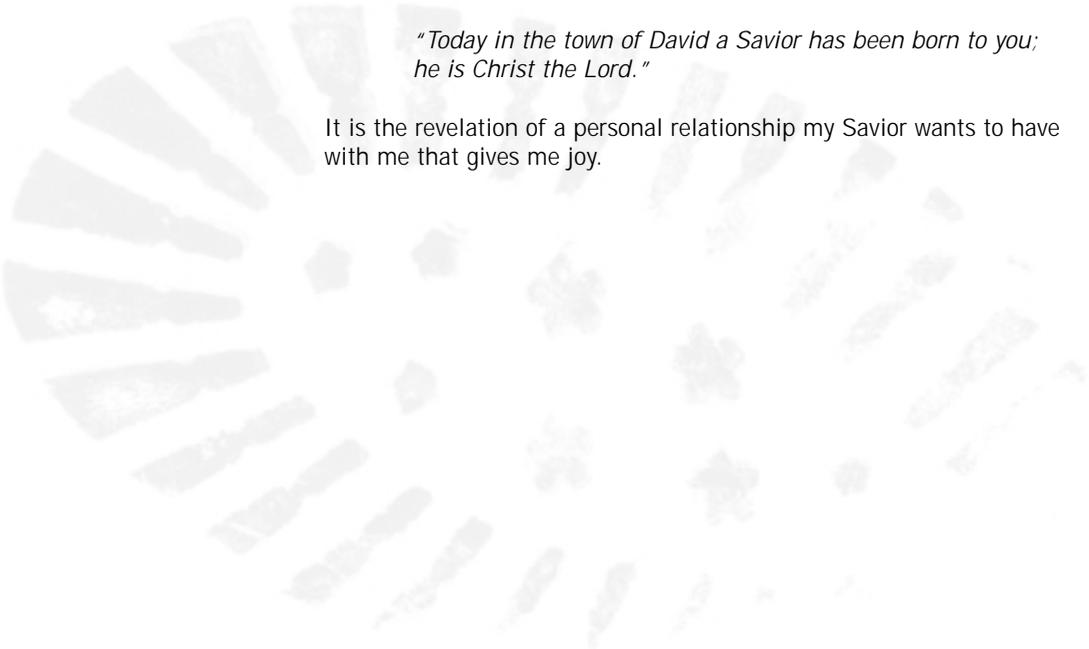
It was not easy for Jesus to go to the cross; in fact, he pleaded with the Father that if there was any other way for him to obey the Father's will in his life that he could do that instead. In Luke 22:42-43, Jesus prayed,

*"Father, if you are willing, take this cup from me; yet not my will, but yours be done. An angel from heaven appeared to him and strengthened him. And being in anguish, he prayed more earnestly, and his sweat was like drops of blood falling to the ground."*

It says that when Jesus faced the cross, his sweat was like drops of blood. That was how difficult it was for him to face the cross.

What was it that enabled him to push through and to be obedient to his Father's wishes? It was the joy set before him. In Luke 2:11, the angels announced that a Savior was born.



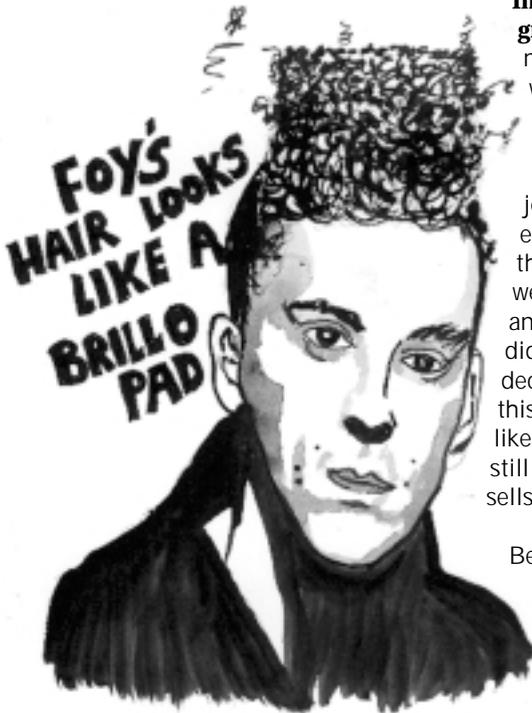


*"Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you;  
he is Christ the Lord."*

It is the revelation of a personal relationship my Savior wants to have with me that gives me joy.

# 18 HELP

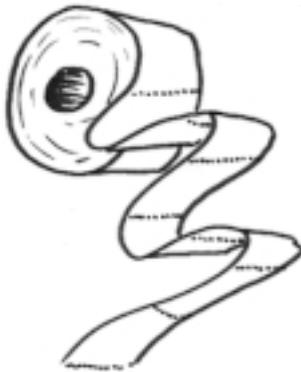
## I NEED SOMEBODY



**In the church youth group**, there was a guy named Max. Now, Max was a wrestler and twice as big as Foy and I. So naturally, we were a little jealous of Max — especially because all the girls liked him. One weekend we didn't have anything to do (the girls didn't like us), so we decided to visit Max. (At this time, Foy had hair like a Brillo pad, and he still does, but now he sells real estate.)

Before we visited Max, we stopped at the store and bought a few bags of toilet paper. We drove up

DRY  
TOILET PAPER



to his house with the lights off in the car because we always did this at night. We threw long streams of paper all over his trees, bushes, and house. The best part of this was that we could see Max in the living room watching television while we did this. This brings up a question: If Max was so cool, why was he sitting at home watching television with his parents on the weekend?

Just before we left, we took the hose and sprayed down the trees so that it would be impossible to get the toilet paper off. The last thing we did was ring the doorbell before we quickly drove away.

Max didn't like this too much, but he wasn't sure who was doing it, so it was lots of fun. We saw him the next day in church and said, "Hi, Max, how was your weekend?" He looked at us very angrily because he suspected we were toilet papering his house and yard, but he couldn't prove it.

It was another Saturday night, and we decided it was a great time to visit Max again. After getting a good supply of toilet paper, we drove up to Max's house. It was perfect, because there he was again, sitting in the house watching television. I was in the backyard throwing long streams of toilet paper over a tree when, suddenly, I heard the back door slam.

"Oh, no," I thought, "that must be Max!" I knew that if he ever caught me, I would die. It was quite dark, but on the other side of the yard, I could see my friend, Foy.

"Foy, I'm over here!" I whispered.

I could see Foy's head turn in my direction. "Foy, over here, over here," I called quietly. I waved my arms and Foy started running toward me. When he was about a meter away from me, I realized that it wasn't Foy, but Max. I knew my life was in sudden danger. I started to run to the car with Max right on my heels. I was running over hedges and through fences the whole time yelling to Foy, whom I could see getting into his car and starting to drive away.

"Wait, Foy! Don't leave me!" I shouted. I realized that the car was my salvation. I needed to get to the car before Max got to me. Because of that fact, I took the quickest and most direct route to the car. I didn't go around the fences — I went over them. I didn't walk — I ran. I didn't care what the neighbors thought. That car was my salvation.

One of the most important things for us to understand is that Jesus is our Savior. He's not somebody to improve our lifestyle, but he's our

salvation. The only way we can come to Jesus is as our Savior. Not only does Jesus want to be our Savior, he also wants a personal relationship with us.

I was a Christian for many years before I understood what this meant. One way you will know that you have this personal relationship is how you pray. Make all requests known to him. In Philippians 4:6-7, it says:

*“Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.”*

In Matthew 6:7, it says to not use meaningless repetition when you talk to God. *“And when you pray, do not be like the pagans, for they think they will be heard because of their many words.”*

**When I was working in the red light district** in Amsterdam, I met someone on the street and made an appointment to meet later to talk about Jesus. On the way to the appointment, I started to pray. You might think I was praying for this person I was going to meet, asking the Holy Spirit to prepare his heart so that he would be open to the things we were going to talk about.

But this was not the thing I was concerned about or what I was praying about. Instead, I was complaining to God. “You know, Lord, what I would really like is a piece of cake. Is that so much to ask for?” As usual, I was completely broke, and I had this strong craving for cake. “A big piece of chocolate cake, God. It would be so great, just to have a piece of cake.” I continued in my silent prayer.

Well, I don't really remember too much about what happened at my meeting with the guy I was going to see. What I do remember is returning to my room and seeing on my bedside table, a plate with a big piece of chocolate cake. There was a note saying, “David, this cake is for you.” I was so excited. I tried the same prayer again the next day, but it didn't work.

**It is my experience that** the more important a person is the less time he has to spend with you. If someone is very important, you must first make an appointment with his secretary, maybe a month in advance. And if he sees you at all, it would only be for a few moments. Sometimes, I view God like this. Yes, it's true I'll never talk to anyone more important than God, but God wants a personal relationship with me, so



how do I pray?

Do you only talk to God about the important things? Jodi, my wife, wants me to talk to her about the important things, of course, but she also wants me to talk to her about dumb things, too. Have you ever told God a joke? Have you ever argued or gotten angry with God?

Of course not!

### **PSALM 22:1-2**

**My God, my God, why have you forsaken me? Why are you so far from saving me, so far from the words of my groaning?**

**O my God, I cry out by day, but you do not answer, by night, and am not silent.**

Well then, how can you have a personal relationship with God and never get angry? The Psalms are full of David's frustration with God.

God wants to know my small talk, my frustrations, as well as my important matters. What is incredible about God is that he wants a personal relationship. How to do God's work is what the disciples asked Jesus in John 6:28-29:

*"Then they asked him, 'What must we do to do the works God requires?'"*

*"Jesus answered, 'The work of God is this: to believe in the one he has sent.'"*

When Aaron was six and Benjamin was four, why do you think they liked me and wanted to please me? Do you think they thought, "We had better be good to Daddy or he won't feed us; we had better be good to Daddy or he will throw us out the window"? Of course not!

My boys want to be like Daddy because they think he is the greatest. Like Benjamin used to say, "Daddy is cool. He has holes in his jeans." Sometimes I am not a good example to my two boys. Once when I was driving my car in Amsterdam, someone pulled out in front of me. I yelled out the window, "You idiot" to the driver of the other car. A few moments later, Aaron yelled, "You idiot" to an elderly lady walking down the street.

**Why do I work for God?** Why do I want to do things for God? When my boys were little, they used to draw pictures for me. When I would come home, Aaron would run up to me and say, "Daddy, look at what I drew for you!" He would give me a piece of paper with all these colored lines drawn all over it in crayon.

I would take it from him and say, "This is great, Aaron. Thank you for making this for your daddy. What is it?"

"It's you, Daddy," Aaron replied.

"Thank you, Aaron. Let's hang it on the refrigerator," I said.

Often I say to God, "Look, God, what I am doing for you. See how I'm leading this team for you. Look at the steps I have taken in my relationship with you. Look at all the people I am telling about you."

God says, "That is wonderful, David. Thank you for doing that for me. Let's hang it on the refrigerator."

God doesn't love me for what I can do for him any more than I love my boys for what they can do for me. I don't love my boys for the work they will be able to produce or the intellectual discussions we can have. Even when they fail, I love my boys for one simple reason — they are my boys.

And that is the same way God feels about us.





# 19

## SPIRITUAL SPONGES

**Do you remember the image of the guy** standing in front of all those tanks in Tiannamen Square in 1987? It amazed me. It wasn't as if the troops weren't doing anything. They were shooting people; and here was this guy, all by himself, who stopped an advancing column of tanks. I think about the courage that guy had. He was crazy or courageous or both. His commitment challenged me by his willingness to take a stand for something in which he believed. People like that are always a challenge to me.

There was someone in the Bible who did the same kind of thing as that student with the tanks coming toward him did. This man, too, was a citizen of a country that was against him and against what he stood for. He had to hide, or the government was going to kill him. What he was standing for was God. This government was so against God that anyone who stood for God was killed. So, here he was, one of the few people in the country who was standing for God.

God spoke to him in and said, "I want you to go to the ruler of this land, the king, and confront him and all of his prophets and people." This guy's name was Elijah. He got together with King Ahab, and he said, "I want you to call all the people and the prophets of Baal together."

There were about four-hundred-fifty prophets of Baal, and these were the guys who were against God. Now, the king probably thought, "This

### **I KINGS 18:21**

**Elijah went before the people and said, "How long will you waver between two opinions? If the Lord is God, follow him; but if Baal is God, follow him."**

is great. I want to kill this guy anyway. This is going to be really easy. He wants all my prophets and people to be there. This is my chance to get him."

**In I Kings 18:21, it says Elijah stood** in front of the people on a mountain and said, "How long are you going to wonder whom to follow? How long are you going to doubt? If Baal is God, follow him. If the Lord is God, follow Him." He waited for the people's response. It says that the people just stared at Elijah, which had to be uncomfortable, so he said, "Okay, let's do a test. Let's build two altars. You build an altar for Baal, and I'll build one for God. We will not light fire to the altar, but we will ask God and Baal to light the fire."

Then Elijah said to the prophets of Baal, "Choose a bull and prepare it first. Since there are so many of you, call upon the name of your god, but do not light the fire." They prepared the bull given to them, and Elijah told them that they could go first. He was being polite, I guess.

Imagine, now, four-hundred-fifty of these guys shouting to Baal to answer them. It says that they shouted, but there was no answer. They danced and danced around the altar for about three hours. They shouted, "Baal, answer us," as they danced.

Then around noon Elijah said, "Shout louder. The reason Baal doesn't hear you is because you are not loud enough. Maybe he went on vacation. Maybe he went to Spain to get away from all the rain. Maybe he's asleep." Elijah said all this stuff while they became more worked up. They shouted louder and cut themselves with knives. Picture this heavy scene. There was a lot of authority and power in it, and a lot of demonic energy was released. They did this until evening. There was no response, no answer, and no one paid any attention.

"Now it's my turn," Elijah then said. He called the people over and prepared the altar of the Lord. He put the bull and wood on the altar. Then he got four large barrels of water and had the people pour it over the offering, the wood, and the stones. Elijah said to do it again and again. They did it a second and third time. The water ran down the altar and even filled the trench around it.

Elijah wanted to make sure that when God answered, they wouldn't think it was spontaneous combustion or something. He asked God to do an impossible thing, because he believed God could do impossible things.

"Lord, answer me so that these people will know that you are God, so

that they will turn their hearts back to you again," he prayed. The fire of the Lord fell upon the sacrifice, the wood, and the stones and evaporated the water in the trench. Can you imagine? The flames came from the sky and destroyed everything.

You can imagine what the people did. They fell on their faces and cried out, "The Lord is God." Elijah then commanded them to seize the prophets of Baal. They brought them down to the Kishon Valley and killed them there. What a scene! We need to picture what was happening to understand what happened next.

Elijah went to the mountain top, again, where he kneeled and prayed that it would rain. He asked his servant to see if there were any clouds, because it hadn't rained for three years. The servant saw a cloud about the size of a man's hand. If you have been on a desert mountain, you will know that doesn't look very big.

Here was a mammoth desert horizon, and he saw a cloud about the size of a man's hand. "Tell the king to get in his chariot. The rain is coming," said Elijah. So, Ahab got in his chariot. Elijah advised him to hurry back to the city for a mighty storm was coming. It wasn't going to be just a nice, little, boring rain. It was a rain full of thunder and lightning, the kind of storm in which you don't want to be outside. The sky grew black with clouds. The wind rose, and heavy rain came. Ahab rode off to the city just trying to stay ahead of the storm.

Now, I like this part. The power of the Lord came upon Elijah. He tucked his cloak into his belt and ran ahead of Ahab all the way to the city of Jezreel. Can you picture that? He was running ahead of the chariot, ahead of the storm. He probably had long hair that went straight out behind him because he was sprinting. There was a big storm with thunder and lightning and rain right behind Elijah, and the power of God was upon him. You have to understand that this was not just a little thing that happened. We have never seen God's power like what happened there. This was a mighty scene. Elijah saw that God was someone who was living and powerful.

**There are many people who**, I think, have experienced God's power as well. Maybe we haven't run ahead of the storm like that, but I know there are plenty of people who could stand up and say, "God is living and powerful. Jesus is real." We could talk about miracles that are happening today. People have been healed. People have come up against me in potentially violent situations, and God protected me.

Once, when I was hitchhiking in America with a friend of mine, we were

riding in a pickup truck. The driver pulled out a gun from under his seat and pointed it at my friend's head. God protected us in that situation.

Elijah, if anybody, knew the reality of Jesus. But a very strange thing happened after this amazing experience. In I Kings 19 it says a woman named Jezebel had found out what Elijah had done. She was into killing people who followed God. "This is it. Look at what he has done," she thought. She made a vow to kill Elijah, no matter what.

This was the Elijah, you understand, who ran ahead of the chariot. This was the Elijah who stood in front of all the people and the four-hundred-fifty prophets of Baal. This was the Elijah who saw and experienced God in many amazing ways. And this woman said, "I'm going to kill him." What did he do?

Elijah was afraid, and he ran for his life. He ran through the desert, and an angel came and strengthened him. Finally, he arrived at the place where he was going to meet God. The Lord came to Elijah and asked him what he was doing there. Elijah answered, "I have been very faithful in serving the Lord God Almighty. But your people have rejected your ways, broken down your altars, and put your prophets to death. I am the only one left, and now they are trying to kill me, too."

What was he saying? Essentially, he worked in vain. He complained about the fruitlessness of his work. Elijah took his eyes off God and, instead, looked at the Jezebel situation. He had just seen a great victory in his life and thought the war was over. Everything was going to be great, and right after that, there was another fight. When Elijah took his eyes off God and looked at the situation, he said, "I'm tired of fighting."

The Lord then appeared to Elijah and said, "I want to pass by you now." There was a great and powerful wind that tore a mountain apart. That must have been quite a wind to tear apart a mountain, don't you think? The rocks shattered before the Lord, but the Lord was not in the wind.

It says there was an earthquake. If you have been in an earthquake, you know what a helpless feeling it gives you. After the earthquake, there was a fire, but the Lord was not in the fire.

Then there was a gentle whisper. When Elijah heard it, he pulled his cloak over his face and went out and stood at the mouth of the cave. A voice said to him, "What are you doing here, Elijah?"

"I've tried to do my best for the Lord, but the people have rejected you, and they won't listen to me. They are putting your prophets to death.

I'm the only one left, and now they are trying to kill me," Elijah said again.

If we are not honest with God, then He is not going to reveal His power to us. Elijah was wrong by not just telling God that he was afraid and tired. Instead, Elijah told God that serving Him wasn't worth it, and all the things God had done, came to nothing.

**God is faithful.** We so easily take our eyes off Him and look at the Jezebels in our life. The focus is taken off God whom we have seen to be faithful to us in the past. We look at our situation and become afraid, or we start to follow people and groups instead of God.

Jesus is the one who is faithful, not any leader or group. In the past, some people have put their spiritual trust in me. Isn't that crazy? They don't look to Jesus but to me to give them something. When they get close to me, they find out I'm just like them; I'm weak, I'm not perfect, and then they lose their faith in God. Sometimes people look to a group rather than to God. They put the group on a throne. When it doesn't live up to their expectations, they lose their faith in God.

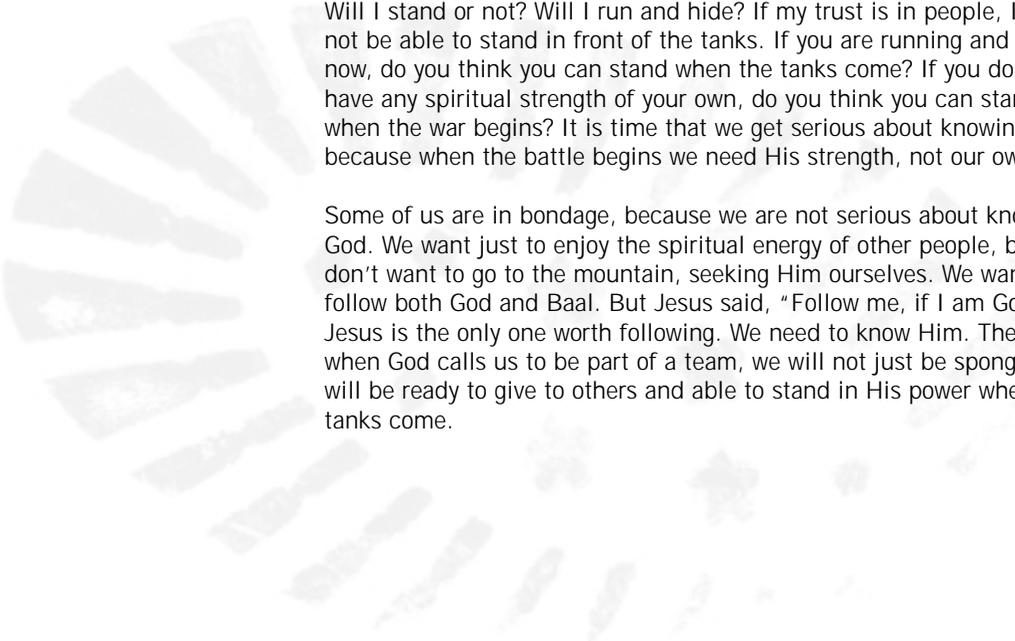
We need to follow Jesus. He is the only one in whom we can put our faith. To follow Him, you have to know Him. We really need to study the Bible. If we are always depending on other people to tell us what God's Word says, then we are in trouble. We need to learn how to think and seek God on our own.

Some of us tend to blame others for our spiritual condition. If we are having trouble, it's the group's fault, or the leader, or whoever. If I'm having trouble with other people in my relationships, it's because they aren't doing something for me. We need to put our eyes back on Jesus.

We can become tired of fighting, too. I can identify with Elijah. God takes me through a breakthrough in my life, then right away again, I'll go through a difficult time. I need other people to support me then. We can't stand alone. We need to fight, and we can't just ride on other people's spiritual strength.

We need to get to know God for ourselves. If we don't, we are not going to be able to stand when that time comes.

**As I watched those tanks** coming toward that student in China, I started thinking that the tanks are coming here, too. The tanks are coming; they are coming to me.



Will I stand or not? Will I run and hide? If my trust is in people, I will not be able to stand in front of the tanks. If you are running and hiding now, do you think you can stand when the tanks come? If you don't have any spiritual strength of your own, do you think you can stand when the war begins? It is time that we get serious about knowing God because when the battle begins we need His strength, not our own.

Some of us are in bondage, because we are not serious about knowing God. We want just to enjoy the spiritual energy of other people, but we don't want to go to the mountain, seeking Him ourselves. We want to follow both God and Baal. But Jesus said, "Follow me, if I am God." Jesus is the only one worth following. We need to know Him. Then, when God calls us to be part of a team, we will not just be sponges. We will be ready to give to others and able to stand in His power when the tanks come.

# 20 SHOUTING IS A SPIRITUAL ACTIVITY

*This is the shouting chapter. I think many people don't realize it, but shouting is a very spiritual activity. In fact, it could be the key for a spiritual breakthrough. So, let's just warm up a little bit and shout for a few moments. This will be new for some of you, but that's okay. Let's hear some shouting. If you do it right, you will get some spit on the pages of this book.*

**Things are falling apart everywhere**, and if you don't know that, it's because you don't read and you don't think.

The only secure place is in the kingdom of God. I need to know that reality, so that I will seek the reality of God in my life. God wants everyone to have the reality of his presence in their life. But the only way you are going to have the reality of his presence is by shouting.

There are several biblical examples to prove my point. One example is an old blind man. He shouted, and because of shouting, he received spiritual reality in his life. It can be found in Mark 10:46.

Jesus went to Jericho with his disciples, and a great number of people were with him. There was a blind beggar named Bart sitting on the road. Jesus was a very important person, and he was doing all kinds of incredible things. He was performing many miracles, he was teaching, and everyone who was important in that town wanted to be next to Jesus.



Suddenly, the old blind man began to cry out, "Son of David, have mercy on me!" He probably didn't cry out too loudly and Jesus probably didn't hear him because he was sitting in a throng of people on the other side of the street.

"Son of David, have mercy on me!" he shouted again. He shouted louder this time, but he still wasn't attracting much attention or irritating anyone by the noise he was making.

Why was this blind beggar shouting in the first place? Because he had come to the end. He didn't like his life and he was sick of everything. You may think, of course, how obvious. After all, he was a blind beggar, wasn't he? But let me tell you, I have seen some beggars in Amsterdam who are the proudest people. I know some people who really think they are cool and alternative because they are begging on the street. So, just because you are a blind beggar, doesn't mean you are humble. But this was a humble, blind beggar, and he started to cry out, "Son of David, have mercy on me!"

Now, the people around this blind beggar, in verse 48, sternly told him to be quiet. They said, "Hey man, shut up! Don't you know who that is? Who do you think you are? This is embarrassing. Look at how you are acting. It is uncool for you to be like this."

Then it says that he started to shout all the louder. I think that's great. They told him to shut up, and he started to shout even louder!

**"SON OF DAVID, HAVE MERCY ON ME!"**

The third time he shouted he didn't care anymore. He was on his face, and he knew that Jesus was his only answer. He didn't have any pride left in him. He was sick of his life; he was at a point where he could cry out to God.

If we are to experience Jesus, we have to be at the point where we are sick of our situation, where we don't care what other people think, where there is no pride left.

Then Jesus heard him, in verse 48, and he stopped. Jesus probably was speaking to some really important religious person when he saw the blind beggar making a fool out of himself. People were probably laughing at the blind beggar and making fun of him. Jesus said, "Call him." If we cry and shout for Jesus, he will call us to him.

But you have to notice something here about this blind beggar. He didn't whisper. He wasn't in the crowd speaking really softly. He didn't

## **MARK 10:46-52**

**Then they came to Jericho. As Jesus and his disciples, together with a large crowd, were leaving the city, a blind man, Bartimaeus (that is, the Son of Timaeus), was sitting by the roadside begging. When he heard that it was Jesus of Nazareth, he began to shout, "Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me!"**

**Many rebuked him and told him to be quiet, but he shouted all the more, "Son of David, have mercy on me!"**

**Jesus stopped and said, "Call him."**

**So they called to the blind man, "Cheer up! On your feet! He's calling you."**

**Throwing his cloak aside, he jumped to his feet and came to Jesus.**

**"What do you want me to do for you?" Jesus asked him.**

**The blind man said, "Rabbi, I want to see."**

**"Go," said Jesus, "your faith has healed you." Immediately he received his sight and followed Jesus along the road.**

care; he was going to be a fool. He knew people would laugh at him, but he was sick of his life, and he knew Jesus was the answer.

Jesus hears us if we cry out to him. Jesus called the blind beggar over and said to him, "What do you want?"

God wants us to shout to Jesus what we want, just like God wanted this blind beggar to shout to Jesus his needs. He needed to not listen to the people who said to him, "How dare you ask such a thing? Look at you; who are you to ask Jesus for this?" He couldn't listen to people who told him he wasn't worthy. He had to be willing to lose his voice completely. "Rabbi, I want to see. Rabbi, I want to regain my sight."

"Go your way; your faith has made you well," Jesus said to him. Immediately, he received his sight and began following Jesus on the road.

**It's important to understand** to whom this blind beggar shouted. He didn't shout to the church. "Church, I want to see." He didn't shout to the music. "Music, I want to see." He didn't shout to a kind of vague god, you know, the kind of god whom rock stars thank at the end of their concerts, or when they receive awards. He didn't shout to that kind of friendly god whom you can thank when things are going well. He didn't shout to a life force. He didn't call on his inner god to give him sight. He shouted to the person, Jesus.

There are people who have lost their urgency. They don't have any urgency about them when they walk the streets. They have lost their compassion. They have lost their hatred for sin. They no longer fear sin but are attracted to it because they are not shouting out to Jesus. They are whispering to Jesus instead, because they don't really mean what they say.

**I can remember many times** when I felt frustration about something in my life and a breakthrough came when I shouted. I was through playing games with everything that was in me, and I said, "I am sick of this situation, Jesus, and I need you to change it."

When I did that, the breakthrough came. As long as I whispered to God with my mind, but not with my emotions crying out to him, the breakthrough didn't come. Jesus wants to break through in our hearts; he wants reality and power in our lives.

**I was criticized once for saying** that following Jesus is so radical. "You

don't have the right to push your idea of God on everyone else. God is that way for you, but he doesn't have to be that way for everyone else."

Well, I don't believe that's true. I believe Jesus' message is a radical message. We can accept that or reject it. But we have to let go of pride and shout to God if we are going to experience his power.

Someone said, "Give me someone who hates sin and wants to please God more than anything else, and I will show you someone who will turn the world upside down."

We have to stop whispering. We need to be like the blind beggar. Forget about what people are telling us, forget our pride. We need to shout, "Son of David, have mercy on me."





# TON

## A WORD ABOUT THE ILLUSTRATOR

**I grew up in a fairly big mining town** in the southern part of The Netherlands. The houses were always clothed in a grey ash. The people looked as grey as the houses. Early in the morning the laborers went to the mine while the night shift returned to their homes. Each day was the same, year after year, on and on. "Is this life?" I thought. It didn't look very inviting to me. I was about seventeen years old. It was the early seventies.

Being a homosexual and somewhat artistic, I preferred to live in my own fantasy world. Of course, I had my role models: Lou Reed, Iggy Pop, and most of all, David Bowie. I put a lot of effort into looking like my heroes. These rock stars sang about sex, drugs, love, and destruction. And they lived what they preached. I started to walk in the footsteps of these guys and began taking speed (methyl-amphetamine) by injecting this into my veins. I turned into an alien-looking being, skinny, pale, high platform boots, bright orange hair, and lots of makeup.

I became a well-known drug dealer as soon as I lived on my own, and my house became a "watering hole" for the junkies in the neighbor-



**TON SNELLAERT**

**Illustrator  
Special Effects Director**

hood. There was some heavy drug dealing going on in the place because where I lived bordered on Germany and Belgium. German customers stuffed heroin in condoms and inserted them into their bodies, while somewhere else in the room, people shot up speed, cocaine, heroin, whatever. I didn't sell out of a commercial viewpoint, I just thought that drugs were cool so everybody should be using them.

**One day, a policeman in civilian clothes** arrested me and my friend, Fred, while we were walking on the street. In my bag I had a large amount of speed, a sort of mobile laboratory of glass syringes with needles in all sizes that were stored away in methyl-alcohol filled cylinders, and a gun. I was accused of burglary of at least fourteen houses, and my laboratory equipment came from a pharmacy robbery somewhere in Austria. As for the burglaries, I had nothing to do with that, but Fred did. The glass syringes had been payment for drugs once, so I had to disappoint the Austrian detectives, and the gun, well, that I had just for fun. I didn't have any bullets, anyway.

Good old Fred was stored away in jail for a couple of months. I was released. Later, he hunted me for a time with a knife trying to kill me, but I prevented this by offering him some heroin. I guess Fred is dead by now, as are many "friends" I knew in those days.

The house that I had been living in was, in my absence, demolished and robbed out. So, I lived on the streets, shooting up drugs in dark alleyways or public toilets. I felt really bad; I needed so much speed to keep running, until one day, I collapsed on the street and thought I was dying. I was twenty years old by then and on the end of my strength. Later, a doctor diagnosed that I had Hepatitis B for about three months without knowing it myself, probably infected by a dirty needle.

During this time, I met a young and very interesting man. He was quite a talented pianist and intellectual. I began a relationship with him. He helped me to quit drugs, but sex became a substitute. I found a job at a printing shop. (This was my profession; in my crazy life, I had some training and also attended an art academy.) We lived together in a nice, little house in the countryside of Belgium.

I loved Rob very much, but I became emotionally over-dependent on him. This relationship lasted for three happy years and one terrible year. By that time, I was so jealous that it made me sick. When Rob went away for one night, I worked myself up so much that the next morning when he arrived, I made a scene. Jealousy was my personal demon, and it made me violent and almost insane. Our relationship ended with all feelings of love or sympathy destroyed by fighting and heavy drinking

bouts. I decided to go to Amsterdam.

**I arrived in Amsterdam with a good friend** named Hans. Crossing the city limits, we crashed over some traffic signs. "Welcome to Amsterdam," I thought. In the back of our car was a crate of beer, and between our seats was a bottle of whiskey, empty of course. I was, at this time, a heavy alcoholic and smoking hash like cigarettes.

Looking for a house, we became involved in the squatter scene. These people who occupy empty houses and buildings are very well organized in Amsterdam. It wasn't really my scene, because I thought they were all fascists anyhow. I became very bitter, drank strong alcohol constantly, and at night I hung out in the gay bars. I had many sexual relations and I couldn't keep track of it anymore. This life was like a blur.

Then something tragic happened. My buddy, Hans, committed suicide by jumping headfirst from a building. I experienced a pain I have never felt before or since. I felt like my heart literally broke. It was a physical and mental pain that I couldn't stand for a second time. I remember crying out to God for help.

For two years I just drank, getting drunk three times a day. I sat in a local bar the whole day dressed in grey with a black hat pulled deep down over my eyes. I was bitter and not making real friends. I never had felt this lonely.

**At the end of those two years,** I couldn't take care of myself. I smelled really bad, I couldn't eat because my body only accepted alcohol, and even that with difficulty. Looking in the mirror, I gave myself maybe one more year to live. I tried to kill myself with alcohol.

I met another old friend, Rattie, who was still using heroin. He looked rather good, as is possible by frequent use of good quality heroin. I thought, "Why not use drugs again?" That night, I took up the needle and returned to my first love, speed.

It was like a leap back in time, but only in a different place — Amsterdam. I looked like an alien again, extremely dressed, androgynous, half boy, half girl.

My house was a shooting gallery for all the junkies in the hood. I'm an art-painter, so I divided my time in painting and drug dealing. I started to experiment with LSD and heroin. LSD was mind-blowing. I traveled

through space with the speed of light. On one of my astral journeys, I had a view of the complete universe. Back on planet earth, I painted my experience on canvas, wood or steel, on anything I could lay my hands on. I became an obsessed painter, sleeping two short nights a week, stuffing myself with all the different drugs available, and not noticing the weird people in my house anymore — except Maria.

Maria was a short, little woman from Ibiza, Spain. She looked like a gypsy, dressed in rainbow colors, and she carried around all her possessions in many bags. She was on a mission from God, she announced loudly. Everybody had to listen because she was given authority to kill.

I knew her for over two years of the ten years that I lived in Amsterdam. She kept warning me that Jesus was coming back and I had to be ready for the transit, whatever that was. Jesus would come back with his army, seated on white horses, to a spot somewhere in the Atlantic Ocean. She wanted me to come along. Her parents possessed a huge diamond hidden under the floor. I was supposed to steal that diamond, sell it, and together with Maria, buy a boat and go out in the ocean. Only, I had to be clean, sober, and not have any drugs.

In those days, I had many spiritual encounters. I was doing all kinds of occult experiments. I had gifts of clairvoyance, magnetic healing, telekinesis (moving objects without touching them), and many other spooky things. Many “friends” were killed by overdoses, murder, AIDS; it was as if some evil power was destroying those lives in a rapid tempo.

After all these years of drug and alcohol abuse, almost seventeen years, I felt at the end of my life. I looked like a concentration camp victim. I knew that I had not long to live.

I was aware of a spiritual world, aware of the demons around me. Sometimes I heard them, sometimes they slithered over my body. I became desperate, knowing I was lost. Who was this Jesus whom Maria was always talking about with such passion.

I decided to ask Maria how I could find the kingdom of God. Since Maria was a New Age prophetess, she used strange ways to follow directions in her life. For turning a street corner or any other decision she used to throw the dice. Her dice were made up of four little letters folded together. On two little letters it was written, “Jesus Christ Yes” and the other said, “Jesus Christ No.” She used these dice to consult some spirit in the air that, according to her, was the Holy Spirit.



**Ton shooting speed in his “art gallery.”**

After mumbling some formula, she asked if it were possible for me to find the kingdom of God. She threw the dice up and the first two letters she picked up said "Jesus Christ No." She threw them up again and still they read, "Jesus Christ No." Ten times she repeated this and ten times the results were the same, Jesus Christ No. She looked at me and said, "Impossible for you to enter the kingdom of God. Maybe in your next life."

Imagine me sitting there, pale, skinny, bewildered, all hope had vanished. But at the same time, I felt a strength returning. I felt as if she had robbed me of something precious, and I was determined to find the kingdom of God.

Left alone, I prayed to God, "If there is a God, please hear me and please help me."

The next day, a boy came to buy some speed and the only thing he could pay with was a Bible. "Great," I thought, "just what I need." I gave him the drugs, a bit more, he deserved it, and said God bless you and started to read Revelation. After that, I read the gospels.

By that time, I was seeking God seriously. As it is written:

*"Here I am! I stand at the door and knock.  
If anyone hears my voice and opens the door,  
I will come in and eat with him, and he with me."  
—Revelation 3:20*

I opened the door. Reading the teachings of Jesus, the words started to whirl around in my head, dazzling me with their light.

**I had another friend who was** a completely crazy guy named Wolf. He was a big, mean-looking person, dressed in a long black coat and big combat boots. Speed ruined his teeth, and he could give such a nice, black, sarcastic smile. He had a radio program called Radio Death. This program continually aired sounds of death and horror. Wolf sampled sounds of horror movies, such as, "Nightmare on Elm Street" and others. You heard screaming, chopping of axes into bodies, spurting of blood against walls, and many mean jokes about God.

One day, Wolf came into my house and told me, "Something really weird happened and only you will believe it. After the radio program last night, a huge angel appeared and descended right through the walls and stood in front of me. We talked about my sarcasm and the foolish jokes. Suddenly, it was as if my thinking was renewed. Instead of an

obsession with death, a lust for life was surging in my soul. Isn't that crazy?"

Yes, that was crazy, so I told him of my adventures with the little Bible and the things I had read. We decided to study the Bible together in the future. This was not the end, but the beginning.

However, my house was still a madhouse, and things kept going the same way or even worse. More people were killed, and darkness was surrounding me. I had arrived in the pit.

One day, after leaving my house to have a walk with my two dogs in a nature area, I broke down mentally. I cried out to God to save my life, to rescue me out of this hell. I was at the end of my own strength. I lay flat on my face and God intervened.

The next day, Espen, a good friend and painter, came to ask me to have an exhibition of my cosmic conscious art. It was to be at their building outside the city in the Amsterdam woods. That day, I left Amsterdam City with all my paintings.

Nobody understood what was actually hanging on the walls. When they looked at it they asked themselves, what is that? At the end of the three-week exhibition, they took down my paintings and hung filled garbage bags at the empty spots. I guess they wanted to make a statement. Anyway, nobody understands a really great artist.

**One of the buildings contained a cellar** sixty meters long built like a tunnel with twelve square cells in a row. At the end of this tunnel, I started to make my new home. I made a bed high above the ground so the rats couldn't eat me, and I lay myself down. I was physically finished. I was a wreck. I lay on my mattress for three months and haven't touched any hard drugs since then. Jesus was there helping me. I expected him each day; I had to be ready for the rapture.

Wolf came to visit me each Sunday to study the Bible together, to talk about things we had learned that week. Of course, we were a bit out of balance. We let our beards grow; we thought it was biblical to not cut the edge of our beards. I started wearing long robes like a priest instead of my Ziggy Stardust outfit. In case Jesus was coming back to take me away, I wrote in big letters on my wall that I had gone with the Lord Jesus so that the hippies living in the other buildings knew that it was all true when I would be gone. By the way, who would take care of my dogs?

I lived in this cave for four years. Jesus revealed himself to me and he helped in my struggles. He filled me with his spirit. The Bible was like medicine, like milk for a baby. I experienced the changing power of God's word and started to understand that God is as a father to me and that a relationship with Jesus is very real.

After going to a Baptist church for awhile, I went to the Steiger boat behind Central Station in Amsterdam. There I met David Pierce and No Longer Music. This was in 1993. Since then, I have traveled around with the band as a special effects guy and actor.

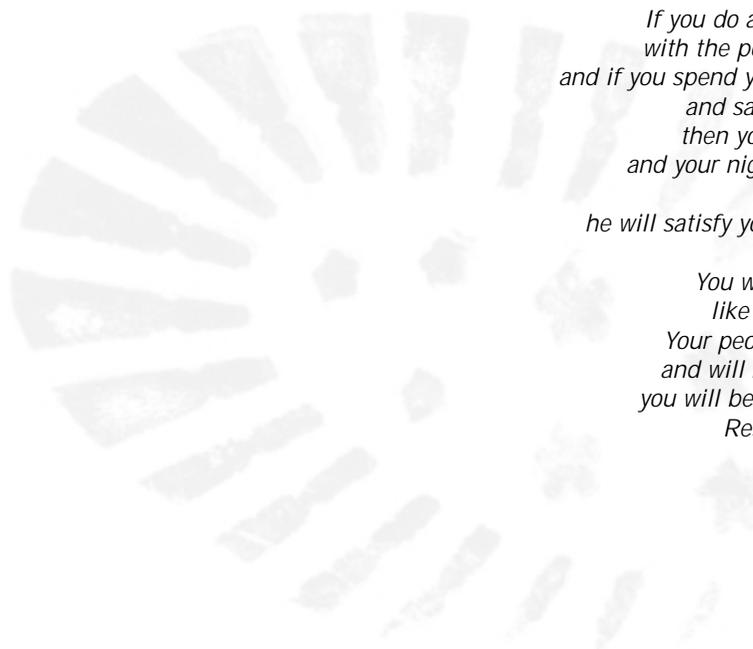
A desire grew in my heart to reach out to the downtrodden, the poor, the destitute, the outcast, the drug addict, urchins, prostitutes, etc. My love particularly went out to the people whom I saw in India.

God gave me a vision to start a house for rehabilitation of destitute men and drug addicts. I envisioned providing a home for Delhi's destitute, the poor, the sick and the drug addicted to care for their medical, physical, and spiritual needs.

In March 1997, the house opened. In the house, we restore destitute men that we find on the streets of Delhi to health, feed and clothe them, help those who can gain skills to find work. And most importantly, reveal the true Jesus. We have also begun a fellowship with an Indian pastor so that they can still have a spiritual home in Steiger Delhi. We also provide ongoing relief to those in the city.

As quickly as God allows it, we will expand to include women and children, a technical training school and cottage industry, an orphanage, an old people's home, and a discipleship training school.

*“Is not this the kind of fasting I have chosen:  
to loose the chains of injustice  
and untie the cords of the yoke,  
to set the oppressed free and break every yoke?  
Is it not to share your food with the hungry  
and to provide the poor wanderer with shelter —  
when you see the naked, to clothe him,  
and not to turn away from your own flesh and blood  
Then your light will break forth like the dawn,  
and your healing will quickly appear;  
then your righteousness will go before you,  
and the glory of the Lord will be your rear guard.  
Then you will call, and the Lord will answer;  
you will cry for help, and he will say:  
Here am I.*



*If you do away with the yoke of oppression,  
with the pointing finger and malicious talk,  
and if you spend yourselves in behalf of the hungry  
and satisfy the needs of the oppressed,  
then your light will rise in the darkness,  
and your night will become like the noonday.*

*The Lord will guide you always;  
he will satisfy your needs in a sun-scorched land  
and will strengthen your frame.*

*You will be like a well-watered garden,  
like a spring whose waters never fail.*

*Your people will rebuild the ancient ruins  
and will raise up the age-old foundations;  
you will be called Repairer of Broken Walls,  
Restorer of Streets with Dwellings."*

—Isaiah 58:6-12

# APPENDIX A

## APPENDIX A

GREAT STORIES & ILLUSTRATIONS  
THAT DIDN'T FIT ANYWHERE ELSE

### ANOTHER STORY ABOUT BRIAN

**A pastor came to Amsterdam** to see what our ministry was like. This was at the time when Brian was into his Uncle Fester look: the shaved head, the long trench coat, the heavy blue eyeliner and combat boots. When the pastor showed up and saw Brian, I was concerned that because of Brian's appearance, we would lose all of our support from this church. But actually the pastor liked our ministry more because he thought Brian had a fatal disease and felt sorry for him. He returned home thinking we had a tremendous ministry to the poor and needy.

### OTHER FOY STORIES

**After one of the Como hymn sings**, Foy and I were walking back to our car. We passed a bus full of American football players from a local high school in the parking lot.

"Don't do it, Foy!" I said as he pulled another firecracker out from his pocket.

"I have to do it!" he said.

"Don't!" I said as he lit the firecracker and threw it under the bus. Soon Foy and I were running through a golf course with 50 football players

wanting to kill us. Fortunately, it was dark and we were able to get away.

Once, when Foy was at the University, he decided to go to the airport with some of his friends. They were bored and were trying to think of something fun to do. Foy sat in a wheelchair and acted like he was mentally retarded while a couple of his friends pushed him into the wall and laughed at him to shock people who were walking by. This was great fun until a flight landed that was full of Marines. When they saw Foy, the poor mentally retarded guy being pushed into the wall and being laughed at, they ran over and started beating up Foy's friends. Foy panicked and jumped out of his wheelchair and started running down the concourse with half a dozen Marines hot on his tail.

**Our parents always made us go to church** on Sunday night. So Foy and I and our other friends would all put on our old clothes and sit in the back of the church. Sunday night was the night you could choose your favorite hymn. So we would look in the back of the hymnal and find the most obscure song possible, like "Bula-land, Oh sweet Bula-land." We would insist that it was our favorite song and everyone would have to sing it. No one knew what Bula-land was or where Bula-land was, and I still to this day don't know.

## **TOUR STORIES**

**Before the fall of Communism**, we were invited to play in a Communist youth club, I think it was in Hungary. We got there to set up our equipment and the manager of the club said, "Forget it, you are not going to play here. There is no way we are going to let your band play in this club. Go home, forget about it."

So we parked our two vans out in front of the club and just sat there, because I had this strange feeling that we shouldn't leave. We didn't have anything to do, so we just sat there. We weren't even praying, some of the band members were telling stupid jokes, I think some of the girls might have been praying.

Then two hours later the manager comes out and says, "Okay, you can play."

The question is, why did he change his mind? Was it the stupid jokes or because of the girls who were praying? You decide.

**We were doing a punk set** in the Bruschal prison in Germany. We did a

crucifixion scene which used blood capsules that are shoved on my head in a crown. When the crown was shoved on my head, the blood got all over the stage and made it slippery. Hayden slipped on the stage blood, fell against the guitar and cut open his face and was bleeding real blood. Ken fell over him and cut open his leg and we had real blood everywhere.

**I arranged a trip to Vietnam.** I had organized the trip and set up many different meetings. I was also bringing some Bibles to the underground church. My friend Anthony decided to come with me at the last minute. When they saw Anthony and I, they ignored me and just talked to Anthony. They thought he looked like a Christian and I didn't, so they wouldn't talk to me. When they finally discovered that I was a Christian too, they said that our group would make good Bible smugglers because we don't look like Christians.

**At one of our concerts in Germany,** we started the concert with our drummer Ken coming out in a cage with Ton dressed up like a vampire. The strobe light made them look even weirder as they snaked their way through the crowd. Ken had flour all over him and he looked completely insane. He got behind the drums and started to drum and everything was going OK. At one point in the concert, Ken came running out from behind the drums and as he was on his way back, he suddenly disappeared over the edge of the stage. All we saw was his legs flying up in the air. Then an amplifier which was right on the edge of the stage disappeared over the edge as well, landing right on his face. Ken bounced up and went back to his drums and continued like nothing had happened.

**Neil Leatherbarrow, our former drummer,** was speaking after a concert we did with a death metal band. He was talking about the fact that even though his father had abused him as a child, he was able to forgive him because of what God has done in his life. But the translator misunderstood and instead said that "I killed my mother, but I forgave her."

**Our German promoter asked me** what I needed for our concerts. I explained to him that one of the things we needed was 50 stuffed animals for the "Animal Rights" song. What we normally did was throw stuffed animals into the audience while we sang and it would usually turn into a giant stuffed animal fight between the band and the audience. But unfortunately the organizer did not hear the word "stuffed"

when I told him that I needed these animals. He asked me, "Where am I going to get them?"

"Everybody has them at home, don't they?"

He said, with concern in his voice, "What do you mean?" "You know, like dogs and cats and stuff." Even more concerned, he asked, "What are you going to do with them?"

I said, "We throw them into the audience."

# F.Y.I.

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# Invitation TO THE Lion's Den

by David Pierce

with Dan Wooding

Afterword by Floyd McClung



---

He's received death threats, been spat upon, physically removed from the stage, and had bottles thrown at him. Yet David Pierce and his band No Longer Music go where few evangelists have gone before.

What caused him to put his rock group on the front line and hammer home his message in such an uncompromising way? Is he right to use rock music to challenge audiences with the Gospel? Read David's story if you're ready to be inspired by someone who has gone beyond "safe evangelism" to where the needs are, no matter how dangerous or demanding that may be.

*"When God looks around to find someone to fulfill a tough assignment and there's nobody radical enough to do it, he calls on David Pierce."*

—FLOYD McCLUNG,  
FORMER INTERNATIONAL DIRECTOR  
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***DANCING W/SKINHEADS***  
**& OTHER BIBLE STUDY TOPICS**

**DAVID PIERCE**

**ILLUSTRATIONS**  
**TON SNELLAERT**

**LAYOUT & DESIGN**  
**STEVE KNIGHT**

This book was printed by gifts donated in memory of  
JOHN EDWARD CHAYA  
born June 16, 1978  
died January 21, 2000

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*Rock Priest*, UK Edition, Kingsway Publications (1993)

*Rock Priest*, Polish Edition, Wydawnictwo, Rockowy Kaplan (1998)

*Dancing w/Skinheads und Andere Bibelarbeiten*,  
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# PREFACE

**One of the most popular bands in Poland** invited our band, No Longer Music, to go on tour with them. I had led the singer to Christ and he had asked, “Would you like to come and tour with us and tell people about Jesus after the concerts?”

When you are playing before an audience that hates Christians, you have to do many crazy things to get their attention. Sometimes in our concerts we have a wall on the stage painted with a picture of people being pushed up against a fence at a soccer match in Liverpool, England. The wall is lit up by a red spotlight and the rest of the stage is dark. This creates an eerie and strange atmosphere. The band is off to the side playing weird music to enhance the atmosphere.

I creep onto the stage through the stage smoke and get directly behind the wall wearing a gas mask and carrying a chain saw. Attached to the chain saw is my wireless microphone. As the band starts into a song, I start the chain saw and rev it up while I am still behind the wall.

At this point, the crowd goes completely nuts, because they think this is the best music they have ever heard. I start to cut through the wall with the chain saw, which makes the crowd even more crazy. Then I go to the front of the stage, I hold the chain saw up in the air and continue to rev it while a guy in our band, who looks like a vampire (he looks like a vampire without even trying, which is really cool, when you think about it) and is wearing a black cape, comes and takes away the chain saw. I take off my gas mask and the concert starts.

We have a big screen at the back of the stage where we project the words to our songs. I sing,

*we say evil systems are still in control  
How can you have a future when there is still no place to go  
Join the revolution  
Take it to the streets  
We're not going to do it by throwing rocks at police  
I say and Jesus says  
The only way to peace is through love instead.*

The audience is thinking this is so cool, and they are getting into it more and more. Then we do this anti-gun song, and we communicate this one by shooting the band. I have a gun — it's a real gun — but we put blanks in it. First I shoot the guitarist, then I shoot the drummer, then I shoot the bass player, then I shoot myself. The vampire guy comes back and ties the bass player's legs with ropes and they hang him up upside down. We play the next song while he's hanging there.

We keep going on into the concert until we get to the part where we re-enact a modern day crucifixion and resurrection of Jesus. I want to portray the horror of the cross, and you have to understand that this is on a secular concert tour — not in churches. I want to show that the cross is not a cliché, that it is not a beautiful piece of jewelry that we hang around our necks. How are we supposed to understand what it meant for Jesus to die for us on the cross when it has become this beautiful religious symbol? The cross was an instrument of humiliation and torture. It was offensive, not beautiful. The cross was a terrible thing.

So, on stage we have this crucifixion, but we don't use a normal type of cross. We have a crown of thorns with blood capsules on it so I am covered in blood to show the horror of the cross. I'm put in this coffin while the person who represents the devil sings about how he won, how he killed God's son. Following this, there is an earthquake and then the resurrection — I come out of the coffin.

At a particular concert in Poland, when I came out of the coffin, I tried to explain to the people what they had just seen. They were not happy about it, because when you lift up Jesus in a place where Satan has normally been able to say what he wants, there is a reaction. I knew when I was speaking that it was with God's authority. I knew it was tangible — I could feel it. But you stir up many things when you do that.

There was a group of neo-Nazis in front who were shouting as loudly as they could, “Go home, go home.” All these other people were screaming and shouting, too. I was shouting through a big PA at the amphitheater in order to be heard over the screaming people — that was how much they were yelling at us. I explained to them what they had seen and how they didn’t have to believe lies anymore, that there is a personal God who cared about them.

God is not an impersonal force. He is a Father with a broken heart. He is passionate. Our feelings count, our suffering counts, and it is important what happens to us because God is personal. Then I talked about the wall that we’ve created between us and God, so he sent his little boy to come, to suffer and to die. I told the audience that we had just showed them that on the stage. But, I told them, the good news was that Jesus rose from the dead, and if they wanted to know Jesus, for them to come up to the stage.

Now remember, we were doing this on a secular tour, so it was really weird to do something like this. Nazis were screaming, people were shouting, and people came up and literally filled the stage. While they were doing this, a drunk also came up on the stage and mocked everyone who had come up. So, not only did they have to fight their way up to the stage, but then they were laughed at by this drunk guy. We did what we call a “reverse altar call,” and someone helped him off the stage.

During this tour we saw eight-hundred kids respond like this. One-hundred-forty came to a Jesus Camp where we spent five days with these kids from the secular festival. For these five days we taught about what it means to follow Jesus, what it means to give him everything. We also helped to start Bible Study groups throughout the country.

It is an incredible time we live in, and I’m just overwhelmed by the harvest. People are so open. Everywhere I go it’s the same. It doesn’t matter what kind of group; there is an incredible spiritual hunger today.

But at the same time, today is the day of the phony radical. For many people, being radical today is defined by the slogans we wear on our clothes or music we listen to on our stereos. I believe this is the day where we need true revolutionaries and true radicals. We don’t need to join the rest of the world and be this phony kind of revolutionary. If there were ever a time when we needed true revolutionaries, it is today. And to be truly revolutionary is to be like Jesus.



# DEDICATIONS

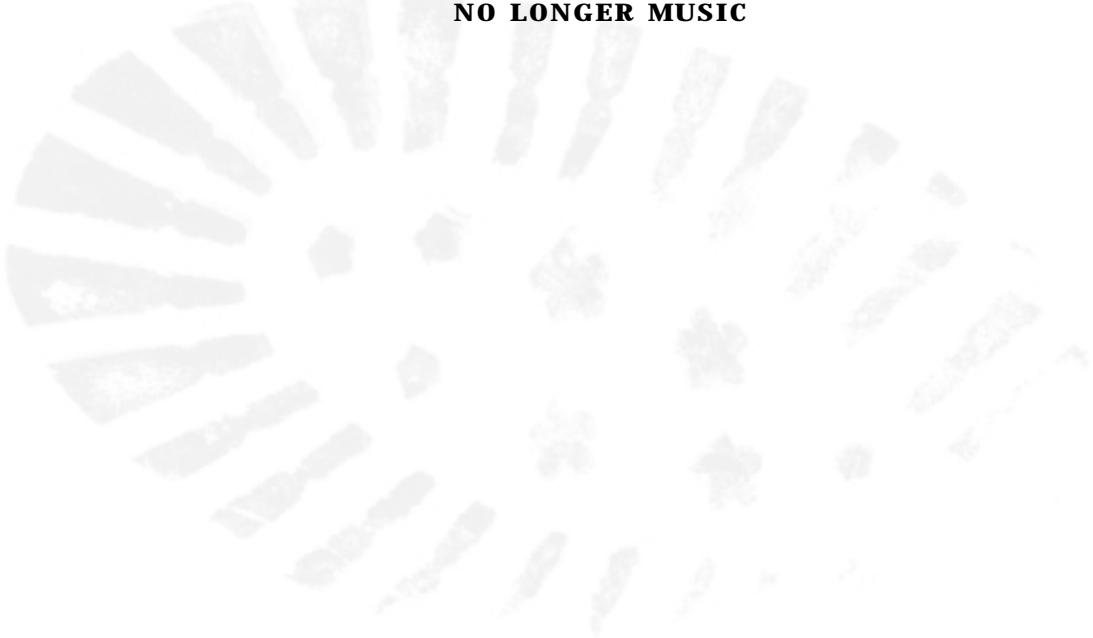
**This book is dedicated** to all of the incredible people God has given me the privilege of working with on our international team: Ken & Lynley Green, Hayden & Damaris Kingdon, Jon & Liz Rush, Ton Snellaert, Sean Clancy, Justine Kingdon, Shae Elliot and Steve & Becky Knight.

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Lastly thanks to my wife, Jodi, who gives me the courage to get out of bed every morning and my sons, Aaron and Ben.



**NO LONGER MUSIC**





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