

**THE
HUG
CRUSADE™**

BASIC TRAINING

1st Edition

Dedication

This guide is dedicated to God.
May it glorify His name and help lead others to Christ.

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About this Study Guide

This guide is presented as a Christian beginner's study guide and as an introduction to The HUG Crusade. It gives only an overview of the subject matter. As such, it is only a guide and not the path. This guide is the work of man, not God. Thus, it is fallible. Readers should individually study God's word, reach their own conclusions and not rely upon the teachings of man.

“But there were also false prophets among the people, just as there will be false teachers among you. They will secretly introduce destructive heresies, even denying the sovereign Lord who bought them—bringing swift destruction on themselves. Many will follow their shameful ways and will bring the way of truth into disrepute. In their greed these teachers will exploit you with stories they have made up. Their condemnation has long been hanging over them, and their destruction has not been sleeping.” (2 Peter 2:1-3)

Depending on your church background, you may or may not entirely agree with some of the non-essential opinions expressed in this study guide. To this we offer the following passage and encourage you to preform your own independent study of the Bible in order to establish your own opinions based on the truth.

“Accept him whose faith is weak, without passing judgment on disputable matters...Who are you to judge someone else’s servant? To his own master he stands or falls...So then each of us will give an account of himself to God...so whatever you believe about these things keep between yourself and God.” (Romans 14:1, 4,12, 22)

Regardless of your non-essential beliefs, everyone is welcome to join The HUG Crusade. We are much more concerned with the WHAT than we are the HOW. (See Lesson 4)

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The HUG Crusade Basic Training: Edition 1

The Crusader's Prayer

God, creator of the universe and Father to all, I praise you for the blessings you have bestowed upon my community, my loved ones and myself.

LORD, I humble myself before you and pray the Holy Spirit will fill my heart, touch my soul, empower my mind and energize my body in helping spread throughout my community your word and the gospel of Christ.

Father, may everything I do glorify your good name and help lead others to salvation.

This I pray in the name of your son, Jesus Christ.

Amen.

Our Mission

To glorify God's good name and lead the world to Christ, one community at a time.

History of The HUG Crusade

In the fall of 2007, two volunteers were asked to participate in a large outreach event in the City of Atlanta, Georgia. A week before the event they went out with the organizers distributing circulars in apartment communities and weekly rental motels inviting the residents to attend. As they knocked on doors residents would often ask for transportation to the event. The only answer the volunteers had was for the guests to ride MARTA, Atlanta's public transportation system.

The event itself was a large event. Live music, food, clothes, medical screening, haircuts, prayer and worship were offered, and everything was absolutely free. Churches and ministries from across the southeast participated as one large team. Not a single group promoted themselves, instead they all worked together to serve the thousands who attended. The event was a great success. The Holy Spirit moved in the crowd and many souls were saved that day.

But the two volunteers left with troubled hearts. Many who they had spoken to when handing out circulars were not in attendance. Transportation was an issue. The event was also much too large for most churches to pull off, requiring months of work to organize and tens of thousands of dollars in money and donated goods and services. They were lead by the Holy Spirit to find a simple, easy way to take the gospel to the unchurched. An outreach event that anyone could pull-off was needed. One that was inexpensive. Once which could be planned in minutes and easily performed.

They planned a small event at a low-income 40-unit apartment community. Used toys and used clothes were collected from the members of their church and volunteers were organized. Those volunteering for the event donated the food to be served at the event along with some balloons to give it a festive atmosphere. After some prayer for inspiration, they named the event a HUG Cookout. HUG being "His Uplifting Grace", as that is what they were intending to demonstrate that day.

On the day of the event, nervous as to the outcome they set up a charcoal grill in the parking lot of the apartment community and invited residents to join in the celebration. Many of the residents did. The Holy Spirit moved throughout the community that day. Several residents sought prayer and names and phone numbers were taken of those wishing to set-up a Bible study group in the community. At the end of the event, 73 people joined in a prayer circle... an astounding number considering the size of the apartment community.

While the event itself was a great success, it was ultimately a failure. The two volunteers had not planned well enough and had no-one to facilitate the Bible study group. They did not feel qualified to facilitate the group themselves. They had no study materials and no experience with establishing groups. To make matters worse, the apartment community was too great of a distance from their church to expect the residents to attend services.

Follow-up was definitely a problem.

At the urgings of the other volunteers more HUG Cookouts in other communities were held, but the two volunteers remained troubled over the lack of follow-up.

Finally, a third volunteer suggested that a church local to the next HUG Cookout be asked to participate. No money, food or other items of value were asked of the church. The church was only expected to attend and take the fruit produced into their fold. Three local churches within a few blocks of the event location were contacted before one was found willing to participate in the event.

This HUG Cookout was not within an apartment community, it was held in a low-income residential area of dilapidated homes. Turn-out, as a percentage of population was less than hoped, but good. The community was touched and some residents from the event attended the local church the next day, one walking the aisle and accepting Christ as their savior! Follow-up worked! However, it would remain difficult to find local churches willing to cooperate with an outside group entering their communities and holding events, especially when they themselves had not served their community.

In this case, the cooperating church was so excited over the outcome of the HUG Cookout they began holding their own within their community! The HUG Cookout concept had multiplied itself! From that, The HUG Crusade was born.

Fred and Billy

Fred and Billy (not their real names) were neighbors. Upon arriving home each evening they would spend a fair amount of time together in various activities.

One day, Fred invited Billy to attend a Wednesday night group lead by a Pastor with him. Billy gladly accepted. Billy did not attend church, but had a little church background and quickly picked up on the gospel.

One evening during the middle of group Billy firmly proclaimed “I want to be a Christian too!” Fred, standing face to face with Billy and poking him in the chest with his finger retaliated “You can’t be. You have to have Jesus in your heart first!”

The Pastor, hearing the exchange sat down with the two and explained the salvation plan to Billy. That evening, Billy accepted Christ as his Savior.

A few weeks later, Billy publicly announced his salvation through baptism.

This simple act of inviting a close friend to a group meeting is extremely powerful. It was Billy’s relationship with Fred that drew Billy into a position where he would be receptive to being exposed to the gospel. That exposure resulted in his salvation.

How difficult is it to introduce a friend to Christ? It is so simple even a child could do it.

Did we mention Fred was seven years old and Billy was nine?

The Nuts and Bolts

In this lesson you will discover the core beliefs around which The HUG Crusade was founded. Our core beliefs are simple and firmly grounded in Scripture.

About God:

God is the Creator and Ruler of the universe. He has eternally existed in three personalities: the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. These three are co-equal and are one God.

“Then God said, ‘Let us make man in our image, in our likeness, and let them rule over the fish of the sea and the birds of the air, over the livestock, over all the earth, and over all the creatures that move along the ground’” (Genesis 1:26)

(see also: Genesis 1:1, 27; Psalm 90:2; Matthew 28:19; I Peter 1:2; II Corinthians 13:14)

About Jesus Christ:

Jesus Christ is the Son of God. He is co-equal with the Father. Jesus lived a sinless human life and offered Himself as the perfect sacrifice for the sins of all people by dying on a cross. He arose from the dead after three days to demonstrate His power over sin and death. He ascended to Heaven’s glory and will return again someday to earth to reign as King of Kings and Lord of Lords.

“For what I received I passed on to you as of first importance: that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures. That he was buried, that he was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures,” (1 Corinthians 15:3.4)

(see also: Matthew 1:22, 23; Isaiah 9:6; John 1:1-5, 14:10-30; Hebrews 4:14, 15; Acts 1:9-11; I Timothy 6:14, 15; Titus 2:13)

About The Holy Spirit:

The Holy Spirit is co-equal with the Father and the Son of God. He is present in the world to make men aware of their need for Jesus Christ. He also lives in every Christian from the moment of salvation. He provides the Christian with power for living, understanding of spiritual truth, and guidance in doing what is right. He gives every believer a spiritual gift when they are saved. As Christians, we seek to live under His control daily.

“But the Counselor, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you all things and will remind you of everything I have said to you.” (John 14:26)

(see also: II Corinthians 3:17; John 14:16, 16:7-13; Acts 1:8; I Corinthians 2:12; I Corinthians 3:16; Ephesians 1:13-14, 5:18; Galatians 5:25)

About The Bible:

The Bible is God’s Word to us. It is written by human authors, under the supernatural guidance of the Holy Spirit. It is the supreme source of truth for Christian beliefs and living. Because it is inspired by God, it is the truth without any mixture of error.

“All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work.” (2 Timothy 3:16-17)

(see also: II Timothy 1:13, II Peter 1:20, 21; Psalm 12:6, 119:105, 160; Proverbs 30:5)

About Human Beings:

People are made in the spiritual image of God, to be like Him in character. People are the supreme objects of God’s creation. Although every person has tremendous potential for good, all of us are marred by an attitude of disobedience toward God called “sin.” This attitude separates people from God and causes many problems in life.

“for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.” (Romans 3:23)

(see also: Genesis 1:27; Psalm 8:3-6; Isaiah 53:6, 59:1-2)

About Salvation:

Salvation is God’s free gift to us but we must accept it. We can never make up for our sin by self-improvement or good works. Only by trusting in Jesus Christ as God’s offer of forgiveness can anyone be saved from sin’s penalty. Eternal life begins the moment one receives Jesus Christ into his life by faith.

“For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith – and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God – not by works, so that no one can boast.” (Ephesians 2:8,9)

(see also: Romans 6:23; John 1:12, 14:6; Titus 3:5; Galatians 3:26; Romans 5:1)

About Eternal Security:

Because God gives us eternal life through Jesus Christ, the true believer is secure in that salvation for eternity. If you have been genuinely saved, you cannot “lose” it. Salvation is maintained by the grace and power of God, not by the self-effort of the Christian. It is the grace and keeping power of God that gives us this security.

“I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; no one can snatch them out of my hand. My Father, who has given them to me, is greater than all; no one can snatch them out of my Father's hand. I and the Father are one.” (John 10:28-30)

(see also: II Timothy 1:12; Hebrews 7:25, 10:10, 14; I Peter 1:3-5; I John 5:9-13)

About Eternity:

People were created to exist forever. We will exist either eternally separated from God by sin, or eternally in union with God through forgiveness and salvation. To be eternally separated from God is Hell. To be eternally in union with Him is eternal life. Heaven and Hell are real places of eternal existence.

“For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life” (John 3:16)

“Whoever believes in Him is not condemned, but whoever does not believe stands condemned already because he has not believed in the name of God's one and only son.” (John 3:18)

(see also: Romans 6:23, 8:16-18; Revelation 20:15; I Corinthians 2:7-9)

If you do not quite understand what you have read in this lesson, that is ok. For now, just understand it is around these core beliefs that The HUG Crusade is built.

Sharing the Word

At a recent outreach event, volunteers were distributing boxes food to the poor from the back of a 45 foot trailer. The boxes were being distributed as fast as they could be brought off the trailer.

As they handed out the boxes, each volunteer would offhandedly say something like “Here you go”, or respond “Your welcome”, after someone said “Thank you”. Finally, one volunteer struck on an idea.

When the recipient of the food said “thank you”, the volunteer would respond. “Don't thank me. This is not from us. It is from God. When you get home, spend a few minutes thanking him”.

Although the volunteer was not specifically spreading the gospel, he was directing the recipients attention to one who made the gift possible.

Can you see how a similar strategy may work for your projects?

Reflections

1. Do you notice anything in *Genesis 1:26* which might lead you to believe that both Jesus and the Holy Spirit existed with God prior to creation? If so, what?
2. In *1 Corinthians 15:3,4*, what does the term “first importance” mean?
3. In *John 14:26*, why do you think Jesus referred to the Holy Spirit as “the Counselor”?
4. In *2 Timothy 3: 16:17*, what do you think Paul meant when we said the Scriptures equips man for all good work?

I was born a Christian!

Just what is a Christian? Do you know?

Many people believing in God makes them a Christian. Others believe that helping the poor makes them a Christian. There are some who believe that being raised in a Christian household makes them a Christian. Some believe that being baptized makes them a Christian.

What do you feel makes a person a Christian? Write your answer below.

Now, let's see what the Bible has to say makes you a Christian.

*“You are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus, for all of you who were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek, slave nor free, male nor female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus.”
(Galatians 3:26-28)*

The above Scripture says nothing about good works, going to church every Sunday, or even praying every day.

Now, consider this next Scripture:

“That if you confess with your mouth, 'Jesus is Lord,' and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved.” (Romans 10:9)

The above Scripture mentions nothing about being a good person, being raised in a Christian home, or even tithing.

Finally, consider this Scripture:

“For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life” (John 3:16)

Do you see the common thread throughout the above Scriptures? The same thread is repeated time and time again throughout the New Testament.

Unstopping Toilets for God

One morning a few years ago, a plumber leaving a building materials warehouse was approached by an elderly lady in the parking lot.

“I need some plumbing work done”, she said to the plumber. “But, I will only hire a Christian to do the job. Are you a Christian?”, she asked.

Caught off guard, the plumber left without giving the woman an answer. Later that same afternoon the plumber approached a close friend and recited the story. “I didn't know what to tell her” he told his friend. “Am, I a Christian?”

The friend told the plumber the salvation plan, explaining how Christ had died on the cross for his sins. If the plumber was not a Christian when he awoke that morning, he was when he went to bed that night.

A few weeks later the friend found in the front seat of his pick-up truck a Bible left there by the plumber. To this day, that plumber has continued to serve God as a witness both in his words and his acts.

When the unchurched has a question about Christianity, before going to church or seeking out a Pastor, they will usually first turn to their friends who they know are Christian. This gives the Christian friend the opportunity to lead the seeker to salvation. But, to have this opportunity your friends must know that you are a believer.

Do your friends know you are a believer?

When questioned by His Disciples, Jesus Christ himself said it best.

“Jesus answered, 'I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.'” (John 14:6)

Believing in a benevolent “higher power” does not make you a Christian, nor does believing in God. You can feed the homeless, give all of your money to the church, treat people nice, and even get baptized, but to be a Christian you must believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God; that He died on the cross in sacrifice for your sins and that He was resurrected three days later.

Why did God send Jesus to die on the cross?

Jesus was sent as a sacrifice for your sins. No matter how good of person you think you are, we all are sinners. Yes, each and every one of us, Christians and non-Christians alike.

The Bible clearly states:

“for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.” (Romans 3-23)

The difference between Christians and non-Christians is that through faith Christians have been forgiven for their sins through the sacrifice of Jesus Christ.

Salvation through Jesus Christ is a free gift from God. You need not make any sacrifice, the sacrifice has already been made. All you have to do is accept His free gift.

As a Christian, since my sins have been forgiven I can do whatever I want and still go to heaven?

God’s word is very clear on this in Romans 6:1-23:

“What shall we say, then? Shall we go on sinning so that grace may increase? By no means! We died to sin; how can we live in it any longer? “

“Or don't you know that all of us who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? We were therefore buried with him through baptism into death in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, we too may live a new life.”

“If we have been united with him like this in his death, we will certainly also be united with him in his resurrection. For we know that our old self was crucified with him so that the body of sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves to sin— because anyone who has died has been freed from sin.”

“Now if we died with Christ, we believe that we will also live with him. For we know that since Christ was raised from the dead, he cannot die again; death no longer has mastery over him. The death he died, he died to sin once for all; but the life he lives, he lives to God. In the same way, count yourselves dead to sin but alive to God in Christ Jesus.”

“Therefore do not let sin reign in your mortal body so that you obey its evil desires. Do not offer the parts of your body to sin, as instruments of wickedness, but rather offer yourselves to God, as those who have been brought from death to life; and offer the parts of your body to him as instruments of righteousness. For sin shall not be your master, because you are not under law, but under grace.”

“What then? Shall we sin because we are not under law but under grace? By no means! Don't you know that when you offer yourselves to someone to obey him as slaves, you are slaves to the one whom you obey—whether you are slaves to sin, which leads to death, or to obedience, which leads to righteousness? “

“But thanks be to God that, though you used to be slaves to sin, you wholeheartedly obeyed the form of teaching to which you were entrusted. You

have been set free from sin and have become slaves to righteousness.”

“I put this in human terms because you are weak in your natural selves. Just as you used to offer the parts of your body in slavery to impurity and to ever-increasing wickedness, so now offer them in slavery to righteousness leading to holiness.”

“When you were slaves to sin, you were free from the control of righteousness. What benefit did you reap at that time from the things you are now ashamed of? Those things result in death!”

“But now that you have been set free from sin and have become slaves to God, the benefit you reap leads to holiness, and the result is eternal life.”

“For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.”

As a Christian you break the chains of slavery to sin and begin to do the work of God.

Reflections

1. Have you accepted Christ as your personal savior?
2. Why did God send Jesus to die on the cross?
3. Who are sinners?
4. Do you understand that eternal life is the result of believing in what Christ did on the cross, and not determined by who you are or what you do?

5. In regards to sin, how is a Christian different from a non-Christian?

Dunk & Dine

“You are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus, for all of you who were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ.” (Galatians 3:26-27)

Baptism does two things:

1. It illustrates Christ's burial and resurrection. Christ died for our sins. He was buried and He rose again. The Bible says:

“having been buried with him in baptism and raised with him through your faith in the power of God, who raised him from the dead.. (Colossians 2:12)

We believe in baptizing the way they did in the Bible: putting people all the way under the water. It is a symbol of the burial and resurrection, just like Jesus Christ died and was buried and then rose again on the third day.

2. Baptism illustrates my new life as a Christian.

“Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come!” (2 Corinthians 5:17)

There are four reasons why we believe and practice baptism by immersion:

1. Because Jesus was baptized that way. The Bible says:

“As soon as Jesus was baptized, he went up out of the water...” (Matthew 3:16)

He went down to the Jordan River and was baptized by John the Baptist. Jesus set the example.

2. Every baptism in the Bible was by immersion. For example:

“As they traveled along the road, they came to some water and the eunuch said, "Look, here is water. Why shouldn't I be baptized?" And he gave orders to stop the chariot. Then both Philip and the eunuch went down into the water and Philip baptized him. When they came up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord suddenly took Philip away, and the eunuch did not see him again, but went on his way rejoicing.” (Acts

8:38-39)

3. “Baptize” literally means “dip under water.” The Greek word “baptizo” means “to dip” under water.
4. It best symbolizes a burial and resurrection.

Do you have to be baptized by immersion?

This is hotly debated among various denominations. Our church practices it for the reasons specified above, but we acknowledge circumstances where baptism by immersion is not practical or even possible. For example, a person who accepts Christ on their deathbed.

Because it is not possible in all circumstances, we must also assume it is not absolutely required.

Your best solution is to read your bible and consult with your spiritual leader. We are of the opinion that what is in your heart matters more than the specific method utilized for baptism.

Who should be baptized?

Every person who has believed in Christ. Biblical references include:

“Simon himself believed and was baptized...” (Acts 8:13)

“But when they believed Philip as he preached the Good News and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized, both men and women.” (Acts 8:12)

There is only one qualification in the Bible to be baptized: you have to believe in Christ. The purpose of baptism is to publicly confess your personal commitment to Christ.

When should you be baptized?

As soon as you become a believer. Or, as soon as you realize its importance. Maybe you have been a believer for a while, but you didn't realize how important it was. Jesus said:

“If you love Me, keep My commandments.” (John 14:5)

In the book of Acts it says those who believed were baptized that day.

"As they traveled along the road, they came to some water and the eunuch said, "Look, here is water. Why shouldn't I be baptized?" And he gave orders

to stop the chariot. Then both Philip and the eunuch went down into the water and Philip baptized him.” (Acts 8:37-38)

The second symbol of salvation is the Lord's Supper or communion.

It's interesting that Jesus never asked His disciples to remember His birth, but He did instruct them to remember His death and resurrection. He gave the church two visible symbols, baptism and communion, to help us remember His death.

The Lord's Supper is an object lesson that represents a great spiritual truth. But, what is the Lord's Supper?

1. It is a simple act.

The Bible says that for the very first communion, the Lord Jesus, on the night that He was betrayed, took bread and broke it.

He didn't have some big elaborate ceremony, wearing special costumes and vestments and burning incense and doing all kinds of fancy rituals. The Lord's Supper is a very simple act. He took bread and He took wine and He gave it to the disciples.

The Lord's Supper does not have to even be lead by a pastor. You can do it yourself at home.

2. It is a reminder.

“and when he had given thanks, he broke it and said, 'This is my body, which is for you; do this in remembrance of me.'” (1 Corinthians 11:24)

The whole purpose of the Lord's Supper is for us to remember what Jesus did on the cross.

3. It is a symbol.

“In the same way, after supper he took the cup, saying, 'This cup is the new covenant in my blood; do this, whenever you drink it, in remembrance of me.'” (1 Corinthians 11:25)

When Jesus said, This bread is My body and this cup is My blood, He didn't mean that literally. He said this before He went to the cross. Obviously, He's talking about a symbol, not His actual blood.

If someone were to show you pictures and say, “This is my wife,” you wouldn't

think their wife was photographic paper with chemicals on it. You would know what they were talking about. The picture would only represent their wife.

Jesus once said "I am the door." Does that mean He's a piece of wood? He said, "I am the bread of life." Does that mean He's a loaf? No. He is using symbolism. He says, "This is My body which is for you." (1 Corinthians 11:24) It's a symbol.

4. **It's a statement of faith.**

"For whenever you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until He comes." (1 Corinthians 11:26)

When you take of the Lord's Supper, you're preaching a sermon. There's a forward look and a backward look.

We look forward to the fact that Jesus is coming back and He says do this until He comes back. And we look back at the cross. Jesus didn't stay dead. He's coming back again.

Proper observance of the Lord's Supper is also important. It is not to be taken lightly. Thus, we adhere to the following rules:

1. Who Should Take the Lord's Supper?

Only those who are already believers should take the Lord's Supper.

When Jesus offered the communion (the Lord's Supper), He didn't offer it to the 5,000 where He fed the loaves and fish. He only offered the Lord's Supper to the disciples whom He knew were believers. He didn't offer the Lord's Supper to the crowds. The Bible says,

"For anyone who eats and drinks without recognizing the body of the Lord eats and drinks judgment on himself." (1 Corinthians 11:29)

So, participation in the Lord's Supper is not for non-believers.

2. How do I prepare myself for the Lord's Supper?

"Therefore, whoever eats the bread or drinks the cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner will be guilty of sinning against the body and blood of the Lord. A man ought to examine himself before he eats of the bread and drinks of the cup. For anyone who eats and drinks without recognizing the body of the Lord eats and drinks judgment on himself." (1 Corinthians 11:27-29)

Before we take the Lord's Supper we are to have a time of prayer and self-examination.

We say, "God, is there anything in my life that's between me and You that I need to confess and get rid of before I take communion?" The Bible says that we are to examine ourselves every time we take the Lord's Supper.

We do these four things.

- First, self-examination -- "God, what is it in my life that needs to be changed?"
- We confess our sins.
- We recommit our lives.
- We even restore relationships.

The Bible says if you've got some-thing against another person -- you're bitter and angry and resentful -- you shouldn't take the Lord's Supper. In fact, it says you shouldn't even give an offering when you hold a grudge against another person. It says go set things right with that person first and then come and worship.

3. **When and how often should we observe the Lord's Supper?**

The Bible doesn't give a rule about how often.

Anytime you hear a rule like, "You ought to take the Lord's Supper every Sunday," or, "You ought to take it once a month," that's a man-made rule.

Jesus never said when or how often believers should observe the Lord's Supper.

Do You Deliver?

At the beginning of a HUG Cookout a couple of volunteers decided to walk the community to invite the residents to the event. They were about finished canvassing the neighborhood when they knocked on the door of a small house. Hearing no movement inside, they moved on.

They had walked no more than 100 feet down the road when they heard a feeble voice shouting "Can I help you?" They turned around and saw an elderly lady in her 80's standing in the doorway of the house they had just left.

Talking from a distance they introduced themselves and asked the woman to come to the event and enjoy food and fellowship. "I don't think I can get down there", she said. "Do you deliver?"

The volunteers promised to see what they could do and continued on with their efforts canvassing the neighborhood.

After returning to the event the one volunteer agreed to fix a plate of food and take it to the elderly woman. When the woman answered the door she was very excited to see the volunteer, and asked him to come in and sit down. He usually would not enter the home of a woman alone, but was lead to do so on this one occasion.

After chatting a few minutes the woman said:

"I lived here with my husband. Each day we would wake up and do a few things around the house. We would then watch television for a while. I would sit here on my sofa and he would sit over there on his."

"A couple of months ago, we were watching television and he did not say anything for about four hours. I got up and walked over to check on him. When I touched him I felt no life in him. I called 911. When the paramedics arrived, they told me he had died. You are the first person I have been able to talk to about this since that day."

Loving a community does not always mean trying to save them. Very often, those who need help are already saved. They just need to experience the love of Christ as exhibited through you. Sometimes it might be a cool bottle of water or a hot meal and at other times all they need is a compassionate ear.

If we had not been reaching out that day that elderly woman may still been sitting alone in her home keeping her emotions bottled up inside... desperately needing someone to talk to.

5. What is the Lord's Supper?

6. Who should observe the Lord's Supper?

7. When and how often should you observe the Lord's Supper?

Lime Green Mohawks & Skin Tight Spandex

“Jesus, full of the Holy Spirit, returned from the Jordan and was led by the Spirit in the desert, where for forty days he was tempted by the devil. He ate nothing during those days, and at the end of them he was hungry. The devil said to him, ‘If you are the Son of God, tell this stone to become bread.’ Jesus answered, ‘It is written: ‘Man does not live on bread alone.’”

“The devil led him up to a high place and showed him in an instant all the kingdoms of the world. And he said to him, ‘I will give you all their authority and splendor, for it has been given to me, and I can give it to anyone I want to. So if you worship me, it will all be yours.’ Jesus answered, ‘It is written: ‘Worship the Lord your God and serve him only.’”

“The devil led him to Jerusalem and had him stand on the highest point of the temple. ‘If you are the Son of God,’ he said, ‘throw yourself down from here. For it is written: ‘He will command his angels concerning you to guard you carefully; they will lift you up in their hands, so that you will not strike your foot against a stone.’ Jesus answered, ‘It says: Do not put the Lord your God to the test.’”

When the devil had finished all this tempting, he left him until an opportune time.” (Luke 4:1-13)

The issues of salvation, baptism, and the Lord’s Supper are what we call “Core Beliefs”. In other words, these are issues that are essential to our Faith; they are the “It is written” passages.

1. **In essential beliefs we have Unity.**

“There is one body and one Spirit...there is one Lord, one faith, one baptism; one God and Father of all...” (Ephesians 4:4-6)

2. **In non-essential beliefs we have Liberty.**

“Accept him whose faith is weak, without passing judgment on disputable matters...Who are you to judge someone else’s servant? To his own master he stands or falls...So then each of us will give an account of himself to God...so whatever you believe about these things keep between yourself and God.” (Romans 14:1, 4,12, 22)

3. **In all our beliefs we show Charity.**

“If I have the gift of prophecy and can fathom all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have a faith that can move mountains, but have not love, I am nothing.” (1 Corinthians 13:2)

A great way to distinguish essentials from non-essentials: the essential is the WHAT and the non-essential is the HOW.

<u>Essential: What</u> (Never Changes)	<u>Non-Essential: How</u> (Constantly changes)
Worship	Style of Worship
Communion	Style - at altar, pass around
Invitation	Altar call, down aisle, card
Preaching	Jesus used parables, Paul was linear
Bible	King James, NIV
Dress	Formal, Casual

You should remember that the individuals reading these materials may be from many different church backgrounds.

Some of you may have been believers for years, some of you are brand new believers and some of you are still on the edge. You might still be considering the promises of Christ.

Regardless of your church background one thing all Christians have in common is our SALVATION. The Bible says:

“You are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus, [notice it’s not through church or through good works; it says through faith in Jesus Christ we become children of God -ed] for all of you who were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek, slave nor free, male nor female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus.” (Galatians 3:26-28)

This says that when you become a believer and you become a part of God’s family, in God’s eyes all of the distinctions are wiped out, the church is a united family. There is no place for discrimination, racism or even gender differences. It says we are all the same in God’s eyes. We are all equally valuable to Him in the family of God.

God couldn't care less if you are a Baptist, Methodist or a member of another Christian organization just so long as you are a Christian.

Jesus said to the Pharisees (a member of a Jewish sect noted for its strict observance of religious ceremonies and practices, adherence to oral laws and traditions):

“...You have a fine way of setting aside the commands of God in order to observe your own traditions!” (Mark 7:9)

Jesus was rebuking the Pharisees for enforcing man-made traditions as if they were established by God.

If you decide that you and your family should wear purple ribbons in your hair to honor Jesus Christ, that is a personal decision you are free to make and enforce upon your family. If you preach that all Christians must do this you will be creating a man-made tradition to be enforced as if it had a scriptural basis. Jesus spoke against this.

The HUG Crusade imposes no such man-made traditions on all Christians. For the purposes of achieving the goals of The HUG Crusade as an organization we may have some non-scriptural rituals we suggest HUG Crusade groups observe during our meetings and projects. But, these are not religious rituals. They were established solely for the purpose of promoting worship, outreach, education and fellowship.

Your style of dress, your style of worship, the genre of music you prefer and other such matters are between you and God. While the Bible does contain standards for grooming and dress they have no impact on your salvation. Our primary focus is on your salvation. So, if you want to show up at group meetings wearing a lime green Mohawk and skin tight spandex, feel free to do so. Not only will you be accepted, you will be loved.

I Want to Tell the Kids About Jesus

The parents were loading up their SUV in preparation for a HUG event. Their seven year old son ran up to the mom and said “I want to tell the kids about Jesus.” Being persistent as he often is, the mom said “Ok son, I will load up a blanket for the kids to sit on and your Star Wars chair for you. You can set-up in the grass and tell the children about Jesus.”

At the event the son ran around and played with the children for a while before setting up the chair and blanket. Calling the kids over, they all sat down while the little boy tried to tell them about Jesus. Witnessing in this way was a little more difficult to do than the little boy thought, but he struggled with the message as best he could. When necessary, an adult stepped in to help.

At the end of the message, several of the children raised their hands indicating they had accepted Christ. Some of the children was a little young to fully understand, but with those the seed was planted.

It is important that you give your entire family the opportunity to participate with you in outreach projects. Do not force them, but if they indicate a willingness give them the opportunity.

This story also illustrates why it is important to witness in pairs. Should a less experienced volunteer be uncomfortable and fumble for words the more experienced volunteer can step in and help out.

Finally, the little boy did not intentionally do this, but by playing with the children first he developed a relationship with them... developed a sense of trust. It was based on this relationship that many of the children set down to hear his message. This is a wonderful example for all HUG group members who should also rely on relationships to build their groups and establish new groups within their community.

Reflections

1. Is the King James Version of the Bible an essential or non-essential?
2. Is Worship an essential or non-essential?
3. Is an Alter-Call an essential or non-essential?
4. Is it essential that you dress up to attend church?

To Tithe or not to Tithe

“The church just wants my money” is a complaint often expressed by church-goers and non-church-goers alike. While there have been some churches which have taken advantage of the generosity of others, almost an infinite number of churches have spent their money wisely in service to God.

Just like any individual or business, churches have expenses. They usually have to pay rent or make a mortgage payment. They have to pay for utilities to keep the lights on. They have to buy office supplies and Christian materials for their congregation to use. They have insurance to pay as well as other hidden costs. After all of this and more, they usually share part of their money with the less fortunate. Most churches need your money. But, that is beside the point.

Tithing is another one of those issues hotly debated among churches. There is plenty of evidence for tithing in the Old Testament, but in the New Testament Jesus seems to focus on sharing directly with the poor.

It is not our intent to debate whether tithing is required. We see it as a non-essential issue. But, we strongly recommend that you do for a number of reasons, among which are the following:

- Tithing is in itself an act of personal sacrifice to God. Whether he commands it or not, we feel certain He will view your personal sacrifice with pleasure.
- Your church is your spiritual home. Just as you support your household you should make a contribution to the support of your spiritual home.
- No matter how much ministries like The HUG Crusade do to spread the gospel, churches remain the primary source of spiritual growth within your community.
- Churches often provide corporate umbrellas under which ministries like The HUG Crusade can operate. Without a host church providing insurance, meeting space, supplies, leadership and a large volunteer pool many ministries simply could not operate.
- Your church is often bombarded with needs from within the congregation and from throughout the community. They are often the last resort for many. In order to meet these needs they have to reply upon the good will of their congregation.

Quite frankly, if you feel your church spending is extravagant or it does such a poor job of managing its finances that it does not deserve your money, you need to find another church.

If you are a member of a HUG Crusade group but do not attend a church on a regular basis you need to find a church to call your home and make your tithes to them.

But I can't afford to tithe!

This is a very common problem, and an understandable one. We are bombarded every day with advertisements for things we do not need. Advertisers focus on emotional issues such as love, greed and pride to make us feel like we “need” a product or service, when in truth it is only a want.

As the result of filling our wants, most of us are shouldered with about as much debt as we can handle. We simply can not afford to take 10% off the top.

First, examine your budget and see where you can cut back so you will have some money to tithe with. Look for the small expenses you can reduce. Cutting back on these can result in a significant savings over the course of a year.

Next, when making financial decisions, take 10% off of your total income and see if you can still afford the expense. If the items are a true need and you must purchase the item regardless, choose a less expensive option. Using this simple method, over time you will eventually be in the position where you can tithe the full 10%.

Finally, tithing does not have to be money, it can be products or services. If your church needs some painting done, instead of letting them hire a contractor help them accomplish the task. The savings to the church is the same as giving them the money. If the church needs new curtains for their offices, if you can sew, make the curtains for them. The savings can be all or part of your tithe. You do not need a receipt to show how much you saved them. No one needs to even know how much.

Your tithe is between you and God.

Don't tithe for your church, tithe to it. You tithe for God. Trust the Holy Spirit to direct your church in spending your tithe wisely.

You do not tithe to impress your church. Don't feel pressured to reveal to the church or its members how much you give. If you give because it is expected by the members or leaders of your church you are giving for the wrong reason. If you give because God expects it you are giving for the right reason. The perfect tithe is probably one which you give without anyone but you and God knowing that you give it.

There was Beauty in Her Toothless Smile

When I met them at the event they were sitting on the curb. She was smoking a cigarette with her legs spread wide apart in a non-ladylike manner. She had exactly one tooth in her head. He was sitting next to her, resting his feet. They sat there relaxing, with their bags of clothes and groceries sitting off to the side. I asked to take a photograph and they happily obliged.

After taking the photograph, I began to walk away.. but thought better of it and asked... "would you like to see your picture?" They were excited. They gazed at the picture for what seemed forever, both with huge smiles on their faces. She glanced up and said they were married and gave him a kiss on the cheek. He blushed.

I took the camera back and again began to walk away when the man shouted... "Hold on! Can I see that again?" As he gazed at the display on the camera for quite a while and with a smile as bright as the sun he said... "I want to be able to remember it."

This struck me. I didn't know why but it did. It might be silly... or I might have just been (and still) feeling sappy because I was tired. But, it just seemed so important to him.. like that one photograph was the most important thing in the world at the time. He smiled when he handed the camera back to me, and said "Thank you."

It was only a photograph, and not a good one at that. It was nothing special at all... at least to me. But, to him it was everything. I do not know if he was a Christian or not.. he may have become one today... or maybe not. Regardless, at this event and for this moment in time he had found a brief moment of happiness that he would cherish for a long time to come. One which may not have been possible, were it not for the event we were participating in.

When viewing the photograph, he did not see the rough life his wife apparently had lived. He did not see her tangled hair or her all but toothless mouth. He did not see the nicotine stained fingers or her worn clothing. He only saw her beauty and the beauty that lies deep within them both. He saw a happy moment.. a moment that may be the happiest he had experienced in quite a while.. a moment he wanted to remember.

Spreading the gospel is more than just preaching. It is touching. It is Christians touching the lives of others in a positive way... a way which may cause them to seek more of the same. I did not save any souls today, but at least in this instance I did associate happiness with a Christian atmosphere. Who knows... maybe they will seek more of the same.

We have found a digital camera to be a great tools to use at projects for starting conversations with children and adults alike. Everyone wants to see their photograph once it is taken. Be sure and take one along on each of your projects, and use it!

Reflections

1. Why should you tithe?
2. God considers not tithing to be what?
3. What is the difference between a tithe and a love offering?
4. How much should you tithe?

How do You Spell Relief?

Humans exist for two purposes: to worship God and to demonstrate His love to others. A definition of ministry is meeting needs with love.

The reality is, everyone has hurts. Everyone has struggles. It doesn't matter how nicely put together you look. It doesn't matter whether you've got a great house and a great car and a great job. It doesn't really matter if all those things are in place because somewhere in everyone's life is a hurt, a need, a struggle. Part of the reason The HUG Crusade exists is to help meet those needs with the love of God.

John 13:35 says, “*By this shall all men will know that you are My disciples, if you love one another.*” Jesus could have thought of all kinds of reasons, all kinds of hallmarks for His disciples. He had the opportunity right here to tell them He wanted them to be known for. He didn't say to His disciples, “I want you to be known for your fabulous preaching. I want you to be known for the great clothes you wear. I want you to be known for the beautiful temples that you build.” He said, “I want you to have a reputation in this world as people who love.” This is quite fitting since Jesus' was here on earth as a personal demonstration of God's love. (“*For God so love the world that the gave his one and only Son...*” (*John 3:16*))

God's love is supreme love. He has no reason to love us. We are all sinners and unworthy in His eyes. But, yet he does love you. No matter how many good works we do for our fellow man, we can not earn God's love. It is His free gift to us, all we have to do is accept it. Have you accepted God's love?

Time and time again, Jesus stressed the importance of love.

“Jesus said, 'Love the Lord God with all your heart and all your soul and with all your mind. This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it Love your neighbor as yourself.' All the Law and Prophets hang on these two commandments.” (*Matthew 22:36-40*)

Matthew 22:36-40 could not be more clear. Jesus instructs you to first love God, and then love your neighbor as yourself. Where have to seen this same message before?

“So in everything you do, do to others what you would have them do to you, for this sums up the Law and the Prophets.” (*Matthew 7:12*)

Matthew 7:12 is often referred to the Golden Rule. Both of these Scriptures put love on a very personal basis comparing the love you should have for others to the love you have for yourself. As if to say, under similar circumstances, how would you yourself want to be treated? Given similar circumstances, what would ease your pain or improve your

circumstances?

It is upon these and other similar Scriptures that The HUG Crusade is focused. The HUG Crusade is a ministry in which you will be loved and a ministry which you can express love.

The Bible says there will always be poor people. Even here in the United States, the wealthiest country in the world, we have poor people.

*“There will always be poor people in the land. Therefore, I command you to be openhanded toward your brothers and toward the poor and needy in your land.”
(Deuteronomy 15:11)*

The poor is not the only specific group of people we are instructed to love. In *Romans 12:14* we are told:

“Bless those who persecute you, bless and do not curse.”

and, in *Romans 12:17*:

“Do not repay evil for evil. Be careful to do what is right in the eyes of everybody.”

Thus, we are told to love our enemies and to do what is right with everyone, regardless of how they may have treated us. This is often referred to as “Taking the high road”.

In *Luke 6: 30* we are told:

“Give to everyone who asks you, and if anyone takes your cloak do not demand it back”

How unselfish is that? We are instructed to give to everyone who asks. The Bible does not tell us to qualify the needs of the person who asks. The person is not required to prove their need. We are not asked to determine if the requester is a legal citizen, or to be concerned if they will use the money to purchase beer or drugs. We are instructed to give to everyone that asks.

The Bible does not instruct us to give everything someone asks for. If someone asks for \$10.00 and you feel lead to give one dollar, then give it. If they ask for money but you feel compelled to buy them food, do it. If you are approached for gas money at a gas station and you question their intent, it is fine to give them change to call someone they know to come help or pick them up. We are simply instructed to demonstrate love.

We should note that the Bible was written for people, not governments. These are God's instructions to you personally, as a Christian. It is our opinion that paying taxes is not a substitute for the love we are instructed to demonstrate as paying taxes is forced upon us,

thus they are not a gift. Government welfare or entitlement programs and the way their funds are managed and distributed are political topics, not Christian topics.

Does the first part of *Luke 6:30* seem familiar? Read the words again “*Give to everyone who asks you...*” Might this be symbolic of God's love for you? Read the words of *Matthew 7:7-8*.

"Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you. For everyone who asks receives; he who seeks finds; and to him who knocks, the door will be opened."

Could our generosity be a Christian's expression of God's grace to others? God gives us an eternal life of happiness just because we ask. Should we not also show charity to others just because they ask?

I Just Got Out of Prison

Just having finished lunch at a local restaurant the couple was walking across the parking lot when approached by a stranger carrying a hand full of paperwork.

“I just had a job interview” the man said. “They agreed to hire me but they require me to have a state issued identification card. I can get one at the State Patrol office, but they cost \$20.00. I have \$7.00. Can you help?”, he asked. The husband pulled a \$5.00 bill out of his pocket and handed it to the man telling him that was all he was willing to give.

“Are you a Christian?” the husband asked. “Yes, I am.” replied the man. “I love Jesus! I just got out of prison and want to get my life together, but to do that I need a job.” “Good!”, the husband replied.

Walking away the husband explained to his wife “The Bible says to give to everyone who asks. But, it does not say give them everything they ask for.” His wife, showing her compassion reached into her pocket and pulled out some money. “Here is the rest of it she said. Go give it to him.” But the husband refused saying “No, make him work for it.”

They stood by their car watching the man solicit money from others. After the man had approached several people, the husband walked up to hear another customer of the restaurant tell the man “No problem! And hey, may God bless you!” as he walked away.

Walking up to the man, the husband asked “Do you have all you need?” Yes, the man replied. I can get my identification card now and go to work. Thank you!”

It may seem like the husband was playing a game with the man, being cruel to make him beg others for money. But, he was not. He had demonstrated God's love and was willing to demonstrate more. But he was lead to hold back some and he was lead to wait and watch.

You see, by the couple giving some, but not all the man was forced to seek the help of others. In turn, another customer also demonstrated the love of God and indicated they too was a believer. Over the course of only a few minutes, the man, who the husband assumed to be a new Christian was shown love by two complete strangers both of whom were also Christians, re-enforcing in his mind that God is truly good.

This also gave another Christian the opportunity to demonstrate the love of Christ and to feel the joy of giving.

Reflections

1. Who has hurts and struggles?
2. The love you have for others should be equal to the love you have for who?
3. Who should you give to?
4. Can man ever solve the poverty problem?

Give it Up for God!

Worshipping God's presence is the number one priority of The HUG Crusade because it is the number one priority for our lives. We weren't made or created to have great jobs or careers; we were made to have a relationship with God. If that's what we were made for, that should be the number one purpose for our lives and that's the number one purpose for our ministry. Worship is expressing love to God. *Matthew 4:10* says,

"...Worship the Lord, your God, and serve Him only."

But, what is worship?

We believe that worship to be any good thing you do to render reverence and homage to God, glorify His name or praise Him. Some examples of worship would be prayer, song, group reading of the Scriptures, dance, baptism, fasting, meditation and communion. But, worship is not limited to only these methods. We will explore other methods later.

You are to worship only God. Even angels of God should not be worshiped, as John wrote:

"I, John, am the one who heard and saw these things. And when I had heard and seen them, I fell down to worship at the feet of the angel who had been showing them to me. But he said to me, "Do not do it! I am a fellow servant with you and with your brothers the prophets and of all who keep the words of this book. Worship God!" (Revelation 22:8-9)

If we should not worship even the angels, is there anything on this earth be it human, animal, vegetation, image, symbol or inanimate object that we should worship? Absolutely not! We are to worship only God.

Reading the word of God is an act of worship. This simple act is just as much a form of worship as your attendance at a church service this Sunday. It is only a different type of worship.

King David worshiped God by dancing when he had recovered the ark of the covenant, as stated in 2 Samuel 6:14-15:

"David, wearing a linen ephod, danced before the LORD with all his might, while he and the entire house of Israel brought up the ark of the LORD with shouts and the sound of trumpets."

Musicians, actors, models and other artists are often worshiped by their fans. When an extremely popular musical band steps out on stage, how do their fans react?

Many cry.

Some faint.

Thousands cheer.

Many whistle.

Some wave banners or posters.

Many dance.

Some hug each other.

Many shout.

Thousands wave their arms in the air.

Some jump up and down.

Some hold candles or lit cigarette lighters.

All of these and many more are forms of worship. None of the acts listed are in themselves worship. But, when they occur as the result of your love pouring out they are. They are all indications of love for the one being worshiped.

Who do you worship?

It's Child's Play

The mother came home to find her seven year old son hammering away at something in the driveway. “What are you building?” she asked. “Nothing” replied the son.

A while later the mother heard the son hollering from the back yard “Mom, help me!... HELP ME!”

She rushed out back and found her son with a large cross leaning against his shoulder. The cross was made of old wood left over from one of his father's projects. Her son had even found a round piece of wood to serve as the head of Jesus.

“I built this for Jesus”, he said. “But I can't make it stand up”, he exclaimed. The hole he had dug was too shallow to support the cross. Taking the shovel, the mother dug the hole deeper and they erected the cross in the middle of the back yard, where it remained for several months until it was blown down in a storm.

This was pure worship on behalf of the son. He had built and erected the cross out of his love of Jesus. There was no music, no celebration, no rituals. This was simply him doing his best to honor our Lord Jesus Christ. He did not place it in the front yard “to be seen by men”. He erected it in his private area as his personal act of worship. The boy did not think all of these through, he simply followed the Holy Spirit and did what he was lead to do.

Like all things of man, the cross eventually perished but the love of Jesus Christ will stand forever. Unlike the man-made cross, the love of Christ can withstand any storm which comes your way. It is stronger than the strongest wind.

Oh Lord, won't you buy me a Mercedes Benz?

Prayer is your personal communication with God. It is a form of worship and praise. It is the time to thank God for His blessings and to ask for His help. It is the time to ask God's blessings for others, and the time to place your burdens on His shoulders.

But, how should you pray? Jesus said, in *Matthew 6:5-13*:

“And when you pray, do not be like the hypocrites, for they love to pray standing in the synagogues and on the street corner 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.”

“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.”

“This, then, is how you should pray:”

“Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name,”

“your kingdom come, your will be done on earth as it is in heaven.”

“Give us today our daily bread.”

“Forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors.”

“And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one.”

What Jesus is telling us is that our prayers should be simple and to the point. That prayers should be sincere and made from the heart and not for show.

God already knows your needs even before you make the decision to pray. He knows the series of events that lead up to your need. He knows why you feel the need. He even already knows your reaction should He fill your need. He knows whether you will give the glory to him or claim it as the result of your personal efforts. He knows if you will squander His blessings or if you will cherish them. He is just waiting for you to ask.

This Scripture can be easily misinterpreted, so be careful. The first paragraph is addressing those who take pride in their prayers.. those whose public prayers are more to glorify themselves than to accomplish their scriptural purpose. The key words are “*to be seen by men*”, this meaning that they are praying to be seen praying by others... praying for the recognition. To those, Jesus is saying the recognition of their peers is all they shall receive from such an effort. You will see this same phrase in a later lesson in this guide and with similar results. Watch for it.

If you are not certain how to pray, pray regardless. The apostle Paul said, in *Romans 8:26-27*:

“In the same way, the Spirit helps us in our weakness. We do not know what we ought to pray for, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us with groans that words cannot express. And he who searches our hearts knows the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for the saints in accordance with God's will.”

As you can see, it is not even necessary to know the words to pray with. Simply make the effort, God will know your needs.

In Jesus Christ's Name I Pray....

Is this or a similar phrase required for God to hear your prayers?

In the book of John, Jesus made the following statements:

“...I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.” (John 14:6)

“Believe me when I say that I am in the Father and the Father is in me; or at least believe on the evidence of the miracles themselves.” (John 14:11)

“You may ask me for anything in my name, and I will do it.” (John 14:14)

Remember, in the Core Beliefs lesson of the guide we stated “God is the Creator and Ruler of the universe. He has eternally existed in three personalities: the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. These three are co-equal and are one God.”

In *Philippians 2:9-11*, the apostle Paul said:

“Therefore God exalted him to the highest place and gave him the name that is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.”

After reading the above Scriptures, what is your opinion?

Praying in public:

The fear of public speaking is one of our greatest fears. As a Christian, one day you will be asked to pray in public. It may be at a church gathering, in your group, at an outreach event or simply saying the blessing before dinner, it is going to happen.

Some people handle this situation by simply memorizing the Lord's Prayer. Jesus himself used this prayer as an example for our prayers. Certainly, it is suitable for most occasions.

If you wish to offer a different prayer, remember that you are not praying to impress those present. What they think about your choice of words, your manner of speech, your accent, inability to pronounce some words, your pauses or your stuttering does not matter! It is not them you are praying to. God sees what is inside your heart, and that is all that matters.

When you pray in public, pretend no-one is around you. Pretend you are alone with God and pray from your heart. Remember *Romans 8:26-27* near the beginning of this lesson. God understands even your grunts and groans.

When attending a public or group prayer you should listen to the words of the person doing the praying, and if you agree with his prayer acknowledge your agreement to God in prayer. For in *Matthew 18:19-20*, Jesus said:

"Again, I tell you that if two of you on earth agree about anything you ask for, it will be done for you by my Father in heaven. For where two or three come together in my name, there am I with them."

Praying for Others:

When participating in outreach events, the odds are great someone will approach you needing prayer. The easy way to handle this is to ask another volunteer to pray on behalf of the seeker. But the easy thing is not always the right thing.

The seeker approached **you**, not someone else. Could it be that the seeker was lead to approach you by the Holy Spirit? Could it be that the request was meant for you as part of God's plan for your life or the life of the seeker?

Before praying for the seeker, ask about their needs. Listen patiently to their troubles. Then pray that God will fill their needs and give them comfort and the strength to carry on.

When praying for others the same principles applicable with public prayer apply. God will know what is in your heart, regardless of the eloquence of your words.

What to pray for?

The Bible says:

“The prayer of a righteous man is powerful and effective.” (James 5:16)

But you must remember that God is good. Thus, God will not answer any prayer which goes against His good will.

The apostle Paul says:

“If anyone teaches false doctrines and does not agree to the sound instruction of our Lord Jesus Christ and to godly teaching, he is conceited and understands nothing. He has an unhealthy interest in controversies and quarrels about words that result in envy, strife, malicious talk, evil suspicions and constant friction between men of corrupt mind, who have been robbed of the truth and who think that godliness is a means to financial gain.” (1 Timothy 6:3-5)

This passage leads the author to believe that prayer for selfish financial gain will not be honored. If you have reliable transportation and just want a nicer car, that prayer might not be answered. If you have a house but want a nicer one, that prayer might not be answered. If you have food on your plate, clothes on your back, and are healthy both physically and emotionally you are already living the good life. In your prayers thank God for your blessings and do not pray for better when there are so many with so much less.

Pray that God will fill your needs and continue to fill your needs. Pray that God will bless those less fortunate. Pray that the Holy Spirit will lead you to glorify God's name and help you lead others to Christ Jesus. Pray for forgiveness of your sins, name every one you can individually.

In your prayers offer thanks for what you do have. Thank God for the good which comes out of bad circumstances. The silver linings that accompany clouds are often God's personal blessings on you. Thank God for them.

You may have lost a loved one, but at the funeral been reunited with a lost friend. Thank God for that blessing as without it they would not have been there to help comfort you.

You may be suffering financial difficulties and be forced to cancel a long anticipated vacation, working those days to pay an overdue bill. Thank God for the opportunity to relieve yourself of that burden that that you may enjoy better times in the future.

Pray for good, not good stuff.

He Sat Alone

On the steps leading up to his mobile home the old man sat alone, smoking a small cigar and looking depressed.

"Howdy", I shouted across his yard as I walked up to him. "It sho is hot, ain't it?" I asked. "Not as hot as it was", he replied.

I leaned forward and shook his hand, introducing myself as being with our church. I explained about the outreach project being held this Saturday and invited him and his family down.

"I would love to come", he said with a sad smile. "But, my wife is in the hospital." I expressed my sorrow and my hopes of a speedy recovery.

"She has cancer" he said, and went on to explain the circumstances. He said the medical bills had taken all his money and that what he had now had to do him until the end of next month. He said he had faith in the Lord that things would work out for the best, and all he could do was trust in Him. "Our friends have been praying for her, and I have too", he said.

I handed him a card and pointed out the number of the church and asked him to call and have him and his wife placed on our prayer list. I explained that I was not a preacher-man, but we had a prayer team which would certainly pray for them.

He agreed to make the call, but I felt that was not enough. Here I was, a Christian and I was afraid to pray for this man and his wife. We continued to discuss his wife and I felt the Holy Spirit urging me to do something... but I felt inadequate. You see, I am not a preacher-man. I am just me. I ain't a good talker.. and can't really pronounce big words and speaking in public scares me half to death. I have a very hard time putting my thoughts into spoken words. I am just me. Certainly, I could not say a prayer that would be adequate for this family's troubles.

I explained to the man that I have a difficult time praying for a specific outcome. That in my prayers I usually ask for wisdom, guidance, courage and that whatever the outcome on an issue I am facing, that the outcome would glorify God and lead others to Christ. Surprisingly, he agreed. He said that he believed that God had a plan and that his wife's illness was part of His plan, whatever the outcome might be.

"I am not a preacher-man", I said again. "But, if you will hold my hand I will pray for you and your wife." He reached out and took my hand. I bowed my head and prayed "God, bless this man and his wife. Whatever the outcome of her illness be, let it serve to glorify Your name and help lead others to Christ.

When I left the man he was in tears. I walked around the other side of his trailer and

shed a few of my own.

God works in strange ways. I did something that day I would have never considered doing were it not for the circumstances God placed me in. These circumstances were brought about by other circumstances in my life which are not too pleasant.

We often wonder why God allows bad things to happen to good people, but it is all part of His plan. Problems in my life lead me closer to God. God energized me to work on his behalf as much as I can. This work put me in the path of this man who, if nothing else, I provided some comfort to tonight.

But there is another side to the coin. This illness of this man's wife left him home alone, which resulted in him sitting alone on the steps of his mobile home as I passed by.

We were both blessed that day. He received comfort and I received courage.

Two days later the following e-mail was forwarded to me. This is humbly submitted as absolute proof that even us that sometimes feel inadequate can, through Christ, make a positive difference in the lives of others.

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I just wanted to make you aware of the impact that some of our members had last night. There were a few people that canvassed a neighborhood passing out cards for the outreach project. They came to the home of the Smith family. Mr. Smith called this morning. He was very touched by this visit. They were there just to pass out a card, but touched him more than anyone will ever know.

You see, his wife was diagnosed with cancer. She has only been able to take one round of chemo and then has been too sick to take anymore. The person that visited their house last night stood there and listened to his story and then proceeded to pray with him. He was so touched by that. They told him to call today and have his wife added to the prayer list. He was so overwhelmed that we would even consider doing that for him. He just wept on the phone.

Reflections

1. Should we use the phrase “In Jesus Christ's name I pray” (or a similar one) when praying?
2. Are prayers for wealth appropriate?
3. What is they one way to handle praying in public?
4. Before praying for a seeker, what should you do?

Prayer Exercise

The group should now break down into smaller groups of two or three people. The members of each group should share one prayer request with the others within the group. Then, each member of the group should take turns praying for the prayer requests.

The Toughest Gift to Give

To many, the toughest gift to give is God's love. It seems that every time it is given away, it is somehow returned. How wonderful is that? A gift you can give, but which will always come back to you!

Cowboy Dancer

The driver pulled into a local quick shop, noticing a heavy-set fellow in tight cut-off shorts, t-shirt and cowboy hat dancing in the parking lot. On the curb sat a boom box blaring country and western music.

The driver went into the store, made his purchase and began to leave. While pulling out the cowboy ran up motioning for the driver to roll down his window.

“Can I have a dollar?” the cowboy asked. The driver reached down into the change cup he kept in his console and grabbed a few dollars worth of change, placing it in the hands of cowboy.

“Are you a Christian?” the driver asked the cowboy. “Yes, I am”, replied the cowboy. “Good”, the driver replied.

As the driver started to roll up his window the cowboy stopped him again.

“Can I have a hug?” the cowboy asked. “Sure”, the driver replied. The cowboy leaned through the window of the driver's SUV and both men embraced in a long hug.

You see, as a Christian, the driver was demonstrating the love of Christ by giving a few dollars to the needy. He tried to capitalize off this act and to witness to his fellow man. The cowboy having nothing of material value to offer in return gave the only thing he had, love.

The funny thing is while the dancing cowboy was appreciative, the few dollars in change given by the driver was repaid a thousand times by the simple act of a hug. This hug was one of a series of life changing events for the driver.

The Christian love you share may not be returned immediately like it was in this case, but it will be returned at some point. Count on it.

Our Strategy:

The HUG Crusade focuses on reaching the unchurched by sharing God's love within your local community.

Our strategy is to reach deep into communities, sharing the love of God in ways which will attract the unchurched so that they will be exposed to the gospel of Christ.

Paul himself set the example for this strategy as described in his writings below.

“Though I am free and belong to no man, I make myself a slave to everyone, to win as many as possible. To the Jews I became like a Jew, to win the Jews. To those under the law I became like one under the law (though I myself am not under the law), so as to win those under the law. To those not having the law I became like one not having the law (though I am not free from God's law but am under Christ's law), so as to win those not having the law. To the weak, I became weak, to win the weak. I have become all things to all men that by all possible means I might save some. I do all this for the sake of the gospel, that I might share in its blessings.” (1 Corinthians 9:19:23)

Association with those different from us is also encouraged in the following Scripture, where the apostle Paul said:

“Live in harmony with one another. Do not be proud, but be willing to associate with people of low position. Do not be conceited.” (Romans 12:16)

The specific way you share God's love within your community should be based upon the people in your community and their needs. Rich or poor, everyone has some need. Let's look at just a few of the needs which might exist within your community:

<u>Group</u>	<u>Needs</u>
Low Income Earners	Clothing Employment Financial Counseling Food Housing Medical & Dental Supplies & Care Transportation
Children of Low Income Earners:	Educational Materials Guidance School Supplies Toys & Games
Middle Income Earners	Financial Counseling
High Income Earners	Stress Management

Divorcees	Divorce Counseling Financial Counseling Grief Counseling
Elderly:	Clothing Companionship Employment Financial Counseling Food Home Repairs Housing Lawn Care Medical & Dental Supplies & Care Prescriptions Transportation
Families of the Disabled/Elderly:	Free time from caring for individual. Lawn Care

Loving someone does not always mean filling material needs, it can also include simply showing someone you care. Here are a few examples:

- You could visit your local big-box retailer on a rainy day and walk customers to and from their cars holding an umbrella for them.
- You can visit construction sites and hand out bottles of cold water to the workers.
- You might hold a free car wash, refusing any donations.

A more comprehensive list of possible projects is included in The HUG Crusade's Projects Manual (LG-002).

Jesus said:

*"You are the light of the world. A city on a hill can not 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 man, that they may see your good deeds and praise your Father in heaven."
(Matthew 5:14-16)*

Based in part on the above Scripture, The HUG Crusade believes that Christians should let their light shine by making the community aware of the good works they perform on behalf of God, not to draw attention to themselves but to draw attention to God and His power and grace.

Give God the credit.

You do little to let your light shine by volunteering or sponsoring an event or project if no one knows you are there to glorify God.

For example: assume a group of homeless advocates are having a walk-a-thon to benefit the homeless. As a Christian, you feel compelled to participate. You register for the event, solicit donations, show up and walk, and afterward go home feeling good that you followed Christ's word and helped the needy. Have you let your light shine? Not unless you let people know that you are participating (or did participate) as a Christian.

List three ways you might have let your light shine in the above situation:

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

The key to letting your light shine is not letting people know that YOU do what you do or did what you did, but WHY you do what you do or did what you did – to demonstrate God's love.

Reflections

1. What did the apostle Paul do to reach out to different communities?
2. Is simply participating in a charitable event “letting your light shine”?
3. Who is it The HUG Crusade focuses on reaching?
4. Identify some of the needy in your community.

5. If you could chose one project for your group to perform to help satisfy some of the needs in your community, what would it be?

Let Your Light Shine

You are the light of the world. A city on a hill can not 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 man, that they may see your good deeds and praise your Father in heaven." (Matthew 5:14-16)

"Be careful not to do your acts of righteousness before men, to be seen by them. If you do, you will have no reward from your Father in heaven. So, when you give to the needy do not announce it with trumpets as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and on the streets to be honored by men. I tell you the truth, they have received their reward in full. But when you give to the needy, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing, so that your giving may be in secret. Then your Father, who sees what is done in secret, will reward you." (Matthew 6:1-4)

These verses have caused some confusion in the lives of many Christians. Do not misinterpret these passages as many have in the past.

By saying in *Matthew 5:14-16* "let your light shine before man, that they may see your good deeds" Jesus might give one the impression you should brag about what you do in regards to spreading the love of Christ.

In what seems to be a complete about-face, by saying "*Be careful not to do your acts of righteousness before men*" and "*so that your giving may be in secret*" the second passage seems to tell Christians that your efforts should be kept quiet... that you should keep them a secret from everyone else.

But, just as your high school teacher probably explained to you, on any test you should carefully read every word of the question. It is the details which can cause you to fail.

Looking a little more carefully at the passages, you will see the first passage clearly says "*let your light shine before man, that they may see your good deeds and praise your Father in heaven.*"

The second passage states "*Be careful not to do your acts of righteousness before men, to be seen by them.*"

Do you recognize the difference? The difference is your **intent**. Do you do your good deeds to bring praise to God or do you perform your acts of charity so that you will be seen by others as doing them?

Mathew 5:15-16 Applies to Those Who Work for the Glory of God.

It seems that Jesus may be speaking about two different groups of people here. The first group, addressed in *Mathew 5:14-16* are those who work for the glory of God alone. Jesus is telling them to loudly shout about their charitable acts, giving all of the glory to God.

Mathew 6:1-4 Applies to the Self-Promoters.

To the second group, those who run around bragging about what they have done or how much they have done, in *Mathew 6:1-4*, He seems to be telling them "Hey, if you got to brag and build yourself up in front of people instead of giving the glory to God, go for it. Just know that whatever recognition you receive here on earth is all you are going to get out of it. In heaven it will mean nothing. But, if you are strong enough that you can control your ego and keep your mouth shut, when you get to heaven you will be rewarded for your good deeds even though you did them for selfish reasons."

It seems that Jesus is telling the self-centered believer that in order to be rewarded in heaven for their good deeds here on earth that they must make a sacrifice. That sacrifice being the self-satisfaction they would have received from the recognition of their peers. This would be a very difficult sacrifice for some to make, indeed.

Jesus is also telling the self-promoters to do the good works, regardless of their intent. But, if you brag about it your reward will be fleeting recognition here on earth instead of the everlasting rewards in heaven.

Some Christians seem to have latched onto *Mathew 6:1-4* not fully understanding who it was meant for. *Mathew 6:1-4* seems to be meant only for those who participate for self-promotion or self glorification, or use their participation for such purposes.

For those to do charitable acts for the glory of God under *Mathew 5:14-16* Jesus commands you to let your light shine. Jesus did not say "you should", "you can" or "you may", He commanded "*let your light shine before man, that they may see your good deeds and praise your Father in heaven.*" It could not be any clearer. Following Jesus' command is not bragging.

One of the goals of The HUG Crusade is to let your light shine. We are not bragging about the efforts of the small groups or of individuals. Instead we are demonstrating God's love and exhibiting to the community the far-reaching impact God is having on our community. We are doing this so that others will recognize God and praise him.

If you or your group participate in community projects and events, anything from cutting someone's grass, doing shopping for the elderly, volunteering at charity organizations, to pulling off a large event, please send us as much information as you can along with a photograph or two if possible so that we can help you let your light shine.

One wise Pastor was recently quoted as saying: "As Christians our goal should become invisible so that others see only the works of Christ." Your good works are the works of Christ and are commanded by Christ to be shown to the world.

Holy Spirit Rain on Me!

It was a Friday morning and raining cats and dogs. Severe rains was predicted throughout the weekend. Reluctantly, the HUG Cookout scheduled for Saturday was canceled.

At lunch, the two volunteers struck on an idea. They immediately phoned the volunteer who had assembled the volunteers to hold the Cookout. "Hey Bob (not his real name), let's grab some umbrellas and hit a big-box retailer!"

Yeah, they thought it was crazy, so only a few volunteers showed up the next day. But, armed with umbrellas they swarmed down upon a local big-box retailer. As customers left the store the volunteers would walk them to their cars under the protection of the umbrellas. When customers climbed out of their cars, volunteers were often there to keep them sheltered and walk them to the store. No one was preached to, but everyone was told the volunteers would performing this service to demonstrate the love of Christ.

The project lasted about an hour and a half. By that time the volunteers were soaked. It seems most umbrellas aren't really big enough to cover two people. During the entire event the volunteers were laughing and smiling. The fellowship was wonderful and most of the customers were very receptive to their kindness.

But what made it all worthwhile was a simple message posted on an on-line service that afternoon.

"Thanks for walking my mother to the car today. She was moved by your small but thoughtful act."

Projects like this are extremely simple to do and cost absolutely nothing. All it takes are volunteers who are willing to step outside of their comfort zone. Fully one-half of the volunteers who participated in this project had never participated in an outreach project before. They each said they would not have missed it for the world.

5. What are some ways to let your community know about your good works without bragging?

Loving is not a One-Night Stand

The avoidance of “one night stands” is one of the reasons The HUG Crusade was formed. The two volunteers felt introducing others to Christ and leaving them on their own was not “good”. They did not have the volunteers necessary to lead multiple groups, so this and other study guides was developed so that groups could be formed in the communities touched and as local groups they could both study the word and share the word with others. Who better to reach a community than members of the community?

Paul set the example:

“Though I am free and belong to no man, I make myself a slave to everyone, to win as many as possible. To the Jews I became like a Jew, to win the Jews. To those under the law I became like one under the law (though I myself am not under the law), so as to win those under the law. To those not having the law I became like one not having the law (though I am not free from God's law but am under Christ's law), so as to win those not having the law. To the weak, I became weak, to win the weak. I have become all things to all men that by all possible means I might save some. I do all this for the sake of the gospel, that I might share in its blessings.” (1 Corinthians 9:19:23)

Paul would enter a community and share the gospel of Christ. But when he left, the gospel of Christ remained with those he converted. Paul left behind churches to teach the word of Christ and lead others to salvation.

The churches Paul left behind was not the churches of today. There were no Baptists, Catholics, Lutherans, Methodists, Quakers or any other denomination. They were simply churches with one objective, to spread the gospel of Christ. This is the purpose of The HUG Crusade.

Like Paul The HUG Crusade is establishing churches (groups) within communities, it is not church in the same manner which modern society considers a church to be. There are no steeples, no pews and not even a restroom. There is just people coming together to worship God, learn about Christ and to satisfy their obligation to the gospel with others. Very much as Paul had done.

It is for these reasons that The HUG Crusade focuses not only on outreach, but on establishing a lasting presence within the communities we touch. The ultimate goal of each outreach project you perform should be to establish a new Bible study group within the community. One which will grow and reap good fruit for God.

It is The HUG Crusade's objective to build your group by conversion, not by migration. While we love for members of your local churches to join The HUG Crusade or a church to establish a HUG Crusade group as their outreach ministry, your group should not be considered a competing organization, only a supplemental one. If someone is already active in their local church, they should remain so. If they are not active in a local church, they should seek one out.

Our objective is to build our groups through reaching the unchurched. Those who have not attended a church service (with the exception of a special service like Christmas, Easter, weddings, funerals, etc...) within the past six months. To grow by enticing others to leave their churches is a waste of time, money and does nothing to glorify God.

You, as a member of The HUG Crusade, are a facilitator in training. Your personal goal should be to facilitate your own group and train others to go out and form their own groups. It is through this method that we chose to spread the gospel of Christ, just as Paul did.

Your group should provide continued support to the groups you create (your child groups) by praying for them, assisting them in their outreach projects and promoting their growth. You should remain in regular contact with them, fellowship with them, share resources and talents with them, help ensure they remain active and on the path to righteousness.

Your personal obligation:

Reaching out to others is not limited to your group's outreach projects. You have a personal obligation to share the gospel throughout your community. Jesus commands it. This does not mean that you have to go door to door handing out gospel tracts, but it does mean you should do what you can to help lead others to Christ.

An easy way to accomplish this is to ask friends and acquaintances to volunteer to participate in outreach projects. Get them exposed to Christians reaching out within their community. They will hear the gospel through their participation and they will be able to witness the Holy Spirit in action.

Remember, HUG stands for His Uplifting Grace. It is our obligation, both individually and as a group to share His grace throughout our community.

Behind the Curtain

They are not outstanding in any way, except for their accumulation of failures.

They both accepted Christ early in their lives, but did not practice their belief for decades. Turning their backs on God, they were avid members of the “me” generation, both focusing on wealth accumulation and instant gratification instead of the really precious things in life.

Christians are granted spiritual gifts by the Holy Spirit. Living separate lives half a nation apart, they tried to use their spiritual gifts for their own benefit. They focused on their own wants, ignoring the suffering around them. They felt pressured to prove their worth in the manner measured by man, a manner which means absolutely nothing to God.

They had lived rocky lives resulting in financial ruin, divorce, heartache and emotional distress. They were a burden, always emotionally and sometimes financially on their friends and families. They suffered hurts and they hurt others. They lost the respect of others, but much worse, they lost respect for themselves.

This cycle of insanity continued until well after they had met and married. He felt worthless and she felt powerless. Their lives were in shambles and everything they tried resulted in absolute failure. They relied only upon themselves and not on God.

Only after they began to attend a local church did their lives begin to change. Over time, they witnessed the power of God in the form of the Holy Spirit moving through others and eventually moving them to become involved; to learn from those more knowledgeable; to experience the love of Christ first-hand and to share that love with others. It was difficult, but over time they learned how to place their problems in God's hands and realized that God was bigger than any problem they had.

These stories you have been presented in this study guide were not rare instances collected from a number of sources. They are the real-life testimonies of the two volunteers as to the power and grace of God. There are a sampling of the experiences of the two volunteers which with the exception on one story, occurred over the course of a little more than two years. There are many more, which will be presented in later publications.

The two volunteers are no different than anyone else. As a matter of fact, there are many others in their church who are more educated, more knowledgeable, more active, more supportive, more energetic, more caring, and frankly, more righteous. But the two volunteers serve as proof that the Holy Spirit can take anyone regardless of their background and struggles, lift them up, make their lives worthwhile using them to accomplish His good purpose. To God belongs the glory.

A wise Pastor once said “Becoming a Christian does not automatically make lives easier. The more you focus on Christ, the harder Satan works to pull you away.” This has proved true in the the lives of the two volunteers. Their lives are still rocky, but drastically improved over what they were only a couple of short years ago.

They have learned to pray not for wealth, but for happiness... not for pleasure, but for peace... not for good things, but for good lives... not for miraculous acts, but for the courage to act. But more important than any of the prayers mentioned, they have learned to pray for the needs of others.

Struggles continue to exist, but so long as they remain focused on Christ their lives continue to improve. God does work miracles, often one small one at a time.

Now consider this: If God can use these two broken people to help accomplish His good purpose, what could He do with YOU if you really dedicated your life to His service?

