

Icy Stairs

One of the most important things we do in our ministry is visit kids and their families in their homes once a week. We call it visitation and it is when our staff goes out into the community and knocks on all the doors of the kids that have attended our meetings the preceding week. To us it does not matter what kind of neighborhoods these kids live in or what the weather conditions are at the particular time of the visitations we just go as the Bible instructs us to do, "Go into the world" is the gospel initiative (Mathew 28:19). I remember early on in our ministry a drug dealer named Flavian came up to me in one of the housing projects and said to me, "You know I've been watching you man and I figure you're from God cause you could get killed out here." The fact of the matter is I believe he was surprised that someone kept coming. He later shared with me that in his words, "Most church folk come and go or we just run um off."

Years ago I learned my lesson that "love is a choice." **It is choice to sacrifice your personal satisfaction and advancement for the highest good for others.** It has little do with your feelings although it can result in good feelings and joy when followed through with actions and commitment. It is sad to see the lives of people who believe love is a feeling and give into sexual sin resulting in illegitimate children, broken lives and dead end generational curses. Real love is always rooted in sacrifice and springs primarily from the sacrifice of the Son of God Jesus Christ. The Bible declares in Romans 5:8 *"But God demonstrates his love for us in this. While we were still sinners Christ died for us."*

Each and every week we make the choice to visit these kids at a regular time and place. **The kids are expecting us to come. They see our faithfulness and begin to develop relationships with us and begin to learn about God by how we treat them and respect them.** While these visitations are done regularly there are always situations that come up to test our resolve. One such occasion occurred to me personally last week during a rare Houston ice storm.

Last Friday afternoon I went out to visit kids in my apartments on the southwest side of Houston the wind was blowing at about twenty five miles per hour with a wind chill factor of about fifteen degrees above zero. Ice coated many cars and walkways of the apartments. I was alone that day as our team had split up to get more done quickly. I came to end of my list of apartment numbers when I looked up at number 1410. I saw the names on the list and remembered that there was a single mom there with a little two year old girl in an apartment with no furniture. I had seen her the week before and I had invited her to come on Saturday. With this in mind I looked up and the stair way leading up to her apartment that was covered with thick ice all the way to the top. My first thought was, "I can't walk up

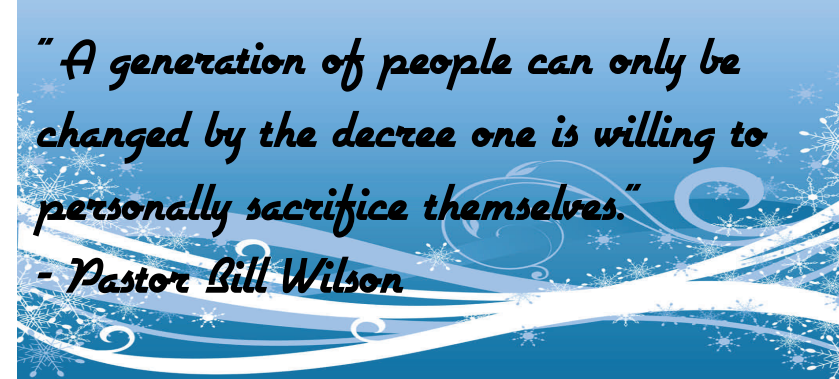
these stairs I'll be hurt." I remembered back when I was a kid in Toledo Ohio falling on the ice backward and nearly killing myself. I looked around and there was no one there just me and those icy stairs separating me from door number 1410. I thought about turning away I could come next week when things were better but what about the child what about the woman? I looked at the stairs and the railings all frozen and placed my bare hand on the icy metal railing and placed my foot on the first stair and slowly lifted myself up pulling and steadying myself by holding on to the side railing. Step after slow step I did this concentrating and praying that I would not fall. The whole process took about ten minutes to reach the top of the stairs a trip that would have normally taken ten seconds.

I stood in front of the door collecting myself for a moment and knocked on door 1410. After a couple of knocks the woman answered and began crying. Her first words to me were, "You remembered me someone remembered me. Thank you so much for coming nobody ever comes." The Lord impressed on me that she had been let down so many times by people that she had given up on hope that anybody cared at all. These are the times people are most vulnerable to the devil's temptations to hurt them or even kill themselves.

I shared with her a moment about the love of God and prayed with her. Her spirit began to lift and her and her daughter got on the bus the next day and have begun to return to God and change their lives.

On the way home that evening I began to think about the icy stairs and how Jesus made a decision to walk up not icy stairs but a hill called Calvary. I thought about the cold pain I felt on my hands as I grabbed the icy rails lifting myself one slow step after another and came face to face with the nails driven through his hands and feet at the cross. At the top of the stairs I thought about the lonely crying woman and then of Jesus on the cross dying for a lost sinner named Scott Binkley. You see it was God who made a decision to have his Son sacrificed for me, and for you and all these kids and families in Houston's inner-city. Love is a choice one that God made with his Son. I want to end this letter today with this verse found in Romans 8:38-39. *"For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord."* God bless you please keep us in prayer.

Pastor Scott





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FROM THE CHILDREN'S ACTIVITY CENTER

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The GOOD REPORT

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The Children's Activity Center – Children's Activity Truck, part of Walking Faith Ministry, is a non-profit, faith-based organization dedicated to sharing the love of Jesus Christ to children and their families in Houston's crime and poverty ridden inner-city. We use a number of colorful fourteen-foot storage trucks converted into portable stages to bring weekly presentations of the gospel in skits, dramas, puppetry, and video, right to the very doorstep of the children who most desperately need it. Weekly visitations to the homes of attending children helps us share the life changing message of Jesus with the entire family. Donations matter and are tax deductible. Donations can be made through our website via Pay Pal.

Senior Pastor: Scott Binkley Administrative Director: Gilda Duncan

Local Church

Recently I read a statistic that 82 per cent of churches in America have less than 150 members. While we hear much about mega-churches with thousands of members because of television and internet we hear virtually nothing about faithful pastors and congregations on the street corners of America that are keeping the light burning these desperate times.

While I am sure mega –churches are used by God in many ways the fate of the American church and revival does not rest in their hands. It is the street corner church, the home Bible study and the faithful kids that attend our schools nation wide from the local church that keeps the Spirit moving in this nation.

This is what I know from fifteen years of inner-city missions. The inner-city is not the inner-city because of the people that are there, it's all about the people who aren't. It's all about the people who left who gave up and went to safer places and refused to stand with God's people where he planted them. My heart aches to see the little churches in Acres Homes and Fifth Ward shut down and ruined and also across rural America. I know it's not popular or easy to be in the hood. But the Church must prevail in the gates of hell or it will not prevail anywhere. Let's pray for these little known faithful pastors and prayer warriors, for as they go we all go. Pray for the local church!

