



NON-PROFIT



TAX-EXEMPT

"Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature" MARK 16:15

JULY - AUGUST 1998

FROM US TO YOU

As we begin another Summer with the Lord, it is with renewed joy that He is always so faithful and good to those who love and serve Him. With that in mind, we would like to share with you a personal testimony. We have been married now for eighteen years. Throughout most of our marriage there has been one person in our lives who has shown a special kindness to us and this ministry. She was Eric's mother, Geraldine Kaestner. In the early days of Bible Believers Fellowship, Inc. she helped to keep us going even when we received little support from anyone else. She donated thousands of dollars to the ministry, served briefly on our Board of Directors, and was a continual source of encouragement and love. Yet, despite her affection for us, Gerry had become disillusioned with Christianity when she was a young woman. She had seen so much hypocrisy in the lives of those who claimed to love Christ that she wanted nothing to do with the faith! For 18 years we tried to lead her to salvation, but despite our best efforts, she would not yield to God. For Satan had used his greatest weapon very successfully, the sanctimonious, self-righteous attitude of those who profess Christ but do not possess Him in their hearts (Matthew 15:8-9 & 23:12-15). But, due to her love for us, she was interested in our newsletter. It was the only Christian literature that she would receive. Therefore, each time a new issue of "The Good News Letter" was printed, Eric would save her a copy. Yet she seldom spoke of it, and we didn't even know if she read them.

We decided to just pray for her and let the matter rest with God. For spiritual battles can never be won with carnal weapons (2 Corinthians 10:4). All we could do was to set an example of Christ in our everyday lives and let the love, joy, and truth of His Gospel shine through us, illuminating the darkness. You know, anyone can live for God when they receive everything they want in this world. However, only those who truly love Jesus will remain faithful to Him in both the good times and the bad. That's why, as believers, we are tested by the things we suffer (see Isaiah 48:10). We are refined through the fire of affliction, and we are purified in the furnace of rejection until we come forth as polished gold (1 Peter 1:6-7 & Revelation 3:18). All of us are of value to God. So great was the price He paid for our redemption that only the blood of His Son would suffice. "All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the LORD hath laid on Him the iniquity of us all" (Isaiah 53:6 KJV. Also, see Psalm 119:176 & Romans 3:22-25). For Jesus Christ came into this world "...to seek and to save that which was lost" (Luke 19:10 KJV. Also, see Luke 15:4-6 & Hebrews 13:20). Well, Geraldine Kaestner was one of those lost sheep (Jeremiah 50:6 & 1 Peter 2:25). But she is in Heaven now! Gerry died of liver and colon cancer on Wednesday, June 3, 1998. No one knew that she was so sick, not even her doctor! She had complained a lot about gas and bloating, but right up until a week before she died she had been living alone and had been able to fend for herself. It wasn't until the hospital did a CAT scan that the cancer was detected.

During her last months Eric had phoned her at least twice a day

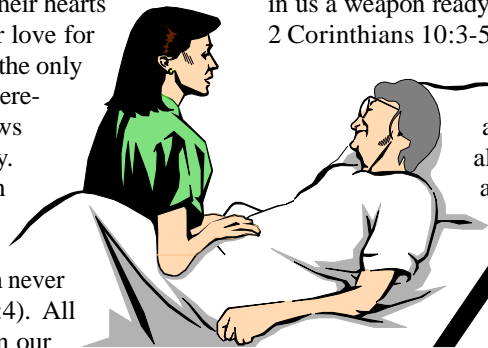
and visited her one or more times a week. It was also an opportunity for him to use her washing machine to do our laundry. Because, throughout the years of our marriage, we have lived in a small, two bedroom apartment in a commercial part of town. The building has no laundry facility and the neighborhood has become so dilapidated that the Laundromat nearby leaves much to be desired. Have you ever felt like God is blessing everyone else but He is not blessing you? That is one of Satan's favorite lies. Because God always tests us severely before He brings in the blessings! During the past eighteen years other couples, much younger than us, seemed to be getting all the good things from God, houses, children, prosperity. Our situation remained stagnant, but we chose to love and serve Christ anyway, and to trust Him with our future. As time went by, we grew accustomed to the sound of noisy car radios from the street outside, or loud mouthed drunks from a nearby bar. Burglar alarms have been a frequent annoyance when we have tried to pray or read the Bible. Graffiti litters the landscape. Yet, during that time, the Lord brought us through the fires of testing and created in us a weapon ready for battle (Isaiah 54:16, Ephesians 6:10-17 and 2 Corinthians 10:3-5). Eric's mother was a spectator to our strange

afflictions or weird circumstances (see 1 Peter 4:12-13). She knew we have an inner strength and a precious hope that transcends the carnal realities of life. For God's Spirit lives in our hearts and controls our destiny.

We had just about given up hope of Gerry ever coming to the Lord. But God knew what a help she had been to this ministry, and He had **not** given up! He put a burden on Anne's heart which she shared with Eric. It was to ask

Gerry one last time if she would like to accept the Lord as her Savior. We visited her at the hospital and she was cheerful and concerned about us, even though the doctor had just told her that she did not have long to live. It was the last day that we were able to communicate with her successfully. For in the days that followed, she was in so much pain that the hospital had made her groggy with Morphine. However, God's timing is always perfect! As we stood by her bed, the Lord reminded Anne again, "Go ahead and ask her. Ask her now!" Anne spoke softly to her, saying, "Gerry, we want to see you again in Heaven. Would you like to accept Jesus Christ as your Lord and Savior?" To our delight she said, "All right dear." Then she began talking about our newsletter. She told us that she had been speaking to one of the nurses about it and the nurse wanted to have a copy for herself. Anne took hold of her hand, and with eyes brimming with tears, she led her 89 year old mother-in-law to Christ. Six days later, Gerry was with Jesus, where we know by faith, that we will some day see her again! As for us, our new mother-in-Christ has left us her beautiful house in Long Island, New York. For she now has a better home in Heaven! (See John 14:2 & 1 Corinthians 2:9.) As Jesus once said, "...many who are first will be last, and many who are last will be first" (Matthew 19:30 NIV). We hope you enjoy this month's article, "Do You Resist The Holy Spirit?"

In Christ's love we remain, Eric and Anne Kaestner



Do You Resist The Holy Spirit?

By Anne Kaestner

One evening, several months ago, while I was working late at the office, I was suddenly interrupted by an unexpected phone call. The caller told me that he had been looking at our web site and he had a question. The man is a member of a large Protestant denomination, and he indicated to me that he had just graduated from seminary school. His question was posed in elite theological terminology. But what he really wanted to know was simple. He had seen the testimonial section of our web site, with the very kind comments that prison chaplains and inmates had made about us in order to encourage donations to this ministry. The people, both Protestant and Catholic, were from various parts of the country and different religious affiliations. That puzzled him. Surely, he felt, there are so many doctrinal conflicts between the various groups that a unity of agreement seemed impossible. Nevertheless, he was curious enough to inquire. As I spoke with him it was clear that, despite his seminary training, he had never really established a close **personal** relationship with Jesus Christ. Therefore, the Holy Spirit could not operate through him! For he was depending on human education and textbook philosophies to change the lives of people for Christ. And, I knew that it would never work for him, no matter how many scholarly degrees he received. Because only **God** can change the human heart! It doesn't matter how educated a person might be, or how eloquent, or personable, or wise. "...*Unless the LORD builds the house, its builders labor in vain...*" (Psalms 127:1 NIV). You, as an individual, cannot win anyone to Christ. Neither can I, if I rely on my own resources! It is the **Power** of God that makes all the difference!

If you love and serve Jesus, your body is a **house** in which God wants to live (1 Corinthians 6:19). Our Creator is not interested in fancy cathedrals or beautiful buildings made by men. "*Heaven is My throne, and the earth is My footstool. What kind of house will you build for Me?*" says the Lord... *'Has not My hand made all these things? You stiff-necked people... You are just like your fathers: You always resist the Holy Spirit!'*" (Acts 7:49-51 NIV). That is the biggest mistake in the Christian church! People want to please God in their own way, through their own methods and they will not give sovereignty over their hearts to Jesus Christ (see 2 Peter 2:1 and Jude 1:4). That's why the church is so divided! There are differences in doctrine because human nature always gets in the way of the pure Word of God! However, our Creator has only one opinion on every issue! So, no matter how much a person may **want** to be useful to the Lord, the degree to which Christ can use him depends entirely upon how much of his heart he is willing to yield to God! The Apostle Paul wrote to the Corinthian church saying, "*My brothers, some... have informed me that there are quarrels among you... One of you says, 'I follow Paul'; another, 'I follow Apollos'; another, 'I follow Cephas'; still another, 'I follow Christ.' Is Christ divided? Was Paul crucified for you? Were you baptized into the name of Paul? I am thankful that I did not baptize any of you except Crispus and Gaius, so no one can say that you were baptized into my name... For Christ did not send me to baptize, but to preach the gospel--not with words of human wisdom, lest the cross of Christ be emptied of its power. For the message of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the **power** of God*" (1 Corinthians 1:11-18 NIV). It is human nature for people to want to control everything. But God cannot work in the life of anyone who will not give that control to Him! Not to their church or their denomination, but to Jesus Christ (see John 15:5). Too many Christians are "...*rash, conceited, lovers*

of pleasure rather than lovers of God--having a form of godliness but denying its power..." (2 Timothy 3:4-5 NIV).

Jesus told His followers, "*If you love Me, you will obey what I command. And I will ask the Father, and He will give you another counselor to be with you forever--the Spirit of truth. The world cannot accept Him, because it neither sees Him nor knows Him. But you know Him, for He lives with you and will be in you*" (John 14:15-17 NIV). Jesus was speaking about the Baptism in the Holy Spirit, God's greatest gift to His children (John 1:12-13). Notice, I did not say to the world! For "*Jesus said, 'My kingdom is not of this world...'*" (John 18:36 NIV). The Baptism in the Holy Spirit is available only to those who love Christ and desire to remain faithful to Him. Being Born Again gets you into the race for Heaven (Acts 20:24, 2 Timothy 4:7, Hebrews 12:1), but if you drop out of the race, you will not get the prize (see 1 Corinthians 9:24-27), the inheritance of eternal life (Matthew 25:34). In this sinful world in which we live, the power of evil is so strong that, even though we may try hard to live for God, we cannot do so if we depend on our own resources. Therefore, God has provided this gift for those who love Him. The Baptism in the Holy Spirit is the total saturation of the person in God's Spirit. Jesus was led by the Spirit (Luke 4:1), just as we must be led by Him (Romans 8:12-14 & Galatians 5:16-18). But God cannot pour this precious wine (Acts 2:13) into a person who has never repented of their sins and been reborn through Christ (Luke 5:37-38).



The Lord's promise to His disciples came true at the time of Pentecost (Acts 2:1). However, only those present in the upper room (Acts 1:13) received this special Baptism by Fire (Luke 3:16, Acts 2:3 and Hebrews 12:29). The purpose of this gift was to enable the followers of Jesus to bring good **fruit** into the Lord's Kingdom (Matthew 7:17-19, Luke 3:9, 6:43 & James 3:17). These days, mostly all the teaching is about the blessings of God. Some false doctrines even tell believers that once they come to Christ they will never have any more problems. But Jesus said, "*I have told you these things, so that in Me you may have peace. In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world*" (John 16:33 NIV). Notice the contrast here! Jesus did not come to bring

peace to this earth (Matthew 10:34 and Luke 12:51). The peace that Christ brings is an internal tranquillity and joy that is not affected by external circumstances. It is a peace that comes through faith and total dependence on God (Proverbs 3:5-7 & Romans 15:13). Those who rely on themselves or carnal devices will never experience "...*the peace of God, which transcends all understanding...*" (Philippians 4:7 NIV). The world cannot receive it (1 Corinthians 2:14). This blessed gift comes to us through the Holy Spirit, but you will not be eligible for it unless you remain in Christ, our Holy Vine (John 15:1-7). For God's Spirit does not come to bring glory to Himself. Jesus said, "...*He will testify about Me*" (John 15:26 NIV). The Lord said to His disciples, "*all men will hate you because of Me, but he who stands firm to the end will be saved*" (Matthew 10:22 NIV).

The good fruit that God wants to produce in us is the fruit of His Spirit, which "...*is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control...* Those who belong to Christ Jesus have **crucified** the sinful nature with its passions and desires" (Galatians 5:22-24 NIV). Those who are not living for Christ produce the fruit of the carnal nature, which is "...*sexual immorality, impurity and debauchery; idolatry and witchcraft; hatred, discord, jealousy,*

fits of rage, selfish ambition, dissensions, factions and envy; drunkenness, orgies, and the like. I warn you, as I did before, that those who live like this will not inherit the kingdom of God" (Galatians 5:19-21 NIV. Also, see Ephesians 5:3-12). Too many Christians have these sinful traits because they will not humble themselves before God. However, unless they repent and allow the Holy Spirit to grow good fruit in them, they will not get into Heaven! Jesus said, "If anyone does not **remain in Me**, he is like a branch that is thrown away and withers; such branches are picked up, **thrown into the fire and burned**" (John 15:6 NIV. Also, see Matthew 13:30, Luke 3:16-17 & Hebrews 6:8).

God will allow Satan to test us (Job 1:7-12, 2:3-10, Luke 22:31-32) to see if we were serious when we made our initial commitment to Christ. In many cases, this results in persecution, or even death. The history of the church is filled with the spilt blood of martyrs. Remember that Jesus said, "...If anyone would come after Me, he must **deny himself** and take up his cross daily and follow Me. For whoever wants to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for Me will save it" (Luke 9:23-24 NIV). Christ doesn't want wishy-washy Christians (Revelation 3:15-16). He wants those who have withstood the trials and tests of faith (1 Peter 4:12-16, James 1:2-4) and remained faithful to Him (Luke 16:10-12, 1 Thessalonians 3:2-9, & 2 Thessalonians 1:4). As Christians, we are tested as "...gold refined in the fire..." (Revelation 3:18 NIV. Also, see 1 Peter 1:6-9). God has said, "See, it is **I** who created the blacksmith who fans the coals into flame and **forges a weapon fit for its work...**" (Isaiah 54:16 NIV). If you truly love Jesus and have been feeling the fires of affliction upon you, it may be because God is trying to turn **you** into a weapon that He can use! Why? So that "no weapon forged against you will prevail..." (Isaiah 54:17 NIV). Until you have been through the furnace of testing and made strong enough for use in the Master's hand, you will not be ready for the battle. "For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against... **spiritual forces of evil** in the heavenly realms. Therefore put on the full **armor of God**, so that when the day of evil comes, you may be able to stand your ground, and after you have done everything, to stand" (Ephesians 6:12-13 NIV). You do this by allowing His Spirit to take command and control of your life! You must be clothed in the righteousness of God (see Revelation 19:8). Because spiritual battles can only be won when our weapons are not carnal (1 Corinthians 3:3 & 2 Corinthians 10:4), but Holy! Our weapon in warfare is the "...Sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God" (Ephesians 6:17 NIV). And the Word of God is Jesus Christ (John 1:14 & Revelation 19:13)!

Now, where does the Lord wear His sword? In His mouth! (See Revelation 19:15.) God cannot use you until His Spirit is able to speak through you (Luke 12:11-12), and you become a Holy vessel fit for His use (see 1 Corinthians 6:15-20 and 12:12 thru 13:13). "For who has known the mind of the Lord that he may instruct Him? But we have the mind of Christ" (1 Corinthians 2:16 NIV). Paul knew that the Corinthians would never understand the spiritual aspects of God through their brain power or education. They needed to humble themselves before Him (Luke 18:10-14) and allow Him to reveal His Holy truths to them. That's why Jesus said that we must come to God as little children (Matthew 18:3-4 & 11:25), vulnerable, needy, trusting **totally** in Him! Therefore, "Let no man deceive himself. If any man among you seemeth to be wise in this world, let him become a fool, that he may be wise. For the wisdom of this world is foolishness with God. For it is written, He taketh the wise in their own craftiness. And again, The Lord knoweth the thoughts of the wise, that they are vain" (1 Cor. 3:18- 20 KJV). Remember what Jesus said to Simon Peter, "...Blessed art thou, Simon Barjona: for **flesh** and blood hath **not** revealed it unto thee, but My Father which is in Heaven" (Matthew

16:17 KJV). It is not until we diminish (John 3:30) in our sinful, fleshly nature (see Galatians 5:19-21) that Christ is able to fill us so full of His Spirit that we become His weapon in battle. Through Jesus, we must be holy vessels for use in God's army (Philippians 4:13 & 2 Timothy 2:3-4). When we are willing to put Christ first and to live by faith, our bodies become a sheaf in which the Sword of the Spirit can dwell. "Stand firm then, with the belt of truth buckled around your waist, with the breastplate of righteousness in place, and with your feet fitted with the readiness that comes from the gospel of peace. In addition to all this, take up the shield of faith, with which you can extinguish all the flaming arrows of the evil one. Take the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God" (Ephesians 6:14-17 NIV).

After the day of Pentecost, new Born Again (John 3:3) believers continued to come to Christ. But that did not mean that they automatically received the Baptism of His Holy Spirit. For example, "...Paul took the road through the interior and arrived at Ephesus. There he found some disciples and asked them, 'Did you receive the Holy Spirit when you believed?' They answered, 'No, we have not even heard that there is a Holy Spirit.' So Paul asked, 'Then what baptism did you receive?' 'John's baptism,' they replied. Paul said, 'John's baptism was a baptism of repentance. He told the people to believe in the one coming after him, that is, in Jesus.' On hearing this, they were baptized into the name of the Lord Jesus. When Paul placed his hands on them,

the Holy Spirit came on them, and they spoke in tongues and prophesied" (Acts 19:1-6 NIV).

These were people who had already become Born Again. They had been led to Christ through another evangelist. However, they did not receive the Baptism of the Holy Spirit until Paul placed

his hands on them and prayed over them (also, see Acts 8:14-17). The seminary school graduate thought that he was already living by faith. He believed that the Holy Spirit lived inside of him. Why? Because that is what his denominational doctrine told him! But no church or religion can give us what can only come from Jesus Christ! Moreover, in this ministry, I'm not interested in trying to please God through my own good works and righteous deeds. I want to continually decrease so that Christ can increase in me (John 3:30). To do otherwise, is to grow ones own fruit. And we cannot grow any fruit on our own that is acceptable to God. He is the Gardener, not us (John 15:1-2). It did not work for Cain (Genesis 4:1-12) and it won't work for us either (Hebrews 11:4, 1 John 3:12 & Jude 1:11).

The only fruit that God wants to receive from us is the fruit that He Himself grows. Nothing I have to offer Christ on my own will be anything more than filthy rags (Isaiah 64:6). That is why I want the Holy Spirit to completely take over my heart and mind and spirit. I want to lose myself in Jesus! The writers of the Bible were used in a mighty way by God because they were **not** trying to please Him through their own efforts. They humbled themselves so much before the Master, that the Lord's Spirit was able to flow through them in order to produce the written Word of God (2 Peter 1:20-21). Therefore, the good fruit that is produced through this ministry has nothing to do with my own personal wisdom or theories. Only God can grow good fruit, and He alone should receive the credit for it! The Apostle Paul was a very educated, intellectual man. But he told the Corinthian church, "My message and my preaching were not with wise and persuasive words, but with a demonstration of the Spirit's power, so that your **faith might not rest on men's wisdom, but on God's power**. We do, however, speak a message of wisdom among the mature, but not the wisdom of this age or of the rulers of this age, who are coming to nothing. No, we speak of God's secret wisdom, a wisdom that has been hidden and that God destined (Continued On Page 4)



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for our glory before time began" (1 Corinthians 2:4-7 NIV. Also, see Philippians 3:3-9). It is the process of living daily for Christ that brings new fruit into His Kingdom (Philippians 1:9-11 & Colossians 1:3-12). Years before God gave my husband and me this organization, I had to make up my mind that I would put Him first and seek His will in all things. New Christians are often impatient for their own ministries. They want to go out and witness about Christ to the world. However, if God cannot trust a person to be faithful in the little things, how can He give them an important job to do? As Jesus said to one of His faithful servants, "...You have been faithful with a few things; I will put you in charge of many things..." (Matthew 25:21 NIV).

For instance, in my early twenties, when I was in a backslidden state, it was the little things of God that finally, over a period of time, brought me back to the fold (Luke 15:4-7 & John 10:11-15). One of them occurred one morning after I had driven to the train station in my shiny new automobile. I was heading for work and, at the time, my job and my car were two of the most important things in my life. Yet I had noticed that people often opened their car door so wide that it hit against my car, leaving small scratches on it. Consequently, as I pulled into my parking space at the train station, I was ready when another automobile pulled in next to me. As the woman in the other car opened her door, it hit against my car. I was out like a flash, very angry at her carelessness. But, despite my furious attitude, she looked at me in a meek, apologetic way, and said softly, "I'm very sorry if I hit your car. And I promise you I will never do it again." I was so flabbergasted that I just stood there speechless (see Proverbs 15:1). I never forgot that woman! She didn't hand me a tract or say a word about Christ, but I recognized the fruit of God's Spirit (Galatians 5:22-24) when I saw it. And it brought me under conviction (John 16:8 & 1 Thessalonians 1:5). A few years later, I recommitted my heart and life to Christ, and He began His work in me. Jesus said, "...I tell you the truth, unless you **change** and become like **little children**, you will never enter the kingdom of Heaven. Therefore, whoever **humbles** himself like this child is the greatest in the kingdom of Heaven" (Matthew 18:3-4 NIV). And God was about to teach me that even though I was still only an infant, spiritually (1 Corinthians 3:1-2 & 1 Peter 2:1-2), His Spirit could still use me, as long as I lived in the Light and love of His Word (John 1:14).

The building I was living in was filled with mostly single people, like myself at that time. They were friendly and nice. However, they knew that I was a Christian and that tended to make some of them very nervous around me! They had a party one night for everyone in the building. But there was drunkenness and a rowdy atmosphere there that was not conducive to my Christian walk. So I didn't go (2 Corinthians 6:14-17). Then, as the evening got late, I heard a commotion out in the hall, and some screaming. One of the young women had returned to her apartment alone while her husband had remained at the party. However, for some reason unknown to me, one of the male party goers had followed her back to her apartment and had accosted her, punching her in the face. It didn't take long before word of it got back down to her husband, who sprang up the stairs with a group of neighbors around him, some of whom were off duty New York City police officers. I think they arrested the perpetrator, mostly to keep him safe from the wrath of the woman's angry husband! I'll call her Linda, but that was not her real name. She was a pretty blond woman of only nineteen. Her husband was just a few years older than

she was, and he was tall and muscular. They were a nice couple, but he was embarrassed that he had told me about an immoral profession he had been involved in before they moved to New York. He hadn't known of my Christian walk at the time, but after he found out about it, he was always ill at ease in my presence. On one occasion I had been at a neighbor's apartment when he had stopped over to borrow a newspaper. The subject of salvation somehow came up, as it usually did when I was around. And he said to me, "But I don't believe in Hell. I don't believe that." Through God's Spirit, I always had an answer for him. "If you're about to cross the street," I said, "And there is a huge truck speeding along the highway, and you say, 'I don't believe in trucks,' and you step out in front of it..." "I know," he replied, sheepishly, "It will hit me anyway."

Linda was small and petite. And while I didn't want to get involved in anything to do with Sunday night's party, the Lord gave me such a tremendous burden for her that, although I tried to forget the whole thing, He wouldn't let me. Throughout Monday the Holy Spirit kept bringing her back to mind. I was deeply in debt and unemployed at the time. Therefore, I had been going on job interviews all that day. Needless to say, I didn't have much money. But I couldn't stand the burden anymore, so I knew I would have to go and see Linda. However, I didn't want to go empty handed. So, when I noticed a

small grocery store on my commute home from the city, I decided to buy Linda some fresh fruit and nuts. I put it all in a nice basket, wrapping it up as a gift. She was alone when I arrived, but she welcomed me into her apartment and we began to talk. I didn't even have to bring up the subject of Christianity. My desire was to comfort her and to be neighborly. So we began to talk. She told me that several years earlier, she had attended a Christian church. She had gone there alone because she was hoping to find out more about God. But she was quickly discouraged by the other church goers. Linda described a rich church where the women dressed in fancy clothes (Revelation 3:17-19). However, she didn't have any fancy clothing (Revelation 19:7-8). So she felt that people were staring at her in a hostile manner. No one welcomed her. Everyone she saw at the church was cold and indifferent (Mark 12:28-34, Luke 6:31 & 10:25-37). The other girls her age saw her and began giggling and whispering among themselves. Linda left after the service with pain in her

heart and she never went back. She had concluded that God was angry at her because of her lifestyle, and she had given up all hope of finding love in Christ. It was then that I knew why the Lord had laid such a heavy burden on me to visit with her! "Linda, Jesus loves so much that He wanted me to come and tell you how much He cares. Those people at the church you went to were wrong to treat you as they did. They weren't living for God at all. They didn't even know Him! For if they had truly known Christ, they would have reflected His love for you!" (See John 8:3-12.)

I know that my visit made an impression upon Linda because a few days later I received a thank you card from her. She especially mentioned the delicious fruit I had taken her. Little did I realize at the time, that the Lord had carefully orchestrated the events leading up to my visit. For I had, unknowingly, chosen a symbol of His love and compassion (Matthew 9:36) working in the lives of those who love and serve Him! As David prayed so long ago, "*O Lord... You do not delight in sacrifice, or I would bring it; you do not take pleasure in burnt offerings. The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit; a broken and contrite heart, O God, you will not despise*" (Psalms 51:15-17 NIV).

