

.†.is my Shepherd

The Lord is my Shepherd, I shall not want.



BOISE, IDAHO

APRIL, 2007

VOL. 3 NO. 9

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HIS MYSTERIOUS WAYS

After years of wandering, Clint Dennis had come to that point in his life when he knew he had been missing something important. And for months he had felt he could find what that something was in that church on the hillside in North Phoenix.

He arrived at Phoenix First Assembly of God on an unusual day. The choir room was filled with members putting on long robes, tying ropes around their waists, wrapping headdresses around their heads. *"Come be part of the mob,"* a stranger told him.

It was Palm Sunday and the church was reenacting the Crucifixion in costume. Like others in the congregation, he would be part of the crowd that yelled, *"Crucify Him! Crucify Him!"* Hesitantly he agreed. Then another stranger hurried up to him. *"The man who was supposed to play one of the thieves didn't show up,"* he said *"Would you take his place?"*

Again he agreed and was shown to the cross where he would look on as Christ died. Just then, though, something about Clint's manner caught a member's eye. He turned to Clint and asked, *"Have you ever asked Jesus to forgive your sins?"*

"No," Clint replied softly, *"But that's why I came here."* There beneath the cross, they prayed, and Clint asked Jesus to come into his heart. His life is transformed. What the church didn't know then was that Clint had been in prison for 10 years. Even after his release he had gone on stealing cars and trucks until he knew he had been missing something in life. He was a real thief, but at last he was welcomed into God's kingdom by the same Jesus who welcomed another thief 2,000 years ago.

Jo Hart, Phoenix, Arizona
Guideposts, April 1988

REFLECTIONS

By Stan Manley

PEACE THAT PASSETH ALL UNDERSTANDING

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Let me take you to a suburb of Los Angeles California, where I worked the night shift as a gas station attendant, as I took a semester off from college.

At about 2:00 in the morning, I was finishing a sandwich when I noticed a figure approach the office from the east side. I got up just in time to meet him at the door. But, before I could ask if I could help him, he had pulled a gun from his jacket, forcing me back into the small office.

He abruptly demanded my money, which I gave to him even more quickly than he had commanded. We were about the same size, but the gun made him about six inches taller and 25 pounds heavier. I immediately dismissed any thoughts of heroism or stupidity.

He ordered me to open the cash register. I quickly explained that it was not functional during the night shift. This tended to upset him. He grabbed a tire iron and began to beat the cash register with one hand, while the hand with the gun was flailing wildly in the air.

I tensed up, thinking he might start taking his anger out on me. He suddenly turned and, pushing the gun into my midsection, he directed me to head for the back room that was just off the office. The thought suddenly came to me that this scene was about to come to an end, and it could be a violent one.

I felt the barrel of the gun press into the small of my back. I reassured myself that it was obvious he was going to have me lay down on the floor and then make his escape. **(continued)**

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(Continued) These plans ended however when he forced me face to face with the wall, with no room left to lie down. Standing there, feeling the gun pressed even harder into my back, something unusual happened inside the pit of my stomach. I knew that at any second he was going to pull the trigger and life would end.

However, the fear, a paralyzing fear that had occupied the pit of my stomach, was suddenly gone. A long time ago I had made the decision to invite Jesus into my life. There was no doubt that there were three persons in this room.

I said a quick prayer, closed my eyes and waited for the sound of the explosion. The moments stretched into eternity. I became aware of a peace that passed all understanding. There was no whimpering or pleading, just acceptance that my life was over, and it was time.

Finally, the thief told me to stay where I was and not to turn around. I could hear his footsteps backing out of the room, and then leaving the office. I waited until I heard a car take off before making my exit to call the police.

There have been several times that I have felt the breath of death on my life, but never the sting of death. In every situation there has been a calmness, a peace that does indeed passeth all understanding. It can be yours.

The Bible tells us that today is the day of salvation. Now is the time. Thinking that we can make peace with Jesus later is a terrible misjudgment on our part. You must remember that you are going to survive death. Your life will continue at that point until forever.

We have not been promised that we will all die peacefully in our sleep. For some of us, our lives could end in an instant of violence or any of a hundred different ways. Invite Him into your life, into your heart. Do it today, do it now. Please don't wait.

Stan Manley-editor

HAPPY EASTER

**MISSION STATEMENT:
TO ENCOURAGE THE FAITHFUL
TO SAVE THE LOST**



**FOR GOD SO LOVED THE WORLD
THAT HE GAVE HIS ONE AND ONLY
SON, THAT WHOSOEVER BELIEVES
IN HIM SHALL NOT PERISH BUT HAVE
ETERNAL LIFE. JOHN 3:16**



IT'S YOUR RESPONSIBILITY, DO IT TODAY.

HITTING THE SAVE BUTTON

Imagine yourself as a writer, typing away on a personal computer. You're in the middle of creating a multi-page article. The words are flowing, and you're beginning to think about your acceptance speech for the Pulitzer Prize. Suddenly and without warning, the lights dim and your computer screen blinks. From an adjoining office you hear someone yell, "*Hit the save button!*" But it's too late.

You were so intent on getting your ideas down that you failed to save any of it. When the electricity went off, your document vanished. It's gone forever because it wasn't saved. What's true of computer documents is true of people. Every person who rejects Christ will realize when death comes, which sometimes strikes more suddenly than an electrical outage, that it's too late to, "hit the save button."

According to the Bible, our destiny is sealed for eternity when we die. That's why we are urged to believe on the Lord Jesus Christ today. Imagine the horror of realizing it's too late. You will have lost everything forever.

**THE EARTH CANNOT
BE THE CENTER OF
THE UNIVERSE. THERE
CAN BE NO CENTER TO
SOMETHING THAT HAS
NO BOUNDARIES.**