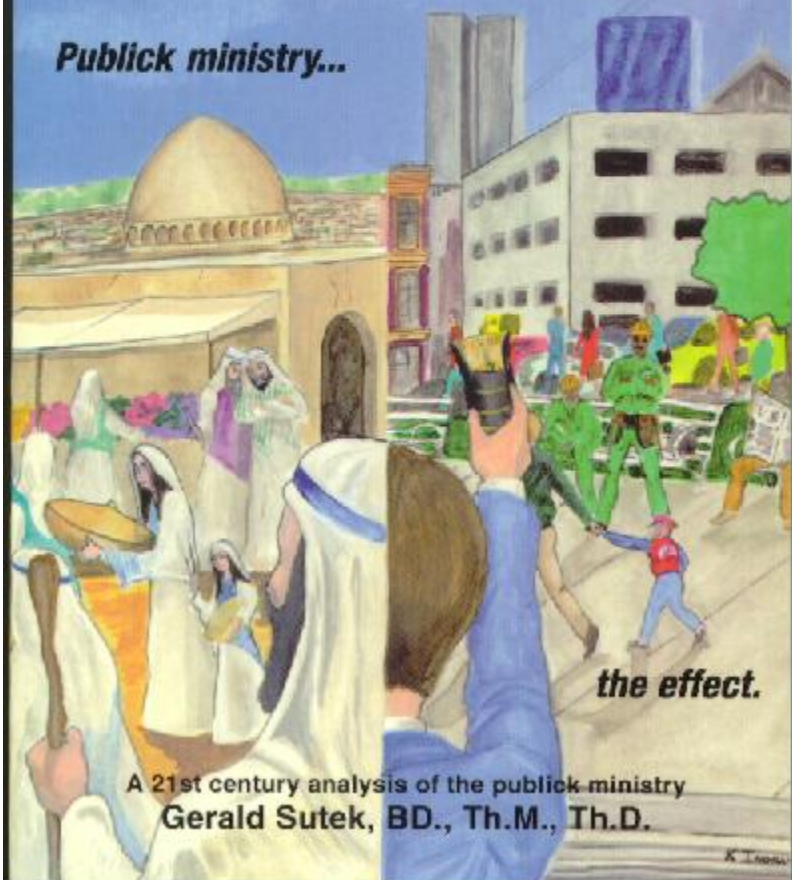


REBUKING IN THE GATE

Publick ministry...



the effect.

A 21st century analysis of the publick ministry
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Rebuking in the Gate

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INTRODUCTION

In my two earlier books, STREET PREACHER'S MANUAL and I AM NOT ASHAMED, great detail was given to describe all aspects of publick ministry (the author prefers the Cambridge spelling of the word "publick" as found in Acts 20:20.) and how to properly engage in it. The weighty, Biblical arguments in favor of this ministry are expounded within these two books as well as modern, state-of-the-art application of publick ministry techniques. This book, Rebuking in the Gate, is a general overview of the subject. It is sort of a 21st century analysis of the publick ministry and the effect this ministry can have upon all who engage themselves in it. This book will also describe the far reaching impact that publick ministry can have either directly or indirectly upon those reached by it. As you will read, the effects of publick ministry are so far reaching that it will affect even into the secular areas of life.

In the researching of this book questionnaires were given to approximately 100 men who have had a good number of years experience in the field of publick ministry. Some are pastors, some full time evangelists, and some hold secular jobs, are members of a local church and have a publick ministry of their own. The gleaning of the wealth of their experience, statistics and general assessment of publick ministry will be leavened throughout this book to the great benefit of the reader.

Reality dictates that in these final days of "American style" Christianity it is unlikely that this book will affect a sudden flooding of the market with emboldened street preachers, but it is my hope that some Christians walking the thin line between lukewarm, popular and acceptable secret discipleship or being a bold publick witness may be pushed to never be ashamed in a publick forum of their saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ because he was not ashamed to die publickly for them.

It is also hoped that this book will provide ammunition and encouragement to those who already enjoy the rich and abundant life of being a publick minister for our Lord Jesus Christ.

CHAPTER ONE

OVERVIEW AND SELF EXAMINATION

PUBLICK MINISTRY.....THE EFFECT

"They hate him that rebuketh in the gate, and they abhor

him that speaketh uprightly." Amos 5:10

Publick ministry has never been very popular either to those on the receiving end or to those challenged to do it. But it seems that in these Laodicean, materialistic, proudful, high-tech, new age days that publick ministry is suffering some of its lowest ratings in the polls.

It doesn't seem to matter that the Lord used this medium of evangelism via every preacher and prophet in the entire Bible. It doesn't seem to make any difference that the Lord admonished all of us who claim his name to utilize this method to accomplish the distribution of his Word. Few are converted to this manner of sowing the seed though they have never equaled its effectiveness in getting the blood of 300,000 souls off their hands as Paul did in three short years in the city of Ephesus. Acts 20:20-26. It was the religious crowd that rocked Stephen to sleep; and sometimes it makes one wonder whether some of these guys might still be around today.

A question was asked during one of my seminars on publick ministry whether I had many problems with gang members or thugs when I preach in the open air. My response was, "Not really; all my enemies are fundamental Baptist preachers."

Don't be too quick to judge the attitude by which this book is written. The happiest, most durable and joyous servants of our Lord Jesus Christ that I know are the ones who exercise themselves regularly in the areas of publick ministry. To these this book is dedicated, and speaking along with these we wish through this book to present the positive side of what publick ministry will do for you, your church, and your community.

**JUST WHAT IS
PUBLICK MINISTRY?**

It seems profitable at this point first to define publick ministry negatively. That is, what publick ministry is NOT.

First, publick ministry is not house-to-house or door-to-door visitation. Some may look at it as such and maybe in a modern definition of publick it may be thought to be included under a broad umbrella of "publick", but the Lord carefully defines his own words and he said: "...publickly AND from house to house." Acts 20:20. (Emphasis added).

Second, publick ministry is not one-on-one soul winning. I believe in doing one-on-one and door-to-door, but they are not publick ministry.

Third, publick ministry is not the meeting in the church. Once again, in the modern definition of the word, the regular church meeting may be termed "public" and we all feel more comfortable with our "public profession" made within the security of the four walls of the building and among like-minded brethren, but this is not publick ministry. A more accurate definition of a publick profession of faith would be found in John 4 with the woman at the well and her heartfelt response to her salvation.

I have said for years that if a preacher will only preach behind a pulpit, for money, to a voluntary audience but will not preach to sinners on the street for free, he is a professional. The same applies to the occupants of the pew. If they will sing and pray and shout inside the church but hesitate doing so in "PUBLICK", they are hypocrites.

**SO
JUST WHAT IS
PUBLICK MINISTRY?**

Noah Webster, 1828, defines the word "publick" as:
Pertaining to a nation, state or community;

extending to a whole people, common to many; circulating among people of all classes; open, exposed to all persons without restriction.

The argument is posed that the Bible prophets and preachers used the publick forum because they did not have church buildings back then. I rebut that even in times when they had buildings they still did publick ministry because it was the method that the Lord designated as the best for accomplishing the task of the Lord's heart. The early saints met in the temple and in houses in Acts, and yet in chapter 8, the men and women of the church went everywhere preaching the word.

Imagine your community if all the truly saved men and women of the church went everywhere preaching the word. Is it a pretty sight and sound? Yea and Amen! It is to those who love his Word. How long would it take for your community to be turned upside down (Acts 17:6) for the Lord Jesus?

Let me use an illustration to help define. Can you drive to Wal-Mart, park your car, go inside and make your purchase, return to your car, drive home and park in your driveway, and no one along the roadway, in the parking lot, nor any of the employees or shoppers in Wal-Mart ever realize that a representative of the Lord Jesus Christ had visited them that day? If the answer is yes, then you are not a publick witness for the Lord Jesus Christ.

What is the difference between you and the lost man who shops at Wal-Mart?

Could an appliance repairman come into your home and repair the dryer and leave and not know in any way that an ambassador of the King of kings occupied that dwelling? If yes, you are not a publick witness for the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ. What is the difference between your house and the lost person's house next door?

Every Christian was saved "for this purpose" (Acts 26:16), and if they fail here, then from the Lord's perspective, the Lord got a raw deal in saving them. There may be many great things that any Christian may do during his tenure on this planet,

but if the Lord saved you for the purpose of being a minister and a witness, and you accepted his salvation but are not a minister and a witness, then that austere man who saved you will require something of you somewhere along the way.

Amos was a publick minister; a street preacher to be specific. He was a simple farmer raising a few sheep and raising some sycamore fruit on the side as a cash crop. Seeing judgment coming to his community because of sin and feeling a burden for the lost members of family and friends, he heard the voice of God and felt that he might be "called" to do something about the situation. Amos had no preaching heritage, no training, no experience, no ministerial contacts or political pull among the brethren, he had no special gift, nor aptitude, and not even any real inclination toward the ministry. Amos was not ordained, licensed or commissioned nor was he given a great open door; except the greatest door of all---the streets of his community. The Lord was looking for a man to stand in the gap and make up the hedge, and he did not care if the brethren approved or not. He found one in Amos.

This is a very profitable portion of your Bible because it lets us know that in order to be a publick minister we do not need the approval or licensing of the brethren. Nor do we need to have a formal education or ordination before beginning our ministry. We do not even need to wait for that first offer of a pulpit from the hierarchy but simply to go and do what the blind man did in John 9. To add a few words for coloration of the text; he may have said: "Look fellows, I don't know if this guy was virgin born or God manifest in the flesh or the fulfillment of all the Old Testament prophesies concerning the coming of Messiah. All I know is 'whereas I was blind, now I see.'" Was he a publick witness? You bet!

WHO HAS PERMISSION?

I can only imagine the huffing of the brethren as well as the city officials during the scene in Luke 19. Jesus is coming into Jerusalem via a donkey in fulfillment of Zech. 9:9. The Bible says that when his DISCIPLES saw him they began to rejoice with a loud voice and shout things that most Laodicean Christians are ashamed to shout in church. They went a step further and climbed up trees that did not belong to them, broke off the branches, and strewed them in the path of their Saviour. They took off their outer garments and did the same with them. Wait a minute! Did anyone ask the city if it was okay to do such a thing or if they had to have a permit for such activity? Are these fanatics "called" to do this? Do any participants in this tumultuous activity care whether anyone looking on is offended? NO! These folk making a publick disturbance are the ones who were the recipients of both physical and spiritual blessings and miracles, and they are doing what comes naturally when the DISCIPLES of the Lord Jesus are filled with His Spirit and are operating in His presence. These are the publick witnesses the way the Bible defines them.

LET YOUR LIGHT SO SHINE

Imagine! You are driving home from downtown EGYPT at the end of another unproductive day in the WORLD. You are DISCONTENTED with all that life in the WORLD is said to be but isn't. You are quite DISTRESSED at the prospect of returning home where nothing seems to go RIGHT. The horrible darkness, of some kind, is ever present. Your DEBT to the world and in the world is not only insurmountable but mounting. (This is the condition of many in downtown EGYPT). In your desperate search for something real you glance into the sky and view the CREATION (oops) of GOD (oops...oops) and something in you longs to have a CAPTAIN over you who will be tender yet strong. You remember there is supposed to be a community of people who claim they are God's people. They claim they have the answers to life's most difficult problems. Maybe the people of God can help you here lost in this WORLD without

Christ, being an alien from the commonwealth of Israel and from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the WORLD. Its getting mighty dark out here. But where would you go to look for such a people and how could they be assured that the answers would be RIGHT? Another glance at the sky with a good heart and you see that "all the children of Israel had LIGHT in their dwellings." That sure would make it easy to find. That LIGHT sure did SEPARATE them from the rest of the WORLD. Because of that LIGHT those people seemed to have a calm about them. They certainly were more joyous than those in the thick darkness and they sure enough could SEE a whole lot better and they sure were easy to spot.

Would this be what one might call a PUBLICK WITNESS? I think so!

The folks in Noah's day had no problem knowing where to go for the answers. And although they did not want the answers, it did not keep Noah from presenting himself as a representative for the Lord.

NOT THAT IMAGE

I have heard it said among the brethren concerning publick ministry that they "don't want that image" for their church, school etc. But why would anyone not want "that image" seeing that it plainly is a Bible image. I can understand that if they have only been exposed to a poor example of publick ministry they may not view it properly, but just because it may have been done wrong does not mean that it should not be done the right way. The brethren who argue this point are inconsistent, for the JW's and Mormons do door-to-door the wrong way, but that does not stop the brethren from going door-to-door.

Why are we so concerned about images anyway? What image do you prefer that your ministry project? If not the Biblical image of a reproach bearing, unashamed, fearless proclaimer of the truth that saved your soul, then maybe the professional, corporate image of the world's measurement of

"success" is the image you prefer your ministry project.

REPROACH

I was teaching on public ministry in a Christian school recently and the pastor was present. I used the following illustration. Suppose this school needed to raise money for a certain school project and they decided to have a car wash. There is not a kid in this school who would hesitate a minute to stand out on the highway with a big sign and shout your lungs out, "CAR WASH...CAR WASH." But let's just change the sign to read "JESUS SAVES", and let's change the message to John 3:16, and let's change the motive to the eternal destiny of your neighbors. There is probably not a kid in here that wouldn't hesitate or refuse or suddenly become ill at the prospect of such an exercise. WHY? Suddenly the pastor raised his hand and said that he thought he had the answer to that. He said that there was no REPROACH associated with the car wash, but there would most certainly be a REPROACH to accompany the witness.

The very fact that there is definitely a reproach accompanying any public witness activity ought to tell anyone who has ears to hear that "*this is the way, walk ye in it.*" Are we not specifically instructed to go without the camp BEARING HIS REPROACH?

WHAT HAS YOUR FAITH EVER COST YOU?

In "free" America, in these casual, Laodicean final moments before the Lord's return, it is quite difficult for the AVERAGE Christian to actually bear the Lord's reproach. When you think of it there really is no reproach to be borne in attending church, even if it is a Bible believing church. There really isn't any reproach in holding an office in such a church. There really isn't much, if any, reproach to be borne by even pastoring such a church. Preaching behind a pulpit carries with it a good measure of PRIDE and HONOR. So, how can the Christian of this period obey the New Testament command in 2 Tim. 1:8 which says that

we are to "be a partaker of the AFFLICTIONS of the gospel?" (Emphasis added). There is nothing pleasurable or comfortable connected with the word "affliction." It implies some sort of pain, suffering, embarrassment, discomfort, inconvenience, etc.

NEW TESTAMENT SACRIFICE

Romans 12:1 calls upon every disciple of the Lord Jesus Christ to become a living sacrifice. This seems only reasonable since the Lord gave his life and blood to pay for the most perverted thought that we have ever entertained. SACRIFICE---this word also carries only undesirable implications, and yet we are beseeched to yield to this request. (It is just a request).

Now consider a servant of the past who is said by the Lord to be a man after God's own heart. David said, when about to offer a sacrifice, that he would not offer unto the Lord of THAT WHICH COST HIM NOTHING.

Consider the original question. What has your faith in the Lord Jesus Christ ever COST you? There is one sure quick way to remedy this. Just go PUBLICK with your faith. Go "without the camp" and bear his reproach. Notice "WITHOUT THE CAMP." There is an automatic silencer that is attached to most exit doors of the local church. The comfort that allows a Christian to relax with his faith should definitely be present within the camp of the church. But the exhortation within the camp should motivate those within to be willing to go without and bear his reproach.

COMFORTABLE DENOMINATIONS

Do you know what group of Christians were known for their success in the field of evangelism during the period of the late 1800's and early 1900's---the Methodists. They had the famous circuit riding preachers as well as a whole lot of outdoor work. They were not well thought of among the mainline denominations. They had not been approved by the

general populous as yet. Then, along about the 1920's they began to build their great churches with stained glass windows and chandeliers and padded pews and carpets. They became COMFORTABLE. But they left their position of being without the camp and thus lost their zeal for the publick ministry. When was the last time you saw a Methodist doing any evangelism, much less publick ministry?

So the Southern Baptists picked up the banner of evangelism. They were thought of back then as the rogue denomination. They began to have their tent meetings with the great evangelists. But then they built their great churches with all the great stuff inside and they became very COMFORTABLE. It is not coincidental that at the same time they lost much of their zeal for evangelism. It must have become more COMFORTABLE to serve the Lord inside, or within the camp. If you have been around long enough, you know that this happened about the end of the 1950's or early 60's.

Can you guess who grabbed the baton after that--- the independent, fundamental, separated, dedicated, blood-washed, missionary, pre-millennial, Bible-believing Baptists. I was part of their giant Sunday School campaigns and busing ministries. If anyone during this time was doing publick ministry at all, it was this crowd. They were not the accepted group among the other denominations. They enjoyed being the independent radicals who broke from the mainline camp. But have you noticed lately that we have become acceptable? Our buildings are just as nice as any other denomination. We can offer just as much COMFORT as the rest of the gang. We can make the timid Christian feel very COMFORTABLE when they come to make a "publick profession of faith." Why, we would not want them or anyone to feel UNCOMFORTABLE within our camp. It may offend someone to have to bear REPROACH. So we CONVENIENTLY remove all association with REPROACH, SACRIFICE AND AFFLICTION in order that we might project an ACCEPTABLE IMAGE to the WORLD.

What group will run with the torch of publick evangelism from here to the rapture? And what will they call themselves? Maybe they'll just be known

as the 7000 who have not bowed the knee to the
IMAGE OF BAAL.

CHAPTER TWO

THE EFFECT OF PUBLICK MINISTRY UPON SIN

"Ye are the SALT of the earth: but if the salt have lost his savour wherewith shall it be salted? It is thenceforth good for nothing, but to be cast out, and to be trodden under foot of men." Mt. 5:13.

"Let your speech be always with grace, seasoned with SALT." Col. 4:6. (Emphasis added).

Salt has three properties or qualities pertinent to our discussion here. Salt is an irritant, a healer, and a preservative. That is, if the salt has not lost its savor. The dictionary defines the word savor as "the characteristic property or distinctive quality." Whenever salt is used or applied, it (the salt) does not get to choose what property it wants to exhibit. The salt cannot select the effect it wants to have. It is simply an agent of the "applier." No one blames the salt for improper application and no one praises the salt for the desired effect.

If we then are to be the salt of the earth, it is not comely for us to dictate how our master might use us. After all, his thoughts are higher than our thoughts; he sees the whole picture and he is the judge. For instance, we want to see folks saved (proper motive), coming to our church (admirable), and growing under our discipleship. All of these are fine motives and goals which I'm sure were held by all the prophets and preachers of the Bible; but many times the Lord chose to send a prophet to a certain area at a certain time for the purpose of being a witness AGAINST them. *"Yet he sent prophets to them, to bring them again unto the LORD: AND THEY TESTIFIED AGAINST THEM: but they would not give ear."* 2 Chronicles 24:20. (Emphasis added). Also, Neh. 9:26, 9:30, 13:21; Jer. 1:16, 25, 30; Ezek. 11:4, 13:17, 25:2. *"And ye shall be brought before governors and kings for my sake, for a TESTIMONY AGAINST THEM and the Gentiles."* Mt. 10:18. (Emphasis added). Also, Mk. 11:6, 13:9; Lk. 9:5.

Sometimes you may need salt as an irritant, and you need it to exert the property of an irritant on that occasion. There may be occasions when you need to irritate the wound and bring the blood to the area before it can be healed. The great physician may want to practice his medicine in his own manner. The following are several examples of the irritating effect of "salt."

It was my experience when I pastored in Tallahassee, Florida, in the late 70's that the community could be greatly benefited via the publick ministry. I have led publick ministry activities which I feel certain resulted in the closing of sodomite establishments. Doug Coates states that he has seen equal results from his consistent publick preaching in Tulsa, Oklahoma.

Ken Lansing has been on the streets of Memphis, Tennessee, for 25 years now and testifies that publick ministry stifles sin (slightly). Another street preacher writes that the police in his city encourage street preaching because they know that it stifles sin.

Pastor David Gibson from Norfolk, Virginia, says that though crime is on the increase nationally, within his community he is able to note that the crime rate up or down has been directly proportionate to the amount of publick ministry being done.

If we are the salt of the earth and salt is a leaven, why wouldn't this be true? Why couldn't the Lord use us to both irritate and bring healing and preserving of righteousness to any community where the salt is applied?

IRRITANT???

Some timid souls may balk at the preacher being used as an irritant. Are we not admonished to bewray the evil? Eph. 5:11 says, "*And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, BUT RATHER REPROVE THEM.*" (Emphasis added).

Proverbs 28:4 says, "They that forsake the law praise the wicked: but such as keep the law *CONTEND WITH THEM.*" (Emphasis added).

Proverbs 29:24 says, "Whoso is partner with a thief hateth his own soul: *HE HEARETH CURSING AND BEWRAYETH IT NOT.*" (Emphasis added). The word "bewray" means to expose; to betray, as if to reveal something kept in confidence or secret.

Back in the late 70's the rise of sodomite liberties was just at the grass roots level. There was a Metropolitan Community Church which moved into the neighborhood. Back then, unless you had done some homework on this group, you would not have known that it was (and still is) an entire denomination of churches throughout the world totally given to the propagation of sodomy under the flag of a "fundamental, Christian church." Theoretically, unknowing members of our community could visit this assembly and become infected by its filth. As a Bible-believing church given to publick ministry my church felt burdened to expose the hidden purpose of this organization and alarm the community to its secret threat. By publick preaching on the issue, we *IRRITATED* the community especially the pastor and members of the Metropolitan Community Church, but we also brought healing to many innocently deceived citizens. We also affected the legislature in failing to pass a law that not only would have made the practice of sodomy legal, but also make it illegal for the private citizen to instruct their child that there is anything wrong with homosexuality.

Pastor Shawn Dunn gives credit to publick ministry for the closing of two bars in his city of Urichsville, Ohio.

Pastor James Knox praises the publick ministry for the closing of a new age book store in downtown Deland, Florida.

Daniel Wright from Deland reminds us that the true effect may not be realized for a longer term. "*Cast your bread upon the waters: for thou shalt find it AFTER MANY DAYS.*" Eccl. 11:1. (Emphasis added).

Instilling the Fear of the Lord

Three verses in Proverbs tell us that by the fear of the Lord men DEPART FROM EVIL. Pr.3:7, 14:27, 16:6. And six verses in Deuteronomy admonish to "gather me the people together and I will make them hear MY WORDS, that they may learn to FEAR ME all the days that they shall live upon the earth, and that they may teach their children." (Emphasis added). Hey, wouldn't that be novel in any community? It may be worth a try. Ask yourself the question: How are you going to go about gathering the people of your community together so they may hear the words of the Lord that they may learn to fear the Lord and teach their children by remaining inside your church building?

We ridicule the charismatics for putting up a billboard which reads "JESUS IS LORD OF CHICAGO" and believing it to be so because they have claimed it. What is the difference when we hole up inside the SANCTUARY of our MONASTERY and ignore the sin outside. We have been to cities in the south where there were more Baptist churches than liquor stores and bars. Would someone please tell me why there are ANY bars in those cities? Answer-NO CONSISTENT PUBLICK MINISTRY.

CHAPTER THREE

THE EFFECT OF PUBLICK MINISTRY UPON THE SINNER

It can hardly be argued that publick ministry fulfills the responsibility of every witness and minister to WARN the wicked and thereby cleansing the hands of the witness of the blood of the wicked. Although Ezekiel 3 and 33 are Old Testament passages they are certainly referred to by Paul in Acts 20:26 which brings them up past the year 2000 should the Lord not return by then.

If a city were in imminent danger of a natural disaster, would it be proper for the church to meet at the meeting house and preach inside to WARN the city? That is absurd! Then why is it any different when a community is in danger of losing their eternal soul? Suppose someone recognized the approaching catastrophe and mentioned it to the local minister and his response was, "Oh, don't worry, we are going out on visitation this Thursday and everybody will be warned," or "Well, we will send the buses out as usual this Sunday AM so that will be all taken care of." These ministries, though they be very right in themselves, would not accomplish the task of WARNING THE WICKED for they are not a publick witness as defined earlier.

DANGER AHEAD--LET'S GO SOUL WINNING

Remember that nowhere in 31,000 verses of the Bible is there ever given a COMMAND to WIN SOULS. Once again, the scenario is of the watchman upon a wall who sees danger coming and so he pulls a passerby aside and begins to go through the Roman's Road. There is nothing wrong with soul winning or the Roman's Road, but neither of these is PUBLICLY WARNING THE WICKED.

WE'RE ALREADY IN HELL

Often when dealing one on one after publicly preaching I get the smart-aleck response, "I'm already in hell." The other night while on a street meeting in Tempe, Arizona, a deadhead, Satanic inspired teen threw that in my face. I replied, "There is one sure way to know that is not true; there are no street preachers in hell."

Pastor Ken McFadden from Searcy, Arkansas, says of publick ministry, "At least it lets the people know there is someone who cares for their soul."

And so it is with the sinner, they cannot say the alarm was not sounded LOUD AND CLEAR on their behalf when a zealous publick minister is at work. *"And they, whether they will hear, or whether they will forbear, (for they are a rebellious house) yet shall know there hath been a prophet among them."* Ezek. 2:5.

OPPORTUNITY FOR SALVATION

Although we are often accused of shoving the gospel down their throats we know that is simply impossible. But what publick ministry does do for the sinner is that it puts the gospel right in front of him, and both provides an opportunity for instant, on-the-spot salvation and forces him to decide. The world is so programmed against the church in these times that most would never even think of going to a regular service; but they must face the gospel on the street and either accept or reject.

Nearly all of the one hundred publick ministers who contributed their experiences to this book have said that there really are genuine conversions on the street. It may remain true that most never show up in church, but that is also true of other ministries.

Jimmy Hood is a pastor and director of a rescue mission in downtown Columbus, Ohio. He observes that the number of souls saved during any of his church calendar years is directly proportionate to the amount of publick ministry that they involve themselves in.

INSTRUCTION IN RIGHTEOUSNESS

Something that I have noticed through my years of publick ministry is that folks on the street are getting more and more ignorant of the basic truths of God's Word. It used to be that most folk would at least state that, indeed, they did believe the Bible and that if you could show it to them in the Bible that they really would believe. It also was true, though long ago, that they knew the Ten Commandments, simple stories and moral teachings and that there was a general FEAR of the Lord among the whole lot of the American citizenry. But in the last generation this has degenerated drastically. The public has been so programmed by the glass toilet in the living room that they now actually believe that adultery, though not recommended, should be acceptable because most people are guilty of it. Sodomy is generally thought now to be just another choice of normal humans. Ignorance of sin and righteousness abounds and society will be little affected by faithful Sunday School teachers who instruct on Bible morals.

I know that "*...evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse,*" but when the skilled publick ministers regularly provide instruction in righteousness at least the community is without excuse.

Ron Knudson, a publick minister in the Marysville/Sacramento, California, area, puts it this way: "Publick ministry makes a statement for righteousness that otherwise would not be present."

EXAMPLE IN RIGHTEOUSNESS

The appearance of evil on our streets is both fashionable and fast becoming the norm. We do not have to confine this to the teens anymore either. Folks just have a generally raunchy appearance. In vivid contrast to this, I can remember in my

lifetime that a relative would not think of going downtown shopping without proper hat and gloves. Some may say that's too much but at least it shows you where we have come from and where we are headed. Recently I dropped my wife off in front of Wal-Mart and parked near the entrance to wait. Within 10 minutes I counted 78 females either entering or exiting and there were only two that had a dress or skirt on.

What do you suppose goes through the minds of the street observers when a group of 15 or 20 ladies and men dressed clean and righteous stand on the corner and sing, "Years I spent in vanity and pride, caring not my Lord was crucified, knowing not it was for me He died on Calvary?" The world NEEDS AN EXAMPLE OF RIGHTEOUSNESS in front of them. Where else would they go on an average day to get an example of righteousness. "...that ye may know how that the LORD doth put a difference between the Egyptians and Israel." Ex. 11:7.

Recently I was ministering on the streets of Tempe, Arizona, near the campus of Arizona State University, the home of the Sun Devils, near Phoenix. Last year's Super Bowl number XXX was held here; (are you catching the drift here). A group of some of the most bizarre "students" dressed in vampire and Halloween style clothing approached as I preached. One of the weird females shouted, "You guys are ridiculous." I responded, "If you are normal, then I'm glad I'm ridiculous." I sort of enjoy being ridiculously normal for the Lord.

Jim Costigan, a veteran publick minister in Boston, says that sincere seekers know where to go when they need help. Brother Costigan uses Job 24:12 to illustrate. *"Men groan from out of the city, and the soul of the wounded crieth out: yet God layeth not folly to them."*

Pastor Scott Strobel tells this story. "One day (at a regular street meeting with his church) during the Gulf War a car with two young men pulled up in the parking lot by the sidewalk where we were preaching. The passenger was laughing sort of frivolously and the driver was listening as we

spoke to them and they told us that the passenger who was about nineteen years old was going to be sent to the Persian Gulf. We soon found out that his light-hearted laughing was a cover for a young man who was scared to death he was going to die and that they had stopped to talk to us for that reason. After witnessing to the young man, he very willingly prayed to ask the Lord Jesus Christ to be his Saviour. Eventually they both drove off and to my knowledge we've never seen them again." What a wonderful publick EXAMPLE OF RIGHTEOUSNESS.

A TESTIMONY AGAINST THEM

We have no right to choose how the Lord designs to use his Word. According to his foreknowledge, he may set up a scene where all the necessary elements of salvation are presented in as near an irresistible manner as possible so that during the Great White Throne Judgment there is sufficient evidence for conviction to the satisfaction of eternal justice. *"Yet he sent prophets to them, to bring them again unto the LORD; and they TESTIFIED AGAINST THEM but they would not give ear."* (Emphasis added).

Just as good attorneys and judges prepare for their cases in court, so the Lord is preparing against the sinner who has rejected the clear presentation of his Word. Each stone that was hurled at Stephen while he preached publicly will play back his message to those who hurled them. *"And Joshua said unto all the people, Behold, this STONE shall be a witness unto us; for it HATH HEARD ALL THE WORDS OF THE LORD WHICH HE SPAKE UNTO US: it shall be therefore a witness unto you, lest ye deny your God."* Josh. 24:27 (Emphasis added).

Pastor Tim Cronan of the Littleton Baptist Church in Littleton, New Hampshire, remarks that publick ministry causes the sinner to "...choose you this day whom ye will serve." Josh. 24:15.

PROVIDING AN ALTERNATIVE

The detailed story of publick ministry found in chapters 7 and 8 of the book of Proverbs was expounded in my second book I AM NOT ASHAMED in the chapter entitled "The Conflict." I would like to bring to light a truth out of that chapter that seems applicable in this section.

Publick ministry provides an alternative stimulation and invitation to the sinner who is normally bombarded with the evil influence of the world, the flesh and the devil. The following story sums this up.

Farren Mathena who pastors in Hereford, Pennsylvania, shook my hand when we first were introduced and said, "I'm glad to meet you. I'm the Proverbs 7 young man that you wrote about in your book." He went on to explain that he was saved at an early age and had surrendered to preach the gospel, but since there was no one close to encourage him or inspire him to live the Christian life, he fell among thorns so to speak. He joined the Marine Corps and soon blended in with the social activities of the rest of the boys. He did most of the things that everyone else did on R&R, but he never went as far as they did. That is, he never would go to the triple x-rated porno places and, although he drank with the boys, he never would allow himself to get drunk (for after all he was a Christian in his heart) and so was usually the designated driver. He sort of flirted or toyed with sin. One particular time he was out to "have a good time" and ended up in front of an XXX porno-and-other place. He was grieved that he would even consider such perversion, but admitted to being at a crossroads (Prov. 7 and 8) and was deciding which way to go. He stared at one of the posters for a long time and decided to buy a ticket for the next show. While standing with ticket in hand he heard a voice from the opposite corner shouting, "You're going to hell! You're going to hell! If you don't get saved by the blood of Jesus, you're going to hell. That is the way to hell!" A street preaching Marine in shirt and tie was offering an alternative way of life from across the street. Farren testifies that the Holy Spirit spoke to his heart and said, "You should be over there preaching." He tore up the ticket, walked across

the street, introduced himself to the preacher, received some gospel tracts, and passed them out. He went to church the next day, Sunday, and led one of his buddies to the Lord. Eventually he led all the men under his command to the Lord. He eventually went to Bible college, started a church in Pennsylvania, and is now a regular publick minister on the streets of Allentown and the surrounding area.

Suppose that street preacher had used some well worn excuse instead of going publick with his faith? Would there be a church in Hereford?

"Doth not wisdom cry? and understanding put forth her voice? She standeth in the top of high places by the way in the places of the paths. She crieth at the gates, at the entry of the city, at the coming in at the doors. Unto you, O men, I call; and my voice is to the sons of man. O ye simple understand wisdom: and, ye fools, be ye of an understanding heart. Hear; for I will speak of excellent things; and the opening of my lips shall be right things." Prov. 8:1-6.

CHAPTER FOUR

THE EFFECT OF PUBLICK MINISTRY UPON THE CITY

FULFILLING THE LORDS DESIRE

**"...yet shall know there hath been a prophet
among them." Ezek 2:5.**

If you want the town or city to sit up and take notice of your ministry there, you need not spend a fortune on advertising---just take the Lord's message to the streets, and the city will advertise you in one way or another. Someone said, "Bad publicity is better than no publicity at all." This may not be true in all cases, but anyone who does publick ministry will understand this. If you are going to be all out and fervent for the Lord and his truth, then count on it, you're going to get some bad press. You might as well make the Lord's heart happy by crying aloud, sparing not, and telling the city their sin. I believe the Lord's heart beats with the publick minister.

Do you really want your ministry to be advertised about the town people as reflecting little or no difference from all the other ministries in town. "*Learn not the way of the heathen.*" Unless your city is abnormal or unusually large, if you do publick ministry you are probably among the simple minority ("*few there be that find it*") who ever stick their head out the door of the church and say anything. You are different for a Biblical reason. Praise the Lord.

Pastor Brent Logan and his army from Spring City Baptist Church in Lebanon, Virginia, preached against a movie house in their city that was just starting to show some pornography. They held five street meetings for five consecutive nights in front of the theater. They won all the battles with the police and not only did they close it down, but the next time they ministered in the county jail one of the inmates recognized them and said, "Hey, your church is the one that shut down our theater." AMEN AND AMEN.

STIMULATING SPIRITUAL CONVERSATION

Being a former teenager myself I know the thoughts, lusts, desires and conversations, not to mention the actions, that take place in and around the cars of teens out on a Friday or Saturday night. We all know they are not discussing their Sunday School lessons from the week before. They are not comparing scripture with scripture, line upon line and precept upon precept. *"God is not in all his thoughts."* Ps. 10:4.

I love to preach to such a group for I know that I have changed their conversation to the maximum degree. One street preacher wrote that at least the town thinks about the Lord for a few minutes. He also said that regular preaching causes the city to become familiar with the gospel so that they are without excuse.

Pastor James Knox in Deland, Florida, puts it this way, "It forces them to confront their attitude regarding the gospel 'outside the church'. As folk drive by the preaching, many yell, 'keep it in the church' because if they can keep it in the church they don't have to deal with it because they don't go to church." Rom. 3:11, *"...there is none that seeketh after God."*

The average person on the street today is so obnoxious and hardened to any public presentation of the gospel that one wonders what it may take to change their hard heart. But it wouldn't have to be too very much, if the Lord maybe just put his hand under the clouds for about 3-4 months or put his hand between the sun and the earth for about 3-4 minutes. A good ole earthquake could really shake people up a bit.

I remember one morning in Jacksonville, Florida, when a bad storm was coming and the normal morning light never came. At 11:30 the street lights came back on and the trees were swirling with the wind. The weather was truly awe-inspiring. As I went to lunch in a cafe I overheard conversations at the next tables about "God" and "the end of the world"

and even "the second coming of Jesus." It wouldn't take too awful much.

I have prayed several times for the Lord to allow me to be in a place when a major catastrophe would happen and that he would allow me to have my health and sanity about me so that I could take full advantage of preaching under those unique, heart-softening conditions. I don't think for a moment that when those things happen in a community that some folks don't think about the street preacher they heard last week and his message.

DISPLAYING A DISTINCTION

I believe that a Christian is under obligation to the Lord to provide the community they live in with a clear, vivid distinction between what is professional religiousism (hypocrisy) and true Bible soldiering.

In Lev. 10:10 the Lord told the priests not to drink wine "*...that ye may put difference between holy and unholy, and between unclean and clean.*" One of the most outstanding ways to accomplish this is through regular publick ministry.

Recently on a street meeting in Mena, Arkansas, two Mormon missionaries came riding up to the meeting on their bikes. I had just finished preaching and they asked me what we were doing. I explained to them about all of the prophets and preachers in the Bible that had the truth preached on the street. Then I asked them why they did not preach on the street if they had the truth like they claimed since they had the same Biblical examples as we did. They had no ready answer and had to admit that this was a good question. I told them that it made me think they did not have the real truth or they would proclaim it as we are commanded to. Of course I know they do not have the truth and I am glad that they do not preach on the streets, but it is interesting that it is the cults who, by and large, do not take their message to the open air. This makes me wonder why some of the brethren who claim to have all the right answers do not take their message to the street.

Publick ministry will help make that distinction to the inhabitants of your community.

ENCOURAGING TO OTHER CHRISTIANS

We were holding a street meeting some years back in front of a flea market. The merchants were doing their usual complaining, shouting, threatening, etc., but we labored on. A man approached while we preached and waited patiently until we had a break. He had a good testimony of salvation but had fallen by the wayside. He said that it had been a long time since he had done anything for the Lord but our presence there today had convicted him to do something. He said that he thought he still had some tracts in the trunk of the car, and he was going to go and get them and pass them through the flea market. We saw him later with a smile on his face passing the tracts. Reading war stories or seeing war documentary films makes any MAN want to grab a gun and go a few rounds with the enemy. Don't you think that the same would be true of a soldier of the Lord Jesus Christ when he sees a man in open combat standing tall for his king?

Pastor Ken McFadden says that publick ministry awakens sleeping Christians.

Pastor Artie Dean from Bangor, Maine, claims that publick ministry encourages other churches and even other denominations.

Pastor James Knox in Deland, Florida, noticed that when his church started doing publick ministry that they were the only ones who did anything of that kind. Now after 10 years on the streets of Deland there are a good number of churches that participate in one form or another.

Pastor Scott Strobel observed that publick ministry helps to draw backsliders and secret disciples out of their shells. Believe it or not they have had "much positive response" from the residents of Lockport, New York. He tells of one incident where a car stalled on the street right in front of their meeting and some of their men helped to push it off

the road and led the driver to the Lord in the process. This makes for good public relations. Pastor Strobel tells of town folk who expect to see him and his church out there, and when they have to be absent they have expressed disappointment.

James Richardson Sr. is a very unusual man. He, in his natural course of life, is not suited for the public ministry. He is a quiet, Delaware farmer who lives out in the country. He is not outward or extravagant in any measure of his life. I think of Amos 7:14, 15 when I think of my friend Jim Richardson. But the Lord put his hand upon Bro. Richardson and gave him a ministry like no other. He has a small pickup truck with a platform he built on the front for preaching. He then proceeded to erect scripture signs which can be read from all sides and from top to bottom. He has 2' wooden, black, King James Bible facsimiles at each corner of the bed on posts and he pulls a trailer behind with a 7' King James Bible facsimile on board the trailer. He has a built in PA system and he absolutely loves traffic jams. He tours around the Del-Mar-Va peninsula and sometimes makes it over to Washington, DC, Baltimore and Philadelphia driving slow and ministering wherever he is. He says that he has received quite a lot of positive and encouraging responses and has been blessed by many testimonies of Christians who have been greatly helped, blessed and encouraged by his bold public witness. He has driven his witness 140,000 miles and estimates that if just 10 people saw him per mile that equals 1,400,000 souls who have received a witness that would not normally have come into contact with the gospel. This is not a bloated figure, for you see Bro. James often parks in lots of busy burger joints and flea markets to eat, shop or take a nap. *"(My word) shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it."* How could anyone argue with that? Do you drive a vehicle?

Bill Manning, the sign man as he is referred to by the residents of Titusville, Florida, hears that he is the talk of the town. Bill is pushing 80, has severe arthritis and emphysema, but most days he prays for the proper location to hold his scripture

signs. For ten years now he has given the JW's something to discuss in their classes, and other churches also have confessed that he has been a topic of conversation in their Sunday School classes. Wouldn't you like to be a little mouse?

Eric Robotka ministers publickly in Delaware and he believes that publick ministry identifies the righteous element in the city with righteousness. That is hard to beat.

Another street preacher friend of mine says that it lets the town know that we truly have something to shout about. AMEN! PRAISE THE LORD!

Pastor Ismael Sanchez from the Philippines tells us that he does not even have a sign up advertising his church, and yet if you ask anyone in the town where the Baptists meet, they will point you to the church where the street preachers come from. Praise the Lord.

CREATING A SPIRITUAL APPETITE

Sometimes when I preach on the street I will say, "Aren't you tired of your sin and the guilt of it all? Aren't you sick of being dirty all the time? Doesn't it bother you to wallow in filth day after day? Aren't you sick of lying awake in the middle of the night feeling guilty and worrying about the judgment, wishing you could die but scared to death to face your Creator? Don't you long to be clean and have your life count for something good and righteous and wholesome?"

The Bible says, "*Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled.*" Mt. 5:6.

I believe that by being genuine in your appearance and presentation of righteousness out in the publick forum that there are souls that will be reached who truly hunger and thirst after righteousness and long to be filled. They are turned off by the thought of going to a church for many reasons, whether valid or false, and they have no other connection with righteousness. Back to

Proverbs 8:7-8, "For my mouth shall speak truth; and wickedness is an abomination to my lips. All the words of my mouth are in RIGHTEOUSNESS; there is nothing froward or perverse in them." (Emphasis added). Remember the context is the publick areas of the city.

PRESERVING LEGAL FREEDOMS

Pastor James Knox of the Bible Baptist Church in Deland, Florida, remembers that when he and his church began to do publick ministry over a decade ago they were informed and shown by the police that although there were twenty Baptist churches, ten Methodist churches, ten Presbyterian churches, and although Deland was the home of Stetson University (a Southern Baptist College) that it was against the law to hand out or pass out religious literature. The law was on the books. Needless to say Pastor Knox and his church objected and fought the law until it was removed. The indication is that if Pastor Knox had not involved himself in publick ministry the law would still be on the books. Publick ministry preserves legal freedoms. He also reminds us that regular publick ministry in the city keeps the police and town council mindful of our First Amendment rights. Recently pastor Knox had another meeting with the high-ups in the Deland police department. I say another because these meetings are a regular bi-annual occurrence. The vice chief of police said that the merchants were considering taking civil action against his church for violation of a noise ordinance which states that there shall be no unnecessary noise. Pastor Knox mentioned that the trucks were louder than the preachers. The vice chief countered that the merchants deemed the trucks necessary to their business. Pastor Knox stated that he could point to many New Testament verses that would clearly state that publick preaching was necessary to the business of the local church. The vice chief referred to many complaints within the past three months concerning the preaching. Pastor Knox reminded him that his church had been preaching on the streets since 1985 and that if the police were doing their job and informing the complainants that the preachers were legally within their

constitutional rights, they would eventually quit complaining. The vice chief had brought along the chaplain of the police department who told the vice chief that "It will be a sad day for the city of Deland if we ever lose these street preachers. Their influence is more of a help to our department than any of us realize".

Ron, a street preacher in Littleton, New Hampshire, agrees with the statement above and adds that one sure way to lose your right to freedom of speech is simply to shut up.

Pastor Dale Anschuetz who pastors in Reading, Pennsylvania, had a wonderful opportunity which would serve as a great idea for any pastor who engages in public ministry to do. Bro. Anschuetz was told by a beat cop that he needed a permit to do public ministry. This has happened to a great many of us. He went to the city hall to check on this and the receptionist told him to write a letter explaining what they were doing and why they were doing it. This gave him a great opportunity to give the gospel as well as explain their actions. The letter was then distributed to every police officer in the city of Reading. He testifies that they have never had another problem with any city official nor have they had anymore police encounters. The police had great respect for them from then on.

It has been my observation that in places like Northern Ireland where public preaching is a common, daily event that the shop keepers take it in stride and never bother calling the police. In fact, I have preached publicly in fifteen different countries besides the United States of America and I have only had one police encounter in all of them. Contrast that statistic with the fact that while preaching in nearly every major city in America and many hundreds of lesser cities, I average a police encounter of some magnitude for every two to three street meetings. The moral of this story is to preach as often as we can in as many cities as we can.

AFFECTING POLITICAL MOODS

Daniel Wright, a street preacher from Deland, Florida, interestingly observes that whenever there is a guest on a TV talk show from Pensacola, Florida, more often than not they are a political conservative. He feels that one of the major reasons for this is that there has been an abundance of publick ministry activity in that city for over thirty years. Personally, I like the thought. Dan says that publick ministry gives Col. 4:6 a chance to do its work. *"Let your speech be always with grace, seasoned with salt, that ye may know how ye ought to answer every man."* And another verse. *"A little leaven leaveneth the whole lump."*

ACTUALLY ALTERING ATMOSPHERES

No one can prove unequivocally whether or not publick ministry can actually alter the atmosphere of a city so I have just as good an argument as my critics and the following contributions are certainly worthy of consideration.

During my time of pastoring Tallahassee Baptist Church in Florida there were several sodomite and lesbian establishments which settled into our area. One of these was the 1812 Bar. This was a particularly perverted dive and was certainly a blotch on our community. I began to preach in front of the bar, but with the busy highway in front and the door closed with loud music inside, I was wasting vocal strength. At one point we actually entered the bar and passed out tracts to all the perverts and the manager. I told the manager/owner who I was and that we had waged a spiritual war against them. I left them with the challenge that it was their god or my God. I asked all of my congregation to pray, and also whenever they drove past the bar to point a finger and announce verbally (but not to be heard outside their car), "Anathema in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ." Laugh if you want, but the bar was a warehouse within a month.

Pastor Shawn Dunn rejoices over the closing of two bars in his town of Urichsville, Ohio, and gives the credit to publick ministry.

Doug Coates has one notch in his publick ministry belt due to the closure of one bar in Tulsa, Oklahoma, which he waged war against.

Ken Lansing, who has had a publick ministry in Memphis, Tennessee, for nearly a quarter of a century, says that it stifles sin---slightly. Of course he is in a town of nearly a million population with a long history of established sin so it might be harder to measure under those conditions than it would be in a smaller, more conservative town. Ken quotes Eph. 5:10 to support this, but he has also noticed that consistent publick preaching affects a greater acceptance of the publick gospel message as opposed to the times when it is not done or in cities where publick ministry is void. Another anonymous street preacher agrees that sin is stifled and he claims that the police recognize that and encourage him to continue.

Pastor Pete Scheer, formerly pastoring in Myrtle Beach, South Carolina, says that when they did consistent publick ministry that "the lines were drawn and they (sinners bound to sin) dared not step over them. When we were not consistent, the next time out on the streets we found that we had given ground and had to recapture, if you will, the territory. ...I know for a fact that our presence was felt and no doubt the forces of the wicked one were held back."

HEROD'S GREAT COMMISSION

In the book of Matthew chapter two and verse eight in the middle of the story of the wise men at the birth of Jesus there is a strange commission given by the great heathen king, Herod. Disregarding for just a moment the secret intent of this commission based upon his actions which followed, let us look simply at the great commission given to the wise men. *"Go and search diligently for the young child; and when ye have found him, bring me word again, that I may come and worship him also."* If we could superimpose this commission over Job 24:12, *"Men groan from out of the city, and the*

soul of the wounded crieth out...," and also bring in Rom. 8:22, "*For we know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together...*," we may be able to catch a vision of the sad condition of the lost within our cities crying out for someone to please take the time and go to the trouble to search diligently for the young child. And when you truly know him and love him and your life reflects this in a genuine manner then be sure and bring me word again. For even though I am lost and bound in sin and will not reveal this to you, I truly have a void in my heart and soul and I, as part of His creation, want to come and worship Him also.

CHAPTER FIVE

THE EFFECT OF PUBLICK MINISTRY UPON THE SERVANT

Being selfish in the old nature which I still retain, I do publick ministry not only out of obedience to the command and not only because of a burden for lost souls and not even for the spiritual thrill of leading some of those souls to the Lord; I do publick ministry for what it does for me personally. I am not so humble that I cannot readily admit that. It does things for me that I need done and nothing else that I have ever tried has accomplished quite the same affects. I agree with Paul who also did most of his preaching on the streets, "*Woe is unto me, if I preach not the gospel.*"

VULNERABILITY

We Protestant Bible-believers certainly do not agree with the Catholic practice of cloistering nuns and monasticising monks under the pretense of service unto the Lord. "*And thinkest thou this, O man, that judgest them which do such things, and doest the same, that thou shalt escape the judgment of God?*" Rom. 2:3. Do we not do the same when we cloister our preachers and our congregation within the fortress of the walls of the church? A hermit who hides from the world for a long period of time loses the ability to function normally in society, and so it is with the Christian who hides within the church; he can no longer function for the Lord outside the church. We have a polarizing effect, of a sort that when the average Christian comes to church he puts on the suit of a saint and participates in the activities of a saint, but the moment he leaves the fort he puts off whatever armour of God he may have acquired and dons the apparel of a worldling. This is most evident within the average church, but it is very different in churches that regularly do publick ministry.

This pacifist, non-aggressive attitude has prevailed to such a degree in our ranks that it has ruined the morale of the army of God. Why do we so

quickly run off to a RETREAT? Why not call it an OFFENSIVE? All this terminology and mentality is a subtle effort on the part of the enemy to conquer us without any shots fired.

Treblinka is a book about the concentration camp of the same name during the Second World War, but it also describes, in great psychological detail, the execution of the plan of the Nazis to exterminate the Jewish nation without any resistance. First of all, the enemy used elaborate propoganda to convince the Jews that they had their best interest at heart. They assured them that the Nazi government could be trusted and that they would handle all the problems. (Our enemy has accomplished the same thing through the propoganda machine sitting in most living rooms). Then the Nazis kept the Jews busy making decisions, all kinds of decisions. They made them appear to be serious, life changing or life-preserving decisions although in the end the decisions made little or no difference; they just served to keep them occupied and distracted. The Jews were so busy and occupied making unimportant decisions that they made absolutely no major resistance to the plan of the enemy. Thus, the enemy led 6,000,000-plus Jews to their death with ease.

Not only has most of the church been lulled to sleep, but we are kept busy within our monastery pacifying ourselves with much that will not count for much in all eternity. Publick ministry gives the Christian an opportunity to come outside the camp and make himself vulnerable to the world.

Mike Varner, who is a street preacher in New York state, knows that publick ministry makes you appreciate the protection of the Lord, and he quotes, "*The Angel of the Lord encampeth round about them that fear him.*"

I know that you can experience this protection in other avenues of your Christian walk with the Lord but it is more evident on the street and more appreciated when serving in publick. After all, we are to be His sheep, and sheep are naturally in need of very much protection for they are animals

which have no natural defense. They depend solely upon their shepherd the way that the Lord designed.

The Christian of today never ministers outside the church and when he does leave the security of the church he has everything insured by the world. Why should he need the Lord?

I was teaching public ministry in a large Bible college when one of the students in my class asked if it were wise when preaching on the street to carry a gun. I was flabbergasted. I rehearsed with him that I had just taught for the past hour the benefits of making yourself vulnerable when on the streets. I asked, "How do you think that Acts, chapter 7, would read had Stephen had a gun and was eager to use it?"

General Douglas MacArthur was a famous leader of men during our last war in the Pacific. He frequently would leave the security of the ship and go onto the beach during the heat of the battle in order to more closely direct the attack. He would often be seen striding up and down the beach while shells and bullets whizzed around him and all others were hiding behind rocks or tanks. He was asked why, with his being such an important figure in that theater of war, did he take such unnecessary risks. His answer: "Because if I do it, my colonels will do it; and if they do it, my majors will do it; and if they do it the captains will do it; and if they do it, the enlisted men will do it and that's the way we'll win the war." Someone quite wise once said that the congregation will never rise above its leadership.

General George Patton had the same philosophy. He would ride in an open jeep sitting on the top of the seat with the stars on his helmet shined to a high luster. He was always seen by his men as going forward to the front lines; he was never seen returning. He had a hidden helicopter or private plane that took him back to the command post.

Evidently these great leaders of men thought this method of leadership produced strength in battle.

Do you think that the men serving under Patton or MacArthur had any problems with peer pressure? The peer pressure was toward the front.

Pastor Hank Thompson has been successful in creating this atmosphere within his church in Austin, Texas. The peer pressure among the teens is, incredibly, toward the front of the spiritual battle. He told me one time that he had eighty teens in his church and he did not have one dud. I have observed that he did not exaggerate. All of his teens are active on the streets and, therefore, zealous toward all other ministries.

Speaking of vulnerability...let's ask the ladies

The following quality ladies have been in publick ministry for several years, and thus are able to provide us with a feminine viewpoint on this subject.

Lisa Knudson serves the Lord in Marysville, California, and the surrounding cities. Mrs. Knudson credits publick ministry with increasing her prayer life, having seen and experienced the open warfare. Not only does she pray for herself, but for the men who dare to engage themselves in the open conflict. Although she continues to do door-to-door witnessing, Lisa says that it yields comparatively little fruit. She goes publick because she considers it a privilege to serve her Lord there and because of the joy which she receives from it. Sometimes she is tempted not to go because of the weather or other distractions, but when she considers the multitudes and the question of her faithfulness, she is compelled to go.

Wendy is Lisa's daughter of twenty-plus. Wendy has been doing publick ministry (that is holding signs, quoting scripture together with other ladies, tracts and witnessing) for about nine years. She confesses that publick ministry has allowed her to fulfill a couple of her childhood ambitions. It seems that Wendy has always wanted to be two things in life; a preacher and a soldier. She says that publick ministry satisfies these ambitions as

closely as can be without violating the rules of her gender. She rejoices in her obedience to the commandments of the Lord and says also that she has learned to yield more to the leadership of the Holy Spirit during times of opposition on the street.

Susan Ware is the wife of Pastor Ed Ware in Phoenix. She encourages the ladies by writing the following: "Publick ministry has allowed me to start maturing as a Christian. Although I have been saved for over twenty-eight years, I believe I did not start growing as a Christian until I conscientiously put forth a consistent publick witness."

"Publick ministry has shown me that I needed to confess my sins of PRIDE and FEAR. The Lord has shown me that when I don't pass out tracts and say something for him everywhere and not just during 'organized' street meetings, house-to-house, etc., it is because I care more about people's opinions, or what they're going to think about me and the image of being peculiar. I am to look more at him, the Lord, and less at the world. When I got right with the Lord about publick ministry, I realized such a freedom - being freed from bondage to this flesh and to the world."

"Publick ministry has restored my 'first love' because I know it pleases the Lord exceedingly and I receive the joy of the Lord; and 'the joy of the Lord is my strength.' When 'I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ,' I receive 'the power of God,' and what an uplifting to my soul, or the new man."

"Publick ministry has also allowed me to 'preach' on the street without usurping the authority of a man. In the past, I have wanted to preach on the corner, but have felt that it was wrong for a woman to preach. Now, I have realized that when I pass out a tract and tell that person or group of people that they need to read about the greatest gift of all, or ask them where will they spend eternity, etc., I am preaching (II Tim. 4:2)."

"Publick ministry has taught me that because I am not bound with the chains of ostracism by others, unsaved or saved, or fear of man, physical or

spiritual, I can boldly stand with a humble heart before others on the streets because I have the truth and the 'truth shall set (me) free."

"Publick ministry has given me a greater desire to get into the Bible and really study. I have also realized an urgency to pray more."

What's it like to have a street preacher for a son?

My mother of eighty years old writes the following: "Mixed emotions of a street preacher's mother. SHOCKED, that it actually happened. SCARED, for his safety. THRILLED, that he found his place in the service of the Lord. HAPPY, that I am no longer ashamed to pass out tracts or witness. The Lord has given me the VICTORY AND FAITH to do these things now and I know that all things work together for good."

.....THANKS MOM.....

The Wife of a Street Preacher

My wife, Robin, contributes the following: "What in the world is it like to be married to a street preacher? One thing for sure...life never gets too dull. Years ago while I was single, I made the statement that I wouldn't marry a man who didn't preach on the street. God gave me a direct answer to my prayer. Life isn't just a once-a-week street meeting; as a family we do our best to be a witness everywhere we go. When we pull up in front of Walmart or the grocery store Mary Bethany, who is only three years old, exhorts us to get our tracts ready. We feel that it is our responsibility to provide a witness to every person God brings across our path."

"It saddens us that so many of our Bible believing brethren don't seem to have this burden and it is our desire to be a goad in their lives that will challenge them to be the publick witness God wants them to be."

"Life is good because it's full of the Lord. Marriage is wonderful because it's centered in the service of the Lord. Oh what a blessing to have the

opportunity to raise a little soldier for the Lord."

"From many conversations with women across this country I have concluded that they don't want their husbands involved in publick ministry because they are afraid: afraid of physical harm, afraid of the reproach they'll have to bear from friends, relatives and neighbors. The only solution to this is to quit standing outside the battle wringing your hands and fretting and just jump in with both feet and be a doer of the Word. There have been times that I have been afraid for my husband and little girl who is also an active publick witness for the Lord at three. Mary Bethany understands exactly what she is doing and why. Just ask her. We don't force her to hold her little sign or to pass out tracts. It is her choice. However, there are times that I do want to shelter and protect my family. But in addition to being a family that is active in doing the Lord's work, we are a family who are fervent students of our Bibles. When I see clearly what God's will is concerning our duty to be His mouthpiece and when I read about men and women who have hazarded their lives for their God, then I realize that the only thing we can do as a family is to go forward. Ps. 27:1 says, '*The Lord is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear? The Lord is the strength of my life; of whom shall I be afraid?*'"

Thou shalt not die.
Judges 6:23

Joshua and Caleb were two men whom the Lord specifically stated would not die for a given period of time. He told them that they would go into the promised land after the forty years of wilderness journeying. He directed them to engage in battle during those years. Can you imagine how much fun a man could have on the battlefield if he had the assurance from the Lord that he would not die? He could be Rambo for real and Schwarzenegger for sure. Well, this is exactly what the Lord has designed for us. He assures us of eternal life and then directs us into the battle. Think of how much

fun they are missing when they "tarry at Jerusalem" rather than follow into battle.

Comfort Zone

Pastor Pete Scheer puts it this way, "The church to me is really a COMFORT ZONE for most preachers and Christians. The public ministry has helped me to see that the game can only partly be played from within the walls of the church. That's really where only the training and equipping of the saints takes place, while the real work of the ministry takes place out in public (one on one and personal work, both publicly and house to house). Our Lord left His Comfort Zone (Heaven), because the work that needed to be done could not be accomplished from where He was. He had to go to where the need was. He gave up His Comfort Zone...His right, if you will (He had a right to be in heaven and stay there) in order for the need of mankind to be met (Our Salvation)."

"It's a Biblical principle throughout the Bible that I did not recognize nor consider much until doing public ministry."

"Jesus said, He could not do the work from where He was...He left His Comfort Zone."

"Abraham could not do the work that God had for him to do from his Comfort Zone (the Ur of Chaldees)."

"Mary had to leave her Comfort Zone (she had to turn over her future to the Lord) in order to accomplish the work that God wanted her to do."

"Moses had to leave his Comfort Zone (he left Pharaoh's house refusing to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter) in order to do the work that God had for him to do."

"Paul realized that he could not choose Comfort and serve God."

"To be quite truthful, it is the same for any Christian living today. We cannot do the work that God has called us to do and yet remain within the walls of the Church (our Comfort Zone)."

"The Lord made Himself of no reputation. He made a choice. We too have to make a choice to leave our Comfort Zone (the security of the church walls)."

Mt. 10:39 is the Lord's voice on the matter. *"He that findeth his life shall lose it; and he that loseth his life for my sake shall find it."*

VISION

Publick Ministry opens your eyes to things most Christians never see. *"Where there is no vision, the people perish."* When it comes to the proper view of certain vital things the average Christian is certainly perishing.

Bible Vision

Dan Wright saw Isa. 53:3, *"He is despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief: and we hid as it were our faces from him; he was despised, and we esteemed him not"* in a way he had never seen it before. Another street preacher said that Mt. 16:24-27 took on a whole new meaning after being involved in publick ministry. *"...If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me...."* A third street preacher commented that it was like a breath of fresh air in his Bible study; that it enlightened many areas of the Bible never before noticed because they dealt with publick ministry.

Soul Vision

Bob Needles is a street preacher in Delaware who, since he started ministering on the street, sees men as souls instead of just human beings.

Pastor and Rescue Mission director Jimmy Hood in Columbus, Ohio, was alarmed at how messed up the world really is. The vision formed a new compassion which was absent before publick ministry.

Pastor Ken McFadden writes that the streets give you the proper view of what people think about God and His Word.

Ten Short Years

I know that Satanism has been around since the garden, but ten short years ago you nearly had to go looking for it in order to run into it. If you went to some huge university campus like Harvard or Ohio State University you could find it easy enough; but it was not prevalent on the typical street. But now, approaching 1997, it is on every street. Any teenager you talk to on the street is into it to some measure. I meet Satan worshippers every time we have a street meeting. It is difficult to convince the sanctuary abider that Satanism is so close and that our camp is nearly surrounded. They just can't see it like the man on the street.

Proper View of Self

When a Christian hibernates in the cocoon of a church where there is very often an atmosphere of exaltation such as, "Bus Captain of the Month", or "Sunday School Teacher's Assistant of the year," they get to feeling like they are really something; that God got a real deal when he saved them. The street corrects that bloated opinion.

I've done everything in the ministry except be a deacon and president of the Women's Missionary Society, and street work crucifies the flesh quicker and more thoroughly than any other ministry that I know.

Pastor Dale Anschuetz agrees and gives this testimony. "...it has helped me to put the flesh down. No matter what, this flesh still has a will of its own, and that will, for the most part is in direct opposition to God's will. More times than not, 'I' did not want to go out on the streets. It is good to crucify the flesh."

Another street preacher dittos that statement and adds that in his opinion the pulpit equals pride and the streets equal humility.

Pastor James Knox's experience has been that when ministering on the street it soon reminds him how quick and alive the old man really is.

Ron from New Hampshire cannot deny that after preaching on the street everybody knows where you stand and what are you going to do.

New View On The Church

If your church does publick ministry, you rejoice in this. Of course, there is always the constantly disgruntled sower of strife in the group; but they do not like something about every ministry of the church. If your church does not do publick ministry and you see it done right by someone else then you wish your church was doing it. I have talked to Methodists and Southern Baptists and even Greek Orthodox on the streets who had a reasonable testimony of salvation and did truly appreciate our ministry on the streets. I asked them why their church did not do it since it was commanded in the scriptures. They said that they did not know, but would mention it to the Rector, Priest, etc., because they thought it would be a good idea. If your church doesn't do publick ministry, why?

Pastor James Knox wants the young people in his church to grow up thinking that it is a normal thing to have street meetings, pass out tracts, and hold signs for the Lord.

Pastor Scott Strobel agrees, and rejoices that his boys consider it standard behavior to participate in open air meetings.

My wife was kneeling down beside my three year old daughters stroller on a recent street meeting trying to explain to Mary Bethany that the beings in front of her looked horribly weird because they were the children of the devil. She told her that the devil did not love his children. She said that they were going to hell and that is why we were out here to tell them how to escape. Just then pastor Ed Ware, who was ministering there with us, began his publick message across the street. Mary's mom said, "That is why Bro. Ed is preaching to these people. They need to hear God's word and be saved". Mary Bethany quickly said, "Mommy get me my sign quickly". Sure she's brainwashed! Have you ever seen a brain, no matter how small, that did not need to be washed? At least she is exposed to sin in the correct setting and context. What setting do your children see sin in?

Broad View of History

It is easy to get a bad case of tunnel vision when all you see is the inside of your church. You get to thinking that all Christians all through the ages were like you; Sunday/Wednesday, one chapter a day, generically conservative, spectator, arm-chair-quarterback, net income tithing, missionary (sure) and all the other right adjectives Baptists (what else). Step outside on the street for a minute and let me broaden your horizon. Our Biblical and Christian heritage forefathers would puke along with the Lord (Rev. 3:16) if they spent five minutes sitting in a padded pew under a hot chandelier in front of a cold air conditioning duct listening to the person occupying the pulpit plead for money to pay off the debts of the new Christian life center.

One street preacher wrote and told me that before his participation in public ministry he viewed the Christian life only from a this-century standpoint. But now he sees Christian history in a much broader manner. Be broad minded---hold a sign. Hab. 2:2.

Send forth laborers

The Lord used a donkey to carry the living Word of God into Jerusalem in Luke 19 because he was available, unashamed, willing, unloaded, and had no controlling master. The Lord will sure use you if you meet similar standards. In fact the Lord admonished us to pray for laborers to work in his vineyard. Isn't it a shame that some of those religions that teach you have to work your way into the favor of God such as the Mormons and JW's have the most willing workers?

Jim Costigan tells us that serving on the street makes him realize just how desperate we are for laborers.

VACANCY

If I were to disciple a young man and it were up to me to choose either the method of house-to-house or publickly with which to introduce this young man into the field of evangelism, I would choose publickly. Why? Both are good and both ought to be taught and done, but there is something exciting and vibrant about publick ministry that hooks a person once it takes hold of them. This is not true with house-to-house. Another reason why I would choose to inaugurate him via a street meeting is because it offers opportunities that are of equal importance to both the beginner and the old pro. Anybody can pass out a tract or hold a sign or even read the Bible in publick, and each of these is just as valid, important, and eternally rewarding as any other service on the street. With door-to-door, the old pro does the talking and the new, young catechiser is rightly the silent student and prayer warrior. In other words, publick ministry offers many and varied vacancies in the service of our Lord Jesus Christ to ALL who will avail without regard to intellect, training or natural ability. Service on the street is the ground floor of service with all servants on the same level.

Though this should be wonderful news to the new, zealous servant of the Lord, it does not mean that anyone ever graduates FROM this service into more advanced, dignified, important, holier position. No; *"There is no discharge in this war."* Although publick ministry may serve as a basic, elementary springboard into our service for the Lord, it is also a foundation never to be discarded. We all learned to brush our teeth at four years of age, but we do not quit now that we have finished college.

For Instance

Derek Sandstrom and Doug Strobel are both eight years old. They serve together in Bro. Scott Strobel's church in Lockport, New York. When asked what the publick ministry has done for them, they both said that it gave them an opportunity to preach and serve. We can all appreciate this, unless you are a Nicolaitan. There is a fringe benefit to publick ministry says Derek: "It makes my mom happy."

Other end of the spectrum

Bill Manning, the eighty year old sign man in Titusville, Florida, says, "If it weren't for publick ministry I would go crazy just sitting around reading and watching the boob tube." Publick ministry is an equal opportunity employer and does not discriminate in regards to age, gender, intellect, ability, education, experience, talent, color, race or background and offers full employment with full benefits, plus retirement to all its employees from the spiritual cradle to full maturity.

So, why do not more senior spiritual servants take up the publick ministry? Well, I perceive they think that it is something that you grow out of. Something for the young and zealous. If you don't have your own pulpit THEN you go out on a street corner. I am living proof that this should not be the case. I am nearly fifty- two years old and have been in the ministry since 1968. I have pastored three churches and have been around the world three times as a missionary and evangelist. I have the usual Bible college degrees which satisfy the brethren, and yet, I continue to do publick ministry because of the good that I know it does for me.

Nearly two years ago I was in a preachers' conference with a couple hundred in attendance. I was asked to preach for fifteen minutes. I gave them a very hard punch in the nose concerning their need for engagement into publick ministry. When I finished, the moderator of the conference came to the pulpit and said, "WOWWWEEEE! Wasn't that something! While Bro. Sutek was preaching I punched the pastor sitting next to me and asked him if he had ever preached on the street and he said, 'Yes, when I was in college' and then I said, Whew--aren't you glad YOU DID!" That is not it, my friend. They missed the whole point. Publick ministry is for everyone at every stage in their life and ministry, and the ONLY REASON ANYONE FAILS TO DO IT IS FEAR.

A Chance To Be Different

One thing this present evil world is good at is pressuring everyone into conformity. Uniformity is in vogue today. Go into the produce store and all the tomatoes look alike. This is because they are not from the garden of God but from the hothouse of man. Don't you get sick of everything being the same. It used to be that every city had it's own department and mom and pop hardware stores, each with it's own personality and product line. Now you can go to any mall in the USA and the variety of stores is entirely predictable. Oh, there may be some advantages to uniformity, but it is the opposite of individuality. Uniformity is not a step in progress, especially not in the spiritual realm. It is closer to a step toward world unity and control. Publick ministry offers all servants of the Lord what one street preacher from New Hampshire described as, "A chance to be different." According to Ezek. 2:8 if you do not do publick ministry then you are just like the heathen on the street. They are rebellious because they won't hear and you are rebellious because you won't tell. *"Learn not the way of the heathen."*

Another street preacher friend said, "When you stand on the street for the Lord, everyone knows where you are what you are doing and what you are standing for."

Harry Sandstrom is the father of eight-year-old Derek quoted a few paragraphs ago. Harry testifies that he was a backslider and owes his renewed fellowship with the Lord to the publick ministry. He is a regular now on the streets of Lockport, New York, and is there to encourage others who may have fallen by the wayside.

VOCAL ABILITY

Really Learning To Preach

Preparation and delivery of sermons class may serve as a very profitable laboratory in which you learn to concoct perfect homiletical artwork to satisfy the discriminating palates of the Sunday morning

gang, but if you really want to learn how to preach to sinners, you'd better spend most of your time on the streets. Not only will it develop your vocal cords if done right (see "Mechanics" in Street Preacher's Manual), but there are many other post-graduate benefits not to be gained in the classroom.

Pastor James Knox advises that anyone who plans to spend any time in the ministry ought to learn how to preach without being distracted. The way that you learn this is by spending time preaching on the street with people yelling, walking by, ignoring you and driving their truck up on the sidewalk to see if you can get out of the way in time. If you can learn to preach to this crowd, it won't bother you when someone yawns, coughs, or gets up and goes to the restroom in the middle of your sermon in church.

He says, also, that preaching in the open air teaches you proper speech and clarity. That is, if you learn to do it right. If you can make yourself heard and understood a block or two away then you will have no problem inside any building.

Bert Sousa from Littleton, New Hampshire, boasts that public ministry has thickened his skin. Maybe pastors could take a lot more from their critics if they found a cheap way to thicken their skin. Maybe the listener in the pew could take more hard preaching if they regularly thickened their skin.

Thick Skin But Warm Heart

Pastor Jimmy Hood praises public ministry for giving him a warm heart towards street people. He said it is easy to get a bad attitude towards inner-city Columbus dwellers, and if he doesn't preach publicly, he gets a cold, hard, callused attitude toward sinners. He claims it is altogether different preaching to sinners as opposed to saints.

Cutting the Chaff

It is easy the longer you are in the ministry to become wordy with the simple gospel message, but Dan Wright says that preaching on the curb helps cut the chaff from the gospel; especially when the average listener is only within earshot from the office to the luncheonette.

VICTORY

Many contributors said that the publick ministry served as a good sword with which to CRUCIFY THE FLESH. The real benefit of this cannot be measured until it has been experienced. There is certainly not one Christian, pastor, preacher or lady Sunday School teacher that does not need to CRUCIFY THEIR FLESH. Paul said, "*I die daily.*" He also said that he "*ceased not to warn everyone night and day with tears.*" Can't you see him crying, and crying out on the streets of Ephesus. It certainly is a grand way to lose your life---and find it again.

I taught and preached publick ministry to a group of preachers and church members not long ago, hammering for an hour and a half that everyone needs to participate if for no other reason than for what it does for your flesh. After the session a very nice little matronly lady approached me and asked to speak. She spoke with pathos as she described her ministry at the seniors center. Then she headed in a direction parallel to publick ministry but not on the same track. She confessed that she just simply could never go out on the street and hold a sign or anything else pertaining to a street meeting---it just was not in her---and such being the case she almost pleadingly asked if I did not think that her work at the seniors center was, in a way, publick ministry. I patiently waited until the pleading was all out, and then I replied a firm, "NO." I commended her for her work among the seniors and urged her to continue, but I also told her that what everyone, including herself, really needed was a regular dose of standing on the street corner of the busiest intersection in town holding a scripture sign. Or stand on the sidewalk outside a junior or senior high school and pass out tracts as the kids arrive

or depart from the building. There is simply nothing like it to CRUCIFY THE FLESH.

Secular Benefits

Rocky is a young Christian who serves faithfully on the streets of the Sacramento/Marysville, California, area. Rocky sells cars for a living and he has appreciated the fact that publick ministry helps him in his approaching customers on the lot and opening conversations with them.

Eric Robotka agrees on this point and says that publick ministry has helped him in many areas of his life beyond the spiritual realm. Eric is an auto mechanic by trade.

Peculiar People

The Bible states two times that we are to be a "peculiar people." Now, most folk are familiar with the definition of peculiar that would mean strange and weird, but let me throw a new one at you. From the dictionary, "peculiar" means to show or display specific characteristics which would identify oneself as the private property belonging to a person or group. The word is even connected with domesticated quadrupeds, either bovine or sheep. Translation: We are to be displaying specific characteristics which would testify to the world around us that we are the private property sheep of our Good Shepherd the Lord Jesus Christ. Why is it that no one in the world hesitates to display certain character traits which identify their belonging to a certain person (Michael Jackson, Madonna, etc.) or group (Masons, Elks, Moose, Fruitcakes, etc.), but the Christian is reluctant or rebellious to be identified with the only Shepherd who died so that his sheep might live?

Ken Lansing is one of God's "peculiar" people who ministers on the streets of Memphis. He says that twenty six years of publick ministry has made him so "peculiar" both personally and professionally that he clearly does no longer fit the world's mold. GLORY! GLORY! GLORY!

Burdens Are Lifted On The Streets

Pastor James Knox says publick ministry has left "me free to teach New Testament Christianity without condemning myself. It's great to get up and tell what Peter and James and John did without the Holy Spirit saying, 'Well, why aren't you doing it?' I'd have to say 'This is New Testament Christianity; when the Holy Spirit came and empowered His church and filled his witnesses, this is what they did' and know that I wasn't doing it. And if you want to know why a lot of preaching never hits home and a lot of teaching just doesn't have a ring of truth to it, it's because the person presenting the truth of New Testament Christianity is not a participant."

Pastor Shawn Dunn said he had a real burden lifted off him when he began doing publick preaching because he had always known it was right to do.

Pastors Dale Anscheutz and Ken McFadden experienced a real satisfaction that came when they finally obeyed what they had known was commanded them and they then had a good conscience toward the Lord.

Contentions are lifted at 4th and Main

"And many of the brethren in the Lord, waxing confident by my bonds, are much more bold to speak the word without fear. Some indeed preach Christ even of envy and strife; and some also of good will: The one preach CHRIST OF CONTENTION, not sincerely, supposing to add affliction to my bonds: But the other of love, knowing that I am set for the defense of the gospel. What then? notwithstanding, every way, whether in pretense, or in truth, Christ is preached; and I therein do rejoice, yea, and will rejoice." Phil. 1:14-18. (Emphasis added).

Paul said that even though the wrong motive was used in preaching Christ, and even though it was done in the wrong manner, and even though it resulted in his further suffering, he still rejoiced in the fact that Christ was preached. I'm sure that he was including those who preached

Christ in the market and in the open air. I feel the same way. There are, admittedly, many kooks out there preaching on the streets. I believe I know more than my share. They may do it altogether for the wrong motive and in a manner that makes me cringe, but I will still stand behind and identify the person who will readily stand on the street corner and minister rather than those who will not or will shy away from it. Our ministry for many years has been to try to improve the quality of the publick minister.

I also believe that if a person will stay in the Word and prayer and stay on the streets ministering that they will eventually mature no matter how much raw material there is that needs to be refined. I covered this extensively in I AM NOT ASHAMED in the chapter on "Five Stages of Growth in Publick Ministry."

Trouble Hiding Word In Your Heart ?

At least two contributors said they were constantly motivated to memorize scripture in order to be on their toes against the gainsayers for they know they will have to give an account for their readiness to give an answer to everyone that asks them a reason for the hope that is in them.

Release from Rejection

Discouragement and even bitterness can come quickly in this day of rejection, but I and others have found a release from this through publick ministry. In Ezekiel the Lord commanded to warn them "*whether they will hear or whether they will forbear.*" Not only does this serve as a negative motivator to keep you going in the midnight hour of rejection, but it also serves as a positive motivator to take the offensive and put your foot in the neck of those that have opposed our king (Josh. 10:24), and taste a little victory and see the Lord drive back the offenders with his word.

Pastor Scott Strobel testifies that publick preaching provides that release from rejection and soothes a quenched spirit.

Oh Yes And Then There's The Crowns

I believe they call it the Victor's Crown for those who have gotten the victory over the flesh. And that is really what it comes down to, victory over your flesh. I have heard all the arguments too many times why saints do not do publick ministry, so please spare me. It all boils down to the fact that your flesh doesn't want to do it and so you invent some elaborate sham so that you can feel more comfortable with the "Black Dog" of the old nature. FEAR comes in many colors, shades and hues, but it's all FEAR and failure. Why not determine right now to go ahead and get the victory over the flesh. Drag it to the altar and leave it there. Then set the new man free on the street for the glory of God.

VIBRANCY

Publick ministry is like a super-charged spiritual vitamin pill. I stated in my last book that it is the steroid of spiritual growth. There simply is nothing to equal what it can do for a wounded, downtrodden, dry, troubled and even offended spirit.

Pastor Ismael Sanchez has hosted several publick ministry seminars in his church in the Philippines, and he writes that publick preaching has done a great thing "in my soul, it keeps me from being dry, and it lets me stay really alive in true evangelism." He says of the men in his church which participate that they are always excited in their Christian lives. It makes them courageous and fearless in doing the work of the Lord. He also admitted that when they go several weeks without hitting the streets they become weak and start to complain.

Listen to these comments of men previously quoted:

Doug Coates, "It keeps me spiritually and scripturally sharp. I am challenged to study knowing I will have to give account."

Jimmy Hood gets "fired back up out there on the streets."

Ken Lansing says it keeps life interesting and he meets all sorts of people and Christians that he never would have run into in the normal course of life. He also testifies that it has helped him endure those dry spiritual times that come to every Christian.

Eric Robutka claims that it makes him more sensitive to the voice of the Holy Spirit.

Scott Strobel stays "fresh" through this ministry.

Bro. Richardson gains "confidence", and his natural self needs this.

Finally, I close this chapter with the testimony of two five-star pastors who have several years experience in doing publick ministry.

Pastor Artie Dean: "We have found and learned that the need for the Holy Spirit leading and a right attitude is everything out there. There has to be a genuine care for the souls of men. If it's approached with a bad spirit and for a chance to verbally blast sinners into hell for a few minutes then you might as well stay home. Without God it's all flesh, and the flesh never helped anyone yet. In an area like ours where we see so few good results we need to remember that while we stand on God's side and for his glory in matters of righteousness (even at the annual Gay Pride parade), we have to have a genuine God-given concern for the blinded lost opponents to the gospel."

Pastor Brent Logan: "The training that I received on publick ministry was the most valuable thing that I learned in all my years of college, because it communicated to me a BOLDNESS which was unattainable through any other means. Publick ministry took a shy boy and made him a street

hollering, sin condemning preacher in the middle of spitting, cursing, evil looks, etc. It showed me the difference between a preacher and a pulpiteer...a sold-out vessel of God vs. a professional...a man unashamed vs. a man of dignified cloth. It has helped me stand also in the pulpit and in life, for if a man can take the hits he does on the street and keep smiling and shouting, THE PHARISEES AND WHIMPY CARNAL BABIES have not a prayer in their desire to frighten the man of God. It has brought me close to some of God's choicest MEN."

CHAPTER SIX

THE EFFECT OF PUBLICK MINISTRY UPON THE SOUL

(soul meaning conscience for this purpose)

"Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams." 1 Sam. 15:22. When our commandment clearly states "into all the world," "to every creature," and "Ye shall be witnesses unto be both in Jerusalem, and in Judea and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth," the only way that I have found to have a fulfilled conscience about this matter of world evangelism as far as in a personal way is through publick ministry. I believe in giving to missions and my percentage of giving to missions is far above average, but obedience is still better than sacrifice. I hear a lot of boasting today about the new faith promise goals and missions giving, but there is no reproach to be borne in giving to missions, and obedience is still better than sacrifice. I think it is great for churches to encourage their members to write personal letters to the missionaries on the field and encourage them in their varied endeavors, and that is a real sacrifice for a lot of people today, but obedience is still better than sacrifice. I would encourage all pastors and as many Christians as would go to visit a foreign mission field. It will change your whole view of the role of the Lord in the world today. For many, to be able to do this would be a genuine sacrifice. It would definitely be worthwhile, but obedience is still better than sacrifice.

Compelling to Righteousness

It is terribly disturbing that our own ranks of "Bible Believers" have been riddled through with immorality all the way to the pulpit. You no longer have to point to the other denominations to find those who are an embarrassment to the Lord, the church, and often times the city, for there are too many who have the same spiritual adjectives as all of us. I used a quote earlier that seems to fit

equally well here, "In my opinion the pulpit equals pride and the streets equal humility".

Now I know, before you quickly criticize, that preaching on the street is no panacea for any sin; but if I had the choice of backing and following a man who regularly and voluntarily ministers on the street as opposed to a man who never quite got around to it or was adamantly rebellious to such an activity, my money would be on the street preacher. I can't supply you with any ready statistics of immorality in the pulpit as opposed to publick ministry, but I will state definitively that there is something about ministering on the streets that compels to righteousness.

Found in the context of publick ministry in Acts 20:17-21, Paul says to the elders at Ephesus, "*Ye know...what MANNER I have been with you at all seasons.*" (Emphasis added). Paul was one of the most publick Christians of the whole New Testament. He was the one who said, "*Be ye followers of me even as also I am of Christ Jesus.*" He was the one who said, "*For to me to live is Christ.*" He ministered and witnessed night and day with tears. You talk about living it! Paul had no time to himself to sin; it was all taken up by the ministry. It should be no wonder then that at the end of his tenure in Ephesus he was able to say, with the Holy Spirit's agreement, "*I take you to record this day, that I am pure from the blood of all men.*"

You cannot deny that this would be a great accomplishment for any servant of the Lord to be able to say, "*I am pure from the blood of all men,*" but Paul had that manner about him. He behaved himself for he was a publick figure for the gospel.

Long before any man runs for president or congressman, etc., they must consider if their lives and past lives will be able to stand the test of the extreme scrutiny that inevitably accompanies an election campaign. Sometimes public figures get elected in spite of their dark lives, but it still must be a consideration. Did you ever wonder why Ted Kennedy never bothered to run for president after the Chappaquitick incident? Public figures

must all take this stuff into consideration. And so it is with a Christian who chooses to become a publick figure. They must pass the scrutiny of either the brethren, neighbors or relatives. Would your past and present allow you to be elected to public office? Would your conscience allow you to stand on the street corner in your home town with a gospel sign? Any publick figure must have nothing to hide. Even if there is a past, it has been fixed, adjusted, paid, or taken care of. Paul had a past of killing Christians and such WERE some of you, but ye are washed. Praise the Lord. Get washed and go publick.

When Joseph sent his eleven brothers home from Egypt to bring back their father, they ran ahead of everybody and everything else to shoot off their mouth to Daddy about Joseph being alive and a ruler in Egypt. Jacob was very reluctant to share their jubilancy and still refused to believe though they must have repeated the good news with great fervency. The Bible says that when Jacob saw the wagons, he believed. The wagons were tangible, visible evidence that what was coming out of their mouths was really true.

Get you some wagons before you go out on the streets and shoot off your mouth that Jesus is alive and well and is coming to rule the world.

CHAPTER SEVEN

THE EFFECT OF PUBLICK MINISTRY UPON THE SAINTS *(within and without the church)*

Much has already been said concerning the effect upon the individual, but let's turn our thoughts toward the corporate body of the local church. Now, in order to be able to fully appreciate the effect of publick ministry upon the church, there may be some among us who may have to cleanse (brainwash) our minds of preconceived or previously taught wrinkles in theology as to what the church is supposed to accomplish, also as to what appearance the church is supposed to portray before the world.

The Lord never told us to fit in or compromise with the world in order that we would be acceptable so we could reach them; he said quite the contrary (2 Cor. 6:17). He did not tell us to build great buildings, especially if we have to sell ourselves into slavery with the world in order to build them (Mt. 6:24 with Pr. 22:7). The Lord never even told us to build the church, especially if we have to do silly, unscriptural stuff to accomplish this. (Mt. 16:18). He did not commission us to entertain the young folk to keep them off the street. The commission of the church is precise and clear to anyone who wants to see it.

The church was commissioned to be the broadcast network of the gospel to the whole world. No parameters were set on what tools could be employed to accomplish this mammoth task, but examples were set (Act. 20). As to appearance, the church was to maintain before the world the spotless garment expected to be worn by the Bride of the Lord Jesus Christ. But the image of a soldier is also listed, and the duty of the soldier of the Lord Jesus Christ is to win the battle as quickly as possible and to accomplish the task as efficiently as his issue of tools and weapons (2 Tim. 3:16-17, Eph. 6) will allow. Compromise of duty tarnishes the bride's garment just as does immorality.

Please consider the following effect of publick ministry upon the Biblically sincere and dutiful church.

UNIVERSAL SERVICE

Publick ministry provides the one and only MINISTRY of a local church in which everybody has opportunity to MINISTER. From the oldest to the youngest, trained or untrained, mature, educated or new convert disciples, men and women, handicapped (physically or otherwise) ALL CAN MINISTER together. There may be other activities of the church where all can participate but not where all can MINISTER.

Small Children

What can small children do in the church to minister? They are the ones we teach in Sunday School, carry on the buses and train to sit still during the service. They may sing before the church once in a while, but for the most part, they are the ones ministered to. But even a child can effectively pass out tracts and hold signs on street meetings.

My wife and I adopted a darling daughter from the Philippines. She was thirteen months old when we got her. The very week that we received her into our care we had her out on a street meeting. We have a picture of Mary Bethany passing out her first gospel tract at thirteen months old while being carried by her mother. She has been with us on the streets ever since. She holds signs as she sits in her stroller and now, at three, she plays her violin on the street. She loves going on the street and we pray it will always be so.

When I pastored in Northern Ireland our church had some 15 urchins from some of the worst family situations you could ever imagine. We joyed in the opportunity to carry them into Sunday School and on special outings, but we also enjoyed training them to be publick witnesses. We would take them out on the streets of their hometowns as well as other

cities, and they would sing and pass out tracts. Some of our best remembrances and photographs are of these times and events. We had them out there from ages three to thirteen, boys and girls, MINISTERING for the Lord Jesus Christ.

In Pastor Scott Strobel's church publick ministry is very much a family affair. It's not just the men who go to the streets, it's mom and dad and the kids MINISTERING together. Bro. Strobel says that this provides an opportunity and platform to try your wings, and it creates the proper kind of peer pressure.

Another preacher put it this way, "It gives the youth of the church a chance to serve ON THE FRONT LINES."

Some may cringe at this "image", but I can't think of a better MINISTRY for the mentally retarded than to hold signs on a street corner with proper supervision. What else could they do to MINISTER?

I praise the Lord that for many years my mother and father, who were in their seventies, ministered out on the streets with me. As I sang they sang with me, and as I preached, they passed out tracts and witnessed. I praise the Lord that to this very day my mother and step-dad, Jenny and Warren Tucker, now in their eighties, still go with me whenever I am nearby.

Pastor James Knox testifies that he likes the publick ministry because everyone in the church can participate and everyone gets the proper view of the world versus the Bible, Jesus, preachers and the church. He says the youth in his church will have great memories of the street ministry and they think it is perfectly natural.

UNITY

I have never heard of a church that split in the middle of a street meeting. They split in the middle of Sunday morning service, Wednesday night prayer meeting, the annual business meeting, the Christmas choir party, deacon's meeting, ladies

Bible study, or teen recreation night, but not on a street meeting. That is a rather interesting statistic isn't it?

Pastor Ken McFadden tells us that his people have learned to appreciate each other, as does a close combat unit because they wage war together.

Pastor Knox says that if you are busy fighting the opposition on the street you will be less busy fighting each other.

I can attest to that. I pastored for four and a half years in Tallahassee, Florida, and my church was involved in a lot of heavy duty publick ministry. Not one time during my pastorate there did we ever have one dissenting vote or opinion on anything discussed as a body.

Ron, of Littleton, New Hampshire, noticed that it unified his church into a real family. Another preacher in the same church said that it made for a closer body.

Mission Director Jimmy Hood said that not only did it motivate a larger participation in MINISTERING within his church, but the mission workers became more rooted and grounded, and found a common, yet clean camaraderie. "We had three men visit our church because of the street ministry. Two nineteen-year olds got saved and the other one got right with the Lord."

Uncommon Joy

Nearly every person who contributed comments for this book mentioned the fact that publick ministry had brought joy, happiness, boldness and strength into their churches. Even when only a few in the church engage in publick ministry, the church seems to unite in prayer, concern and interest about the street ministry. They say that it provides sort of a vacuum ministry where there is always a need for laborers, prayer warriors, chaperons, drivers, sign makers, float makers and such like.

Pastor Brent Logan quotes, "Like begets like," and since his church has a street preacher for a pastor, whether they like it or not, he has watched as one after another of his men caught a burden and a vision of the publick ministry until he now has nine of his good men that regularly engage themselves in publick ministry. He pastors in a very rural, conservative Virginia community and for his men to do such an unnatural and anti-traditional thing is very shocking to the area. Pastor Logan says that publick ministry is not for the weak of heart or pleasure seeking pastor, because, although it may cut into the actual numbers, it will help you make something big out of those you have left. He has observed the growth in the ones who spend time on the street, and he is assured of their stability and future fruit in the ministry.

Pastor James Knox simply states that it will let you find out, real fast, who is serious about the church and the service of the Lord. "It keeps the carnal babies out of the church and I have learned that benefit is not to be minimized." Church member Dan Wright adds that "it keeps the insincere sheep out of the flock."

Pastor Strobel claims that it tends to make the timid more bold; that it boosts the spirit of the services; it gives you many more contacts for later one-on-one visitation and some actually attend church due to the street ministry. He notes that it actually gives the flock a taste of persecution thereby strengthening and firing them up, and thus it keeps his life and ministry very interesting.

Another preacher warns that it is contagious within the flock, and his partner says that it sharpens the testimony of both the individual as well as the church as a whole. He has also seen several souls saved and come to church from the street ministry.

Ken Lansing testifies that it has given him a new love for the people of the church regardless of whether they do anything for the Lord or not; at least they have chosen the Lord. Whereas before doing regular publick ministry he was easily aggravated with the other members' shortcomings.

He also adds that the men of any church are more excited when they take part in the street preaching.

Shawn Dunn says, "Some takers have become givers."

Bro. Dean writes to encourage us that as they were out and about the Lord's business in downtown Bangor, Maine, a young man observed them from a bus bench. After some inquisition the young man came to church and got his life right with the Lord. He became a disciple in all areas of service including publick ministry, and as a result, his father came to church. It seems his father was saved early in his life and was involved in a similarly zealous church for awhile, but life moved on. He restored fellowship and began to bring his wife who shortly thereafter was saved. Now, all three members of this family and members of Bro. Dean's church are regular publick servants.

It would be interesting if we could see what condition this family would be in today if Pastor Artie Dean had not led his church into publick ministry.

UNIQUENESS

Unlike all the others

My pastor has been doing publick ministry in a medium-small town in central Florida for over a decade. This past year being an election year sparked a new idea in our church. They had colorful election campaign signs made just like the ones on everyone's lawn at election time, only these read, "JESUS CHRIST...AMERICA'S FIRST CHOICE." Nothing else was on the signs. They put these up all over town wherever they were given permission. Then folks started calling the church to get some of these neat campaign signs. The odd thing about this is that no one can figure out how so many folk that called and asked for the signs knew where to call. If your church does regular publick ministry, it is the fastest traveling, cheapest, and most Biblical advertising that your church can find.

Bro. Knox rejoices that regular publick ministry keeps your church from being invited to join the ministerial association, Promise Keepers and most preacher's fellowships. GREAT!

Jim Richardson Sr. is the man with the truck described earlier. He parks his truck on the front lawn of his church right out by the major four-lane highway every Sunday morning. He stands on the platform built onto the front and waves his Bible for about an hour before the service inviting all who drive by to church. That's good advertising. Believe it or not several cars have stopped to see what was going on and some of the men of the church have led them to the Lord and gotten them into church. Get this! The population of the town where their church is located is less than 1000. It barely has its own zip code and no traffic light, and there is NOTHING around it for at least 7 miles. This church leads somewhere between 125-175 souls to the Lord every year through publick ministry.

Pastor Strobel has enjoyed "the distinction between his church and the others" because of publick ministry for more than ten years now.

Fringe Benefits

Ken Lansing confesses that spending one night preaching on Beale Street does more to convict him of "weights" in his life than an entire sermon on sin in church. Especially when a teen age girl had listened to him preach about dope and rock music and then poked him in the belly and said "How much do you weigh?"

Pastor Tim Cronan gives other pastors a valuable tip when he tells that publick ministry in his church allows him to enjoy a fully balanced ministry. I can attest to the fact that he really has the balanced ministry that he talks about.

Ken McFadden enjoys seeing the Holy Spirit in simple unveiled evidence at work in the hearts of

the one or two off in the crowd who are really listening.

UNCTION

More than one contributor admitted to public ministry serving to open the eyes of their church to the gross darkness outside as well as the duty of any lightbearer to take the shade off and let your light so shine among men.

A short century ago a man employed to light the gas street lamps of the city was going about his job when a small boy stopped him and asked what he was doing. His response will preach: "I am knocking holes in the darkness."

Can anyone guess why Coca-Cola and TV have fulfilled the great commission ("Go ye into all the world") in less than 100 years and the Christians have been losing ground since the end of the first century AD? Simply because Coca-Cola and TV and McDonalds and others WENT PUBLIC! And the only way that you and your church is ever going to fulfill the great commission with THE gospel within your city limits is to GO PUBLIC with your faith.

I close this chapter with a commentary from a pastor who has enjoyed public ministry for several years.

Pastor Aaron Samples from Gainesville, Florida, writes: "I believe that pastors, evangelists, etc., that are too proud to preach on the street (no matter how well they may preach), have never fully experienced 1 Cor. 1:17-31; and thus, have never completely fulfilled their call to preach. Lest you think me too harsh, consider how hard it is to conform the preaching of Paul in Acts, the preaching of John the Baptist, Peter, Stephen, Isaiah, Jeremiah, et al, to that of a man preaching in a pulpit to which he was invited, to people who came specifically to hear him preach (even the lost in the service), to get paid with an offering or a salary he expects to receive. Obviously, I am not against 'church preaching' - praise God for it and for men that will take a stand behind a pulpit and

preach the Word of God - but I hope you can see the difference in that and street preaching and can see the importance of both!"

"Never will you see a more appropriate spiritual application of Ezekiel 16:6 than in the midst of Woodstock '94 - Hedonism en masse - when the Lord saved three people."

"You'll never feel the import of Proverbs 14:34 like you will when you've preached at the Washington Monument and off the steps of the Lincoln Memorial."

"You'll never experience the reality of II Chron. 20:17 unless you're in a situation like we were in Richmond, Virginia, with Pastor Ron Talley - 1:30 am Friday night/Saturday morning - witnessing outside a 'Bi-' (straight & queer) bar called 'The Metro'. A police officer was just about to arrest Pastor Talley (illegally) at the request of the cursing, fuming bar owner when the bar 'suddenly' and 'mysteriously' caught on fire. Instantly, we no longer seemed to be such a big problem and we continued our work for several more hours."

"You'll never cry the heart-felt words of Ps. 18:3 until you've done it from a jail cell where you were placed for legally telling others about Christ on a public street."

"You'll never make a more practical application of Ps. 118:6-9 until you hand a man a gospel tract and he pulls a gun and points it at you." (The same man and his bar went bankrupt 2 weeks later.)

"You'll never understand the balance (Pr. 11:1; 16:11) of Pr. 29:27 and 1 Tim. 2:3-4 until you've preached the gospel in a crowd of queers and faggots performing such perverse gestures that they cannot be described in public or private. Then you can have the boldness to call the queers 'Sodomites and faggots' from the pulpit (regardless of the criticism) knowing that you've shown them the love of Christ face-to-face when you gave them the gospel, instead of (like most preachers today - who would faint if they met a militant queer fat-to-face) pretending that you are showing the 'love' of

Christ by apologetically referring to them as 'gays and homosexuals.'"

"You'll never experience the power of God in Romans 1:16 any more than we did among the heathen at Bike Week in Daytona Beach, Florida, when we saw 4 'tough guys' break down and receive Christ as their Saviour."

"You'll never again be swayed by the crossed arms and frown (Jer. 1:8:) of a displeased deacon or member or preacher in a service after being hit with wine and half-eaten hot dogs from the third-floor balcony of a hotel during the all black 'Greek Week' festivities in Virginia Beach, Virginia."

"You'll never feel the urgency of II Cor. 5:18-21 until you preach among the multitude of people around Times Square in New York City on New Year's Eve and see 5 saved out of the literal one million present."

"We've never known the reality of Eph. 6:10-19 and I John 4:4 like we did in Sunbury, Pennsylvania, when 28 young people were saved on the streets one late Friday night. The same night, devil worshipers were chanting, reciting incantation and casting spells and hexes on us in the name of Satan."

"If you want to see Romans 10-11 epitomized, watch a young man bow his head, close his eyes, call out to God and receive the Lord Jesus Christ as his Saviour in the middle of a crowded sidewalk with several of his 'friends' laughing, joking, mocking, yelling, and cursing him not more than 12-24 inches from his face while he is praying."

"Never will you see II Sam. 10:12 exemplified as in the actions of two of our members at the Bible Baptist Church of Gainesville, Donny Rinas and Russ Hamm, both of whom are law enforcement officers. In April of 1996, we were told by university police officers that if we returned the next week to preach at the Univ. of Florida's 'Plaza of the Americas' (a designated open, public forum), we would be arrested...period! My brother, Stephen,

and I returned the next week with fear and trembling and told Donny and Russ that they did not have to go with us. (As law enforcement officers, even an illegal arrest could result in the loss of their jobs.) They insisted that they had to obey God rather than men. As we prayed before entering the plaza, the tears could not be prevented while they prayed for God to take care of their families and for God's will to be done. We preached for two hours straight and not one campus officer showed his face. Praise God!"

"I have as much need for 'Knight Illustrations' as a computer programmer has for a typewriter. If I need a new illustration - I go to the street."

"Christians and preachers talk about being in the 'Lord's Army' while never being in anything but the 'Rear Guard.' After spiritual 'hand-to-hand' combat on the street, it makes you long for II Thess. 1:6-10; Joel 2:1-11; and Rev. 19:11-16 when we, with the Lord Jesus Christ, will literally destroy the enemies of God at His Coming!"

"In short, 'street work' keeps you humble, right with God, bold, and ensures that you have the proper perspective regarding yourself, your ministry, God's people, the lost, God, and His Word!"

CHAPTER EIGHT

THE EFFECT OF PUBLICK MINISTRY UPON THE SPIRIT

All through the Bible the Lord is looking for a person who will believe him, and obey him and thus fear him. Actually, the three are interrelated, for if you truly believe him, then you will obey him which is evidence that you fear him. Oppositely, if you do not fear him you will not obey him which is evidence that you really do not believe him. They are all interdependent upon each other so that you cannot have one without the three. Throughout the Bible it is rare when the Lord finds someone who believes him enough to obey him. Some do for awhile and then fall away. Some never do and a rare few believe, obey and thus fear the Lord all the way to the end. I can only think of a hand full or less mentioned throughout Bible history which fall into this category: more may be alluded to. Whenever the Lord finds them, you will see his abundant blessing upon them. He refers to them as "*A man after my own heart,*" "*a chosen vessel,*" "*there is no greater prophet,*" "*Noah, Daniel and Job,*" "*Of whom the world was not worthy*" and many more terms of endearment and blessing.

It seems simple just to believe and obey, but evidently it must be more difficult because the Lord said that he was looking for a man to stand in the gap and HE FOUND NONE. Jesus asked the question which still remains unanswered, "*When the Son of man cometh, shall he find faith on the earth?*" There must always have been a dearth of souls who will simply believe and obey and thus fear the Lord.

It has been my observation and experience over 28 years in publick ministry that if a person truly has a heart to obey the Lord in the area of publick ministry that the heart of the Lord beats with the heart of that person.

All of us will have to be corrected at the Judgment Seat of Christ for minor, major or medium blunders, mistakes, false doctrines, bad attitudes,

unharnessed spirits, unclean hearts, and so forth. But if a person will go out in publick with the light that the Lord has given them like the blind man in John 9, the woman at the well, the lame man in John 5, the disciples in Luke 19, the maniac of Gadarra in Mark 5, Stephen, Paul, the list in Hebrews 11 and many more, I believe the Lord smiles upon them. I don't know whether it is harder or easier to take a publick stand today versus times in the past, for the flesh is 6000 plus years old, but I know that the ease and comfort of America is diametrically opposed to any publick ministry activity. Persecution fires courage but comfort fosters sleep. The Lord and the Marines are looking for a few good men, but it is easier to join the Marines.

I know that the Lord enjoys and blesses the servants who shout his praises because he wrote a whole book of Psalms for this purpose. How would you feel about somebody if you did them a favor and they could not stop talking about it and bragging on you every place they went?

We are told not to quench the Spirit and we are told that the Spirit can be grieved. We have all experienced both. But how could you ever go wrong by publicly proclaiming the goodness and greatness of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. *"Let the high praises of God be in their mouth..."* and *"...the whole multitude of the disciples began to rejoice and praise God with a loud voice for all the mighty works that they had seen;"*

I do know, beyond a shadow of a doubt that Satan sure does hate it and man sure does respond negatively to it, and the Bible says, *"that which is highly esteemed among men, is abomination in the sight of God."* Don't you think the opposite would be true?

THE EFFECT OF THE FUTURE UPON PUBLICK MINISTRY

Publick ministry is as alive today as it was in the book of Acts. Publick ministry is also as unpopular today as it was in the book of Acts. The laws,

culture, technology, and traditions may change, but the Bible and the flesh never do. So, what is the future of public ministry into the 21st-century? IT IS AS BRIGHT AS YOUR COMMISSION OR AS DARK AS YOUR HEART !

I have been in public ministry since 1968 which at this point is about 28 years. I hope and pray that the Lord Jesus Christ comes today and interrupts my work to complete his. But let us consider, for a moment, that the Lord may not return for another generation, and if that be true let us take the twenty eight years of experience and observation that I have obtained and project that out into the future, say, to the year 2025. What does the next generation of public ministers have to look forward to and prepare for? I am not claiming any charismatic gift of prophesy, but I have seen a pattern forming over the years and if this is allowed to continue to deteriorate then I can pretty much tell you what it may be like in the generation to follow.

Future on Sin

Besides the familiar prophecies of our Lord Jesus Christ concerning things in general waxing worse and worse, frankly folks, it ain't gonna get no better! Several hundred years ago when sin became intolerable for a group of Christians they could just leave that setting and, as pioneering as it may be, they could just go to some new place and found a Christian society all over again until that became corrupt and so on and so forth. But we have run slap out of new places in which to found new Christian societies. The world is "pan-populated" and sin is pandemic.

Sin will become more graphic and more public. Barring a major intervention of God or a worldwide technological catastrophe, technology will continue to increase and sin will continue to be its most profitable product.

I took a group of preachers out to eat at a Shakey's Pizza in Tarlac, Tarlac, Philippines. Does anyone know where that is? We were grossed

out in the middle of our meal by a large screen TV preaching pornographic filth powered by loud, obnoxious rock music. We complained, so they turned down the music a little. This is kids stuff compared to what it may be in ten years.

I stood in line to buy a plumbing product at a counter in a major department store in Bratislava, Slovakia, and was confronted by a TV monitor selling a new shower head by graphically showing how it works on totally nude females.

I remember my non-belief as I heard a preacher back in the sixties predict that there would be rock music and sex going on during church services in the not too distant future. I am no longer a non-believer.

I have only ministered in one Mardi Gras in New Orleans. Unless the Lord vividly directs otherwise, that will be my only exposure. This was some ten years ago and the things I witnessed will scar my brain cells until they decay in my grave. I can't imagine that Mardi Gras has morally improved any in the past ten years, and therefore, I can only predict its further deterioration in the ten years hereafter.

The Bible tells us, *"As it was in the days of Noe, so shall it be also in the days of the Son of man"* and again the mentioning of the days of Lot. In the days of Noah it is described that *"every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually."* Remember that the Lord waited one hundred and twenty years after that before he destroyed them with a flood. As bad as things are now, I can't really say that every imagination of the thoughts of people's heart is only evil continually. But it will get that way.

My daughter of three lives a very sheltered life in our Christian incubator called home. Yea and Amen. But we do allow her to be on the streets with us, and thereby, she is exposed to some pretty gross stuff. When we go out to Harvard Square with all the punker dead-head Satanist worshippers or down in Tempe, Arizona, on the campus of Arizona State University, the air gets pretty stale with sin. We

have prayed for the Lord to show us the time or the place where it would be displeasing to him or harmful to her for us to take her out. The time is fast approaching when the publick minister of the future will not be able to take his children on the street to minister with him. Any aggressive, carnivorous animal knows to attack the easiest of prey first.

I have preached on Waikiki Beach where I preached with my eyes closed. Already the world is eager to defile whom they can. It is a common thing to be mooned while preaching and also for the female gender to remove their tops that they might distract and defile you. The publick minister of the future is going to have to invent some sort of blinders to preach in lest he vex his righteous soul.

Technology has made it possible to drown out any preaching with ground shaking death rock music. What with satellites, who knows but that they will broadcast the devil's favorite music from the principalities of the air.

It has long been advisable not to accept any open drink from some "kind thinking" person while preaching on the street regardless of how hot and dry your throat may be. In the future it may be advisable not to breathe the air as you preach. Evangelist Don Boys predicts that AIDS will go airborne by the end of this century. It is already unadvisable to breath through your nose when preaching to or dealing with some sinners. We publick ministers may have to invent a new kind of gas mask to use in our preaching.

Oh, don't quit now!

The future here on earth is always a dim prospect for the citizen of heaven. Remember, "WHERE SIN ABOUNDED, GRACE DID MUCH MORE ABOUND!", "MY GRACE IS SUFFICIENT FOR THEE," AND "I CAN DO ALL THINGS THROUGH CHRIST WHICH STRENGTHENETH ME."

FUTURE OF THE SINNER

As sin engulfs our cities as it did many times in Bible history the sinner becomes harder against righteousness. The family and friends of Lot took him as a mocker. The elders of Israel would not receive the leadership of Moses. Elijah was considered the troubler of Israel and Paul and Silas were accused of turning the world upside down.

Twenty five years ago when I would go on visitation from the church it was somewhat common to get asked into a home to present the gospel. I can't remember when the last time I was invited into a home for that purpose. Tracts used to be received rather well by all. And if the white folk did give you a hard time you were always well received by the blacks. Times are certainly changing. Door-to-door visitation, except for some select towns, is very difficult and in many places, banned. The tract distributor of the future is going to have to have a velcro tract that automatically sticks to sinners as they pass by. Maybe there could be a jumping cactus tract that would jump onto and imbed itself in sinners even when they come near.

Scotland and England were the origin of many of the best missionaries of our recent PAST, but they are among the most difficult countries that I have ever attempted to distribute tracts. It is not much better here in our "Christian" nation.

I mentioned earlier in this book about Satanists being on every other corner nowadays. This will pose yet another problem for the publick witness of the future. Twenty years ago the common person did not think much about "Missing Children," but today they appear on milk cartons and the back of semi-trucks across the nation. When we take our daughter out on the street she is strapped into her stroller AND strapped to our wrist and we NEVER separate from her. I am very naive concerning Satanic activity, but with what I do know I am very cautious. The sinner of tomorrow will be given to Satan from birth to death, fed through piped in Satanic music, and promised bonuses if he dies early and takes out a few Christians along the way. The kids under 16 already talk freely about ruling

with Satan in hell. *"The weapons of our warfare are not carnal, BUT MIGHTY!"* I stopped at a traffic light the other day next to a Satanist tattooed from head to toe. I yelled over his music, "Satan is a real loser." They cannot touch us unless they have permission. We are not to fear even the devil. Mt. 10:28.

Recently I was battling along with a group of other publick ministers right in the middle of the devil's playground. A lull came in the activities on the street so I decided to try a spiritual experiment. I read aloud from Revelation 20:10, *"And the devil that deceived them was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet are, and shall be tormented day and night for ever and ever."* Then I preached that the devil was a loser and Jesus Christ the winner. I said that the score was Jesus Christ 1000 and the devil 0. I also stated that anyone who followed the devil was a loser and a liar, for the devil was the father of all lies. I did this experiment to see what might happen. It happened; the devils climbed up out of their pit and came out onto the street to meet the opposition. In a brief time we were surrounded by many of the devil's own. The following were some of the perverted phrases which jumped quickly out of their mouths like frogs: "I'd better leave now, before I slit your throat," and "I love everybody and I'll be very happy to drink all your blood." I am encouraged by the words of a good preacher, "We are invincible until the Lord is ready to take us home." AAAAAAAMEN!

If history repeats itself, the sinner of the future will get more aggressive against the Lord's messengers. We actually live in one of the rare moments of human history when Christians are not being physically persecuted in most of the world and are protected by law. These few exceptions that I know of prove the rule. Just last year a man was beaten severely for preaching the gospel in Monterey, Mexico, and a very good missionary to South Africa, Ron Sykes, mentioned in his newsletter about he, his wife and some of his church getting into it physically at a sodomite parade where they were trying to minister. I know there are many more isolated incidents of physical

persecution that I am not aware of, but by and large, we still can minister publickly without resisting unto blood. But as the law further deteriorates and the mob begins to rule under the guise of democracy, objects will be hurled as they were in the past. Why should our generation be the only one exempt from this when it was so prevalent in past generations? Consider these encouraging words from the Lord to his faithful publick servant. *"And thou, son of man, be not afraid of them, neither be afraid of their words, though briers and thorns be with thee and thou dost dwell among scorpions: be not afraid of their words, nor be dismayed at their looks, though they be a rebellious house."* Ezek. 2:6.

Well, so far the publick minister of the future has blinders on his eyes, ear plugs in his ears, a gas mask, a bullet proof vest, and jumping cactus tracts. We look as weird as they do. Stephen had none of the above and you would delight in the choice of that name for your grandson.

FUTURE OF THE CITY

Don't look to the six o'clock news for a report stating that the congress has now passed a new law which would totally outlaw all forms of publick ministry. The devil is very subtle. The laws will be passed or are already on the books that will prohibit such activity, but they do not read so blatantly. They are vague noise ordinances or disorderly conduct laws or trespassing laws. I have seen such laws, like, "No one shall disturb the peace of the city" and "There shall be no tumultuous behavior on the streets of the city." There is not much you can do about these laws outside of court. But then most Christians who do not do publick ministry think that it is already against the law; or they enjoy the comfort of the lack of conviction by thinking this. So, if they will not do publick ministry when it is legal, what makes you think that they will, suddenly, start doing it when it does become illegal? *"If thou hast run with the footmen, and they have wearied*

thee, then how canst thou contend with horses?"
Jer. 12:5.

I predict there will be Independent Baptist pastors who will rejoice, breathe deeply and wipe their brow when it does become illegal. *"...whosoever killeth you will think that he doeth God service."*
John 16:2.

Some of the brethren think they are helping me when they share with me the latest gossip about the secret laws being or already passed against publick conversion, proselytizing, preaching against sodomites, etc. I believe most of this is fearmongering, and even if they are true, it is not going to alter my ministry one iota. So please, spare me from such discouraging words. Suppose they do make it illegal; does that mean that you are not going to do it? *"We ought to obey God rather than man."* Acts 5:29.

As we see the law becoming toothless and thereby passing into the hands of the mob, we'll see the law enforcers, more and more, looking the other way and thus allowing the mob to have it's own way. Hey, what's new; *"When Pilate saw that he could prevail nothing, but that rather a tumult was made, he took water, and washed his hands before the multitude saying, I am innocent of the blood of this just person: see ye to it."* Mt. 27:24.

The religious freedoms enjoyed by Christians in this country were born out of the Philadelphia church age which has long since passed. When they have decreed it to be illegal to allow a framed picture of Jesus Christ to remain hanging in a hallway of a public elementary school where it has hung for forty-seven years, don't expect the freedom of religion laws to be there protecting you some twenty-five years from now.

Our children will be victimized by the government under colour of their protection. It's child abuse, you know, for having your kids with you on the street corner singing songs about Jesus Christ. This is where the law will really get in our way and strike at our hearts. Do all you can to be wise in every circumstance, but after all is said

and done, they do belong to the Lord and they do need to be trained in the service of the Lord. Many others throughout history have been persecuted by way of their children. This strikes at a soft spot in the heart of every parent---I know.

It may be considered an un-American activity to do so, but even Jesus told his disciples that if they were not received into one city that they should *"flee ye into another."*

I'll never forget what a young missionary to Communist China asked me one time. He said that he believed and practiced publick ministry, and that if the Lord allowed him to lead some Chinese men to the Lord and disciple them that he would not neglect instruction in publick ministry. But knowing full well the consequences of blatant publick ministry practices under communist law in China, he asked if he should simply teach them to defy the law or should they learn some form of compromised publick ministry? I quickly and wisely backed off from that question because I have never yet lived under laws prohibiting open service to my God and I would not presume to answer for those who are. However, we do have several examples in recent history where men, serving the Lord under communist and other antichrist systems, were taken to prison for preaching openly after which their wives would run into the streets to preach and then quickly hide. When this persecution comes to us, we will just have to pray for the wisdom to minister correctly in all circumstances.

I am all for fighting and defending our American rights both through exercising them and through the court system if necessary. But I would strongly advise anyone to stay in tune with the Lord concerning how far to go and how much time to spend in chasing legal rabbits. It is very easy for a preacher of the gospel to get real caught up in his legal affairs to the point that he starts preaching the gospel of American constitutional law rather than the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ. When this becomes the case, no matter how unfairly you may feel that you have been treated, the devil has won simply by default. I personally watched this happen in a large part to the ministry of Lester

Roloff. The more the government encroached upon his ministry the more his message changed from Bible to American freedom laws.

THE FUTURE OF THE SERVANT

I believe that the statement in 1 Kings 19:18 concerning the remnant of seven thousand who have not bowed the knee was not intended to be limited to that occasion only. I believe there will always be a faithful remnant of the Lord's servants who are not ashamed of him and will stand and preach regardless of the cost. As previously discussed, there may have to be changes and/or even compromises on the part of the publick minister, but publick ministry will continue regardless of who chooses to participate.

Traveling, as I do, I have observed a serious increase in church trouble over the last twenty years. The devil divides in order to conquer and he is active in these last days. The rule is that churches who will not compromise the truth or who are slack in their service are battling the devil on the front lines and are having a real time of it. The ministry of the future may not be centered inside a comfortable church building, but rather out on the cold concrete sidewalks. Also, as the government moves in closer (for our protection, you understand) and demands more in building codes and taxes it will be increasingly difficult to operate a church, particularly if there is indebtedness. Indebtedness leads to compromise.

Another interesting observation of mine is that most of the servants doing publick ministry today are under 35. This may be good in the sense that if they continue doing it there will be a good strong group for several years ahead. But it may be bad in the sense that the attitude sets in that only the young are to do it. It would be a healthy trend for more seniors to get involved. Paul spoke of himself as a wise masterbuilder and as Paul the aged. There was no indication that he quit the publick ministry when he reached a certain stage of maturity. Thank God for the strength of youth but

what we increasingly lack is wise elders who are still in the publick service of the Lord.

Duni Toth is a grandmother who serves the Lord on the front lines with the best of them. Consider that she is triply vulnerable. That is, she is a senior female with a very slight frame. She told me that she has a tendency to be feisty and that publick ministry has taught her to control her temper. She testifies that sin had hardened her heart, but serving the Lord on the streets has replenished her compassion. She beams as she says that following her pastor and others in her church out onto the streets is one of the greatest services she can render unto her Lord.

I see one thing the publick minister of the future is going to have to work on---controlling the spirit. There is a dearth of publick ministers who have a good handle on their spirit. *"He that is slow to wrath is of great understanding: but he that is hasty of SPIRIT exalteth folly."* Pr. 14:29. *"Better it is to be of an humble SPIRIT with the lowly, than to divide the spoil with the proud."* Prov. 16:19. *"He that is slow to anger is better than the mighty; and he that ruleth his SPIRIT than he that taketh a city."* Prov. 16:32. *"He that hath no rule over his own SPIRIT is like a city that is broken down, and without walls."* Prov. 25:28. (Emphasis added). No one knows how difficult this is to accomplish any more than myself; however, it is of the utmost importance that we gain the victory over this for the future effect of publick ministry is at stake.

I have observed publick ministry done the wrong way many, many times. And I have observed publick ministry under fire and persecution to the breaking point. Very few times was the dam able to bear the weight and pressure borne upon it. WE MUST LEARN TO CONTROL OUR SPIRIT or we will bring more persecution upon us than would normally have to be. The only answer to this is prayer and maintaining constant quality control while on the streets as well as in our personal lives. *"For if we would judge ourselves, we should not be judged."* 1 Cor. 11:31. We are commanded to be conformed to the image of the Lord Jesus Christ and this CAN be

accomplished if you don't excuse away your lack of control by relegating it to, "Oh, that's just my personality."

I know there will be publick ministers in the future for I look into the book of Revelation, in chapter 11, and I see two men who are standing strong. The Lord may have pulled them out of a long retirement to find a man to stand in the gap, but at least they are still standing strong. I catch a glimpse of the future of public ministry in this passage also; for we can see the attitude of the people and the government. The people rejoice while the government allows their bodies to lie in the streets for three days. We also see the end result and the attitude of the Lord toward his faithful servants for in the end they live and all the others die. You notice also that there is no indication of any mass conversion; but rather a very necessary witness.

FUTURE OF THE SAINTS

The attitude of the saints toward publick ministry seems to be in direct proportion to the overall comfort of the saints. I have traveled, preached, and taught publick ministry in many other countries where the standard of living is far below ours and it is always true that the saints there are much less reluctant to take their faith onto the streets. Although they have the same flesh to deal with as we do, it seems that a more spartan society allows freedoms which lend toward more open service for the Lord. In the last century the saints have let the world form their opinions instead of the Word of God. The world hates publick ministry, therefore most saints despise it as well. Any Bible believing pastor will agree that the world's opinions hold sway in fashion, music and philosophy, so it would only stand to reason that the world's revulsion of publick ministry would affect the saints. This is reflected in our churches and Bible colleges and institutes for the most part. They just don't want THAT IMAGE. If there is an element in our churches and institutions who engage in this activity, they are

considered the rogues and not worthy of equal assimilation into the body.

Even if someone has all the right credentials it is most difficult to get a Bible college to let you come in and present the challenge or teach on publick ministry. Sometimes I do get this opportunity, but when it comes down to actually taking them out on the street and putting New Testament Christianity into practice, it is always the last thing on the schedule, there is little or no participation from faculty or anyone who isn't under mandate to attend and the students show a great lethargy in their attitude toward the event. Few students will actually preach unless it is required. I think this is a blotch on the body of Christ. It is not the student's fault; for even if some do get zealous concerning this ministry, they are ostracized and relegated to their own rogue fraternity. There is a need for an entire attitude change in the body of Christ toward publick ministry. The church leaders, pastors and Bible college faculty seem to have the attitude, "*There is a lion without, I shall be slain in the streets,*" but I must remind them that those lions are just publick servants who are doing their reasonable service for their Lord Jesus Christ. "*The wicked flee when no man pursueth: BUT THE RIGHTEOUS ARE BOLD AS A LION.*"

I was sitting in the chapel service in a large Bible college in this country while evangelist Don Boys preached. His audience consisted largely of "thirteenth graders", boys and girls with goo-gooly eyes and surging salivary glands one for another, but outwardly keeping themselves under lest they get another demerit. These perfumed cheerleaders and slick-haired boy scouts represent the cream of the latest crop of "soldiers" in the body of Christ. Bro. Boys, in his usual good style, began to present the life of a soldier. He said that being a soldier wasn't a very clean job and that it could be painful and uncomfortable. There would be long days and inadequate pay and few vacations. He went on and on saying that it could even be dangerous and that a soldier stood a good chance of making the ultimate sacrifice for his service. He concluded by saying that the life of a soldier was

so undesirable the most Christians would rather just sing about it.

I guess that is how I view the future of the saints when it comes to publick ministry. They would rather hypocritically read the gallant stories of past public ministers in the Bible and in Foxes Book of Martyrs and turn publick ministry into a spectator sport rather than obey the clear commandment, follow the superb examples, and step out of the church onto the nearest street corner and proclaim "THUS SAITH THE LORD GOD."

FUTURE OF THE SPIRIT

If the Holy Spirit continues to be grieved with rebellious saints in the future, it is assured that he will pour out his blessing upon those who are obedient; those who will not offer unto the Lord that which costs them nothing. If I were the Holy Spirit in constant search of clean vessels willing to yield to the use and purpose designed by the creator, I would look upon America's churches and Bible institutes as a great heap of vessels not fit for the Master's use.

The Holy Spirit, as anyone can observe, has moved through and gone out of many countries on this planet. I believe He will continue to move as long as he can find a willing heart here and there in this time of gleanings. But the Bible does say that, "*My Spirit shall not always strive with man.*" It also says, "*...the night cometh when no man can work.*"

The Lord's train will pull into the station whether you or I are on it or not. Praise be to the Lord.