

“Newsletter Number 12 – March 2009”

Looking Back Over Four Short Years!

365 sounds like a very large number, but when we place that number in the course of a year it is amazing just how fast time flies by. Just a little over four years ago “Living Hope Ministry” as we know it came into being. A dear friend in Louisville, Kentucky wanted to help me in ministry. Along with my wife, our family, and his constant support and encouragement we began on a journey that has covered more miles and been in more places than I had ever dreamed possible.

We had been in the ministry for over 34 years, and in part we were aware of the struggles, troubles, joys, difficulties, blessings, conflicts, victories, and just about everything else you can think of that goes along with ministry. So why not try to encourage, help, walk along aside, and train those who are in the ministry now? Little did we realize how open those in the work of ministry would be to help! One of our very good friends often tells me, “Phil, there are two things that constantly surprise me about the work you are doing. First of all, I didn’t know you had it in you to do this kind of work. (I always love positive reinforcement) Second, I had no idea people in ministry and in leadership were hurting so much.”

Our Lord has allowed us to work in 7 states, share with 8 separate churches in various stages of difficulty, work with over 1000 ministers in leadership and ministry work and training, hold 20 church leadership series, share the Gospel in 5 different fellowships of believers, and preach countless times in revivals in 5 states.

To God be the glory great things He has done. It is really true, “It does not matter who gets the credit as long as God gets the glory.”

We continue on in 2009 with the knowledge that our Great God will continue to use this work as we stay close to Him and lift up His Holy Son our only Savior and Lord Jesus Christ.

The greatest need in our world now is for people to know Jesus Christ, and to come to Him as Savior and Lord of their lives. This truly is the greatest work in the world no matter the work we do! When the people of the Lord testify about the Lord the world will know who Jesus is! May we all minister in His name until He comes again or until He calls us home. What a privilege it will be for Jesus to find us faithful when He calls us to Himself, and the blessed joy of hearing the Lord say, “Well done, my good and faithful servant, enter in to your rest...” See you at the house!

Preach the Word!

Writing to his son in the faith, the Apostle Paul gives Timothy marching orders we all need to hear and heed.

"In the presence of God and of Christ Jesus, who will judge the living and the dead, and in view of his appearing and his kingdom, I give you this charge: Preach the Word; be prepared in season and out of season; correct, rebuke and encourage—with great patience and careful instruction. For the time will come when men will not put up with sound doctrine. Instead, to suit their own desires, they will gather around them a great number of teachers to say what their itching ears want to hear. They will turn their ears away from the truth and turn aside to myths. But you, keep your head in all situations, endure hardship, do the work of an evangelist, discharge all the duties of your ministry. For I am already being poured out like a drink offering, and the time has come for my departure." (2 Timothy 4:1-6, NIV)

What in the world can someone like me do in these trying times we are facing? "Preach the Word!" The absolute truth of God's Word is still a light to our path and a lamp to our feet. The Word of God is living and active. The Word is profitable for teaching, training, correcting, rebuking so that the follower of Christ may walk in His ways. All we need to do is "Preach the Word," in simple, practical ways so the people may hear what God's Will is, His good, pleasing, and perfect Will. We don't have to reinvent the wheel to be effective in our personal work for God, we just need to do what God already knows will work.

Do you remember this great old poem?

**"Preach the Gospel, brother, preach it,
Put it high, where men can teach it,
Put it low, where men can reach it,
But preach the Gospel, brother, preach it."**

C.T. Studd once wrote:

**"Some want to live within the sound
Of church or chapel bell...
I want to run a rescue shop
Within a yard of hell..."**

When we see the harvest fields with the eyes of our Lord then we will know that the Gospel truly is the Good News for all. Jesus did not come to make man right with man. Jesus came to make man right with God. "Preach the Word," church, now is the time!

Financially Speaking

In every event we share someone will always ask a very important question, “Phil, how do you support this ministry?” As bold as I am in many areas of my life, this is not one of them. Most of the time when I am asked this question my answer is weak, “We do a lot of begging.” I do ask a lot for support, but that isn’t the best answer I can give.

The absolute best answer is, “Our Great God in Heaven continues to provide for our needs.” Isn’t it amazing to realize that we serve the only Living God who knows our needs before we even ask! All we have to do is learn to trust Him, and live in obedience to His Will.

God has provided faithful individuals who have partnered with us in this work and been very faithful in their monthly support. When we began we ask for a year’s commitment to “Living Hope.” As you are well aware that year has long since come and gone. Thankfully, many who made that commitment are still faithful in their support. Along with those I have just told you about five churches now support us on a monthly basis.

Why haven’t more churches come along aside to help in this work? I really don’t know the answer to that question. Many have said they would, but up to now they haven’t. I will reaffirm what I know to be true, “God will provide.” Is it easier to have full assurance that the funds are going to come in regularly? All God’s people will say, “Amen.” Maybe the reason you are reading this now is because you want to help! I will thank you in advance for your amazing generosity.

I will let you know that when we have a “Ministry to Ministers and Church Leaders” the local church where we meet goes above and beyond the call of duty by providing our location, sound equipment, and the food for the breakfast and lunch. You see God really does provide through His people.

Up-dated Schedule of Events for 2009

March 8, 6:00p.m. – Mt. Hebron preaching

***March 10, 8:30 – 12:00 – Ministry to Ministers and Church Leaders
Hanging Rock Christian Assembly***

March 11, Country Lake Christian Retreat Center – Ministers

March 15 -18 – Revival – Martinsville, Illinois

March 29, Morning Worship – Westview Christian Church

April 26 – 27 Ministry to Ministers Hagerstown, Maryland

August 5, Revival – PeaksMill Christian Church, Frankfort, Ky.

September 11, 12 – White Mills Christian Camp – Men’s Retreat

September 14, -- PeaksMill Christian Church – Ministry to Ministers

September 21, -- Paoli Christian Church – Ministry to Ministers

Confronting the Challenges of Living for Jesus

The Apostle Paul wrote some very insightful words to the Christians at Ephesus I had overlooked for many years. I read them many times, but they never really hit home until just a while back. Paul wrote: "...now to Him who able to do immeasurably more than we ask or imagine..."

Yes, I knew God was more than able to do immeasurable more in my life, in my work, in the ministry, and in the church. We all are probably aware of this truth. But have you ever considered yourself as the reason things aren't being done in your life for the kingdom?

You see, Paul said, "...we ask or imagine..." I was not getting the job done because I didn't ask God believing He would work in me. And then I didn't imagine it was possible He would work through me. Isn't it a sad commentary on life when we recognize the enemy and realize we are him!

May I share with you some things I have learned that will help us all to ask and imagine more when it comes to serving our Lord? Challenges we can successfully overcome when we completely sell out to our Savior and Lord.

- 1. We don't have to be successful in the eyes of the world; we just have to be faithful in the eyes of God.**
- 2. We don't have to grow the church, we just have to plant and water the Word of God – and then He will grow the church.**
- 3. We don't have to save the world – Jesus has already done that – we just have to tell them the Good News.**
- 4. We don't have to please everybody – we just have to please God.**
- 5. We don't have to change everybody else – we have to work on changing ourselves to be like Jesus.**
- 6. We don't have to do the convicting work of the ministry – that is the work of the Holy Spirit.**
- 7. We don't have to be intellectually superior – we just have to tell the truth in practical, applicable ways.**
- 8. We don't have to be boring – anybody can do that – learn the lessons in scripture and tell the old, old story.**
- 9. We don't have to do it all – we just have to do what we have been gifted to do.**
- 10. We don't have to make anyone committed to Christ – we can't do it anyway – we just have to live a life of commitment.**

I can only imagine what God is going to do when ask...