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# The Story of Jesus

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Published By Evangelist Van Billingsley

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## Because of Victory in Jesus

*"Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord." — 1 Corinthians 15:58*

The words preceding "Therefore" in this verse say, "But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ." Because of Victory in Jesus, we are to be **Steady Going** ("be ye steadfast"), have **Solid Grounding** ("unmoveable"), and show **Strong Growth** ("always abounding").

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**Important Update in Ministry News! Please Read inside.**

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## Search and Rescue: The Truth About the Bus Ministry

by Evangelist Van Billingsley

*And of some have compassion, making a difference: And others save with fear, pulling them out of the fire; hating even the garment spotted by the flesh. -*  
— Jude 22,23

*For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul? — Matthew 16:26*

Most ventures not strictly for pleasure are expected to be profitable in some way. Even leisure and pleasure can be considered profitable to our well being, but efforts requiring resources to be accounted for should show some merit and most often should pay for themselves. Even most public service agencies in some way seem to pay for themselves. Roads and bridges generate the ability to tax tags and licences. Revenue comes into police agencies through fines and fees. Ambulances even bill those transported and tax dollars subsi-

dize all these simply because we know we must have them.

Ministry is much the same. Mission work is expected to show results. Churches reach others and the church grows. This allows the church to then reach even more. When people give to a min-

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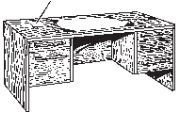
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# *Our Ministry News...*

## **From the Desk of the Editor**

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As an update on our ministry I will tell you what we know about the transition we are in. Our ministry has always been that of mission evangelism, but for the past decade we have operated a mission church out of our home church. Without going into great detail, I will just say that this mission was started out of necessity and responsibility and the Lord has blessed it throughout these years. From the beginning, I thought it may be a temporary thing and when the Lord led us to continue on I thought He may grow a church out of this ministry. This has certainly not been a fly by night endeavor; we are nearing the end of our tenth year. We've seen many saved and lives have been changed. Most of those who have shown positive results have moved on to other areas or they are now attending elsewhere with family.

For the past year or so the work at the mission church has been waning. We have been diligently seeking God's directions and I believe it is in His timing to turn our focus to other areas. It seems God has fulfilled His purpose for this ministry. All this time I have been active in missionary evangelism but the requirement of being in our Sunday morning service every week has placed strict limitations upon my traveling. I moved back into full time

ministry without any other salary over five years ago, but these circumstances have also prohibited going out to seek additional support. We are currently in the process of phasing out our Sunday services at the mission church and during this time we are working to put the few we are still ministering to into other ministries.

This means for the first time in over ten years I will be available for services on Sundays and for meetings which require being away from home over the weekend or for multiple weeks. As always, my goal is to do whatever God places before me but my understanding of where God is leading is to move forward helping smaller churches and ministries, mission churches, new churches and other missionary evangelism type efforts. I do not want to define limitations that would narrow what God wants me doing. I will still work locally with my home church as well as other area churches when in the area, but now will be able to work elsewhere as needed. We are already working with a preacher and his family who is starting a church in our region. Of course, my involvement there will be from the exterior as an evangelist. I will also be able to increase my involvement with the several other ministries I have already been helping and working with.

Please pray for our needs to be

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met, which are many. The small building which has housed the mission church for the past five years will still be needed for my office and headquarters since this is the only space presently available to me. It has served as such all this time, but I do not presently have the support for the rent and utilities. We also need open doors to serve as we change our focus to these other

areas.

My summer schedule is just about full, but as usual, most of this will not provide offerings or support, so we have needs to be met during this time. Please pray for all these things as we press forward for Him.

A Servant of Christ,  
Evangelist Van Billingsley

(... from cover) -- **“Search and Rescue”** istry, they want to see that the gift is fruitful. When we work, we want to see results and fruits.

Unfortunately, it is not always as simple as this. Going back to our public service and public safety examples, there is one activity which really never pays for itself. It is very costly and involves extreme risk and danger. Though on the surface it is never profitable and in retrospect usually should have been prevented in advance, yet there are those who rush to serve and risk everything to succeed when the need arises. The operation I refer to is "Search and Rescue." There's always funds set aside and trained professionals ready to respond plus a mass of volunteers prepared to act. These operations are generally very costly and would overwhelm any individual who may wish to foot the bill. Still, when needed, we respond. I've even trained some in my own spare time for such volunteer services.


There are areas of ministry which have a striking similarity to these situations.

Critics say, "Those people will never help our church," or "That will just cost a lot of money for nothing." Some justify themselves thinking it would simply not be fruitful. Many ministries would fit this profile including prison ministries, street ministries, and even the nursing home, but none fit the analogy of "Search and Rescue" quiet like the bus ministry.

First of all, it is very costly and no, it will never pay for itself financially. There are masses of children who are trapped in homes of lost families who will never darken the door of a church. Many of these adults have a church background and go to the extreme to stay away from any Christian influence out of resentment or fear of a convicting environment. Many are involved in drugs and alcohol or other influences contrary to Christianity. For those trapped in these environments, a search and rescue operation is their only hope and chance.

Not only is it costly, but it is risky. Just as those involved in physical search and

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rescue must place themselves in elevated danger, those involved in bus ministry place themselves in heightened risk. Just the neighborhoods themselves present perils we may wish to avoid, but when dealing with children and single parent homes, especially those from some of the homes we must reach, we face extreme danger of accusation and in some cases even temptations we would otherwise avoid. Those in physical search and rescue will go into areas against their own judgement to perform a rescue and many lose their lives or suffer severe injury as a result. This is a risk assumed in search and rescue. Of course one should take every precaution possible and teamwork is a necessity. Those trained in search and rescue are taught that they are not a help if they must too be rescued! Rescue efforts are often halted because of undue danger to the rescuers, but there is a heightened risk from the very beginning. When working with children, we should always be conscious of the cooperation from the parents or guardians. Without full support and co-

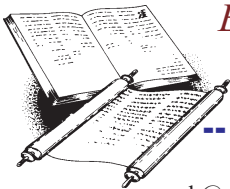
operation, and a good relationship between worker and parent, disaster is likely! Other risks include liability with transportation as well as the likelihood of discovering things you must deal with legally and morally, but these risks are all small when compared to the value of the soul.

Then there's the excuse that they should not be in that situation to begin with, so we say let's just focus on prevention efforts. An ounce of prevention may be worth a pound of cure, but since when do we give up on the cure. I myself often think, "That hiker should have known better, why risk more lives?" but there are always some who still care enough to help. In search and rescue type ministries, some have compassion making a difference!

It is costly. It is risky. Those who volunteer are usually forgotten and never justly compensated. Nevertheless, there are those in dire straits who await rescue and there are those who care enough to get involved in "Search and Rescue."

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