



## Missionary Man !

When I was about 8 years old, my mom was walking out of a church service, holding my hand, when we met a man at the exit. He had on a miter hat and layers of priestly robes and a staff in his hand. The bishop greeted my mom and asked who I was, to which my mom replied, "This is my son John." The man bent over and said, "What do you want to be when you grow up?" I looked firmly into his eyes and said, "I'm going to be a **Missionary Man!**" Both my mom and the bishop had a little chuckle . . . but did God?

When I was 9 years old, on summer vacation, I wanted to do a mission trip in the woods by our house. I made up small posters with the date, time and instructions: Bring a lunch for the mission trip venture. I put them on telephone poles, to see who in the neighborhood would join me. To my surprise, 4 younger kids were waiting with their lunch boxes at the designated place, ready to go on a trip into the woods. I had a stick like a staff that I brought with me and I began to lead my team into the woods. We had to cross a stream and I helped each one to get across, as we ventured into the wilderness.

Let's jump thirty years ahead. I was 39 years old. There was an inner voice that kept saying to me, "***It's time! It's time!***" This went on for a few months. I remember saying to the voice, "***Time for what?***" Then I met an elderly man who told me about his mission trips to Africa. As I heard his stories, I stated, "I would love to do that too." He gave me a number to call a mission organization. They suggested a trip to South America, to help a Christian hospital. My current trade as a bricklayer was needed to accomplish the task there at the hospital, so my wife Pam and I went on a one week mission trip.

When I returned, my appetite to continue mission work was heavy on my heart. I called another agency and was put on a team of 50 people to build a 7-classroom school in the mountains of Guatemala, at about 12,000 ft elevation above sea level. After returning to Canada, I continued to go on many mission trips over the next 15 years. *Continued on Page 2*

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## on the streets . . .

Direct Report From John

I found myself speaking at many churches and service clubs, and began recruiting people to serve on mission trips. During this 15-year period I led teams to Guatemala, Haiti, Cuba, Nicaragua, Honduras, Dominican Republic and New Orleans. Together, we helped build Christian medical clinics, feeding centres, churches, several Christian schools, and many homes for the less fortunate.

The Lord led me to lead teams which had various ministries, medical, construction, vision, children ministries, dental care and evangelism. Who would have ever thought the words spoken by an eight-year-old boy would lead to the successful completion of many projects, helping thousands in need and the conversion to Jesus Christ of many souls. As I ponder over the many difficulties and challenges leading these teams, I realized God's hand had protected and guided through all of these ventures and projects.



Our Teams were caught in the middle of 2 civil wars; served in villages with diseases like typhoid, cholera, malaria, leprosy and many, many other ailments that impact the local populations. On the back of a motorcycle, hanging on tightly, a Haitian Pastor and I traveled through the middle of a fire fight between the UN and rebels' forces. We were mobbed, surrounded, and barely able to escape before being crushed. We had an army surrounding our vehicle with AK 47s pointed at us--a terrifying experience. We were stranded between 2 towns, hours away from either one, with robbers and thieves all around us; confronted with angry men with machetes, and forced to leave the village; cursed and confronted by witch doctors. When ready to fly home, the lights went out on the plane and men rushed in with guns, and a lot of yelling, leaving us to believe we were being hijacked. Twice I was very sick, on a bed in a foreign place; survived 2 earthquakes, with massive devastation all around us; to top it all off, a level 3 hurricane struck, and the village we were in was devastated. I was called in front of a military desk, in a communist country, with hid-



den Bibles in my suitcase. \$30,000 worth of medical supplies were taken by airport officials, only to get it back by God's divine intervention. Two men attacked me with flashing knives; I was spared by God's hand.

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## Missionary Man !

On a spiritual side of things, we were able to bring a projector to many villages, showing a movie of Jesus in their local language. There was even the opportunity to minister to people living in garbage dumps in decrepit conditions. There are many more situations, too numerous to mention or write down in this short article, where the Lord guided and protected me in all my missionary endeavours for Him. We will need another venue, with more time to tell the wonderful stories of lives restored to His Glory and the miracles that were performed for the dream of an 8-year-old youngster.

I never knew or thought, when I told the bishop when I was 8 years old that I wanted to be a **Missionary Man**, that God was listening too!

Today, I am still doing missions work with the homeless, shut ins, single parents, lonely people, the disadvantaged, people seeking a human touch and people, in general, in my community. So now, after I was inspired to share more of my story, you know a little bit of what the Lord has brought me through. I praise



Him for His love, protection and care for Pam and me as we journey onward in this **Walk of Faith** that He has asked us to take.

Please pray for us both as Pam and I will pray for you and all who cross our paths.

Thank you Lord for answering my wish and giving me the desire of my heart.

~ ~ John

## What Does it Take to Keep JC's Place Running?

Is this a question any of our readers is able to answer? The situations we meet on a daily basis, even though we are on the road only 2 times per week, (once with the Cube Van and food and clothes, and once with the passenger van on a smaller, more personal outing) take a lot of thought and prayer, seeking the correct answer to the situations that we encounter. Let me relate some situations that need answers, to see if you have the solution or some advice. As a wise man once said, "It is easy to give answers, but much harder to deliver the solutions."

The primary question to ask is **"What Would You Do"?**

We have a lady with 3 young children, 7, 9, and 12, living in a 400 square foot motel room. She was first promised a house, but that house went to two drug addicts and she missed out. Later another home was found and the landlord said \$2000.00 per month, everything included (water, hydro, taxes, heat); a week later the rent was \$2k, with utilities extra, and later yet the rent was only good for the first month and then it will go to \$2100.00. Not a stable situation. She has just completed an interview for a 3<sup>rd</sup> location but the phone has not rung. Finding affordable accommodation is a province wide problem. **WWYD?**

Met one of our motel residents whose boyfriend had been fighting cancer; actually, two cancers at the same time. She came out to get a lunch one Sunday and stated that her boyfriend had passed away. It takes 2 persons to pay the rent and still have a little bit left over for food. After she received her lunch and soup and was off talking with



one of the other residents, it occurred to me that we had some small stuffed animals on the truck, which were purchased for such an occasion. Met this same lady 2 weeks later and her opening words were, "Thank you. Please thank John for the sympathy card he left in my door. He is such a sweet person."

**WWYD?**

Went to the Via station and met Todd, who asked for dog food. So we bought dog food, but for at least 3 weeks

he never showed up. When he finally did, we asked where he had been. He showed us his bandaged hand, where he had been attacked by a strange dog. He'd been severely bitten and unable to go to his part time job. He then said that the trailer on top of the hill had been on fire so no one was there, but there were others living further west and east in the bushes. We did have some dog food, given by a generous donor, for Todd the following week. He showed his hand. Much had healed, but the movement of the little finger was not so good. Todd was very happy with his lunch and the dog food for his pet. **WWYd?**

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Often, Sunday mornings, from 11 am to 1 in the afternoon, are spent sorting clothing and loading the truck. While it takes a lot of work to know what to load, it is also a lot of work to sort the clothing. We meet all kinds of needs, especially coats, boots, gloves, hoodies and pants. It is difficult to tell those whom we know as true street people, "We do not have boots your size." What are they wearing? Usually, sneakers which are soaking wet. Had one young lady who had on a good-looking pair of sneakers tell me her toes were freezing. She needed a pair of boots. There were none her size on the cube van but one of our volunteers found her a pair on the passenger van. We gave out every single pair of winter gloves, every pair of boots, and most of the winter coats we had on the van. **WWYD?**

The unsheltered receive a place to warm and sleep from 7pm to 7am; so come morning, they spend 12 hours outside. Maybe, if they're lucky, they can spend some time in a store or Tim Hortons--as long as they are buying something. Or maybe they can shelter under the canopy of the public library, waiting till it is time to go to the warming center again. Not a very exciting life and far from warm. Some of our unsheltered have on as many as 3 pairs of pants or sweat pants and 3 to 4 coats, hoodies, sweaters etc. We had on the truck what I would call an ugly coat--looked like it was synthetic bear fur. Two persons tried it on, it looked so warm; finally it fit the third person. **WWYD?**

Came back to the church after the run on Sunday and spent another hour reloading the truck. Please, have a look in you closets for unused coats, boots, winter gloves, hoodies, sweat pants--they are so needed. If you weigh only 120 pounds, try staying warm outside for 12 hours even if you have a coat. The cold is penetrating; if there is a wind, look out--the temperature drops an additional 2 degrees for every 10 mph. Add even more discomfort: if it is damp, raining, or combine sleet with snow, it will be even worse. If you listen to the weather man, when he is predicting -25-degree weather, bare skin will freeze in 10 minutes. Are you able to help? **WWYD?**

Our storage rooms have been reorganized by the work of Trevor, Linda, Hibbert and Dwayne; collectively, they've put in more than 25 hours moving clothes to their new



locations, sorting, labeling clothing, sorting over 100 pairs of running shoes donated by Running Free. (See pictures of new storage area) Thank you to the volunteers who made this happen. Now we will be training the drivers and assistants to use the new system effectively, so the items can be distributed efficiently. We are still looking for volunteers. **WWYD?**

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We also had a brand-new volunteer, who, after eavesdropping on my conversation in a thrift store, taped on my car window and wanted to volunteer. She was on the truck yesterday and was a blessing; she fit in immediately. At one point, at the train station, we were confronted with about 12 Venezuelan refugees requesting boots, coats and food. Wow! What a surprise, and with a twist of a bit of a language barrier. Anna, our new volunteer, stepped up--she spoke Italian. Apparently, Spanish-speaking folk and Italians can understand each other. WWYD?

We had 90 lunches on board yesterday and a full container of soup. We ran out of soup and our sandwich count left us 30 to serve the 40 persons at the warming station. WWYD?

We are finding volunteers in the most unusual places. A homeless man wanted to do what he could by helping to serving hot chocolate and soup. The lady who almost froze in her car and her friend want to go and also give out hot chocolate and see how we minister to the homeless. Even though the homeless live in unbelievable surroundings and conditions, many of them give back to JC's Place what and however they can--a few coins, food they have left over, clothing they do not need, and some want to give their time. WWYD?

John is receiving many requests for Bible Studies from some of the homeless, some in motels units, and no, it is not only men; ladies are beginning to ask. Are you able and willing to step up to help serve others? WWYD?

JC's Place Ministries is taking about 20 sandwiches and 15 bowls of soup to the overnight warming center which shelters 40 people per night from 7pm to 7am in the morning. This amount of food is not enough to fill empty stomachs, let alone the amount of nutrition that is needed. We have a problem of making enough food with the limited budget that the Ministry has. Are you able to "Lend a Helping Hand" by contributing funds, or sharing of your precious spare time?

GOD'S SPIRIT is doing some wonderful work with JC's Place Ministries. Where do you fit into the picture? WWYD?

~~ Carl

### **Ways to Give:**

- 1. Electronically . . . [Www.jcsPlace.org](http://www.jcsPlace.org)**
- 2. Mail . . . JC's Place 2408 Smithville Road Smithville L0R 2A0**
- 3. Phone . . . 905-975-6394 or 365-880-7229**



### JC's Place Ministries

a mobile ministry of the Niagara Falls Seventh-day Adventist Church

5355 Belmont Ave., Niagara Falls ON L2H 3H6

[www.JCsPlace.org](http://www.JCsPlace.org)

Carl: 905-975-6394

[donate@JCsPlace.org](mailto:donate@JCsPlace.org)

John: 365-880-0818

