

## Chapter 14

### Church on the Beach and streets of Texas

As we continued our daily morning prayer at Sylvan Beach a brand new ministry started to grow. We started out by taking a blanket down to the beach and sitting on the blanket to pray right after midnight and we would pray until daylight often.. It is normal to see someone walking, sitting or jogging down the beach at any time of the day or night. The beach and park at that time was open 24 hours per day 7 days per week. That changed with the onslaught of Hurricane Ike. The beach was closed September 12<sup>th</sup> 2008 and when it re-opened 6 months later it is now closed from 10.p.m. Till 6:am daily. From July of 2007 when we first prayed at the beach until September 2008 several interesting thing happened that steered our soul winning ministry in a totally different direction. People would see us sitting on the beach in the grass with our Bibles and sometimes Clyde our hound dog. Most of the time the beach was empty from 2 : am until daylight. One morning it was pitch dark and we saw a young man coming to the beach from our left. He appeared to be wobbling from being on drugs or from lack of sleep. He got about 20 feet away and climbed on some rocks above the waters edge. He stretched out his arms in a cross formation and begin to say “God help me God help me”. He was totally unaware of our presence as we sat there in the dark. I called out to him “no don't jump don't do it”. Jane and I began to pray out loud for him . “ God help him don't let him die God help him”. The waves were splashing up on the Rocks from the high tide and he began to get wet. This startled him and he straightened up and quit wobbling. He climbed down off the rocks and walked off right past us again never even noticing us. I called out as he passed “Jesus loves you man.” He just kept walking and disappeared in the dark. “Come on lets go see where is is going” I said as I started to pick up the blanket. We could not follow him directly because they have ONE Way traffic lanes at the beach. After we circled around the entire park we lost him. We turned the corner and I spotted him sitting on a park bench inside the skateboard area. We circled the park and drove in the west side entrance. I parked right next to the walk in gate where he was sitting. A good looking young girl had just walked up and gave him a cigarette. As I got closer under the lights of skateboard park I could see that he looked real rough and scary. I said “are you OK?”. Why do you ask who are you? “ He snapped back.. “I was the one calling out to you when you were standing up on those rocks down at the beach.” I yelled out Jesus loves you and said no don't jump.” He said man I didn't hear nothin or see anyone man”. I said well I can sense something is wrong, it is not normal for any one to be here at 3:am standing up on the rocks over looking the ocean with out stretched arms yelling God help me”. I further felt you were going to jump in and drown. I also know that if you did die you would have a pretty good chance that you would go to hell”. I would like to help you and pray for you..” By this time Jane had tried to talk to the young woman to see what we could do to help the guy.. I felt that the guy was an escapee from jail or some place of incarceration. He had contacted the girl to meet him there I guessed.. I finally said “look it doesn't matter what is going on but we need to ask Jesus to fix it can I pray for you ?” No you can 't pray for me with this cigarette in my mouth he slurred.” Get real man don't you think God can see you smoking that cigarette? Do you think that will make your prayer any better if you didn't smoke? “ At this point in your life God is not the least bit concerned about that little piece of paper with that weed in side of it? You have called out to him, I heard it and he is here to answer you .

God sent us to pray for you I replied? “ I tried to reach out to touch his hand but he drew back.. I put my hand on his shoulder as he bowed his head and he gave the cigarette to the lady .I told God that this guy here had called out to you and now we want you to answer him. “He needs help and I don't know where to begin God” I prayed. Send your Holy spirit to hold his hand and lead him. We know that he needs Jesus and he has called on you. You said if anyone calls on you that you will in no way cast him aside.” “I know you have a plan for his life and it is not for him to jump on those cold rock and smash his head and drown”..I prayed for a short time and said Thank you Jesus.. He never would tell his name or where he had come from or what he was doing. He threw down that cigarette and left with that girl. We never saw him again,. He did not jump in the ocean or kill himself in some other way at least not in our area. He disappeared the same way he came, in the dark of the night.

### Lady of the night prayed for on the beach

On another occasion we had completed our morning prayer on Sylvan beach and we were folding up our blanket. An attractive hotly dressed Mexican lady had pulled up in a fancy car. She had seen us with our Bibles and had been watching us. As I walked past the front of her car I greeted her with a hi and a smile. We struck up a conversation. She said she was Catholic and she used to be pretty faithful to the church. She said she was waiting for a man to meet her there. It was very obvious that she was not going to go fishing with the man. I told her that we had just completed our prayer session that we did every day. I asked he if there was any thing we could pray with her about? Obviously the Holy Spirit had been working on her. She said yes “please pray for me I am not living a good life right now” ? I asked her if she wanted to change and start following Jesus again. “Yes” she answered. We prayed and she was very receptive and solemn. After the prayer a man dressed in work clothes pulled up in a pick up truck and he looked around as if he was to meet someone there. The lady in her high heels walked over to his truck and shook his hand. They talked for a very short time and she was shaking her head no. The man left in his truck and she stayed on the beach for a considerably longer time. She just sat in her car meditating. After a while she left going in the opposite direction. You fill in the blanks.

### Man saved at community Thanksgiving Service

We met a Methodist pastor, Charles Monet and his wife while fishing on the Sea Breeze pier in the fall of 2007. He was a personal friend of George Foreman the former heavy weight boxing champion who pastors a church in Houston Texas now. Charles invited us to a community church service for Thanksgiving. After the service Charles and I were out in the lobby saying good by to the folks. A guy waked up and asked me if I had some weed or any kind of dope. I said no “I don't need dope I have Jesus to get me high and make me feel good. “You need Jesus not some dope I told him” I explained the whole plan of salvation and Charles Rushing accepted Christ right there in the lobby of the huge church. By the way they did not have an altar call at that church service that had just ended... They had a nice choir, a nice talk by a Methodist minister and some nice snacks but no Wild West Soul Winning. Several months later we saw pastor Monet out on the pier. He told us that he took the guy home with him and bought him a bus ticket back to his home in New Orleans. He had kept track of the guy and at least 6 months later that Charles Rushing was still serving and following Jesus. We still pray for brother Rushing on our prayer list.

## Christmas eve caroling

Christmas eve of 2007 we went Christmas Caroling around house on 508 S . Third street. Our daughter Susie and her family came down from Woodville to go sing with us. I took my harmonica and 10 of the Rosa family went out. The first place we went to was 3 doors from our house and were greeted by a man that had a reputation in the neighbor hood of being a mean bad dude. He had a bottle of beer that he hid behind his back. He was well on his way to a real drunken evening. I gave the starting note on my harmonica and Jane lead the singing of Silent Night Holy night all is calm all is bright. #2 song was Away in a manger no crib for a bed the little Lord Jesus laid down his sweet head. We concluded by singing we wish you a merry Christmas and a Happy new year. By this time our neighbor had been joined by his wife. He melted in the presence of the songs of Jesus. He hugged us and wished us a Merry Christmas.

That Sunday we went to Kings Barbecue restaurant for dinner. The waitress asked us in Broken English the usual question of did you have a nice Christmas? I told her that we went Christmas Caroling around our house. She said “where do you live ?” “508 S 3<sup>rd</sup> street” I responded. “She said you went to my uncles house, he told me that some neighbors sang to him. You know he used to be real mean. He works out on an oil rig and only comes home every 3 months. He was not supposed to be home but he got off for Christmas. He is real mean and used to fight with his wife. Guess what she asked? That mean dude had been nice this time the entire Holiday vacation.” That was 4 years ago and to this day we still get our meals for the same discount as the local police department gets and we never asked but they refuse to take full price for the meals.

## New Years eve tragedy

New Years Eve we out fishing on the Sea Breeze pier. The pier closes at dark and we were just leaving when we heard tires screeching and a loud bang up on the street next to the park. I was the first person on the scene except the driver of the Dominoes Pizza car. A 15 year old kid named Billy and 2 other kids were walking on the side of the road. Billy was walking in the street dressed in dark clothes. The pizza driver did not see him and hit him with the right front of the car. Billy was laying on his back in a pool of blood he was moving all over the pavement moaning in pain. There was a big dent in the windshield where his head had hit it. Billy's head was split open and swelling fast. I began to pray out loud for Billy and telling him that Jesus was going to heal him. I prayed until the Morgan's Point police officer showed up followed close by was the Ambulance. Billy's dad came in a few minutes and he was going to kill the Pizza Driver. The officer subdued him and told him that his son was at fault. They took Billy away alive. A year later we were eating at Village Pizza and the Morgan's Point office came in. He remembered me. He said that they had kept the top of Billy's head open and lifted up for a year until his brain healed and the swelling went down. Billy had nearly fully recovered and was left with only minor motor skill inefficiencies. His family had moved out of town so he could be closer to the rehabilitation center. More Wild West Soul Winning.

## Praying for famous people

Our prayer list is not only for people we know personally of see regularity. We pray for public figures, movie stars, TV show hosts and many other well known people including the president and other government officials. We

pray that God will give us good honest leaders. The Bible says that when the wicked beareth rule the people mourn but when the righteous are in authority the people rejoice. We have seen God answer these prayers and one in particular was Nancy Grace who had made a comment on her show one evening that she was too bad to have God show her any mercy and have any interest in her. The man she loved Keith Griffin had been murdered just before they were to be married at the age of 19. Jane and I fell in love with Nancy and prayed for her that God would show her that he did love her and would not reject her. Nancy married David Lynch in 2007. Nancy had a beautiful set of twins that changed her entire life. After their birth she declared that God had answered her prayers and gave her a miracle birth. Nancy continued to give God credit and Glory. The next year Nancy was given the sad news that she may have cancer. We again went to prayer for her down at Sylvan Beach. After a short stay in the hospital Nancy gave the news that she did not have cancer and gave God credit and praise for that too.

We also prayed for a God hating guy name Christopher Hitchens. He wrote a book titled "God is Not Great". He travels all over the world appearing any where he can get an audience and proclaim his blasphemy. Last year he had to stop his speaking and debates because he developed throat cancer and could not talk. He refused prayer and still hangs on to his falsehoods. We still pray for him and believe he can be changed by the power of God.

### Hurricane Ike came to town

Our family had left Michigan in 1980 where Jane almost froze to death while walking home from school in a knee deep snow. Her mom saw her staggering home with her legs nearly frozen. They went out helped her inside to thaw out. We lived in Phoenix for 27 years where we were nearly roasted in the 122o summer heat. Now we were in Texas facing a 135 mile per hour Hurricane. The predicted path of the storm was to come right over our house in La Porte. It was supposed to hit on Friday afternoon September 12<sup>th</sup> 2008. The police issued a mandatory evacuation for all of our city. About 3:00 pm Jane and I walked down to Sylvan Beach. We started walking up and down the beach for a ½ mile in both directions. I held up my Bible and demanded Ike to take a hike. We rebuked that storm just like Jesus did. It started to sprinkle about 3:pm. The water had risen up into the parking lot of the beach about 4 foot above the break water. A lady was crying hard and feared she and her children would all die. I told her have no fear that God would protect her. Jane and I continued to pray. As we got back to the drive way leading off the beach I saw a large gathering of police vehicles at the gate. I saw our son Abe there with them. They were yelling for us to come out. As we got through the gate they locked it behind us. Abe said they were going to lock you in until I told them that you were still down the beach ½ a mile out of sight. They asked what we were doing? I showed them my Bible and asked them if they would join us in prayer as I grabbed a big huge sheriff deputies hand. He jerked away and said don't ever grab an officers pistol hand. I said OK and grabbed his left hand and started to pray while all the cops held hands in a circle. After the prayer the police told us to leave town. I said "I am not going to leave God is going to protect us." He said OK but put your social security number on your wrists in permanent ink because you will die tonight.

We went home and got prepared for Ike. We had gas for our new Generator, food that neighbors had given to us when they left and water in jugs. The wind picked up in a counter clock wise motion as it entered the beach and came over our house. The T.V. crew clocked the wind at 135 MPH down the street. We prayed constantly out loud for

the next 12 hours. This old 100 year old house was swelling up and deflating like a huge blimp. The walls looked like they were breathing. The wind sounded like a freight train and it did not stop like it does in a tornado. The wind continued for 12 hours. Trees were making a crashing sound as they were toppled by the giant wind. 3 trees of 2 foot diameter on our east property line were knocked down as the storm passed through going north. The transformers on the power poles were popping like fire works until all power was off at 10 pm. It was not restored for a month to 6 weeks in some locations. When the eye of Ike came over the house it was calm as a frozen snowy night. The wind started again in the opposite direction. It took out 3 more trees snapping them in the opposite direction. The roaring wind continued until 9:am the next morning. The only damage we had were a few leaves blown in our yard.. We went out side to get a huge tree out of the storm drain cover it was blocking and the police came by and said do not leave your house. We were stuck there for 3 days and nights. It was so hot we had to sleep in the car and run the Air conditioner off and on most of the night. We had plenty of food and water and a generator so we could watch the weather and listen to emergency reports. On the 4<sup>th</sup> day we were allowed to leave. However earlier we had found a back way out of town so we could go past the road blocks to church in Houston 35 miles away. The National Guard had come to town with 6 semi tractor trailers full of food and water. To their surprise not many people came to get the free stuff. Several other emergency service groups came with hot meals but had to leave with most of the meals they brought. They had people out on the highway with big signs advertising meals, bread and other free stuff. They were not getting many takers for the free stuff. Down in Houston where the damage was very light and incidental the people were lined up around the block for any thing they could get for free. We got a couple of bags of ice. They pulled out with those semis full of stuff and the melting ice left a trail of water as they left.

### God will repay

After a week were allowed to go all over town. We went down the road one mile and met a sight that made us literally cry for pity. In the subdivision of Shoreacres there were 525 homes. Only 15 were left habitable. The rest of them were torn to shreds. Big huge 3 story homes were knocked off the foundations and down the next street. The Houston Yacht club was destroyed. Boats were all over the roads. The 9 foot sea surge had pushed boats miles in land. Picture in your mind a normal 2 lane street in a subdivision. Picture in your mind a narrow one lane crooked path where one vehicle could travel. The rest of the space from the front of every house to the center of the street was stuff from inside the homes. Every thing imaginable was there from cars , boats, furniture, appliances. People were still hauling, piling and carrying belongings to the street. Insurance adjusters by the hundreds were there making estimates of the damage. As we wept at the sight I said I do not have enough money to build these folks a home or replace their belongings and heirlooms I have no place for all of them to live. I have no money to feed them. I do have something I can give.

I drove back home and found 2 old logs floating in the ditch. I made a wooden cross out of those 2 old logs. I took the wheels off Sam's, our granddaughter s roller skates and put it on the bottom of the cross. We drove back to the flooded out school parking lot and parked. We got out that old rugged cross and I carried it through that subdivision. People would stop hauling trash and stop and come out and touch the cross. I was yelling that God is

going to give you back double what the devil has taken. I was shocked as they sat in the back of their trucks and said yes we know and most of them were very peaceful and not worried at all. We prayed for some as they came out and touched us. Some came out and took pictures. One guy grabbed a video camera and yelled back to people in his house well I'll be - - - . Look at this Ma as he video filmed the cross. It was a heart warming feeling.

Galveston Island was closed to all incoming traffic for 3 weeks and when it opened we went there and walked the neighbor hood and prayed for many of the people there next to the ocean. Those were mostly Asians. Today 3 years later you can not tell that there was ever a storm that hit the area and in many cases God gave them back double of what they had.