

## What Could You Do If Nothing Else Mattered? cont.

For years I had felt that I was simply one of the church's mechanics. I helped keep the church's machinery running, but my life and work had little impact on the needy world around me. I knew Christ could give a totally satisfying life to all the people I passed every day, but I had no way to tell them. Finally, one day in the middle of this frustration, God confronted me with the question, "What could you do if nothing else mattered?"

His question started me on a search. I came across 1 John 2:6:

*Whoever claims to live in him must walk as Jesus did. (NIV)*

So I started a study of the gospels, looking for answers to these questions: How did Christ walk? And therefore, how should I walk?

I noticed in the gospels that to reach people, Jesus didn't build a church and invite people to come. He ministered *among* them. He took whatever opportunities afforded Him to speak to people where they were: in the marketplace, in the streets, over meals, in homes, in chance personal encounters.

I began to think how I might communicate with people. I looked at the major means of communication in our society. We have a large, well-developed Christian media, but secular society generally ignores it. And we have a large, well-developed secular media, but they usually want little to do with the gospel.

So I thought about "underground" ways of communicating. A newsletter? Tracts left in restaurants, doctors' offices, etc.?

About that time our local church put out a call for people interested in joining a task force—a task force with the job of reaching the community around our church for Christ. To make a long story short, my wife, Gloria, and I became part of Neighbor to Neighbor Ministries, a systematic, non-invasive way of drawing people, not necessarily to our local church, but to Christ Himself.

I became the writer for the ministry. I wrote a series of 12 monthly mailers that went out to each home in our community under the non-threatening name, *For Your Consideration*. As a sequel to that, I wrote another 12-month series titled *Living the Natural Way*, dealing with life issues from a Christian perspective.

Those pieces became the starting point for *Living the Natural Way*, our own publishing ministry. We began with 12 pocket-size books, and that soon expanded to include the publication of my hymns through our website, [LNWhymns.com](http://LNWhymns.com). How the Lord worked out all that is another story.

But the point is this: It's easy for us to continue to talk just to evangelical believers because we're comfortable with them. We share a common viewpoint and a common language. We tend to forget about the rest of the world. But God doesn't forget.

We can let the walls of the church circumscribe our efforts at drawing people to Christ. But that's not the way Jesus worked, and it's not the way God continues to work.

We cannot make the same mistake that ancient Israel did, forgetting that our calling and our chosen-ness is not the privileges of a small, elite group. It's a calling to be His light to the entire world.

During His earthly ministry, Jesus often answered a question with a question, drawing people into a discovery of faith. That's what He did with me. I was asking, "What can I do?" He turned the question back on me: "What could you do if nothing else mattered?" His question led me to realize that my inability to impact my world with the truth about Christ resulted from my own lack of commitment and faith.

My journey of faith continues to lead me in new directions, with many unexpected twists and turns. But He continues to inflame me with the desire to glorify Him, to help everyone realize just how great and good He is.

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