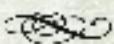
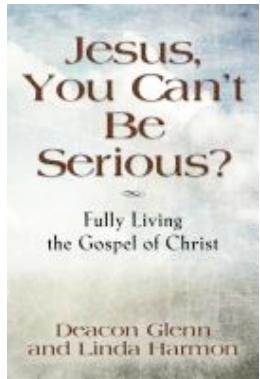


Jesus, You Can't Be Serious?



Fully Living
the Gospel of Christ

Deacon Glenn
and Linda Harmon



Jesus, You Can't Be Serious describes how to discover the loving, healing power of Jesus Christ. Once a powerful corporate executive living in the fast lane, Glenn Harmon became an ordained Deacon in the Roman Catholic Church. For over 20 years, he and his wife, Linda, have presented more than 500 parish missions throughout North America, sharing their experiences to inspire and encourage others to bring Jesus into their daily lives.

Jesus, You Can't Be Serious?

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Fully Living the Gospel of Christ

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and Linda Harmon

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ISBN 978-1-63490-187-1

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Published by BookLocker.com, Inc., Bradenton, Florida, U.S.A.

Printed on acid-free paper.

BookLocker.com, Inc.
2015

First Edition

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Introduction

“But to you who hear, I say love your enemies; do good to those who hate you; bless those who curse you; pray for those who mistreat you. To the person who strikes you on one cheek, offer the other one as well, and from the person who takes your cloak, do not withhold even your tunic. Give to everyone who asks of you, and from the one who takes what is yours, do not demand it back.” (Luke 6:27-30)

Jesus, you can't be serious!

“If anyone wishes to come after me, he must deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow me. For whoever wishes to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for my sake will save it.” (Luke 9:23-24)

Jesus, you can't be serious!

Then, Peter, approaching, asked Him, “Lord, if someone sins against me, how often must I forgive? As many as seven times?” Jesus answered, “I say to you, not seven times but seventy times seven.” (Matthew - 18:22)

Jesus, you can't be serious!

Actually, He was dead serious!

Linda and I were married April 4, 1970. She is not only my wife but also my best friend. Linda is a woman who believes that it's in living by faith that we truly gain the promises of Christ. Her life is a testimony of what hope and faith can be for people in need.

We are Christians in the Catholic tradition. We have been blessed with two beautiful daughters, four amazing grandchildren and a terrific faith community with an abundance of friends and neighbors. Our life is great and we love the Lord Jesus and the abundant life He offers.

But, it was not always this way.

From living in the fast lane as a singer, to achieving a vice presidency in a major national corporation, I had been on the top of my world. Not God's world, but mine. My theme song was, “I did it my way.”

Through disobedience, I landed where no person would choose to go. I know that I broke at least eight of God's commandments. My lifestyle almost destroyed my marriage, as well as my relationship with

my two daughters. It cost me my career and brought shame, pain and heartache to my family and my Church. I was a broken, wounded and humiliated man.

Only our Lord Jesus, through His grace, mercy, unconditional love and forgiveness would restore my life, our marriage and family while taking us on a journey we never thought possible.

As we write this book, we see wars, poverty, homelessness, racial conflict, exploitation and political gridlock. For the most part, we live in a world that has either forgotten, refuses to accept or does not know there is a Savior. His name is Jesus Christ!

It is our prayer that by reading this book you will:

- ❖ reawaken and strengthen the faith within you;
- ❖ encourage you to believe in and accept your uniqueness in Christ;
- ❖ help you experience the healing power and unconditional love of Jesus Christ;
- ❖ empower you to share your gifts and talents with others and
- ❖ enable you to fulfill God's will by living the Scriptures.

It is our hope that this book will inspire, encourage and even challenge you to renew your walk with the Lord. It is a message of hope, love, faith and reconciliation that will bring healing and restoration to you and the relationships around you.

We can confidently say that because the messages in the following chapters changed our lives, marriage and family.

What's In Your Junk Drawer?

Allow us to share a practical and common example of what this book is meant to be for you, our reader. If Linda and I had the privilege of coming to your home, we would probably find something that we have in our home - a "junk drawer." Ours is in the kitchen.

A junk drawer is a place where, when you have something and you don't know what to do with it or you don't want to deal with it at the moment, you open the drawer, drop it inside and forget all about it - until you go to put something else in the drawer and there you find all of that stuff that you had hoped would disappear.

If your junk drawer is anything like ours, once or twice a year it gets so full we are forced to do something about it.

Linda and I will take the drawer, dump everything out on a table and start going through it. We take all the trash and junk - you know, the stuff we should never have kept in the first place - and throw it away. What we find remaining are all the things we consider valuable and important.

We take all those things and put them right back in the drawer and start the process all over again.

This book is about cleaning out and rearranging our personal and spiritual junk drawers. It's about taking all the stuff that we carry around with us each day that prevents us from experiencing the abundant life that Jesus promises and getting rid of it.

And, when we do, what is remaining are all the treasures that were buried below all that junk - God's peace, hope, healing, love, joy, faith and forgiveness.

Our ministry begins

Since July of 1992, Linda and I have dedicated our lives to full-time ministry. By faith, we are following a special call from our Lord to share the love of Jesus Christ. For over two decades we have been in ministry, giving over 500 Catholic parish retreats, workshops, seminars and conferences around the United States and Canada.

We do not offer hell fire and brimstone, but rather God's unconditional love as revealed to us in Jesus Christ. We invite people to a greater personal reform and holiness of life, which will then contribute to the strengthening of our marriages, families, Church and society.

We chose to take to heart and live out the words of Jesus in the Gospel of Matthew 28: 19-20.

"Go, therefore, and make disciples of all nations, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And, behold, I am with you always, until the end of the age."

This Gospel is referred to by theologians and Scripture scholars as the Great Commission. In essence, it is the final marching order of Jesus to His apostles. I can just imagine their reactions. "Really Lord! You

can't expect us to go out and save the world. We're just ordinary people and fishermen."

Up to this point, the apostles had been eye witnesses, simply observers. But now Jesus was calling them to witness to Christ's teachings by being living examples of those teachings.

He was offering them three things:

- 1) a purpose greater than themselves,
- 2) the assurance of His power, and
- 3) a promise that He would always be with them.

Linda and I have experienced all of these promises two thousand years later in our lives and ministry.

None of the apostles could have imagined how far their "yes" to Jesus would take them or how much fruit they would bear for His Kingdom. Jesus made it so the people they encountered would accept Him as Lord not on the basis of their ability or preaching skills but in response to His own grace working in their hearts.

Christ's ministry inspires us

But these words were not only meant for 12 men on a mountain. Christianity for 2000-plus years has flourished because other people just like you and me have taken the words of Jesus seriously. Each of us has been created for a mission. Our English word "mission" comes from the Latin word for "sending."

Jesus clearly understood His mission on Earth. At 12 years old, He said, "I must be about my Father's work." Twenty-one years later, while hanging on the cross He said, "It is finished."

While we are on this Earth, I believe we have some key purposes.

- 1) to accept Jesus as Lord and Savior.
- 2) to be a part of His family.
- 3) to become more like Him.
- 4) to serve Him.
- 5) to love Him.

Nothing else we will ever do matters as much as helping people establish an earthly and eternal relationship with Jesus Christ. Your mission, my mission, is so important that Jesus repeated it five times in

five different ways in five different books of the Bible. It's as if He was - and is - saying, "I really want you to get this."

If your friend or neighbor had a life threatening illness and you knew the cure, it would be sinful to withhold that life saving information. However, it would be ultimately more damaging to keep secret the true way to love, forgiveness, mercy, peace and eternal life.

We have the greatest news in the world. We have a Savior and His name is Jesus Christ. Our mission and purpose has eternal consequences. Fulfilling your mission does not mean that you have to do what Linda and I do. God wants you to share the Good News of Jesus in your daily life - as parents, as grandparents, as children, where you work, where you go to school and in your neighborhood.

So what is the cost?

It requires that we surrender our agenda and accept God's purpose and plan for our life.

But here is the Good News.

If we will commit to fulfilling our mission in life, no matter what the cost, we will experience the blessings of God in ways that few people ever experience.

Over 20 years ago, Linda and I were giving a Catholic parish retreat in Louisiana. As usual, I was preaching at all the weekend Masses before the retreat started.

I'll always remember Percy

After one of the Masses, I was outside the church visiting and saying goodbye to people as they were leaving to go home. That morning, I met a man I will never forget.

He told me his name was Percy, that he was 63 years old and had been a Catholic all of his life. He then went on to tell me that he had never gone to a parish retreat, but he was planning on coming to this one.

As you can imagine, his comment peaked my interest.

I said, "Percy, why have you made the choice to never go to a parish retreat but you're making the decision to attend this one?"

I noticed that tears started to well up in his eyes.

Glenn Harmon

“Six months ago my wife died,” he said. “Over those six months I have realized that I have a hole inside of me. No matter what I try to do, I just can’t fill it up. I am hoping that you might say something, or God will do something, to at least begin to fill up the hole.”

I wished him a blessed retreat.

After the third night of the retreat, I was in the front pew spending some quiet time in prayer. I felt a hand on my shoulder and when I looked up I saw it was Percy. He said, “Glenn, I don’t know if you remember me, but I am the man who told you over the weekend that I had a hole inside of me.”

I told him I certainly remembered him.

He said, “I can’t completely explain this, and I know that I will never be able to adequately understand, but tonight as I was sitting in my pew simply listening, somehow God completely filled up that hole I had inside and He made it very clear that if I will just let Him, He will keep it filled everyday.”

I believe that for many different reasons and circumstances, we are all just like Percy. We have a hole inside of us. I call it a God hole. We spend our lives running around trying to fill it up with everything BUT God. Our Lord wants to fill up the hole in your life.

It is Linda’s and my hope that you will not only read the words in this book but, like Percy, listen to them with what St. Benedict calls the “ear of your heart.”

May our Lord bless you on your journey of faith.

**Deacon Glenn Harmon
and Linda Harmon**

Chapter 1

Roadblocks to Victory

For over a decade, God has been nudging us to write a book sharing the messages He has given us to preach and teach.

Over the past 22 years, countless numbers of people have been asking us to put our spoken words into written form.

My wife Linda was willing and eager to begin this project years ago, but I have been dragging my feet.

Why?

Because it would force me to confront my two greatest roadblocks, fear of rejection - fear that nobody would want to read anything we have to say and rejection because if they did read the book it would be looked upon as a failure.

Thousands of saints, theologians, Scripture scholars and academics have written books on God, Church and various aspects of spirituality.

What else could we say that has not already been explored and said?

However, God has not stopped nudging and people continue to ask, so I will attempt with God's grace to overcome my roadblocks and be obedient to God. This book is not supposed to be a theological symposium or a doctrinal dissertation. Linda and I are very simple and ordinary people. We have written this book just like we talk, in a very simple manner.

I want you to know that Linda and I thank God for each and every one of you reading this book, because, like the people we've met at more than 500 parish missions, workshops and retreats in the United States and Canada since 1992, we believe you've felt the need to take time to deepen and strengthen your relationship with almighty God.

We believe that's why you're reading this book. If you didn't want to have a better understanding of God and a better relationship with Him, you would be reading something else.

Also, we believe with everything in us, that God is going to honor your faithfulness.

We also want you to realize that you're not reading this by accident.

The Holy Spirit has been prompting you, nudging you, and you have responded to His prompting.

One of the joys, one of the great pleasures, that Linda and I receive as we travel the country is that we have an opportunity to meet family that we didn't realize we had. I'm speaking about you.

You see, if we can come to an agreement that we all come from one God, God the Father, and that Jesus Christ is our Lord, Savior, and Brother, then in the eyes of God we are family. Over the years, Linda and I have found it doesn't make any difference what city or state we're in, there are several things that never change.

We've discovered that when people such as yourself will take the time and make the sacrifice necessary to come to a mission, or read a book like this, you are generally in one of three places in your spiritual life. We think each and every one of you will be able to relate to one of these spiritual areas.

Some of you are in what I call a resurrection moment in your life. Everything is going great for you. You just want to wrap yourselves in it because it feels good. You're reading this because you're aware of that and you want to know how you can continue to be in that resurrection moment.

Secondly, some of you are reading this because you know there's something missing in your life. You may not even know what it is. But you know there's a void, you know there's a hole. You hope that by reading this book, God will not only make you aware of what is missing but God will help fill up that void, that hole that you sense is within you.

And some of you are reading this because of something that happened in your past or something that's going on in your life right at this very moment.

You're broken, you're wounded, you're hurting and you're in need of the healing touch of God.

I want you to remember that Jesus is the divine healer, the supreme physician who knows exactly what you need. If you read this with an

open mind and an open heart, willing and eager to receive whatever God has in store for you, we believe that your life will change for the better.

Three vital questions for you to answer

I'd like to start by asking you three questions. I caution you not to answer these questions too quickly. Your answers are just between you and God. And since God knows the answers to these questions you might as well be as honest as you possibly can.

These are key questions that people have been struggling with for 2,000 years and people will continue to struggle with these questions until God calls us home.

Question number one:

Do you believe that Jesus Christ is really who he says he is?

Question number two:

Do you believe that the promises of Jesus are true?

And, question number three:

Do you believe the promises of Jesus are for you?

Now, look at how you honestly answered those questions at this moment in your life - not how you want them to be or how you hope they might be in the future - but, how you honestly answered them right now. Your answers to those questions are dramatically affecting the choices you're making in your life and how you're living your life.

Over 20 years ago, a very spiritual and wise man asked me those same questions. Without even thinking I answered "yes" to all of them.

Yes, I believed that Jesus Christ is really who he says he is; yes, I believed that the promises of Jesus are true, and yes, I believed the promises of Jesus are for me.

Maybe that's how you've just answered those questions, too - without even thinking.

Well, God knows each of us better than that.

Despite my confident answers, within about a week, in various ways, as only God can, He began to show me the areas of my life that He knew I refused to surrender, areas of my life that I wouldn't let go of, areas of my life where I wanted to hang onto control.

I realized the things He was showing me were reminders that there were areas of my life that I did not surrender because in those areas of my life I did not believe He was who He said He was.

Because if I had believed that, I would have freely given Him those areas of my life that I had held back.

Of course, He was right.

At that point in my life, I had given God a lot. But there were certain things that I had not truly surrendered to him, just in case Jesus wasn't who he said he was, just in case Jesus couldn't or wouldn't come through. I kept a little bit back. I held on to some things.

You see our whole life should be about surrender. Our whole life should be about giving up. But, we live in a world, in a society, that promotes "grab it, keep it and, when you have it, don't ever let it go."

The Gospel of Jesus is about exactly the opposite. It's all about giving up, surrendering, giving in and letting go.

So I'm asking you as you begin this book, what areas of your life are you still holding on to, what areas of your life are you refusing to let go of and give to God?

Maybe it's a marriage that's not working as you want it to work. You've been doing everything you can to fix that marriage and it's still not getting fixed. You're holding on to it so tightly. Why don't you surrender it, let it go, give it to God and allow God to fix it?

Maybe it's children who are doing and saying things you never, ever thought they would do or say. You have exhausted every possibility, you have done everything you can possibly think of to fix those kids and they're not being fixed. And, you're holding on to them so tight that you're smothering the relationship. Let go of them and give them to God, who created them in the first place.

We create barriers between us and God

Our Catholic church teaches us that 2,000 years ago, when Jesus went to the cross, that single act re-connected and re-established the broken relationship between humanity, which we are all part of, and God our Father.

If, in fact, that is true - and it is - why is it that so often we believe there is this big wall between us and God, that there are all these roadblocks, all these obstacles that make it so difficult for us to get close to God?

Very simply, when Jesus went to the cross, he moved all these roadblocks, obstacles and barriers out of our way. Yet, everyday we put them right back.

When Jesus moves them out of the way again, we put them back again.

Now, I don't think there are any of us who wake up in the morning and deliberately say, "Today, I'm going to put as many roadblocks between me and God as possible."

But, because of our weakness, our humanness and our sinfulness we put up all of these obstacles that prevent us from having the deeply intimate personal relationship with God that we all want.

You know, our spiritual journey is like any other journey we go on. First, our journey starts at the moment of conception. I'm speaking about our spiritual journey here on earth. It starts at our conception and it goes on until God calls us home.

It's like all other journeys that we take. There are certain things that we want to take with us, things that will improve and benefit our journey. But, there are also things that we want to leave behind, things that will weight us down, things that will prevent us from truly experiencing the beauty of our journey.

If you look at this book as your guide on your journey, as a pilgrimage, I think it's very appropriate that we look at what I call spiritual roadblocks. These are things that prevent us from being the people that God wants us to be.

As this chapter unfolds, I'm going to tell you about six spiritual roadblocks, things that prevent us from doing the things that God wants us to do, things that would bring us closer to God.

It's helpful to remember that the first step toward making any kind of change is awareness. You cannot change anything in your life until you become aware of what needs to be changed.

Before we examine the nature of these roadblocks, I want you to be aware that the only reason I can discuss these spiritual roadblocks is

because either I have dealt with each of these, in one way or another, or I am still dealing with them. Let me assure you that you're not alone in your struggles.

I believe that every one of us is struggling with at least one of these spiritual roadblocks. Until we become aware of them, and until we can do something about them, we will never be the person that God wants us to be, which I believe is also the kind of person each of us really wants to be.

I'm talking about those spiritual roadblocks that rob us of our peace of mind and soul. That's why I call the first two roadblocks spiritual thieves, spiritual robbers. What do they steal, what do they rob? They rob our peace of mind and soul, our hope for the future and our joy of the moment.

Every one of us wants peace. I can't imagine anybody reading this who's thinking, "Jesus, keep your peace, I just want more stress and anxiety."

We all have more stress and more anxiety than we can possibly deal with. Yet, we all want to have that peace Jesus promised that goes beyond all understanding. Are you willing to do what is necessary to gain that peace? Recognizing these roadblocks to victory, and how to remove them, can make all the difference in finding God's peace in your life.

The past and the future

Now, the first roadblock has to do with the past. And, the second roadblock has to do with the future. Together, they rob you of the peace, joy and hope of the present moment. The first one is regret, shame and guilt of the past.

As we travel across North America, we meet so many people who in one way or another, at least in one area of their life, are stuck in the past. Something happened in their past and they are filled with great shame and guilt. And, they will not let it go.

And because they will not let go of the past, they're missing out on so much joy, peace and hope of the present moment.

Is there anything that has happened to you, that still has you stuck in the past? I know that intellectually you realize you cannot change the past. None of us can go back into the past and change anything. What has happened has happened. We can learn from it but we can't change it.

However, if there is any regret, shame or guilt about anything that has happened in the past, please surrender that to our Lord before you read on.

He stands ready to take that regret, shame or guilt from the past and he'll heal you of that and pour out his abundant peace, hope and joy to change your life.

Later in this chapter, I will give you a 5-step process to surrendering anything to God.

Now, the second spiritual roadblock has to do with the future. It's called fear.

Once again, I want to tell you that during the more than 500 missions, retreats and spiritual presentations Linda and I have presented since 1992, we have met so many people who are literally paralyzed with fear about something that might happen.

It hasn't happened yet. And, it may never happen.

But because it might, they're filled with fear.

Now, there's something important to understand about fear.

Fear does not start out as fear.

Fear starts out as concern. I'm concerned about something. Now, if you don't get a handle on that concern, that concern will turn into worry. Now, I'm worried about something. And, if you don't get a handle on that worry, I can promise you, that worry will turn into full-blown, paralyzing fear.

Let me give you an example.

At one of our parish missions Linda and I were giving, this lady came up to me afterward. I guess I've been doing these missions long enough now that I just got this really strong sense she was filled with fear.

I looked at her and I said, "Pardon me, but what are you afraid of?"

She looked at me like I could read her mind.

"Cancer," she said.

"Well, I'm sorry you have cancer."

“No,” she said. “I don’t.”

“OK, some one of your family members has cancer?”

“No,” she said.

“So, a friend has cancer?”

“No,” she said.

“Well, let me ask you, does anybody you know have cancer?”

“No,” she said.

Then, I asked her what she was afraid of.

“I read an article about cancer and I thought what if I get it?” she said. “I am so afraid that I might get it some day.”

So you see, there was no evidence of any kind that this beautiful woman was ever going to get cancer. But, because she thought that some day she might get it she was filled with, and consumed by, a paralyzing fear. It was robbing her of every bit of peace, hope and joy in her life. You could look at this woman’s face and see that she had no joy, she had no peace.

My brothers and sisters, if anything in your life right now or anything to do with the future, is causing you to be consumed with fear, once again I ask you, to let it go.

God was very specific when it came to fear. In Isaiah, Chapter 43, verse 1. God said, “Fear not.”

Isn’t that just like God? God doesn’t say, “OK, you can be afraid on Monday, Wednesday and Friday, but on the other days, just don’t do it.

God simply says, “Fear not.”

God knew that if we were filled with fear it would stop us, prevent us, keep us from being the people that he wants us to be.

If there is anything in your life right now that you’re afraid of, surrender and give it to God. He will heal you and set you free.

Your responsibility is to surrender. Let it go. Partnership with God! He will set you free and he will fill you with his abundant peace, hope and love.

Those are the first two spiritual roadblocks - regret, guilt and shame about the past and fear of the future.

Choosing to believe what others say about you

Now we come to the third roadblock and I have to tell you up front, this one seems to be the most difficult roadblock for people. I have seen it over and over again.

This third roadblock is choosing to believe what other people say about you rather than what God says about you.

This is critical. And the focus word is choosing. Choosing to believe what other people say about you rather than what God says about you.

In just a minute I will tell you exactly what God says about you and exactly what God thinks of you.

But first, let me tell you some of the things that people have told me other people have said to them, things that absolutely destroyed their lives - but only because they chose to believe those things.

And they often believed these things that were said about them because they were generally said to them by people who supposedly loved them and cared for them.

Things such as you're too tall, you're too short, you're fat, you're thin, you're ugly, you're worthless, you're stupid, you're a failure, you shouldn't even bother to try because you will never amount to anything.

Now if we begin to hear those things often enough, over and over and over again, we begin to take it in. We begin to internalize it and we begin to believe it.

I know for certain there are people reading this book, like many of those who come to our missions in churches across the United States and Canada, who have had people say those things about them and it has literally stopped them from becoming the people that God wants them to be.

Now, you may be wondering what God says about each and everyone of us. So, I'm going to tell you. With your Bible still open to Isaiah 43, read down to Verse 4. I want you to realize this is God, your creator, speaking, the God who created and formed you. This is what God says about you.

“You are precious and glorious in my sight and I love you.”

That is so powerful that I want to repeat it.

“You are precious and glorious in my sight and I love you.”

Right now, as you read this, do you honestly feel precious and glorious in the sight of God?

And, do you believe in the depth of your heart that God loves you?

You see, for far too many years, I thought what God said about being precious and glorious in his sight was meant for everybody else except me. Because when I looked back in my life, and saw so many wrong things that I had done, I wondered how could God possibly say that I am precious and glorious in His sight ... and that He loves me.

That's why I know there are people reading this book, like those attending the hundreds of missions Linda and I have given for the past 20 years, who are saying, “Oh, no. Not me.”

There are many other people reading this book who have never even heard those words.

Nobody has ever told them, “God said that you are precious and glorious ” and that God loves them. Sadly, there might even be somebody reading this who has never even heard anyone tell them that they are loved, even by the people they truly would love to hear it from.

So, if you're one of those people, how can you believe that a God you cannot see thinks that you are precious and glorious when we never seem to hear, feel or experience those feelings from people who are close to you?

It was about 30 years ago when I realized how important this roadblock is and how devastating it can be in people's lives.

As the director of youth ministry for a Catholic diocese in the United States I did many high school retreats a year. And, at every high school retreat, at some point in that retreat, I would give each one of these teenagers a blank piece of paper and a pencil and tell them to draw a straight vertical line in the center of that paper.

On one side of the line I would ask them to write all the things they don't like about themselves and on the other side I would ask them to list all their different talents, all the special qualities that they believe they have.

And, I never told them which side of the paper to start on.

Ninety-nine percent of those kids would first list everything they didn't like about themselves, every thing that they considered to be wrong. And they had no trouble filling up that whole side of their page.

Why?

Because most of their lives they have heard over and over again, "This is what's wrong with you."

Maybe, if any of those kids came from a home where their parents, their grandparents or whoever was raising them helped them to discover their gifts and talents and positive things about themselves then, maybe, they could write four or five things that they liked about themselves.

I'll never forget one particular retreat. I had just asked the teenagers to do this exercise and I noticed this young lady in the back of the room. I came to find out later that she was a senior in high school.

I saw her fill up one side of the page, which happened to be the side of the paper where she listed everything she didn't like about herself. It only took her about two minutes to do it. Because she had internalized every bit of that negativity, she was carrying it all around within her.

But, as she was starting on the other side of the paper, the positive side, she couldn't think of anything to write down.

I went up to her and asked, "What's the problem?"

She began to cry.

"Mr. Harmon," she said, through her tears, "I have no gifts and talents."

What a tragedy! To be a senior in high school, about ready to go out into the world to make your mark and you honestly believe in the depth of your mind and your heart that you have nothing to give to yourself, to your parents or to anybody else.

Later, while doing adult retreats, I took that same exercise and moved it over to the adults. Guess what, the same thing. You see we live in a world, we grow up in a society, that does not affirm us. We live in a world that says if you look a certain way, talk a certain way, act a certain way, dress a certain way, you're OK, and we love you.

If you don't, we want nothing to do with you. There are people reading this book who honestly believe they have nothing to give to anyone.

If you don't gain another thing out of this book, I want you to begin to take into your mind and into your heart that you are precious and glorious in the sight of God, that each and every one of you is a unique, original one-of-a-kind masterpiece of God.

I want to make one more point on that, because if you do not get past this third spiritual roadblock I promise you that you will never, ever become the person that God wants you to be.

I grew up in San Diego, Calif., and spent most of my life there. San Diego is like any other big city. It has very distinctive and beautiful art galleries. Personally, I am not much into art. But I'll never forget this one particular weekend.

One of the six famous art galleries in San Diego was having a one-of-a-kind showing. It had 10 masterpieces on display for one weekend. There were people wrapped around the block, waiting in line for three hours to see these paintings. And they were paying a lot of money to see them.

A newspaper columnist came up to them and asked people in line, "Why are you waiting in line for three hours and spending all of this money to see these paintings?" And every person would say, "Because there's only one like it! If I don't see it now I will never see it again."

I want you to think of yourself and then think of all of the billions and billions of people that God has created before he created you. And think of all of the billions of people that God has created since and all of the people that God has yet to create.

Yet, He created only one of you.

There has never been, there is not now and there never will be another person exactly like you. That makes you more rare than any painting. That makes you more different than any symphony.

If we could truly understand that about one another we'd stand in line just to say "Hi" to each other, because we would begin to realize the kind of a masterpiece each and every one of us is.

Please, realize that you are precious and glorious in the sight of God, because you are, which is why He loves you so much. Still, we put roadblocks into our lives that keep us from the victory God wants us to have.

Understanding your true identity

So far, we've talked about roadblocks that include regret, shame and guilt of the past, fear of the future and choosing to believe what other people say about you rather than what God says about you.

And now we come to the fourth roadblock to victory - understanding your true identity.

Because we don't understand our true identity, the identity that Jesus Christ and our Catholic Church give us, we don't understand that quite often our priorities become misplaced.

We tend to live our lives, to prioritize our lives, based on who we think we are. And, quite often - in fact, if you would allow me to say this, MOST of the time - we have a misunderstanding of who we are and what our true identity is.

That's why I want to tell you who Jesus, and your Catholic church, says you are. You can either choose to embrace that identity or you can choose to reject that identity.

And then you can see where your priorities line up.

Growing up as a little Catholic kid in southern California, I never read the Bible. As a child, I never picked it up, I never read it. But, when I became a teenager, God placed a particular scripture in my mind and in my heart and He planted it so deep that I couldn't shake it.

I don't even know where I heard it. It must have been in one of the readings or one of the homilies at Sunday Mass, but it stuck with me. It's the gospel of Matthew, Chapter 6, Verse 24, where Jesus said, "No one can serve two masters."

Now that jumped out at me, and has always jumped out at me. Jesus didn't say some of us can serve two masters and some of us can't. Jesus said, "No one can serve two masters."

First of all, who are the masters that Jesus is talking about? Well, he's talking about himself, God, as the Master and all the values that Jesus holds up. The other master is the master of the world and all of the values of the world.

Now most of you have probably reached the point in your life, like I have in mine, that we begin to become very much aware that the values of Jesus and the values of the world are 180-degrees opposite.

That's why Jesus made it very clear that none of us can live our lives serving God and the world. We have to choose which master we're going to serve.

Having read that, I began to watch people to see which master they seemed to be serving. I watched my parents. I watched their friends. I just watched people in general. For the most part, this is often what I saw.

I saw people come into Mass for an hour on Sunday. If Mass lasted any longer than an hour they'd start looking at their watches. Some would become very agitated. Not everybody, but many of the people that I watched.

I could see they already had in their minds when they came to Mass that they were only going to serve God for one hour on Sunday.

And, those same people, who seemed to have a very difficult time worshiping and serving God for an hour on Sunday, would walk out of the doors of that church and spend 60, 70, 80 and even 90 hours a week serving that other master. So, as I grew up, I figured that must be what I'm supposed to do.

So, for much of my adult life, I would come into church for an hour on Sunday. Then, I would walk out of the doors of that church and I would spend 60, 70, 80, 90 and sometimes even 100 hours a week serving the master of the world and those values that the world holds up for each and every one of us each day.

As you know, billions of dollars are spent every year to get us to accept and to buy into those values. Narrowed down, all of the world's values that so many of us seek to serve fit into five major realms - money, power, possessions, recognition and authority.

The world tells you that if you have enough of those five things your life will be filled with peace, your life will be filled with hope and you will be "a success."

Remember the words of Blessed Mother Teresa of Calcutta. "We have not been placed on this earth to be successful; we have been placed on this earth to be faithful."

Actually, we're all going to be faithful to something. We're going to be faithful to Jesus or we're going to be faithful to the master of the world.

When I was growing up, however, it was the values of the world that sounded pretty good to me, not the values of Jesus. So I started pursuing the values of the world. And, I became a wonderful success - in the eyes of the world and in the minds of others who followed those same values.

However, I realized very quickly that it's impossible to walk toward two things at the same time.

As I began, with everything in me, to walk toward money and power, possessions, recognition and authority, I began to leave other things behind. I began to walk away from my relationship with God, my relationship with my church, my relationship with my bride, Linda, and my relationship with our two daughters, Christina and Kelly.

You see, I didn't have time for any of those things because I was out spending all of my time serving the master of the world. By the time I had reached 35 years old, I had achieved a level of success that I had never thought I'd ever achieve.

But, it was success as seen in the eyes of the world, certainly not in the eyes of God. I had ended up as vice president of the second largest military distribution company of its kind in the United States.

I had more money, more power, more possessions, more authority and more recognition than I ever thought I'd have.

To achieve that level, this had become my average work-week:

I'd get on an airplane on Sunday. I'd fly all over the country for meetings during the week. I'd return home on an airplane the following Friday. Then, I'd spend all day Saturday in my office doing paperwork. Sunday would roll around and I'd go to church.

For that hour on Sunday I would serve God. And then I would rush home and re-pack my suitcase. If I had any time left over, I'd spend what little time there was with Linda and the kids. Then, I was back on an airplane again. And, this routine went on for years and years and years.

Then, in one particular week in January of 1983, God gave me a spiritual wake-up call. I'm telling you, that spiritual wake-up call is what eventually led me to begin our missions and then to write this book.

Now, every one of us has had spiritual wake-up calls from God. We may not have realized what they were at the time but looking back we can easily recognize them. A spiritual wake-up call is very simply a time when our God creates a situation - or allows a situation to take place - to get our attention.

Listen for God's wake-up calls

A spiritual wake up call stops us right where we are.

And God makes it very clear that we are to look at our lives and see if what we are saying and what we are doing is giving Him glory.

You see, I believe, with everything in me, that the only reason we have been created is to give God glory by what we say and by what we do.

In that one particular week, I looked at my calendar and saw that it would be a little bit busier week than normal. I was going to be on nine airplanes, in eight cities, in six days.

Looking back on it, that was absolutely insane. But, I was so grounded, so rooted, in serving the master of the world that I looked at that schedule at that moment and it actually excited me.

So, on Sunday afternoon I flew from San Diego, Calif., to New York City.

The very next day I'm at a luncheon meeting with three other business men and myself in the Waldorf Astoria Hotel. That's a very famous, and very expensive hotel.

My luncheon bill for the four of us - and keep in mind this was in 1983 - my luncheon bill came to seven hundred and fifty-two dollars for the four of us!

Believe me, I'm not telling you this because I'm proud of it. I'm only trying to show you what kind of a life I was living in those years because of the master I had decided to serve. You need to know this to understand the spiritual message that God was about ready to give me.

So when the check came, I pulled out my American Express card - yes, I never left home without it - and I gave it to the waiter. You see I didn't care what the meal had cost because I wasn't paying for it. The company was paying for it.

After I said goodbye to the three other business men, I walked out of this world famous hotel, heading for the airport.

Now, some of you may have been to New York City or even lived there. New York is a very unusual city. One city block can be like rows of palaces and the next block may be like a slum.

As I walked out of this world famous Waldorf Astoria Hotel, I looked about halfway down the block and saw a cab. I started walking toward the cab, heading for the airport, and realized I had to keep stepping over sleeping homeless people to get to that cab. That made me very angry.

In fact, I remember literally screaming at them as I stepped over the homeless people lying on the street who were in my way.

"You worthless, lazy, shiftless no good bums," I shouted at them. "Get out of my way."

You see, at that time in my life, I saw no connection at all between me, and them, and God. They were just in my way. They were preventing me from getting to where I wanted to go as fast as I wanted to go.

That's when God burned this message into my heart.

God said, "Glenn, there's something wrong with this!"

But, still angry, I went on, got into the cab and arrived at the airport in time to catch my flight from New York City to San Francisco. After more meetings that day, I got up very early the next morning. I recall I had a 6:30 a.m. flight.

I'm in the airplane, on the runway, waiting to take off and I look out of the window of that airplane and folks, for the life of me, I could not remember what city I was in.

I was moving so fast that I could not remember where I was. I had to ask the passenger next to me. Well, that scared me. Once again God burned this message into my heart. He said, "Glenn, there's something wrong with this."

Well, that day I went to three other cities, first Denver, then Salt Lake City and I ended up in San Antonio, Texas, about 10:30 that night. I always stayed at the same hotel. So, I got a cab to the hotel and walked into the lobby. The desk clerk saw me, tossed my keys to me and up to the 40th floor I went.

I opened the door of my hotel suite, walked in and dropped my bag on the carpet. As the door closed behind me, I suddenly noticed the full-length mirror on the back of that door.

I stood there and I looked at myself.

Folks, I was 35 years old and I looked like I was 60.

And, I said - not in any kind of a formal prayer - "Lord, is this all there is?"

Have you ever said, "Oh, God, is this all there is?"

You see I had spent many, many years thinking that if I just had enough money and power, if I just had a high enough position on the corporate ladder, I would be filled with peace and joy.

Instead, my life was falling apart. And, I didn't know what to do.

So, I went to bed, I finished out my week and I was flying home on Friday. As I'm sitting in the airplane, flying back to San Diego, I was reflecting on that past week. I knew something had happened to me that week. I didn't know what it was. I didn't know who had caused it to happen. But there was something stirring within me that had never been there before.

Well, the plane landed in San Diego, I drove home, I pulled into my driveway and got out of my car. At this point, there's something you need to know about the relationship I had at that time in my life with my bride, Linda.

We'd been married for 13 years and we had two very beautiful daughters.

Way back then, Linda would go to all of the spiritual things. She went to Bible study, she went to prayer meetings and she'd just been to this mission at our church. As you might imagine, at that time in my life, you would have never caught me at a parish mission. And, Linda knew that.

So when I opened the front door it must have taken a tremendous amount of courage and faith for my bride to ask me this question.

"Glenn," she said, "there's a Catholic evangelist giving a parish mission in our church. Would you like to go?"

“I’ll give the guy one night!”

Now, see, normally I would have cut her off halfway through her sentence and said absolutely not! But because something was stirring within me I looked at her and said very carefully, “How long is he going to be there?”

She said, “He’s going to be there all week.”

“I’ll give the guy one night,” I said.

Since Linda and I have been doing these missions, as Catholic evangelists, I’ve come to realize that almost everyone who comes to our missions is saying - and thinking - “I’m going to give this guy one night.”

And, if you told any of your friends, they probably said, “Are you going? Tell me if he’s any good. Maybe I’ll come tomorrow night.”

Well, needless to say, I stayed the entire week.

And, folks, I’m telling you I heard things at that mission that made my mind say, “Tilt! Do not listen to this!”

That’s why Jesus told us to renew our minds. You see, Jesus knew that this mind of ours would be the source of a lot of our problems. If we did not renew it to get on the right track we would be in deep trouble.

Fortunately, that night, while my mind was saying “Tilt, do not listen to this！”, my heart and my spirit were rejoicing. Because my heart and my spirit had been wanting to hear the messages of an evangelist like him for 35 years.

I just would not slow my life down long enough to listen. So God created the right situation and he stopped me.

At that mission, I heard many, many things that changed my life forever.

And you’re going to read many things in this book that, if you will take it in, if you will renew your mind, and let it penetrate your heart and spirit, it will change your life forever.

There was one specific thing that I heard at that mission that changed my whole understanding of who I was. It set me on a new path, as a Catholic evangelist, and led me to become an ordained Deacon in

our Catholic church. I want to share it with you. In a loving, caring way, I hope it turns your life upside down just like it did mine.

I'm going to assume that most of you who read this book have heard of the Second Vatican Council. It happened between 1962 and 1965, when 2,500 bishops from around the world gathered together in Rome and reviewed every aspect of the Catholic church.

These bishops wrote a lot of documents at that council, but I wonder how many of you are aware of the significance of one small little document they wrote. It's the document on the laity from Vatican II.

Very simply, and quite powerfully, the Holy Spirit used those bishops to tell the laity of the church their true identify and how they could live out that identify.

And I want to share one paragraph with you, because when I heard this I tell you it changed my life.

Now these words are not the words of Deacon Glenn Harmon. Those would be easy to reject. But these are the words of our own Catholic bishops. They say to you as laity that "from the fact of their union with Christ ... flows the lay person's right and duty to be apostles. It is by the Lord himself that they, the laity, have been called to this Apostolate."

I heard that and in my mind I said, "Stop the train." This was big news to me.

Later, I had the privilege, some 20 years ago, to visit with two or three of the bishops who had gone to that second Vatican council and, being a lay person at the time, I asked them:

"Are you telling me that because of my union with Jesus Christ through my baptism, the same Jesus who established this church, that Glenn Harmon as a Catholic layman has a right and duty to be an apostle, just like the early apostles?"

Those bishops grinned and said, "That's exactly what we're saying."

I said, "Will you help me understand this. You see, I've never heard that before." "Glenn," they said, "those early apostles that Jesus gathered together were created for a special moment in time to do a special work.

They're gone. And, they're not coming back. You see, they've already done what God asked them to do.

"Glenn, you are one of the modern day apostles. You have been created for this moment in time. And, as Jesus said, you are called to do even greater work."

One of the reasons I had such a difficult time wrapping my brain around that concept is that I had grown up in a church that was like a cathedral. As a little boy growing up I'd look up at the stained glass windows, at all of those holy women and men in the early church, and I'd say to myself, "Oh, Lord, I could never be like them."

But, think about it.

Who did Jesus choose to do His work, to be His apostles?

He chose ordinary people.

And, when those ordinary people surrendered everything to Jesus, when they made themselves available to Jesus Christ, He took those ordinary people and turned them into extraordinary people who did extraordinary things.

So, if you think that you are ordinary, well, praise God, because you are exactly who Jesus and our church is looking for today.

Don't be afraid of being an apostle. The word apostle simply means messenger, one who is sent. And each of us are going to be a messenger of something every day of our lives. We are going to project and preach and live some kind of a message. What kind of a message are you living today?

How have you lived with your husbands or wives, your children, your grandchildren, the people at work, the people in your church, your neighbors?

Have you lifted up the message of Jesus by what you have said and what you have done?

Or, have you been a messenger of the values of the world? Remember, we're all going to be messengers of something.

Now you know that our bishops tell us, because of our union with Jesus Christ, that all of the laity are apostles. After hearing this during one of our missions, many people will come up to me and say, "Glenn, if I accept and embrace my identity as an apostle, am I supposed to do what you do?"

Well, I don't know. Maybe God is raising you up at this moment in time to preach the good news of Jesus and the blessings of our Catholic church. What is more likely, I have found over the years, is that Jesus is calling you to be an apostle right where you are.

In your marriage, with your children, your grandchildren, for the people at work, the people in your neighborhood. Jesus is calling you to be that messenger, that apostle, who portrays the messages of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Regardless of your role in life, I want you to realize that your true identity is as an apostle of our Lord, Jesus Christ.

You may be a doctor, you may be a teacher, you may be a lawyer, a plumber, a firefighter or a police officer but that is what you do. That is not who you are. Really, it makes no difference what you do in your life, you can be an apostle wherever you are and whatever you do.

So often we place our entire identity in what we do. Have you ever known somebody who after many, many years either retires, or they lose their job for one reason or another, and they just seem to fall apart.

They fall apart because all of their identity was in their job, in what they did for a living.

So, I want you to know, from this moment forward, that your true identity, because of your union with Jesus Christ, is that you are an apostle. Now, you have to look at your priorities in a new way. Look at this moment in your life and see if your priorities line up as being an apostle of Jesus Christ.

It's often not easy to do. You can't expect to make that change completely overnight.

After I heard at that mission with Linda about our Christian apostleship, it took me eight years to totally believe, completely accept and completely embrace my identity as an apostle.

It took me that long very simply because I realized that what was coming out of my mouth everyday were not the words of an apostle of Jesus Christ. And, because the way I was living my life, in many cases, did not line up with the way an apostle of Jesus Christ would live their life.

And, I knew that if I accepted my identify I was going to have to surrender and change so that Jesus could use me to give Him glory.

I pray that you will, at some point, embrace your true identity as an apostle.

Now, finally, we come to our sixth roadblock.

Just to recap, we've had regret, shame and guilt of the past, which was roadblock number one.

We've talked about fear of the future, which was number two.

Number three was choosing to believe what other people say about you rather than what our Lord says about you.

Number four was not understanding our true identity given to us by Jesus and our Catholic church, which leads to the fifth roadblock, misplaced priorities.

**And, last, we come to roadblock
number six - rejection!**

I have to tell you, this has been the most difficult one for me to deal with and to overcome.

None of us want to be rejected, do we? Most of us want to be liked. In fact, many people spend their entire life trying to please others just to be liked by them.

They run around saying just tell me what you want me to say, tell me what you want me to do, tell me how you want me to dress, tell me how you want me live, just, please, like me.

Don't reject me.

And, so often, this roadblock of rejection has to do with fearing to share our faith.

I don't think that there is any Christian who would find it a major revelation that Jesus has called each and every one of us to go and share our faith.

But, so often we don't do it because we are concerned about being rejected by others. Because we don't want to be rejected, we don't want to share our faith.

As a result, millions of people die in this world every year without ever knowing Jesus Christ because the people who say they know and love Jesus Christ refuse to share that love of Jesus with others.

Here's an example from my own life.

I grew up with two very beautiful parents. My mom was a Catholic Christian woman and my dad was a wonderful man. He wasn't a Catholic, although he was a baptized Christian. I saw him in church only twice in my entire life. The first time was when Linda and I got married. The second time he was in a church was at his own funeral.

When I was growing up as a little Catholic kid in San Diego, Calif., my mom didn't know how to drive. So Dad would drive my mom and I to church every Sunday morning for Mass.

But, he'd wait out in the car.

I'll never forget this one particular Sunday morning. Mass was over. Dad, as usual, was sitting in the car out in the parking lot. We got in the car and Dad started driving home.

Now, remember, I was five years old. At this age, when you have a question, you just ask it. You don't care if it's the right question. You don't care if the time is right.

You think of a question and out it comes.

I remember my dad was sitting in the driver's seat, my mom was riding in the passenger seat and I was sitting in the back, when I said, very calmly, and very innocently, "Dad, why don't you go to church with Mom and me?"

Oh, I'm telling you, that was the wrong question to ask.

I saw my mom's shoulders tense up. I got very quiet. Dad didn't answer me in the car. In fact, my dad didn't answer that question until nearly two hours later, when he came to see me while I was playing in my room.

Dad came in, sat down and said, "Glenn, you know that question you asked me in the car, about why I don't go to church with your mother and you?"

I said, "Yes, sir."

He said, "I believe in God. Just don't ever talk to me about Him." Now, at five years old, you want to be obedient to your parents. You want to do what they say. So from that time on, I never did talk to my Dad about God.

In October of 1991, my Dad was 76 years old, and he was dying. He was dying from just about everything a person could die from. He had cancer throughout his entire body. He had smoked for over 40 years

which left him with only 20 percent of his lungs remaining. And, because it was so hard for him to breath, his heart was beginning to weaken.

My mom had gone to be with the Lord 10 years before that, so when my dad reached the point where he could no longer take care of himself medically, Linda and I invited him to come live with us, which he accepted.

Let me tell you, it was a marvelous experience, especially for our two teenage daughters. For one thing, they saw up close and personal that nobody is immortal, not even their grandfather.

Well, after nine months my dad had reached the point where we couldn't give him the care he needed. So I had a real tough decision. I put him in a convalescent hospital. I'd visit him four or five times a week. He had his good days and he had his not so good days.

But, this one particular day I went to see my dad and he was having a miserable day. When I left his room, I started walking down the hall of that hospital and I began to have an intense conversation with God.

Ever have one of those intense conversations with God?

I was angry.

"God, why are you keeping my father here?" I asked Him. He's lonely. He's miserable. He's hurting every day."

Well, even today, I can take you to the exact spot in that hallway where God burned this message in my heart.

"Glenn, I'm keeping him here so you can tell him about my son, Jesus."

I remember thinking, "Oh, no!"

That's when I reminded God of what I could never forget.

I reminded him that when I was five years old, Dad told me, "Don't you ever, ever, ever talk to me about God!"

"Lord, what if he gets angry with me? Oh, Lord, what if he rejects me? What if he finally rejects you?" I asked.

Then, in frustration, I remember telling God that He's going to have to figure out a new way.

You see at that time in my life, I was so arrogant with God that I thought if I said, "Lord, you're going to have to figure out another way,"

then God would say, “Oh, Glenn, I’m so sorry to have bothered you. I’ll work it out some other way.”

But, for the next week, it didn’t make any difference where I was, at home, in the car or at work, I must have heard God’s same message 20 times a day.

“Tell your dad about my son, Jesus.”

One day I had a morning like I know you’ve had at times in your life, where God has been urging, nudging and poking you to get you to do something that’s important.

And, you just kind of pretend you’re not hearing him.

That morning, when I woke up, I just knew I was going to have to do what God had been asking me to do.

Later that day, after work, I headed for the hospital. It was about a 20-minute drive. Well, 10 minutes into that drive my hands were so sweaty I could hardly hold onto that steering wheel.

You see, rather than seeing this as a glorious resurrection moment, I saw it as a crucifixion moment. And, I said the same thing that Jesus said in the garden of Gethsemane. I said, “Oh, Lord. Can we figure out another way?”

When I got to the hospital, I was still thinking, “Lord, I don’t want to do this.”

So I got to that hospital and I started walking down that long hallway. Now at that moment, in my mind, there were a couple of things that I was thinking about. I knew that I did a very poor job of living these two things, but I sure did know about them.

The first thing was that everything we are supposed to do on this Earth should be motivated by love - love of God and love of one another.

Well, if love is the motivator, then, my brothers and sisters, faith is the activator. Faith is what kicks it all into gear. Faith is what makes it happen. I remember getting to the door of my father’s hospital room and under my breath I remember saying, “God, I don’t think I have enough faith to do this.”

Then, in those quiet places of our hearts where you hear God speak to you, God said, “Glenn, you make the effort and I will bless it.”

Now, when I heard that, I had no idea what that meant.

Then, I opened the door of my Dad's hospital room and prepared to step in.

First, there is something you should know about my Dad at that particular moment in his life.

He was so lonely and so miserable that the first thing he did every morning about 5 am. would be to reach over, grab the remote control for the television set and turn it on. It would stay on all morning, all afternoon and into the late, late night. About 11:30 p.m. he would pick up that remote again and turn off the television.

So, it was no surprise to me that when I walked into his room the television was blaring away. I sat down in the chair beside his bed. Quite honestly I began to talk to Dad about everything except what I was there to talk about.

"Nice weather, huh, Dad? How about that football game today, Dad?"

God said, "Get with it!"

Has God ever said, "Get with it!" to you when you hesitated to do what you knew needed to be done? Well, I got up and I sat on my Dad's bed. I looked at him and said, "Dad, I'm here tonight to talk to you about something."

Miracle number one:

Dad reached over, grabbed the remote control of the television and turned it off.

Miracle number two:

Dad looked at me and said, "What do you want, Son?"

You see, in over 40 years, my Dad had never called me "Son."

I looked at him and said, "Dad, I'm nervous and I'm afraid, but I'm here tonight to share with you about Jesus Christ."

Then, this little 76-year-old man, who was literally skin and bones, began to cry. With tears running down his cheeks, he said, "Oh, thank God. I was hoping somebody would talk to me about Jesus."

"Dad, are you serious?" I said.

"Glenn, more than anything in my life," he said.

Knowing that my Dad didn't have much time left, I started talking to him about Jesus.

“Dad, I want you to repeat after me. Lord Jesus, I am sorry for my sins. I acknowledge you as the son of the living God and I accept you as my Lord and my God. I invite you into every area of my life this night and I receive you as my Lord and my Savior. Fill me with your Holy Spirit. Heal me. Strengthen me. I love you, Jesus.”

When Dad got through repeating those words, he surprised me again.

“Glenn,” he asked, “Would you write that down? I want to say it every day.”

Three weeks later, Dad died.

Today, as you read this, I believe with everything in me that my dad is in heaven with my mom, and that he’s looking down at me and saying, “Look God, there, that’s my son, who risked all his fears of rejection to share you with me.”

Right now, think about who in your life needs to hear about Jesus Christ.

Most of us don’t even have to go outside of our household to find that person. Maybe it’s a wife or a husband, a son or daughter or a brother or a sister. Maybe it’s somebody at work or maybe it’s your neighbor.

Do you love God enough, do you love that person enough, to risk any kind of rejection to share your faith in Jesus Christ with them?

Maybe, God would have worked out another way with my Dad. But, you see, I love God and I realized that I loved my Dad too much to take that chance.

As apostles, we are called to be messengers of Jesus Christ. In every day of our lives God brings at least one person into our path so we can share Jesus with them.

Now, if we don’t realize our true identity as an apostle, and if we are so terribly afraid of rejection, we will never live out God’s will in those situations. As a result, many people who may need Jesus Christ will never hear about Him, at least not from you.

Today, finally, I have become so accustomed to my identity as an apostle, I am constantly on the lookout for that person.

In my mind, I’m always aware and searching.

“Lord, is that the person? Lord, am I supposed to share you with that person?”

You see, I’m constantly looking for opportunities to make myself available to do the work of Jesus.

As we end these thoughts about life’s true roadblocks to victory in our spiritual life, I know that every reader of this book - just like every person who attends one of our missions - is struggling with at least one of these roadblocks.

I ask you to pray, perhaps as you’ve never prayed before in your life, asking God to give you the faith and the courage you need to surrender whatever it is that you’re holding on to that’s keeping you from moving closer to God’s embrace.

And, always remember the importance of the sacrament of the present moment. Living in the past or living in the future steals from the present.

Let's end this chapter with a prayer...

Lord, give us new wisdom and insight to understand our true identity. We ask by the power of the Holy Spirit that the loving lessons in this book will leave us prepared to go out into our world as your apostles.

We ask all of these prayers, all of these petitions and offer all of these desires of our heart in the name of your Son, our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.

Amen

Your 5-Step Process for Surrender

Throughout our lives, our Lord asks us to surrender certain things. He doesn't do this for His benefit, but for ours.

He knows that if we will, we will truly find the peace and freedom we desire.

Over my life I have made the decision to surrender many things to my Lord: regret, guilt, shame, fear, anger, sin, bitterness, resentment, unforgiveness - and the list goes on and on.

Surrender is not easy.

Many people see surrender as a sign of weakness.

But when it involves God and us, surrender is a sign of strength and obedience.

For over 20 years, I have used this process to let go and surrender to God.

IT WORKS!

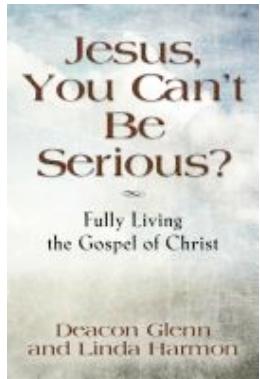
I'm sharing it with you in the hope that you will use it to gain the abundant life that our Lord wants for you.

1. Come to an acceptance and understanding that you have things to surrender. People who might consider themselves "perfectionists," or people who like to be "in control" often find this is a very difficult step.
2. Name the things you have to surrender; make a list.
3. Begin to imagine what your life would be like if you were not carrying those burdensome things around everyday. Think about the peace, joy, hope, love and freedom you would begin to experience.
4. At this point in your life, why are you not letting these things go?
5. This is the most difficult step for most people. Quite often a good spiritual director is needed to help you "peel the onion" to uncover those reasons.
6. Then, let those things go and surrender them to God.

A Call To Action

We believe that faith is acting on what we say we believe. We invite you to “review” and “act” on the reflection questions listed below. We wish you God’s blessings!

1. How did you answer the three questions at the beginning of this chapter? What do your answers say to you about your understanding and relationship with Jesus Christ?
2. Which one of the six roadblocks discussed in this chapter is causing the most difficulty in your life right now?
3. What action can you take to remove it from your life?
4. What was your reaction when you realized that because of your “union” with Jesus Christ, your true identity is as an apostle?
5. What priorities can you re-arrange to better live out your identity as an apostle?
6. What is the number one thing that God is asking you to surrender?
7. How can you use the 5-step process for surrender to accomplish your goal?



Jesus, You Can't Be Serious describes how to discover the loving, healing power of Jesus Christ. Once a powerful corporate executive living in the fast lane, Glenn Harmon became an ordained Deacon in the Roman Catholic Church. For over 20 years, he and his wife, Linda, have presented more than 500 parish missions throughout North America, sharing their experiences to inspire and encourage others to bring Jesus into their daily lives.

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