

## **PREFACE**

### **(Study Questions)**

1) As **Psalms 139:16 (New Living Translation)** tells us, “**You saw me before I was born. Every day of my life was recorded in your book. Every moment was laid out before a single day had passed**”. As Wendell believes, “every person created was formed with the intent and capacity to be a great masterpiece”.

Do you truly believe every day of your life has already been recorded, that your life was created with the intent, care, love, and potential to live the great masterpiece that is you? Why or why not? **(p. xi)**.

2) What characterizes the difference between “doing” life and “living” life, and what do either of these approaches to life require of us on a personal level? **(p. xi)**?

3) What are some cultural and religious expectations you take for granted, placing them in high value (e.g., freedoms, values, respect, the Law, the good life, good health, God’s blessing, God’s love, accomplishments, rewards, safety and security, etc.)? Do you assume and/or presume these are globally inherent for you, no matter the situation or place? Why or why not?

# **PART 1**

## **FROM THE INNERMOST PARTS OF THE HEART**

## CHAPTER 1 - EARLY YEARS

### (Study Questions)

1) Wendell writes about learning foundational values that served as a moral and spiritual compass, guiding him through life's twists and turns.

Were cultural and moral Christian values taught to you during your earlier years? How or where were those values taught, and how have they shaped you throughout your life? (p. 1)

2) Are following cultural and moral Christian teachings equivalent to living a Christian life that follows Jesus' teachings and model? How or how not?

3) Has there ever been a point you've wondered if life on earth is more than the years you will spend on earth? (p. 1)

4) In your earlier years, did you or someone you knew ever experience a supernatural event (a "miracle")? If so, was it openly discussed and shared? Was it accepted as a miracle? Was it rationalized as a fluke? How did the experience affect you? (p. 2)

5) In John 5:39-40 (NLT), Jesus says, "You search the Scriptures because you think they give you eternal life. But the Scriptures point to me! Yet you refuse to come to me to receive this life".

What is Jesus talking about when he refers to words like "search", "eternal life", "point", "refuse", "receive", and "life"? What connection do you see between these verses and foundational cultural and moral Christian teachings you may have internalized as a child (inside or outside a religious setting)? (p. 2)

6) Church services in Wendell's early years are characterized as dull words, interspersed with impersonal references to impersonal others, in the apparent hope of sharpening validity and appeal with impersonal evidence.

What message/s might be internalized within a young person sitting in similar services week after week, year after year? (p. 3)

7) In what ways might guilt, fear, and shame (real or false) exploit or twist faith, hope, and trust in God and Jesus? Is Jesus more than an impersonal superhero or mascot? Does acknowledging Jesus and asking for forgiveness of our sins imply more than a ticket to heaven? More than guarding against Hell, or committing the unpardonable sin of blasphemy against the Holy Spirit? More than a bargain basement deal? (p. 4)

8) Hebrews 13:8 (NLT) says, “Jesus Christ is the same today, yesterday, and forever”. What does it mean for you if this is true? Which do you trust more, less, or equally: the validity and reliability of the unseen you don’t control, the validity and reliability of observed evidence you can see and exert some power and understanding over, or equally, the seen and unseen? (p. 5)

9) In agonizing over 52 warts, Wendell became fixated on the spiritual truth that Jesus is the same yesterday, today, and forever, and what that personally meant for him. He writes that the truth brought him new hope. It struck death to childish fears and doubts.

In 1 Corinthians 3:2-3 (NLT), Jesus says, “I had to feed you with milk, not with solid food, because you weren’t ready for anything stronger. And you still aren’t ready, for you are still controlled by your sinful nature. You are jealous of one another and quarrel with each other. Doesn’t that prove you are controlled by your sinful nature? Aren’t you living like people of the world?”

How was God gently pursuing and inviting Wendell to step beyond the security of knowing where the safe sustenance of milk originated from, into the spiritual trust of being provided meat to mature with...not controlling where that sustenance might originate from? (p. 6)

10) Does Jesus want his followers to be invulnerable, armored, and guarded from pain, insecurity, and vulnerability? How do you characterize your own life in this regard?

**11)** Wendell speaks of believing he needed to do something to “activate the faith I had in what I knew Jesus would do”. What might priming the pump of faith and trust in what is unseen look like and feel like, for you? **(p. 6)**

**12)** Have you ever seen spiritual or religious faith, hope, and trust exploited for a false doctrine or false belief, subtly stealth-marketed as “meat” instead of milk? Explain. **(pp. 7-8)**

**13)** Wendell was invited to sample meat from God’s buffet of nourishing, transformative spiritual food. He writes of how an appetite was awakened that “became a deep craving for more of the reality of God, of His presence, power, and, most of all, love.” Then he writes that the deep craving, while still offering a “distant flickering” of hope, eventually succumbed to the paralyzing darkness of internal and external forces in the attempt to define his own identity.

Have you experienced “the dark night of the soul”? If so, what was that experience like for you? **(pp. 8-9)**

## CHAPTER 2 - HONKY BOY

### (Study Questions)

1) When Wendell graduated from high school he suddenly had freedom, but he lacked purpose. What happens when we have lots of freedom, but lack a purpose that gives us a fulfilling and sustainable identity? Have you experienced this? If so, how did that look and feel? If it was resolved or addressed, how was it resolved or addressed? Are you satisfied with the outcome? **(p. 11)**

2) Proverbs 29:18 (KJV) says, “Where there is no vision, the people perish: but he that keepeth the law, happy is he”. In the NLT version of the bible, the same verses say, “When people do not accept divine guidance, they run wild. But whoever obeys the law is joyful”.

What observations from these verses can you make regarding Wendell’s freedom? What observations or similarities do you note between the external identities of city culture, hippie culture, gang culture, race culture, territorial culture, etc., that Wendell experienced? What observations or similarities do you note between external identities in your realm of life experience that might be “searching desperately for identity and a way to express it”? **(pp. 12-13)**

3) When was a time when you felt helpless and afraid, when all you knew to do was to call out to God for help? **(p. 14ff)**

## CHAPTER 3 - GOING DEEPER

### (Study Questions)

1) Luke 11:11-13 (NLT) says, “You fathers - if your children ask for a fish, do you give them a snake instead? Or if they ask for an egg, do you give them a scorpion? Of course not! So if you sinful people know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask him.” Do you truly believe those words? If so, what do they mean to you personally?  
(p. 17)

2) In Luke 9:23-24 (NLT), Jesus says, “If any of you wants to be my follower, you must give up your own way, take up your cross daily, and follow me. If you try to hang on to your life, you will lose it. But if you give up your life for my sake, you will save it. And what do you benefit if you gain the whole world but are yourself lost or destroyed?”

What is Jesus talking about when he refers to words like “follower”, “must”, “give up”, “own way”, “cross”, “daily”, and “follow me”? What connections might you see between these verses about unseen faith and trust and, as Wendell writes, “being trapped inside an illusion of success or happiness”?  
(pp. 18-19)

3) Wendell refers to words he had previously written down, stating that, “You won’t find your real purpose for living until you find a purpose worth dying for”. If that’s true, and if God only gives us what is for our good, then what might lie beyond illusions of success or happiness? What is required to venture beyond a life of illusions? How might daily requirements connect to deep purpose and true identity? (p. 19-20)

4) Life and death. All or nothing. No compromising. Wendell writes, “At that moment, it all began to make sense: Jesus had lived His life to the fullest because He had found I was worth dying for”! How do we reconcile those words with

learned teachings about pride, order, correct doctrine, self-esteem, humility, etc.? What Scripture verse or verses might come to your mind? **(p. 20)**

**5)** Like being offered salvation from sin as a gift from Jesus that we either accept or reject, the Holy Spirit, similarly, is a gift offered to us by God. We either accept the Holy Spirit as a gift, open it and use it, reject it outright, or pretend to accept it while hiding it away and never experiencing its intended use.

Have you heard of the Holy Spirit? What are your feelings, thoughts, or experiences related to who the Holy Spirit is, what the Holy Spirit does, and how to receive the gift of the Holy Spirit?

**(pp. 22-23)**

**6)** Is it necessary to *consciously* invite and accept the person of the Holy Spirit as a gift into your life? Are spiritual disciplines of reading the Bible, praying, going to church, living a morally pure and religiously upright life, raising your hand to be “saved”, and becoming baptized into The Church enough to live beyond illusion? Enough to die for? Why or why not? **(pp. 22-23)**

**7)** Psalm 42:1-2 (NLT) says, “As the deer longs for streams of water, so I long for you, O God. I thirst for God, the living God”.

Have you ever experienced yearning and longing to this extent at any point in your life? To the point you would give anything to have that yearning fulfilled, even if you didn’t understand it? How did it feel? What are the **(pp. 26-27)**

**8)** Matthew 3:16-4:1 (NLT) says, “After his baptism, as Jesus came up out of the water, the heaven were opened and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and settling on him And a voice from heaven said, ‘This is my dearly loved Son, who brings me great joy’. Then Jesus was led by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted there by the devil.”

Considering the previous study questions (1-7) for this chapter, what significance do these verses from Matthew hold for you? **(p. 28)**



## CHAPTER 4 - THE SEPARATING

### (Study Questions)

1) Wendell had an experience of stepping out in faith and trust to invite the Holy Spirit into his life, knowing it could give him sustainable purpose and identity, while also knowing it meant dying to his self-interests. Referring again to **Luke 11:11-13 (NLT)**, “You fathers - if your children ask for a fish, do you give them a snake instead? Or if they ask for an egg, do you give them a scorpion? Of course not! So if you sinful people know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask him?”.

In light of these verses, would it have been reasonable for Wendell to expect “better gifts” from God as a result of his step of faith?

2) In **Matthew 3:11-12 (NLT)**, John the Baptist says, “I baptize with water those who repent of their sins and turn to God. But someone is coming soon who is greater than I am - so much greater that I’m not worthy even to be his slave and carry his sandals. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and with fire. He is ready to separate the chaff from the wheat with his winnowing fork. Then he will clean up the threshing area, gathering the wheat into his barn but burning the chaff with never-ending fire.”

Wendell had high expectations after receiving the gift of the Holy Spirit, but he had no definite direction for how to live that out. What have you experienced in your life as exhilarating and life-changing, only to find yourself crashing after the high wears off? (p. 29ff)

3) Wendell received the gift he yearned for. But, as Jesus also experienced, he was led by the Holy Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted and tried by Satan. God knew Wendell had chaff of old temptations, disappointment, frustration, bitterness, broken dreams, darkness, confusion, loneliness, insecurity, doubt, boredom, demand for direction, feelings of abandonment, existential pain, and eventual atheism that needed to be hotly burned away from the wheat so the wheat could be used. Some of these things Wendell wasn’t even conscious of. The chaff

represented Wendell's go-to miseries; his default identity; the safety of the familiar. Jesus was tempted differently in the desert by Satan after his baptism, after the Spirit of God descended on him like a dove, and even after hearing he was God's beloved Son who brought God great joy. Wendell's miseries might have continued unacknowledged under God's magnifying glass, without God lovingly allowing him to first wander in a violent desert of temptation and brokenness.

What happened once Wendell began acknowledging the "default chaff" in his life? What happened when he started discovering the great goodness and love God had for him, even as his life had been in turmoil, even as God seemed absent, and even as Wendell feared God's wrath? Do you believe God loves and yearns for you just as much?

## **CHAPTER 5 - SURRENDER**

### **(Study Questions)**

**1)** Does it surprise you that God was pursuing and hearing Wendell all along, and had not left his side? What else did God need from Wendell in order to take him to the ends of the earth, to gift him with that life of identity and purpose, to show him “life is not just random fate”?

**2)** Knowing Wendell’s heart, are you surprised God met Wendell where he was, before Wendell could scramble to clean up his life? Are you apt to give grace and mercy to others who may be experiencing the “dark night of the soul”? Do you trust God to be even their Master Travel Guide? Do you trust God’s power to transform lives?

**3)** God meeting with Wendell is a personal, as well as a personalized, story. From what Wendell shared in this chapter, what stands out to you? What had a significant effect on you?

## **CHAPTER 6 - BOOT CAMP**

### **(Study Questions)**

**1)** Upon the seemingly ungracious greeting Wendell and Dave experienced at the Bible School “boot camp”, what old presumptions of life on his terms arose as anger for Wendell? **(p. 48)**

**2)** When have you felt betrayed by your expectations, or by what you felt you deserved? Were you able to consciously release yourself from them so that other purposes could be worked out? If so, how did you accomplish that?

**3)** Wendell was faced with a choice. He knew becoming a disciple of Jesus was going to cost him. Becoming a disciple would involve discipline. Becoming a disciple would involve learning to know and hear the voice of the Holy Spirit, possibly unlearning previous assumptions about the Holy Spirit. Becoming a disciple would involve humbly and repentantly shining a light on his prison of deep inner ugliness, pain, denial, and numbing strategies. Becoming a disciple would involve developing deep intimacy with the heart of Jesus. Becoming a disciple would also risk ridicule and misunderstanding from mainstream traditional expectations.

Have you seriously considered what the choice to become a disciple of Jesus means?

**4)** What were the crucial decisions facing Wendell during the transformative discipling process he engaged in? Have you personally gone through similar processes to experience “dividing the word of truth”, discovering fresh interpretation from the Holy Spirit? If so, what have been the crucial elements and decisions of your experience?

**5)** How was the process of Jesus inviting the 12 disciples into a discipleship of transformation similar or different from Wendell’s experience?

## CHAPTER 7 - AN EXTREME MAKEOVER

### (Study Questions)

1) “The instructions of the LORD are perfect, reviving the soul. The decrees of the LORD are trustworthy, making wise the simple. The commandments of the LORD are right, bringing joy to the heart. The commands of the LORD are clear, giving insight for living. Reverence for the LORD is pure, lasting forever. The laws of the LORD are true; each one is fair. They are more desirable than gold, even the finest gold. They are sweeter than honey, even honey dripping from the comb. They are a warning to your servant, a great reward for those who obey them” (Psalm 19:7-11 NLT).

What comes to mind when you read the Scripture passage above? Are your foundations and filters for how words are planted within you true or false? Where do the foundations and filters originate from? How do spoken and unspoken words, personal history, lineage, presumptions, and assumptions mold and shape us? (p. 61)

2) What effect do words like self-rejection, shame, guilt, judgment, fear, Heaven, and Hell have on your soul? Do those words define your purpose and identity? If so, how do you experience that? (pp. 61-63)

3) What had become necessary for Wendell to step out in faith and trust, accepting an invitation into the unknown? (p. 68)

4) How does this challenge or confirm your understanding of what it means to follow God’s directions?

## **CHAPTER 8 - HEADHUNTERS!**

### **(Study Questions)**

**1)** God calling Wendell into the unknown is both a personal and a personalized story. What were the implications and ramifications of being in a place that had “little influence from the outside world”? **(pp. 65-66)**

**2)** Wendell writes, “I recalled what had been said, that my life in Him did not need to be an endless procession of boring, lifeless Sunday school classes. There was real adventure that He had prepared for me, an experience with Jesus, right out of the pages of the Bible”.

What are your thoughts and feelings about these words, as you may have experienced in your own life? **(p. 68)**

**3)** From the terrifying story shared in this chapter, what stands out to you? What had a significant effect on you? Would you be willing to step out in faith and trust, not knowing if it might cost you your life? Why or why not?

## CHAPTER 9 - INTO THE JUNGLE

### (Study Questions)

1) Wendell felt the direct call from the Holy Spirit to follow wherever he was led. He was called, he responded affirmatively, and he was sent. None of these steps occurred in a vacuum; they were the product of Wendell zigging and zagging for years while the Holy Spirit gently pursued his prodigal son. Now, Wendell was ready to go and tell.

Romans 10:14-15 (NLT) says, “How beautiful are the feet of messengers who bring good news!”. In the early part of this chapter, Wendell details how difficult and challenging the journey toward the Luzon jungle was. At times, he didn’t know if he would make it in this “adventure to the uttermost part of the earth.”

What experiences did Wendell have to keep surrendering to God to keep his heart and mind aligned with God’s purpose? (pp. 70-74)

2) What were the tradeoffs/blessings for Wendell (and his travel companion, Bayani) when Wendell pushed through pain, weariness, and fear in obedience to God’s purpose? (pp. 74-76)

3) “I had been placed among hungry, open souls - curious souls, eagerly reaching out for something, perhaps for God. This was a ripe harvest field, and I was right in the middle of it”. Have you ever had the experience of being right in the middle of a ripe harvest field? (p. 75)

## **CHAPTER 10 - CULTURE SHOCK**

### **(Study Questions)**

1) How were Wendell's cultural and ministry expectations upended when he reached the final destination - the mission base - and realized he was at the mercy of the mission of his hosts? **(pp. 77-78)**

2) Beyond Wendell's story, how can you expand those applications into your personal life? **(p. 81)**

3) Wendell believed he had been taken through the desert that burns away chaff from the wheat. He had stepped out in faith. He trusted God to bring him the promised adventure. Jesus wandered in the wilderness for 40 days, leading him to a weakened state. In that weakened state, Satan tempted Jesus with offers of religious and political power if only he would renounce his Godhood in a transaction that would ascribe to Satan the power of God. God allowed Jesus to be tested while in a weakened, vulnerable state of being.

In what ways was Wendell in a weakened state of being? In what ways was he tempted that could have justified a transaction with Satan, but had the appearance of God? What was it that carried him through temptation to the other side of victory? Do you find yourself tempted in ways that serve Satan's goal of ascribing to God things that *look* like God, that *look* like righteousness, but are not born from the power of God?

**(pp. 81-83).**



## **CHAPTER 11 - FIRST ENCOUNTER WITH HEADHUNTERS**

### **(Study Questions)**

- 1)** What were some of the most significant things Wendell was being taught during the early stages of the Philippine “missionary adventure” at the Christian Training Center? **(p. 84-86)?**
- 2)** Have you ever found yourself in cultural situations where you feel like you stand out alone? If so, what effect did it have on you, and how did you deal with it?
- 3)** Can you recall times in the Bible when people found themselves in situations that suggested life or death were at stake?
- 4)** Among headhunters, Wendell felt overwhelmed with anxiety that his life was at stake. What readjustment of his heart, mind, and soul happened for him to recommit his *inabilities* to God? Which do you find easier to commit to God to use for His purposes, your abilities or your inabilities? **(p.89)**
- 5)** What lessons did Wendell learn about the “adventure” of missionary work? **(p. 90)**

## **CHAPTER 12 - THE HEADHUNTERS AND THE HEART HUNTER**

**(Study Questions)**

**1)** As you read this chapter, when did Wendell experience weakness, weariness, and anxiety? Give examples of how the power of God worked through Wendell when he felt most weak and unsure of himself. How did Wendell know it was the power of God working through him?

**2)** When do you believe your inabilities outweigh your abilities? Like the boy who freely gave his lunch of five loaves and two fish (imagine five dinner rolls and two cans of tuna) to Jesus, when have you held back even small gifts God might have multiplied into something far greater for His purposes? **(p. 93-96)**

**3)** Wendell writes, “It’s not about how well we perform, how great our faith is perceived to be by those around us, or how great we perceive our faith to be. It is all about Jesus!” What do those words mean to you? **(p. 97)**

## CHAPTER 13 - GOD'S STRENGTH IN WEAKNESS

### (Study Questions)

1) Dying to Self and Self-recognition is a theme of this chapter. In **2 Corinthians 12:9-10 (NLT)**, Jesus tells us, **'My grace is all you need. My power works best in weakness. "So now I am glad to boast about my weaknesses, so that the power of Christ can work through me. That's why I take pleasure in my weaknesses, and in the insults, hardships, persecutions and troubles that I suffer for Christ. For when I am weak, then I am strong."**

What is Jesus referring to here as weakness? Do these verses imply that God condones sin in our lives? How has your understanding of mission work and stories of missionaries, at home or abroad, been affected by reading about the conditions Wendell lived in? What does the paradox of the Holy Spirit being able to best use our weaknesses as strengths mean? **(pp. 99-102)**

2) Wendell addresses how quickly his spiritual peace and resolve could be turned upside down when healing scabs of his old identity, hidden out of sight within the innermost parts of his heart, got clawed back into the open while he was in a weakened state. How was it a tactic of spiritual warfare for Satan to hit Wendell when he was already down? Do you justify "camouflaging" insecurities that lead to self-limiting beliefs in an effort to control and hide them? **(pp. 103-104)**

3) Do you let your identity and purpose be dictated by what you think, feel, and believe about yourself? **(pp. 103-104)**

4) How did Wendell win this battle of spiritual warfare, and what was the result? **(pp. 105-106)**

5) What does it mean for nations today using military might and power to "protect" religion, to "protect" cultural religious values? What does it mean in terms of religious denominations boasting of their works, their power, maybe even their weakness?

## CHAPTER 14 - LEAVING THE PHILIPPINES

### (Study Questions)

The word “crucible” as defined by Merriam Webster Dictionary: “A crucible is a container made of a substance not easily damaged by fire. It is used for holding something to be treated under great heat. In metallurgy, a crucible is a container of metal or refractory material employed for heating substances to high temperatures. It can also refer to a hollow area at the bottom of a furnace in which the metal collects. Additionally, a crucible can be a severe, searching test or trial.”

Dictionary.com provides a metaphorical definition of “crucible”: “usually applied to a situation that tests a person’s character and perhaps changes them forever. The association of extreme heat with extremely challenging experiences can be found in many other expressions, such as trial by fire”.

With the crucible in mind, many Scripture passages are foundational to the transformative work of the Holy Spirit *when we allow* ourselves to be transformed. Reflect on the following passages:

- In **Psalm 139:7-10 (NLT)**, David says, “**I can never escape from your Spirit! I can never get away from your presence! If I go up to heaven, you are there; if I go down to the grave, you are there. If I ride the wings of the morning, if I dwell by the farthest oceans, even there your hand will guide me, and your strength will support me.**”
- We read in **Isaiah 55:8-9 (NLT)**, “**My thoughts are nothing like your thoughts,” says the LORD. “And my ways are far beyond anything you could imagine. For just as the heavens are higher than the earth, so my ways are higher than your ways and my thoughts higher than your thoughts.**”
- **I Thessalonians 5:18 (NLT)** instructs us to, “**Be thankful in all circumstances, for this is God’s will for you who belong to Christ Jesus.**”

1) In what ways was Wendell being *tested* while he was in the crucible in the Philippines, questioning God about his situation? In what ways was Wendell being *refined* while he was in the crucible in the Philippines?

**(pp. 107-109)**

**2) What finally released Wendell from the intense fire of the crucible he was in?  
(pp. 109-110)**

**3) What was the key Wendell found “that unlocked the door to the ‘peace that passes understanding,’ which I would carry with me through the rest of my life”?  
(p. 110)**

**4) Is it possible to be physically unwell while still being spiritually well?  
(p. 110-115)**

**5) What crucible do you find yourself in? Would you be willing and trusting enough to cease asking, “Why is this happening?” and instead ask, “What do you want me to learn?” Even if it means doing this over and over again?**

## CHAPTER 15 - ANGEL IN DISGUISE

### (Study Questions)

1) Have you ever found yourself in a situation where it appeared you made careless mistakes, and would face a seemingly inevitable fate? What spiritual truth gave Wendell the foundation to reevaluate the difference between fate/frustration and God's divine destiny/peace? (pp. 116-121)

2) As Wendell chose to surrender himself over and over to living in the flow of the Holy Spirit, how did God provide protection and direction for him? Do you believe, **"For he will order his angels to protect you wherever you go (Psalm 91:11 NLT)"**? Have you had similar experiences?

3) **Hebrews 13:2 (NLT)** says, **"Don't forget to show hospitality to strangers, for some who have done this have entertained angels without realizing it!"**.

What are your feelings, reactions, and possible fears about these verses? How might we discern the difference between angels and non-angels?

4) Have you ever struggled with the tension of "having a fling with God", yearning to just be "normal", but also longing for that seed of divine identity and purpose to continue growing? If so, what was that tension like? (p. 124)

5) Wendell eventually realized that his time in the Philippines and traveling back to the U.S. held little actual meaning for him beyond an exciting story "buried in my memory". The next challenge was to fit that story into living life in the West, a new normal. What "values, priorities, and expectations of myself and others" had been forever impacted, including the "dreams, goals, and accomplishments I had once valued so highly"? How do you imagine answering this in your own life? (p. 125)

6) What was the key that unlocked the door between "normal" Christianity and the "Christianity demonstrated in the pages of the Bible"? What were the new doors facing Wendell that he felt compelled to unlock and walk through? (p. 126-127)

## CHAPTER 16 - THE ENEMY SETS A TRAP!

### (Study Questions)

- 1) At least six culturally accepted benchmarks served as outward symbols of God's blessing on Wendell's life. What were those? Do you recognize these in your own life? What feelings or beliefs do you associate with them? (**pp. 128-129**)
- 2) What downsides did Wendell discover to his identity and purpose that he had not anticipated with acquiring these outward symbols of success? (**p. 129**)
- 3) Reflecting on your own life, what do the following words mean to you, "The lifestyle we were living was one I was not willing to die for, yet it felt like it was killing me!" and, "While my life was full of Christian activity, my soul felt empty."? (**pp. 129-130**)
- 4) Wendell realized the "goods" of religious and cultural blessing had, by subtle necessity, compromised and diverted a day-to-day renewed filling and connection with the Holy Spirit into a form of spiritual lethargy. An illusion. The broad road leading to false happiness. How do you characterize your relationship with the Holy Spirit? (**pp. 129-131**)
- 5) In **Acts 2:37-41 (NLT)**, Peter speaks to a very large international crowd of nice religious people on an annual religious pilgrimage. He pleaded with them to save themselves "from this crooked generation." "Peter's words pierced their hearts, and they said to him and to the other apostles, 'Brothers, what should we do?' Peter replied, 'Each of you must repent of your sins and turn to God, and be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. Then you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. This promise is to you, to your children, and to those far away - all who have been called by the Lord our God.' Then Peter continued preaching for a long time, strongly urging all his listeners, 'Save yourselves from this crooked generation!' Those who believed what Peter said were baptized and added to the church that day—about 3,000 in all."

Peter saw through their illusions. He pointed them out as being way off target. How would you respond or react if someone told you your religious activities were keeping you from the divine identity and purpose God has laid out for you, as an individual?

**6) Mark 8:35-37 (NLT) says, “If you try to hang on to your life, you will lose it. But if you give up your life for my sake and for the sake of the Good News, you will save it. And what do you benefit if you gain the whole world but lose your own soul? Is anything worth more than your soul?”.**

Do you straddle a life of compromise, trying to serve two masters?  
How do we fully die to one of these lives? What rationalizations might have to be put to death for this to happen?



## **CHAPTER 17 - WHEN GOD LEADS**

### **(Study Questions)**

- 1) When we respond to God in faith and trust, God will tell us what the next steps are. “I asked, ‘What should I do, Lord?’ And the Lord told me, ‘Get up and go into Damascus, and there you will be told everything you are to do’” (Acts 22:10 NLT). Do you trust that God has always been with you, even though you didn’t always feel God’s presence? **(pp. 135-137)**
- 2) What question did God again tell Wendell to be asking? What was the only way to take down the giant of compromise? **(p. 137)**
- 3) Did Wendell have all the answers to his rational questions, questions that were going to demand trust in illogical answers? **(p. 138)**
- 4) Have you had the experience of fasting? If so, what precipitated this experience? What was your goal? Was that goal met? **(p. 138)**
- 5) What do you feel in your heart and soul as you read the story of how Wendell wrestled with God in the barn? What do you feel in your heart and soul as you read the story of how God spoke audibly to Wendell, like God spoke to Samuel?
- 6) Thinking back on Part One, From the Innermost Parts of the Heart, is God the same yesterday, today, and forever? Does God have a unique purpose and identity for each one of us as individuals if we will only step out in faith and trust to surrender to it?

## **PART TWO**

# **TO THE UTTERMOST PARTS OF THE WORLD**

## CHAPTER 18 - BREAKTHROUGH

### (Study Questions)

1) Do you ever wonder if it's only Evangelical Christians who follow cultural moral expectations? Are Evangelical Christians "lucky blessed ones that get an existential pass"? What difference does it make that Jesus came to Earth to die and be raised back to Life? Can a Social Gospel and Cultural Christianity be practiced and preached by those who have not surrendered their lives to the Holy Spirit?

2) I John 4:8 (NLT) speaks of God's Perfect [agape] Love, "But anyone who does not love does not know God, for God is love". And I John 4:18 (NIV) tells us, "There is no fear in love. But perfect love drives out fear, because fear has to do with punishment. The one who fears is not made perfect in love."

What thoughts or feelings arise when you read these verses? Do you feel justified in hating certain people? Hating certain behaviors? Hating certain politics? Hating certain people who behave in certain ways? Is righteous anger ever justified, and what are the parameters for anger being righteous? Is there truth in the statement that anger can often be both a cover and a release for underlying fear?

3) What does Jesus mean in John 20:21 (NLT), "Again he said, 'Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, so I am sending you.'"? Is it notable that Jesus *repeated* the commission to spread his message of Good News? Is this more than a suggestion to disciples of Jesus? What does he mean when he says, "Peace be with you"? When does anger become sinful? (p. 145)

4) Do you encounter feelings of fear when you think about not only consciously and publicly making a decision to accept Jesus into your life, but to then live beyond moral, cultural, religious, and political expectations; beyond "righteous anger"; beyond avoiding Hell; beyond avoiding punishment; beyond avoiding both hard and soft judgement; beyond avoiding breaking Commandments and Laws; beyond safe religious and spiritual activities; beyond stopping short of surrendering your life to follow Jesus... no matter the cost?

5) Matthew 16:24-26 (NLT) says, “Then Jesus said to his disciples, ‘If any of you wants to be my follower, you must give up your own way, take up your cross, and follow me. If you try to hang on to your life, you will lose it. But if you give up your life for my sake, you will save it. And what do you benefit if you gain the whole world but lose your own soul? Is anything worth more than your soul?’”

Wendell writes that, beyond other things, he would need to give up to have the identity God wanted him to have, it would mean giving up the comfortable and proud identity he had created for himself over the previous years, “fashioned for my own credit” (with a debt load demanding repayment). He was faced with a huge choice: step out in faith to what he believed God was [illogically] calling him to, or [logically] submit to Compromise.

How might our churches and families look and feel different if we liberated and normalized others to fully step into “illogical” steps of faith with our blessing? Allowing your imagination to run free from the “giant of Compromise”, what could you even dare to envision the next chapter of your life looking like? (pp. 145-147)

6) Saying goodbye to family was difficult for Wendell. What are your areas that challenge compromise? Do you want all your ducks in a row, without having to peer over the cliff, before stepping out in faith? Are you willing to “free fall into the vastness of God’s creative possibilities”? (pp. 147-149)

7) People receiving Bibles in China were willing to die in order to get them. Is there a mountain you would be willing to die on? (p.149)

8) Through the veil of failure and humiliation from seemingly unsuccessful courier trips, Wendell again questioned where God was. What was God’s response to Wendell, and what was the implication of that response? (p. 150)

9) God took Wendell right up to the proverbial cliff, which, over the edge, offered mystery and adventure “of the new custom-designed life God had prepared for us”. Illogical, but far better than anything Wendell could have strategically planned for.

Ephesians 3:20 (NLT) tells us, “Now all glory to God, who is able, through his mighty power at work within us, to accomplish infinitely more than we might ask or think”. And in Isaiah 55:8-9 (NLT), we are told, “My thoughts are nothing like your thoughts,” says the LORD. “And my ways are far beyond anything you could imagine. For just as the heavens are higher than the earth, so my ways are higher than your ways and my thoughts higher than your thoughts.”

We each have a Father who lives in Heaven. Some earthly fathers do not want even the best for their children. How did the Heavenly Father show Wendell that He can be trusted, even when leaning over the edge of the cliff? How was this an important lesson to be learned? How willing are you to surrender careful planning and strategies (that provide silent safety-nets to address fear) (**pp. 150-151**)

## CHAPTER 19 - A NEW LIFE IN HONG KONG

### (Study Questions)

1) In Psalm 73:24-25 (NLT), we are told, “You guide me with your counsel, leading me to a glorious destiny. Whom have I in heaven but you? I desire you more than anything on earth.” And in Jeremiah 17:7-10 (NLT), “But blessed are those who trust in the Lord and have made the Lord their hope and confidence. They are like trees planted along a riverbank, with roots that reach deep into the water. Such trees are not bothered by the heat or worried by long months of drought. Their leaves stay green, and they never stop producing fruit. The human heart is the most deceitful of all things, and desperately wicked. Who really knows how bad it is? But I, the Lord, search all hearts and examine secret motives. I give all people their due rewards, according to what their actions deserve.”

Wendell writes that he soon learned his purpose for being in the win-at-any-cost job that opened up for him. It was to “make me street-smart about this new world I had just been thrust into and to help me understand that, regardless of the culture, nationality, race, and social values, the human heart is the same the world over....God wanted me to see what he sees and to understand His heart...He wanted me to feel about them the way He feels about them”. Do you ever feel you are being constantly tested and refined by God, maybe questioning your purpose? (pp. 152-154)

2) Luke 16:10 (NLT) counsels us that, “If you are faithful in little things, you will be faithful in large ones. But if you are dishonest in little things, you won’t be honest with greater responsibilities”. In quoted words from Wendell, what stands out to you: “To be faithful in the little things of life was key to how things would go later. This is a basic kingdom principle. Whether I had the money or not, I needed to treat the bank fairly as I would want to be treated. Yet the dilemma I was facing offered no way forward. If I used our last dollars to pay the bank loan, how was this being faithful to my wife and babies? Someone was going to come out on the short end of the deal, no matter what I did.” How have you seen this application in your own life experience or the lives of others? (p. 155)

3) God's message to Wendell was **Romans 13:8 (NLT)**, "Owe nothing to anyone - except for your obligations to love one another. If you love your neighbor, you will fulfill the requirements of God's law". What do these verses mean to you? What applications do you see in your small world? What applications do you see in the world at large? Logically and illogically, what were the implications of this verse for Wendell as he again perched precariously at the edge of the cliff? (p. 156)

4) **Hebrews 11:6 (NLT)** tells us, "And it is impossible to please God without faith. Anyone who wants to come to him just believe that God exists and that he rewards those who sincerely seek him".

What do these words mean to you? Is Hebrews addressing the initial coming to Jesus for salvation, in a step of belief in God's existence? Is faith the same as risk? Is it faith to say I am "stepping out in faith" if I have logically prepared for potentially unseen risks and consequences? Is it faith when I am propelled forward by logical rationale? Why or why not? What does it mean to sincerely seek and be rewarded? (p. 156-157)

5) Wendell writes that, "God is limitless in His creative ability to provide and care for us when we dare to position ourselves in the places and situations He provides to meet us in." Are there areas of your life where, out of fear of trust and risk, or demanding outward evidence of a blessed life, you overlook the "fine print" attached to God's promises? (p. 158)

## CHAPTER 20 - EVIDENCE OF THINGS UNSEEN

### (Study Questions)

- 1) “Evidence of things unseen” seems like a paradox. How can there be evidence of unseen things? **Matthew 6:31-34 (NLT)** says, “**So don’t worry about these things, saying, ‘What will we eat? What will we wear?’ These things dominate the thoughts of unbelievers, but your heavenly Father already knows all your needs. Seek the Kingdom of God above all else, and live righteously, and he will give you everything you need. So don’t worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will bring its own worries. Today’s trouble is enough for today.**” Do you ever consider the meaning of these verses? Do you believe them? Why or why not? **(p. 159)**
- 2) Are you willing to upset the ordinary to follow Jesus fully? What would you be risking to do that? **(p. 160)**
- 3) How did God creatively provide for Wendell and his family’s needs? Have you ever rejected what God supplied because you felt you deserved better? **(pp. 160-163)**
- 4) Wendell writes of his and Daisy’s “utter dependency” on God, similar to the Israelites receiving daily manna from God. He refers to living in a “place of daily tension between anxiety and faith”. Do you believe there is a correlation between the fullness of God’s presence and the level of our dependence on God for our daily needs, and true adventure into the unknown? Is this what God calls every follower to? Why or why not do you believe this? **(p. 164)**
- 5) If the opposite of faith is unbelief, which leads to distrust and fear, is it difficult to logically comprehend that “faith in a loving God who sees and cares for His children fits logically into the equation of sound judgment”? What does it mean to trust God beyond the faith we put in our logical problem-solving abilities, beyond logical science, beyond the Government, beyond the Church, beyond bank accounts, beyond relationships? Can you put even more faith in what seems



humanly illogical? Is this evidence of being irrational, lazy, irresponsible, selfish, or demanding free stuff from God? **(p. 165)**

**6)** In the story of Wendell and Daisy's family returning to Ohio for an anticipated short-term physical rest, God instead used that time to birth a plan for long-term spiritual and emotional rest. Again, **Ephesians 3:20 (NLT)** says, **"Now all glory to God, who is able, through his mighty power at work within us, to accomplish infinitely more than we might ask or think."**

How did God provide what Wendell and Daisy really needed? Are you able to see how God's infinite and sufficient grace upheld them beyond what they even thought to ask for? Could that grace also uphold you?

**(pp. 166-169)**

## **CHAPTER 21 - JESUS DEVILS**

### **(Study Questions)**

**1)** Our actions should match up to our words. How did Wendell and Daisy's actions speak even louder than words to a large group of people? Did they risk being misunderstood? **(pp. 170-172)**

**2)** How did God use Wendell and Daisy's obedience to further their testimony in the village where they lived? What would have happened if Wendell and Daisy had not followed what they believed the Holy Spirit was telling them? **(pp. 170-172)**

## CHAPTER 22 - THE FIRST BIBLE COURIER TRIP

### (Study Questions)

- 1) **Matthew 24:14 (NLT)** instructs us that, “**And the Good News about the Kingdom will be preached throughout the whole world, so that all nations will hear it; and then the end will come**”. Do you believe God calls every person to the same ways of preaching the Good News? If you are a person who proclaims to follow Jesus, is it optional not to preach the Good News of what we say we believe and accept? What makes the difference between when, how, and where a person preaches the Good News? Should we be ready at all times? **(pp. 173ff)**
- 2) What do you see as factors creating spiritual, existential hunger and vacuum in persons near to you? In our nation? In the world? In yourself? **(pp. 173ff)**
- 3) If God’s ways are higher than our own, are you ready to be on constant alert to how God wants to use your skills, interests, faith, and trust to creatively share the Good News so all people eventually hear it? Even if the when, how, and where cause discomfort? **(pp. 173ff)**
- 4) How did God nurture and affirm Wendell and Daisy’s interest in the underground church in China to receive Bibles that served to spread the Good News in a very unique way to a unique number of souls?
- 5) Wendell knew his life now was not boring. It was not a game or an illusion! It was a life of purposeful identity where experiencing and depending on the power and glory of God daily became “normal”. What spiritual value superseded both the anxiety of Bible couriers and the real danger to Chinese Christians? **(pp. 180-181)**
- 6) Like God multiplying even small gifts surrendered to Him, Wendell writes, “It was said that in the late 1970s and early 1980s, every Bible smuggled into China resulted in at least one hundred people coming to faith in Jesus! Even at the writing

this book, after millions of Bibles have found their way into China, it is commonly reported that at least five people come to faith in Jesus for every Bible carried in". The Bible speaks of gaining the world at the loss of our soul.

In **Matthew 6:19-20 (NLT)**, Jesus says, **"Don't store up treasures here on earth, where moths eat them and rust destroys them, and where thieves break in and steal. Store your treasures in heaven, where moths and rust cannot destroy, and thieves do not break in and steal"**.

If Wendell, Daisy, and the courier teams had prioritized treasures on earth, thieves stealing, anxiety, danger, and disregarding God's call, would they have been more likely to gain the world or to gain their soul? How do you respond to the idea that a Gospel of health and wealth prosperity might be the opposite of treasure multiplied and stored safely as transformed hearts, minds, and souls of people? How do you define treasure? **(pp. 182-183)**

## **CHAPTER 23 - DONKEYS FOR JESUS**

### **(Study Questions)**

**1)** In this chapter, Wendell details what a courier trip entailed. Wendell is also honest about how a life of full trust and unique adventure didn't mean a life of ease, comfort, or predictability. God had provided help in the form of monetary donations, allowing him to focus solely on Bible courier work. God also provided help in the form of courier groups transporting Bibles. He writes that he and Daisy "made more trips into China than can be counted, well over a thousand, stretching over a period of forty years". Would you continue with a job that didn't provide satisfaction or purpose, but gave you acclaim and a generous paycheck? Why or why not? **(pp. 184-185)**

**2)** What are your reactions to God exposing Wendell to various cultures and cultural expectations? What does this indicate about who you are in light of God's very big world? What causes you to feel in or out of control of your surroundings?

**3)** Have you or anyone you know ever felt the strong presence of angels? If so, what was that experience like, and what did it mean? **(p. 187)**

**4)** Wendell writes, "It seemed that if you tried to create ways to preemptively outfox the customs officials and the scanner, the more likely you were to be stopped. The more you simply trusted God to get you through or trusted that He would show you what to do in the moment, the more likely you were to be successful. It didn't seem to matter how much or how hard I prayed beforehand. It didn't seem to matter whether I had read my Bible that morning or not. What mattered was that I was obedient to the calling on my heart and that I truly believed that God wanted his Word in China even more than I did". What are some unintended results, attitudes, or emotions (when our actions seem perfectly logical) that can arise when we take things into our own hands, and the results are positive? What are some unintended results, attitudes, or emotions (whether our

actions are logical, or dependent on full trust) that can arise when results appear less than positive? (**pp. 188-193**)

## **CHAPTER 24 - A PICTURE IS WORTH A THOUSAND WORDS**

### **(Study Questions)**

**1)** Art had been a part of Wendell's identity, career, and ability. He surrendered all of that when he left everything behind. What would you find hardest to leave behind in order to fulfill the Great Commission, whether in physically leaving home and everything familiar, or in not leaving physically but surrendering attachments that might interfere with God's calling on your life? (**p. 194**)

**2)** Do you believe the gospel of Good News is equally meant for cultural Christianity as for non-Christian religions and ideologies? Despite the challenges, what creative way did the Holy Spirit use to nurture and highlight Wendell's artistic gifts in the Great Commission? What did these challenges require of Wendell? What were the cross-cultural and spiritual implications of this artwork project?

**3)** What miracles specifically addressed the challenges in getting "The Life and Teachings of Jesus Christ" finished and printed? Do these stories increase your faith that God knows what is going on in our lives? (**pp. 195-202**)

**4)** What was more important to Wendell than receiving money to continue printing the book? (**p. 203**)

**5)** What jumped out to you in the story of how "The Life and Teachings of Jesus Christ" was able to be spread to the young people of Hong Kong in such a unique and creative way, fulfilling a deep desire of Wendell's? (**pp. 203-208**)

## **CHAPTER 25 - “GO NOW”**

### **(Study Questions)**

- 1)** In Wendell and Daisy’s general Bible courier experience, they had been invited to bring only Bibles into China. If you were ever promised public physical and religious safety by associating with, for example, a Christian Nationalist church with a pre-approved Bible, and presumed unquestioning loyalty to the government-controlled official church, would you believe the Government-approved religion and its Scripture were all that was necessary?
- 2)** If you were ever in a situation of extreme poverty and danger, labeled as an illegal danger to a government-controlled Christian Nationalist church, would you be tempted to compromise your beliefs and values to gain or retain wealth, safety, and freedom accompanying a government-approved and government-controlled church? Would the alive Word of God, speaking uniquely through fresh and personal revelation, according to the “different seasons and circumstances of life”, be enough to provide daily wisdom and clarity for literal survival? Even if God feels millions of miles away?
- 3)** What were your reactions and emotions as you read Wendell’s harrowing story of him and MacGyver getting the confiscated Bibles into China on the same trip? Would you have continued to the very end like Wendell did?
- 4)** Is there a mountain you are willing to die on? If so, what mountain is it?

## CHAPTER 26 - LIKE SHEEP WITHOUT A SHEPHERD

### (Study Questions)

1) As Chinese Christians from the underground church risked their lives to follow Truth, many thousands of Vietnamese refugees risked death and the violence of pirates in their desperate efforts to flee Vietnam. Among other factors, communism had ended, there was persecution, and there were fears of losing land and businesses. Many followed a dead-end rumor they had valiantly hoped would deliver them asylum and freedom in a nation accepting asylum seekers.

Matthew 25:37-40 (NLT) tells us, “Then these righteous ones will reply, ‘Lord, when did we ever see you hungry and feed you? Or thirsty and give you something to drink? Or a stranger and show you hospitality? Or naked and give you clothing? When did we ever see you sick or in prison and visit you?’ And the King will say, ‘I tell you the truth, when you did it to one of the least of these my brothers and sisters you were doing it to me!’” And Matthew 9:36-38 (NLT) says, “When he saw the crowds, he had compassion on them because they were confused and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd. He said to his disciples, ‘The harvest is great, but the workers are few. So pray to the Lord who is in charge of the harvest; ask him to send more workers into his fields.’”

Reflecting on how God over and over worked through the Holy Spirit in Wendell’s life, do the words from the preceding passages come to new life for you?

2) The Vietnamese boat people overwhelmingly held onto hopes and dreams that, somewhere in the world, there would be people who would welcome them with compassion and open arms. What they were willing to risk and endure to keep that hope and dream alive was quite incredible. Have you ever wanted or hoped for something so much that you were willing to risk your life for it? To endure being caged and treated like an animal? To live at the mercy of the weather elements? (pp. 226-230)



3) During Wendell's first time speaking to the Vietnamese refugees (through interpreters), he realized most, if not every, refugee in the group had never heard of Jesus. He introduced them to basic Bible stories, contextualized in the love of God and how Jesus came to reveal that love here on earth. The words emphasized hope, even in unfair and dangerous life circumstances. Do you take the basic facts about Jesus for granted? Would you know how to explain who Jesus is and what Jesus does, in simple enough terms that resonate with the context of the listener? (pp. 230-232)

4) Wendell writes, "Then I led these new Jesus followers in a prayer in which they introduced themselves to Jesus, welcomed Him as Lord over their lives and situations, and invited Him to reveal the living God to them personally. They individually prayed a prayer of repentance and surrender one by one, so the entire crowd could hear them!" Wendell had not been able to fully connect with the Vietnamese refugees until someone who knew the language appeared on the scene. Wendell was a conduit, offering up faithfulness and boldness for the Holy Spirit to use. Like the story of Shadrach Meshach, and Abednego that Wendell had shared with the group, the Holy Spirit used the surrendered spiritual space to do something beyond Wendell's imagination. And beyond the imagination of the interpreter.

Like many of the new Vietnamese Christian refugees, are you able to imagine letting go of a hoped-for dream if that dream was replaced by a bold new dream and vision? (pp. 233-235)

## CHAPTER 27 - MAKING DISCIPLES

### (Study Questions)

1) Matthew 28:18-20 (NLT) reads, “Jesus came and told his disciples, ‘I have been given all authority in heaven and on earth. Therefore, go and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit. Teach these new disciples to obey all the commands I have given you. And be sure of this: I am with you always, even to the end of the age.’”

If we consider ourselves disciples of Jesus, then we’ve been given the command to “Go and make disciples.” Do you ever find yourself assuming or presuming it will be long-term, faraway missionaries, or local pastors who will have that ministry? Why or why not? Is relegating this to others an option for a disciple of Jesus? Are you bold enough to obey? Give examples, if possible. (pp 236-237)

2) Wendell had no seminary Bible training. He spent time in Bible School in Florida years earlier, but now the only way he knew to teach the Bible was to simply open it up and read. While Brother Barabas translated into Vietnamese, the Holy Spirit provided input into discussions so the young men became transformed with the unique, “custom-designed” destiny, identity, and purpose God created for each of them. Have you ever had a clear sense of your “custom-designed” destiny, identity, and purpose created by God for you? Have you stayed on this path, or have circumstances and/or doubts drawn you off this path? (pp. 238-239)

3) “The Spirit alone gives eternal life. Human effort accomplishes nothing. And the very words I have spoken to you are spirit and life” (John 6:63 NLT).

How did God provide much-needed renewed energy for Wendell when he desperately needed it? (p. 240)

4) In Mark 7:6-13 (NLT), we are told, “Jesus replied, ‘You hypocrites! Isaiah was right when he prophesied about you, for he wrote, ‘These people honor me with their lips, but their hearts are far from me. Their worship is a farce, for they teach

man-made ideas as commands from God.’ For you ignore God’s law and substitute your own tradition.” Then he said, “You skillfully sidestep God’s law in order to hold on to your own tradition. For instance, Moses gave you this law from God: ‘Honor your father and mother,’ and ‘Anyone who speaks disrespectfully of father or mother must be put to death.’ But you say it is all right for people to say to their parents, ‘Sorry, I can’t help you. For I have vowed to give to God what I would have given to you.’ In this way, you let them disregard their needy parents. And so you cancel the word of God in order to hand down your own tradition. And this is only one example among many others.”

Why is *how* you read the Bible so important? Does the act of reading the Bible make you a disciple any more than going to church every Sunday makes you a disciple? Does *believing* the right doctrine make you a disciple? Is your heart always open and *teachable*, ready to make you more like our Jesus as an extension of the fullest love of Jesus for you, for all others, including those who would be your enemies? (p. 241)

5) The story of the conversion and transformation of Joseph, in conjunction with Wendell’s searching to know if the Holy Spirit alone was enough to serve as “professor in the classroom of God’s Word”, is very compelling. It shines and reflects the light of John 16:12-14 (NLT), “There is so much more I want to tell you, but you can’t hear it now. When the Spirit of truth comes, he will guide you into all truth. He will not speak on his own but will tell you what he has heard. He will tell you about the future. He will bring me glory by telling you whatever he receives from me”.

What was the extent to which Wendell found his mission increasingly clear? What did he find to be the key to letting “the Holy Spirit do the personal heart and mind repair that each individual needs to live out God’s wonderful dream for their lives”? What is involved in the primary work of disciple-makers as “He must become greater and greater, and I must become less and less” (John 3:3 NLT)?

Do you feel up to this challenge, or does it feel overwhelming? (pp. 241-245)

## **CHAPTER 28 - SENT OUT BY THE HOLY SPIRIT**

### **(Study Questions)**

1) If you can set aside any bias or preconceived idea about the Holy Spirit, what is most important when reading the Bible to find out who the Holy Spirit is, what the Holy Spirit does, and how and why the Holy Spirit does it? (p. 246)

2) Even in the midst of great revival, joy, manifestations of healing, signs and wonders, salvation, and water baptism there was something missing. What was missing...missing to the point that a man named Simon tried to buy with money what was missing so he could transfer it to others? (p. 248)

3) Acts 8:18-24 (NLT) says, “When Simon saw that the Spirit was given when the apostles laid their hands on people, he offered them money to buy this power. ‘Let me have this power, too,’ he exclaimed, ‘so that when I lay my hands on people, they will receive the Holy Spirit!’ But Peter replied, ‘May your money be destroyed with you for thinking God’s gift can be bought! You can have no part in this, for your heart is not right with God. Repent of your wickedness and pray to the Lord. Perhaps he will forgive your evil thoughts, for I can see that you are full of bitter jealousy and are held captive by sin.’ ‘Pray to the Lord for me,’ Simon exclaimed, ‘that these terrible things you’ve said won’t happen to me!’”

If the Holy Spirit cannot be bought with money or a transactional transfer, can you think of other ways the Holy Spirit, and the power associated with it, might be exploited through wickedness and sin? (p. 248)

4) Have you obeyed Jesus and received the gift of the Holy Spirit? Why or why not? Do you know people who are so busy with spiritual formation and building a temple of good works, both inwardly and outwardly for the Holy Spirit to be attracted to, who unconsciously deny the need to actually accept this...gift? What was Wendell’s prayer for the Vietnamese refugees who chose to return to Vietnam, despite the risks? (p. 249)

5) How was Wendell's fervent prayer answered, and without coercion from him? After many received the gift of the Holy Spirit, how did their focus dramatically change and transform? (pp. 249-251)

6) In Luke 10:21-22 (NLT) we are told, "At that same time Jesus was filled with the joy of the Holy Spirit, and he said, 'O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, thank you for hiding these things from those who think themselves wise and clever, and for revealing them to the childlike. Yes, Father, it please you to do it this way.' My Father has entrusted everything to me. No one truly knows the Son except the Father, and no one truly knows the Father except the Son and those to whom the Son chooses to reveal him."

What stands out to you in these verses? What stories, experiences, or fears do you have about accepting the gift of being filled with the Holy Spirit? What was Jesus filled with when he receive the Holy Spirit? How is it that this gift of the Holy Spirit seems to be "hidden" from those who think they are "wise and clever"; not childlike in their faith? (p. 251)

7) Of the most transformed Vietnamese refugee leaders who returned to Vietnam, what treatment and persecution did they face? What also transpired out of ill treatment and persecution? Does reading about this raise feelings and/or fears as consider your own life context? What are those feelings and/or fears? (p. 252)

8) Does the United States have an "official" church? If so, do you feel allegiance to it? Why or why not? What would it mean to radically detach from the loyalty, allegiance, safety, and acceptance from an official and church into worship and pursuit of a God who is active and alive today, just as He was "yesterday"? (p. 253)

9) Brother Thao became a student in the School of Hard Knocks. How do you respond to his comment that, "The church seen with the physical eyes is not always the real church. The unseen church is where the real church is!"? How did this

bear out after he began to “logically” partner with various Western church denominations? (pp. 253-255)

**10) I Corinthians 13:4-7 (NLT)** tell us that, “Love is patient and kind. Love is not jealous or boastful or proud or rude. It does not demand its own way. It is not irritable, and it keeps no record of being wronged. It does not rejoice about injustice but rejoices whenever the truth wins out. Love never gives up, never loses faith, is always hopeful, and endures through every circumstance”.

Wendell shares the reality of a miracle not being an end in itself. It’s not the end goal, but instead serves as an encouraging sign post to keep us focused on God’s “love, acceptance, and goodness that He continually extends to everyone of us.” and unconditional love that we are also called to extend to everyone. Everywhere. Illogical and sometimes risky. How does this resonate with you and your life? (p. 255)

## CHAPTER 29 - MORE THAN IMAGINED

### (Study Questions)

1) **Ephesians 3:20 (NLT)** are, again, words of encouragement, “**Now all glory to God, who is able, through his mighty power at work within us, to accomplish infinitely more than we might ask for think**”. Do you ever see life situations as nothing more than formidable walls to logically not bother trying to scale? To accept as part of life? **(p. 256).**

2) Wendell writes about the unimaginable growth of an isolated and secret underground Church in China that, on outward appearance, looked to have been stamped out of existence by communist policies. Does it remind you of someone whose message and model was believed to have been stamped out of existence through death, only to discover it birthed unimaginable growth?

One of the goals of communism in China was for everyone to “put their hope and faith in their government”. Similarly, Satan tempted Jesus in the wilderness with false sovereignty. He offered Jesus a role and title as Messiah, Chose One, King of the Jews, accompanied with religious-political power and dominion. Jesus only had to agree to forfeit his birthright as the Son of God. He could even work [false] miracles, signs, and wonders through Satan’s power as [false] proof he was still God. What are the temptations or distractions you see and experience that lure you from fully trusting what God could do throughout the world, independent of safety nets like money, buildings, programs, teachers, and other spiritual add-ons? **(pp. 256-257)**

3) Have you ever considered there might come a day when Bibles, as you know them, will be unavailable or even illegal? Stories like the ones in this chapter demonstrate the preciousness of the Word of God. It can be confounding and hard to relate to for those who have Bibles readily accessible. Do you find yourself taking the Word of God for granted and commonplace, maybe ignored? Do you

find God's Words energizing in a way that reflects the experience of Chinese couriers who who risked everything to take Bibles to people who had none?

**(pp. 257-260)**

4) In **Acts 9:13-14 (NLT)**, Ananias must have experienced tension between dreaming big and obeying big. **"But Lord," exclaimed Ananias, "I've heard many people talk about the terrible things this man has done to the believers in Jerusalem! And he is authorized by the leading priests to arrest everyone who calls upon your name."**

Describe in your own words and experience what it means to "dream big" vs. "obey big". How might this be in tension with the human potential movement often preached in spiritual and religious settings?

**(pp. 261-262)**



## CHAPTER 30 - THE KINGDOM INVITATION

### (Study Questions)

1) “Go now”, “Wait ten years”, urgency stirred. All these phrases suggest surrender to the Holy Spirit is likely not a straight path. As Wendell has repeated, the key is to be ready to obey; to offer whatever is in your hand in the moment and then watch how God takes it and multiplies it. No matter if all the ducks are in a safe row. No matter if I decide I don’t like God’s plan. It is God’s Church being built, not ours. Even after many years, Wendell and Daisy were being taken to the edge of the cliff, faced with decision of whether or not to step into the unknown. What are some examples in this chapter of how God again used free-fall obedience to accomplish far beyond what Wendell and Daisy could imagine? What was necessary for Wendell and Daisy to be able to view the amazing ways God chose to accomplish his plan for growing His Church by Christian literature being distributed to every residence in Hong Kong? (pp. 263-274)

2) Go Now! is filled with stories. The Bible is filled with stories. Thinking back to Wendell’s early days of hearing Bible stories in church and desiring similar stories to become real in his own life, do you see the circle coming together decades later? As quoted on page 274, “The amazing stories we read in the Bible about Jesus are so much more than just stories! They are illustrations of what it is like to work alongside God in what He is doing. In a similar way to the story of how Jesus’ disciples began feeding a huge hungry crowd by walking among them with just a few pieces of bread and fish in hand, God also multiplied the little we had.”

How can you begin walking among the seekers and the children in your life, even if you hold nothing more than the “yes” of a few pieces of bread and fish in hand? How can you be instrumental in instilling into seekers and children that these stories can become living illustrations in their own lives? As Wendell writes, “If we don’t know what God has promised us and if we don’t apply those promises by

faith to live in the destiny God has created for us, how then can we share in the divine nature He has invited us to"? (pp. 274-275)

## **CHAPTER 31 - AN UNEXPECTED TURN**

### **(Study Questions)**

1) Many Hong Kong citizens lived with the internal tension of China taking over rule of Hong Kong from the British government. God put plans in motion for Wendell, Daisy, and their three children to move away from Hong Kong. Leaving Hong Kong was extremely difficult for Wendell; the timing didn't seem right and he and Daisy were heavily invested in the missionary work there. However, God had other plans. He planted a level of nagging dread in both Wendell and Daisy that they finally walked in faith into. This was a different step of walking into the unknown and, again, nothing seemed logical. Wendell writes that surrender to this move was "a heavier weight than I had ever felt before, a weight I didn't think I would be able to bear". Instead of being led into something exciting, he was being called to leave something that filled him with joy and life. (pp. 276-281)

Despite their initial hesitance, what did God have planned for Wendell and Daisy's family that would meet their needs, as well as grow His Church in ways they had never imagined? (pp. 281-283)

## **CONCLUSION**

### **(Study Questions)**

Several principles of how God builds His Church are emphasized in the Conclusion. What stands out to you? How do these principles correlate to the stories in Part One and Part Two? Are you ready to embrace the same, by faith? **(pp. 285-286)**