



# Lift

No. 6 - SEPTEMBER 2006

INSPIRING OUR READERS TO GIVE THEMSELVES FULLY TO GOD



I WILL *LIFT* UP THE CUP OF SALVATION AND CALL ON THE NAME OF THE LORD. PSALM 116



“Oh, not again!” I must have repeated that phrase on twenty different occasions as I was attempting to figure out how to get around Atlanta.

One way streets, and approximately 55 streets with “Peachtree” in the name made it seem impossible! I even went on a website to help me learn how to get around, and it had this quote: “There’s no overnight way to learn your way around Atlanta streets.” Tell me something I don’t know!

But then there was the wedding at Peachtree Christian Church.

Yes, we had been there before.

LEARNING FROM LIFE ISN'T AUTOMATIC. IF IT WERE, WE WOULD NEVER REPEAT A MISTAKE! THE 'LEARNING CIRCLE' IS A SIMPLE AND DEPENDABLE PATH TO EXPERIENCE A REAL BREAKTHROUGH.

Yes I got us lost, and late, the first time.

Yes I could have done a Mapquest.

Yes, my wife suggested that a detailed map might be a good idea.

And probably, since we were late to the previous wedding, I should have printed off the map. Instead, armed with pride and over-confidence, I boldly drove into the circle of doom. How frustrating to be able to see the church steeple reaching for the sky and not find one road that led to the parking lot. We just kept orbiting the church building in an ever-tightening circle.

“Oh, not again!” She said it first, but I had already been thinking it. “What is the deal?” I stewed. “This is ridiculous.” I was really mad at myself, but I was also frustrated with Susan for what I thought she had to be thinking. I imagined she was over there fuming about all the times we had driven around our geographic target because “I didn’t need a map.” She was more gracious to me than I was to myself. We made the wedding, (walking in with the candlelighters) and sat down on the crowded back row with the other “don’t-need-a-map” guests.

Can you relate to this? In what area of your life do you feel like you are just “going in circles?” How do you feel when you can see your destination and still not reach it? For me, the trip to the wedding was my last “map-less-quest” around Atlanta. The solution to my frustration was so simple. My frustration was not only misdirected, it was completely unnecessary. And now I can even get Mapquest on my PDA!

The LIFT publication is all about strengthening our connection with God. But maybe you are thinking, “That’s the place I feel like I am going in circles!” But do you like the idea of a vibrant spiritual life? It is possible. Maybe all you need is a new spiritual map.

This issue of LIFT is filled with stories and testimonies of people who demonstrate how to learn from life’s experiences. They have found ways to break the repetitious cycles that only lead back to the same feelings of emptiness and frustration. I know you will find their stories inspiring, but I pray they will also be instructive. I hope they will give you the LIFT you’ve been looking for.

*Don McLaughlin*

*Excerpts from* ∞

## JOHN 13

It was just before the Passover Feast. Jesus knew that the time had come for him to leave this world and go to the Father. Having loved his own who were in the world, he now showed them the full extent of his love.

The evening meal was being served, and the devil had already prompted Judas Iscariot, son of Simon, to betray Jesus. Jesus knew that the Father had put all things under his power, and that he had come from God and was returning to God; so he got up from the meal, took off his outer clothing, and wrapped a towel around his waist. After that, he poured water into a basin and began to wash his disciples’ feet, drying them with the towel that was wrapped around him.

When he had finished washing their feet, he put on his clothes and returned to his place. “Do you understand what I have done for you?” he asked them. “You call me ‘Teacher’ and ‘Lord,’ and rightly so, for that is what I am. Now that I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also should wash one another’s feet. I have set you an example that you should do as I have done for you. I tell you the truth, no servant is greater than his master, nor is a messenger greater than the one who sent him. Now that you know these things, you will be blessed if you do them.

# CAN'T LIVE A DAY

*Avalon (In A Different Light)*  
CCLI 184877a

I could live life alone  
And never fill the longings of my heart  
The healing warmth of someone's arms  
And I could live without dreams  
And never know the thrill of what could be  
With every star so far and out of reach  
I could live without many things  
And I could carry on, but...

## Chorus

I couldn't face my life tomorrow  
Without Your hope in my heart I know  
I can't live a day without You  
Lord, there's no night and there's no morning  
Without Your loving arms to hold me  
You're the heartbeat of all I do  
I can't live a day without You

I could travel the world  
See all the wonders beautiful and new  
They'd only make me think of You  
And I could have all life offers  
Riches that were far beyond compare  
To grant my every wish without a care  
Oh, I could do anything, oh yes  
But if You weren't in it all... (chorus)

Jesus, I live because You live  
You're like the air I breathe  
Oh Jesus, oh, I have because You give  
You're everything to me (chorus)



# REFLECTION



JOURNAL

## *on your* "UP" RELATIONSHIP

*After reading John 13, record your personal response to the corresponding study question.*

Jesus is almost universally respected as a teacher by those who are Christians and those who are not. Why do you think this is? How does His teaching make Him unique?

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The story in John 13 reveals that Jesus knew who he was, and what he was supposed to do. How do you struggle with knowing who you are and what you are supposed to do?

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Jesus taught his disciples by taking up a servant's position and doing a very degrading task. Are their similar jobs in our society today? How can you show your love to another person in an unglamorous way?

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In the story, Jesus tells Peter that he must let him wash his feet. Do you have trouble being waited on like Peter did? Has your pride ever kept you from accepting the service others offer you?

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Jesus teaches us that we can not be picky about who we serve. He washed the feet of one who would deny him and another who would betray him. How do you choose who you are willing to serve? Are you willing to serve those who might hurt you?

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The temptation in life is to serve those who can elevate us. But this often sets in motion a cycle of expectations, keeping score, and disappointment. How does Jesus' example and explanation help us break that cycle?

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# KAIROS

— by Mark Richardson —

## M O M E N T S

It was a morning just like every other. I got up just in time to catch a train to head for school. Nearly every day for four years I caught the 7:16 train. I was living in Schiedam, Holland and caught a train to go to school in the Hague. I'd ride the 7:16 to the next stop and then transfer to another train in order to get to school. However, on May 4th, 1976 things were different. I was actually running a few minutes early (which I never did) and the 7:09 train was a couple of minutes late, so I caught the 7:09. I went on the school and thought nothing of it. After all, it was just another day at school - right? Wrong!!! I was oblivious to the fact that God was going to use that simple act - catching a different train than usual to radically change my perspective of life.

I can hear you now: "What's the big deal? You caught a different train. So what?"

I'm glad you asked.

Let's get back to the events of that day. I caught the 7:09. However, the 7:16 crashed resulting in the death of 24 and at least 11 more injured. That afternoon when I came home from school I learned what had happened and my perspective on life changed. I

learned that the train I caught every day was the one involved. I recognized that for some reason God had graciously allowed me for the only time in my high school career to be on a different train that day. I also came face to face with how many things in life I had been taking for granted. I saw how fleeting life can really be and I resolved not to simply go through the motions of living. This became what I later came to recognize as a "kairos" moment. Kairos is a Greek term for "life changing" moments. It's one of those times in life when perspective and motives gain a lot more clarity.

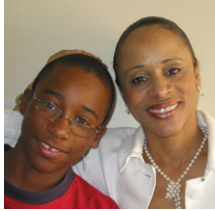
Kairos moments don't have to necessarily be as earth shattering as an actual train crash. Actually the same year that this event happened I had another kairos moment. This one was much less dramatic from a "news" perspective. In fact it would have never even been considered for a news story. I was talking to my Dad one day and he made a very simple, but life changing suggestion to me. He told me that he knew that I was going to be leaving home within the next couple of years and that his faith and my Mom's faith were not going to be

*(continued on back cover)*

# STORIES OF FAITH

## FIRST AND FOREMOST I HAVE TO THANK MY

Heavenly Father,  
His son Jesus  
Christ and the  
Holy Spirit for



Roseanne and Keenan Blakeney

saving me. This is really important for me to acknowledge because 4 years ago, I did not want to be saved!

August 5th 2002 I was given a second chance. I realize how blessed and loved I am; how God saw fit to keep me around a little longer to share my life with others and help others who are struggling with the disease of addiction. Previously, I believed that I was not fit to be a good mother, and I was confronted with the challenges of leaving an abusive spouse.

I had struggled with this addiction for 32 years and believed that I was destined to be just that...an alcoholic and addict.

I can relate so well to story of the woman recorded in Mark 5:25-34. I finally gave God a chance, I asked for his complete protection over me and my children. Today my life has changed tremendously. I have been forgiven and my life has been RENEWED.

My son Keenan has a whole new perspective on family and loves his life and enjoys his new mom. My beautiful

daughter, Teanne, has expressed her happiness and “thanks God daily for saving her mother.”

I still become quite emotional and overwhelmed when I look back on my life. I had given up on God for years but He never gave up on me. That is more than I deserve.

I am ready to face the changes and challenges in my future because I rest assured that God is faithful and will sustain me.

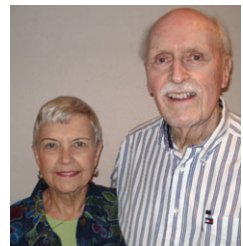
With God’s continued direction and the amazing people He has placed in my life, I know I am going to stay true to His Word. I pray daily to remain humble, teachable and faithful. Change has made my life worth living today.

“Daughter your faith has healed you. Go in peace and be free from suffering” Mark 5:34.

*Roseanne Blankeney*

## RECENTLY I EXPERIENCED MY 80TH BIRTHDAY.

The days preceding were emotional, and I felt drawn to a review of my spiritual life.



Bill and Jan Hooten

I journeyed back in time to a

*(continued on back cover)*

*(Hooten · continued from page 7)*

Sunday afternoon in early 1951. Jan and I found ourselves at Fort Sill, Oklahoma, where I had been called back to active duty in the military; the Korean War was raging.

I was disillusioned, a “sometimes” kind of Christian, searching to make sense of my life.

I turned first to the church and then to scripture. I often found myself devouring scripture. That Sunday afternoon was such an occasion. As I studied Jesus and the Spirit in John’s gospel, a feeling of warmth, peace and understanding immersed me.

I had been baptized as a teenager, but on that Sunday decades ago, I also received what I call the fullness of the Spirit. He has been my companion ever since, not without a struggle, but my companion nonetheless. I can’t imagine living a day without him. He has put the “life” in my many years

“It is the Spirit that gives life.” John 6:63  
*Bill Hooten*

*(KAIROS · continued from page 6)*

enough to sustain me. So he made a simple but powerful suggestion. He said: “Mark, develop your own faith. Read the Bible for yourself and come to your own conclusions.” So I started reading the scriptures in a different way and it has forever changed the way I study. I started looking at how the Bible applies to my life or to the lives of others. I quickly learned that it’s not a dead book but it’s a love letter from my Father and it is relevant to every part of my life. What an amazing kairos moment.

After the crash I came to realize that day that every day I have is a gift from God. After the talk with my Dad I came to see that the Bible really is living and active and that it has direct bearing on my life and how I live it each and every day. The same thing is true concerning its relevance for your life. Make the most of today. Today is a gift from God! Live it for Him. He’s given us His word to help us, so I beg of you to commit to learning and applying it to your life. You’ll be glad you did. ☺



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OUR READERS TO GIVE THEMSELVES FULLY TO GOD.

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