



The Healing Stream

Matthew 19:26 Ministries - April 2015



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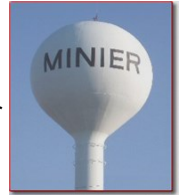
Power For the Journey

A prayer:

Lord, consume me with your love for the lost and hurting. Let your fire burn deep within me when I come across those who need you. Remove my blinders and help me to see that sin is sin and the message of the Gospel is for whosoever will. In Jesus Name!

EVEN HERE

BY BOB HONEYSETT



It's funny how long-ago conversations can come back to your remembrance after many years. That happened to me recently as I traveled to a speaking engagement in the village of Minier, Illinois.

Minier (population 1,300) is in central Illinois about 130 miles from Chicago, smack in the middle of the heartland of the good old U.S. of A. Even after living in Texas for so many years, I was taken aback by how endless the view was as I traveled the roads from my arrival point in Peoria to the church in Minier. In my New York City frame of reference, it was like standing in Lower Manhattan and having a clear sight line to Riverdale in the Bronx in all directions.

As any New Yorker would tell you, THAT'S VAST!

Without going into detail, I was invited to Minier by a pastor whose church was struggling over the impact of homosexuality in the local area. His heart was for him and his church to face the issue with the heart and mind of Christ. To be honest, as I drove through the area, it was hard to imagine that gender and sexuality issues could be an issue in such a quiet and serene place. That's when the almost two decade old conversation came back to me. My mind wandered back to a phone conversation we had with a pastor who had a church in a similar environment. His analysis of our ministry at the time was that we were irrelevant to him and his community, because, as he said; *"That gay thing is a 'big city' issue, we don't have that going on in the country."* It was a silly assessment back then, and even sillier almost 20 years later with same sex marriage legal in 37 States.

As we drove further, I felt a very small voice in my heart say; **"Even here."** With those words, in my mind's eye, I could see what appeared to be a tablecloth unfold before me, and woven into it were all of the issues that our culture is facing today. From the very center of the cloth, to the hem on the edges, there was issue upon issue that was woven into the fabric. Even here, the very heartland of our country, the issue of homosexuality, and a multitude of other morality issues, were once and for all woven into the fabric of our everyday lives. No longer talked about in whispers, but irrevocably on display for all to see and cope with.

The weekend went on, and I had the opportunity to speak with the youth group in the morning, preached about **Homosexuality and the Response of the Church** in the morning service, and then met with the young married home group in the evening. It was a great time of ministry with a variety of honest and thought provoking questions. I was thanked many times over for presenting a truthful but compassionate approach, for dealing with the issue as a church. My prayer is that in the long run, I was able to assist this precious body of believers in their desire to be Christ-centered in their response to the issue as they go forward.

By the time I was headed to the airport on Monday morning, I had many questions burning in my heart. "How will the church respond to this issue in the years ahead?"

(continued)

We've already seen mainline denominations caving in and denying the authority of Scripture in favor of "love and equality." Where will we go from here? Will God's people ever stand up with a clear and compassionate voice to deal with the issue? Will pastors and those leading God's people ever break through the wall of silence they've created, and start speaking to the sexual and relational issues that plague each one of us?

I know one in Minier, Illinois who has, and a few others, but what about the rest? Will our voices rise with a message of hope in Christ, or will we stay silent until we are completely marginalized, and the message of the Gospel is thrown into the dustbin marked irrelevant?

Is there one of you reading this that has not been touched by the issue of homosexuality, whether it be in your family, a friend, a friend's child, a co-worker? What are you doing? Are you being a light for Christ, or is your light hidden under a bushel because you're afraid someone will ask you a question, and you won't have an answer?

STAND UP GOD'S PEOPLE! Be a fearless voice in the wilderness that calls out to those lost in the darkness of this culture. Pray fervently and humbly ask the Lord to call His children home. May He call them to the place of rest and peace that He has for those that follow Him. Don't be silent, for as the days progress, silence will be the enemy of the church. No longer will denial be an effective coping mechanism. **EVEN HERE** in the country, **EVEN HERE** in the city, **EVEN HERE** in our homes and families, **EVEN HERE** everywhere, it is woven into the fabric of our everyday lives. How will you respond?

In my own life and ministry, I feel the Word of the Lord is to "GET MOVING!" *"As long as it is day, we must do the works of him who sent me. Night is coming, when no one can work."* (John 9:4) Night is fast approaching. It's evident more and more as the days pass. Speak up while you still have a voice and an influence with those the Lord has placed in your life. Pastors, speak up as you shepherd God's people. If you're not sure what to say, reach out for Christ-centered resources.

Our life and calling is to reach the lost for Jesus Christ regardless of what particular sin issue they are struggling with. The good news is that the Good News of the Gospel is open to "whosoever will." If you're confused about where to start your dialogue, start here; *"For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten son, that whosoever believes in Him shall not perish but have everlasting life."* (John 3:16) If your heart is open to being a friend, and you allow God to help you stand in truth while infusing you with a compassionate heart, there's no telling the number of lives you can touch in His name.

To our new friends in Minier....I know everyone who receives this newsletter will be praying that the Lord will direct your steps. We're all in this together! To those whose giving and prayers make these trips possible, we humbly thank you for believing in the work we do.



Minier Assembly of God, Minier, IL



Even here in the heartland. How will you respond to the issues the Lord has placed before you?

ONLINE GIVING UPDATE

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