



Shiloh Messenger

January 2009

Make It Count

*Teach us to number our days aright that we may gain a heart of wisdom.
(Psalm 90:12)*

Christmas at Shiloh was a glorious event. Several months ago, I would have never imagined that I would be able to endure being away from home and living in a dormitory with a group of men in Texas for Christmas and New Years. Although I miss my family terribly, as the holidays approached, I found myself almost excited about experiencing a Christmas in the fellowship of this group of men seeking God. I was definitely glad about 2008 ending and thrilled at having the chance to start a clean new year. There is something very cathartic about concluding a year and starting over. In all my days, I will never forget Christmas 2008. On Christmas Eve, I received a beautiful gift from my family. My wife Rene and my children Beth and Eric sent me a new Bible for Christmas. My name, Cecil Armstrong is engraved in gold lettering on the front. The pages are edged in gold trimming and sandwiched with pure leather that feels and smells so wonderful. Never have I received a more treasured gift!! It is surely a signet of love and approval from God, but also one of acceptance and agreement to restoration from my wife and my children. Rene wrote in the front of my new Bible, "To Cecil, A Man who fears God and honors God in all he says and does. A new creation in Christ, old things have passed away and became new. Forgetting those things behind, and pressing on to the high calling of God." She continued to pen a reminder of the meaning of my name "Cecil." The inherent meaning is blindness. The Spiritual connotation is illuminated and the Scripture reference is Ephesians 5:8 "For you were once darkness, but now you are light in the Lord, walk as children of light." NKJV

I will graduate in a few short months. I have come quite a way, but I have surely not arrived as I experience that the more I learn, the more I see I know so little. Thankfully, I have revelation to know that now my life is a day by day learning about the One who has purchased me and set me free from sin, selfishness, and utter nothingness. I began my New Years day reading in the Psalms. One of our Bible teachers, Mike Isham directed us to Psalm Chapter 90. As I read sitting quietly in the presence of the Lord, I began to weep. I was consumed by emotion as I reflected on all of the time I had lost. I read, *As for the days of our life, they contain seventy years, Or if due strength, eighty years, Yet their pride is but labor and sorrow; For soon it is gone and we fly away.* (Psalm 90:10) *So teach us to number our days, That we may present to Thee a heart of wisdom.* (Psalm 90:12) *O satisfy us in the morning with Thy loving kindness, That we may sing for joy and be glad all our days.* (Psalm 90:14) The Lord, through the Psalmist, even goes on to tell us, *Let thy work appear to Thy servants, And Thy majesty to their children. And let the favor of the Lord our God be upon us; And do confirm for us the work of our hands; Yes, confirm the work of our hands.* (Psalm 90: 16-17) (New American Standard) This was one of the most divinely appointed moments I have ever experienced. The Holy Spirit affirmed me as I sat in His presence. The Word of God spoke to every fiber of my being. It is my ambition in 2009 to get to know all I can about the character and the nature of the One who has taken hold of me with His Grace, Love, and Mercy. 2009 holds 365 days. I want each day to count for God's Glory. I desire to be eternally minded. I have wasted enough time. I have hope and faith to believe God can redeem the time I squandered. If I have learned anything about Him, I know He is not a God of waste.

I am journaling during my quiet times. I am asking God to direct me where His work will benefit the most from of my life that remains after I graduate Shiloh. I look forward to reunion with my family and I am inspired to return to Portland, Oregon and root myself in the Church where my wife and children attend. This Church has taken such great care of my family while I have been away. They have truly been an example of Jesus. I desire to give back and serve alongside these people of God.

I received a Christmas card from my former boss. He wrote that I have a job if I want it after I graduate from Shiloh. This amazes me. I was selfish and unreliable the last year I worked for this man. How he can entrust his computer business to me again baffles me. This is another example of forgiveness in action. He is a good man who loves God. He deserves more than what I gave him. Several of the guys I live with here believe they are called to become Missionaries and Evangelists. I do not doubt their callings, yet I know that God uses people in the market place to be his hands, feet, and mouthpiece and this too is the Mission field. As of now, I am not sensing a call to fulltime Christian service as a Missionary or Evangelist. I am learning that surrender is the key. Once true surrender takes place, there is a willingness to allow God to choose your Mission Field. I think it is wrong for us in the Body to think one particular spot or function is more significant than another. What makes one's calling glorious is if the Lord fashions it for you. We can get lost sweating over the positioning aspect. If we spend quality time with Him, getting to know Him and listening to His voice, He will place us. I am asking God what He wants me to do. It is not my life to choose and pick and rationalize. I understand that our life is but a vapor. Only what is done for Christ will remain. I want Him to place me where He can get the greatest dividend from my brief life. If it is in a third world Nation, then get my wife and kids ready Lord, but if it is in a computer software business in Portland, Oregon, then make us ready there Lord to receive my field of service for You and be a witness for You Lord. I believe in miracles. I am a Miracle. He has taken my self-centered life and nailed it to the cross.

Shiloh Ministry Team. Earlier installments of this fictional story about Cecil Armstrong are on our website at www.shilohmensministries.com

A Graduate Testifies

My name is Brian Gust. I graduated from Shiloh in November 2004 and I now live in Minnesota. Pictured with me are my wife Miranda and my two daughters Isabella (7) and Sophia (2). Jesus has done so many good things since I connected with Shiloh. The Bible says in Psalms 37:23 that the steps of a good man are ordered by the Lord and he (the good man) delighteth in his (the Lord's) way. From my time at Shiloh until the now, this verse has always encouraged me. Considering the mess my life was in due to a sinful lifestyle, I was very glad the Lord ordered my steps to Shiloh Ministries. During my time at Shiloh, the Lord restored my marriage and my relationship with Isabella. While there, I learned the Word and it gave me a foundation to build upon and go further into my calling with God and further away from a life style that brought pain and shame.

After graduating, the Lord ordered my steps towards getting a job at a company that employs over 3000 people from all over the world. At my job, I have received great favor as well as promotion and pay increases, but the greatest blessing I have received is the opportunity to meet born again believers from Africa and parts of Asia and to have a relationship with them. I am amazed when I hear their stories of how the Lord ordered their steps to America.

One of my friends I call Victor "The Victorious" because the Lord saved him from being captured twice when he was fighting in his country's Civil war. Victor is from Sierra Leone where war and fighting is rooted deep in power. The country is enslaved by greed and poverty connected with the exportation of diamonds. I also have a wonderful friend named Georgia from Liberia. This woman of God is a special friend. Even before we started talking, I sensed the Holy Spirit's unction to meet this lady. She would always smile at me and say hello and have this sparkle in her eye when she did. I would hear her singing in the Spirit at work and soon we began talking. The Word of God flows out of this woman whenever the opportunity presents itself. I have seen her defend the Gospel and share it with others when people were loud and somewhat cruel in their conversation towards her. Each time she spoke, the love of God would remain strong in her, and she would be back smiling and singing in the Spirit again. She is always reading the Word and engaged with Jesus in one way or the other.

When God orders our steps, we are set for a purpose and a reason. God ordered our steps to the right Church. I am amazed time and time again when I am at my home Church hearing the Word taught and preached. Often the Word I hear now had already been taught and imparted into me when I was at Shiloh. Paul said, "I have planted, Apollos watered, but God giveth the increase." (1 Corinthians 3:6) There were times at Shiloh I simply did not understand what I heard. I received as best as I knew how, but I knew there was more for me to understand. Well, even now over four years after graduating Shiloh, I find myself getting more understanding from the same things I heard at Shiloh. I delight myself in the steps God has ordered for me! These include relationships, revelation, blessing, and favor at my job and with others. I thank all of you who support Shiloh Ministries with your giving. Your giving has truly helped God order all of our steps towards where God has called us.

God Bless you,
Brian Gust



Brian, Miranda, Isabella &
Sophia Gust

Shiloh Ministries gives the LORD honor and praise for lives that have been delivered from a life of slavery. We celebrate Kingdom Life here at Shiloh. All of our supporters make a tremendous contribution towards lives that forever are destined for eternity with God. We ask and encourage everyone to give financially to help with the cost of restoring lives. The LORDS Ministry at Shiloh is free to the men who seek restoration. It is a walk of faith for our financial needs to be met every month. Would you please consider being a monthly supporter? God always speaks to those He has asked to give. We believe that His people will respond out of a heart of gratitude for what He has done & continues to do for them. Thank you, for your generosity in giving & co-laboring with us in the LORDS Ministry at Shiloh. (Shiloh Ministries is recognized by the IRS as a 501C3 Charitable Organization)

CONTACT US AT:

Shiloh Ministries

P.O. Box 10226

Liberty, TX 77575

Phone: 936.334.8616

Fax 936.334.0061

E-mail: shilohmin@sbcglobal.net

Visit us on the web at

www.shilohmensministries.com



Rocky & Debbie Fondren.
Founders of Shiloh Ministries.