

THE TENSION OF COUNTER-CULTURAL RESCUE MINISTRIES  
SEEKING SUPPORT FROM THE CURRENT CULTURE

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## ABSTRACT

The continued success of rescue ministry in America is a subject close to heart of this writer, given his nearly twenty years of investment in the work. He has seen a potential vision of a future in which rescue missions struggle to find adequate funding in a world of pluralism and compromise of biblical truths. Is it possible that rescue ministry can find its place in this changing culture? Will there be enough support to allow it to continue and to prosper? Will changes in potential funding sway missions to sacrifice the preaching of the good news in order to keep the doors open?

It is encouraging to know that, just as in the times of Elijah, there are many ministers who have not bowed their knees to the gods of the culture, but who continue to proclaim the life-changing message of grace and forgiveness to those who need it most. They have not changed, and they would not change even if they felt that had to do so. They are faithful to their core convictions in the gospel message.

More than that, many of them continue to explore new ways to reach the hearts of those whom they serve with the gospel in practical ways. The traditional chapel has become a vehicle for communicating with the current culture. The call to live counter-culture may continue to be a challenge, especially when that culture calls for acceptance of alternative lifestyles, many of which are in contrast to the righteousness of God. Rescue ministers have not given up, and are arming themselves with love, compassion, acceptance, and understanding. They are looking at the tough issues, like dealing with a

culture that names and welcomes same-sex and other lifestyle issues as normative, and they are finding answers that can communicate with that culture. They are challenged by a world that defines right and wrong by a standard that is far removed from a biblical worldview, and they are learning how to contextualize the message of the gospel to this postmodern audience. There are few lengths to which they will not go to bring a saving message to a culture that truly needs it, whether that culture will admit it or not.

There is indeed reason for hope that rescue ministry will continue, even beyond this present generation. It will not be without challenge, difficulty, or setbacks, but this is a courageous and faithful group, who believe in a God who has no limitations for the outreach of his grace. They continue to hold high the banner of what they believe, and are not intimidated by threats from within or without or from fears of the future. They have been persuaded that nothing can ultimately stand against them, and that the vindication of their cause is secure (cf. Rom 8:38-39).

## CHAPTER ONE

### INTRODUCTION TO THE PROJECT

It was not more than a few months into their employment as co-directors of the local City Mission that Robert and Susan faced a situation that would become the first in a line of many others like it, specifically resistance to the work of rescue ministry. Robert was not a novice to the concept or practice of ministry, but he was still surprised by the nature of this attack. The sad fact was that it had come from within rather than without. One of the members of the board of trustees who had begun her term about the same time that Robert and Susan were hired had objected to the practice of mandatory chapel. This was, it would seem, no small matter for this board member. It was not presented as a difference of opinion or of judgment, but as a matter of principle. The longer the discussion wore on over the next few months, the more it was looking like an “either they go or I go” issue. The battle lines were being drawn.

Knowing that their ministry could be severely handicapped without the opportunity to preach the gospel to *everyone* who stayed at the Mission, Robert and Susan went to the best source of information or ammunition they could find next to scripture: history. They searched the archived records of the Mission, which turned out to be no small task. For weeks on end, they read and made notes and researched the practice and background of rescue ministry in the setting of their little Mission in a mid-sized Midwestern city. What they learned was that their Mission had been built on the bedrock

principle that the gospel was for everyone and that everyone needed to hear the gospel. The Mission was founded by a truly dedicated woman of God who sacrificed the essence of her life for thirty-nine years to provide a place where people could meet God and find salvation in the chapel services. Chapel was no afterthought or supplementary part of the work of the Mission; it was integrally the heart and soul of the ministry. Without the preaching of the gospel for everyone who stayed at the Mission, there was no difference between a rescue mission and a “flophouse”. For Robert in particular, it was the reason he had come to this work. Having suffered through the loss of a pastoral charge because of the failure of his marriage a couple of years earlier, the idea of being able to preach the gospel again on a regular basis was a big part of his decision to re-enter ministry. Without that opportunity, there would be little incentive for him and his newlywed bride to stay in the work. Ministry would be hard enough for Robert and Susan and their young daughter without the handicap of having to obtain permission from the residents before being allowed to preach the gospel. Preposterous!

What was the end of this story? Robert and Susan prayed like they had never prayed before and presented their research and findings to the board in written and oral form. After much discussion, the board voted nine to one to continue the practice of mandatory chapel in the historical tradition and charter of the Mission. Robert and Susan went on to a long, successful, and expanding ministry, while their one dissenter resigned from the board the week following the vote.

#### *Context of the Problem*

This story, which came from a set of directors who preferred not to be identified, is probably not that uncommon. The role of servants of God involved in rescue ministry

is a challenging one. They have to deal with resistance on an almost daily basis. The fact that residents of rescue missions balk at rules of any kind is no surprise. When people who have no discipline or structure in their lives enter into a setting where both are present, there will naturally be resistance. It is a clash of ideologies, of philosophies of life. The gospel of Jesus Christ brings a spirit of self-discipline (cf. 2 Tim. 1:7) by its very nature. Those who need what the gospel has to offer in the way of freedom from sin and release from addictions are those who fight its reception the most. Rescue ministers know this, of course. Often times, though, the problem may be that not everyone understands what is happening.

This generation, and life in the United States in particular, is about freedom. This is by its own designation a “free country”, founded on that very principle. That from which people are “free”, however, is not the sin or sins in which they are trapped. As many ministers are indeed fond of saying, “People do not want freedom *from* sin; they want freedom *to* sin.” If people choose to live their lives in whatever fashion they wish, why should they be forced to listen to a message that by its very nature contradicts their desires and calls them to be accountable?

Mandatory chapel is surely a point of contention in this issue, but it is not the heart of the issue. Pastoral ministry is different than rescue ministry. Both types of ministers faithfully preach the gospel. Both are accountable to those who hire them and supervise their work. Both are susceptible to criticism, resistance, and problems in their ministries. Whereas pastoral ministers on many occasions deal primarily and sometimes almost exclusively with members of their own churches (and a few outsiders), rescue ministers deal with churches, individuals, businesses, and the general public. Anyone

who has a concern about the downtrodden, the hungry, or the homeless and who makes any sort of contribution towards that work is the public with which the rescue minister has to interact. On the one hand, many of this select “public” are Christians, who respond to the same call to serve the poor as does the rescue minister. On the other hand, though, many of them have motives other than Christian motives for their support. Some are from other faiths, who also believe in the importance of reaching out to those less fortunate than themselves. Some are social activists, who are trying to solve societal problems. Some may have had the misfortune of suffering poverty or homelessness of their own in their past. They respond now to the problem out of a sense of giving back from their own current good fortune. Others may have no specific cause to uphold; they just want to know that whatever they are doing is making a difference in the lives of the poor.

There is a tension between the rescue minister and the world. The rescue minister tries to serve God by faithfully responding to her call through preaching the gospel at every opportunity and trying to reach her part of the world with the message of salvation. The world, of course, may not see or appreciate the need to hear the gospel, and see it as an infringement on its individual right of freedom to choose its own way. This is not a unique problem. Hopefully the church that is served by the pastoral minister will acknowledge that they have hired her for that fundamental purpose of evangelizing and support her in the face of opposition or hardship.

For the rescue minister, however, there is an added dimension. A rescue mission is not a church. Both are frequently governed by boards made up of people who are ideally Christians, but rescue ministers are not paid from the pockets of their board members. Not all churches are financially independent, of course, but those who are do

not have to depend on those outside their immediate fellowship for the funds they need to continue to exist. Rescue missions do not have that luxury. The “members” or attendees at their religious services are the poor, who obviously lack the resources to contribute adequately enough to the work to allow it to function independently. Because of this stark reality, rescue ministers and their development staff have to engage in fundraising from the general public, from those who have a heart for or at least an interest in the work of rescue ministry. The tension should become apparent. The same people who are being asked to contribute to the work of rescue ministry are often times ill-informed about the nuances of the work and might disagree with the policies or rules of the ministry, if such rules are presented with some type of personal bias or in a context of misrepresentation or misinterpretation. It might even be a difference in personal philosophies or ideologies. The rescue minister must learn to excel in matters of marketing and public relations if she is to succeed in securing funding for her work.

Taking this even one step further, many sources of funding are strongly opposed to contributing towards any work that smacks of religious orientation. While there has been optimistic talk about “faith-based funding” in the George W. Bush administration in Washington, the reality is that all funding has not inherently or fundamentally changed. The difference is that faith-based organizations *may* not be immediately disqualified from normal sources of funding for reason of their religious orientation. They still must compete for the same dollars as before, however, that are also available for non-faith-based organizations.

This basic situation is not likely to change, given the increasingly permissive nature of our society. What will happen in the future, for example, with the issue of

same-sex marriages? Since rescue missions house all individuals, both gay and straight, and sometimes families as well, what mission director has not already faced the issue of having same-sex couples argue that they are in fact married? Many rescue missions fall back on the biblical definition of marriage as the union of one male and one female (cf. Gen. 2:24), denying that a same-sex union can truly be identified as a “marriage”. What happens then, when the law of the land in America changes to legally acknowledge same-sex marriages across the country? On what grounds can rescue missions deny shelter to families with same-sex partners without risk of lawsuit for breach of civil liberty? Will they have to abolish all services to families, allowing individuals to stay as singles only, to avoid this problem? How does this then help the nuclear family of husband, wife, and children, who are struggling to stay together while their world is falling apart? Truly we are only seeing the beginning of a much greater problem.

#### *Statement of the Problem*

Rescue ministers today are facing a growing and multifaceted problem. How can rescue ministers who are faithful to their core convictions of both serving and evangelizing learn to communicate their mission effectively to a society that may be more concerned only with the socio-political aspects of helping the poor? This study has identified three considerations that are at the core of the issue.

First, there is the matter of *faithfulness to the core convictions of the gospel*. Since a rescue minister has to function and interact with society in general to maintain his existence, what does he do when his core convictions are challenged? How does he face the same-sex dilemma in handling requests for shelter for families? What will he choose to do when the law changes to a code that violates his understanding and conviction of

the whole same-sex issue? He must also deal with the wide range of convictions or opinions of the public, which can be as fickle or as variant as anything. How does he answer a question about mandatory chapel when speaking to social activists, who might not see any value or importance in the preaching of the “irrelevant” message of the gospel? Does he come off sounding like a flaming fundamentalist when speaking to one church, and then the following week like a generous liberal when addressing a church of a completely different polarity? Is he truly becoming “all things to all men” (1 Cor. 9:22 [NASB]), or is he simply “two-faced”, saying only what he thinks people want to hear? Is he genuinely driven by his core convictions or by his need to fund his programs?

Second, the concept of funding points to the need for *consistent and effective marketing*. No public organization that fails to consistently and effectively market itself to its public can expect to survive. The competition for the wallets of America is both intense and fierce. One need only count the number of solicitations received by letter, e-mail, phone calls, or personal invitations, especially around the holiday times, to realize how many good and worthwhile organizations are asking for the same dollars. It is not an issue of whether the work or ministry is good or successful that makes the difference for the funds they receive. The question the potential donor must ask is, “Why should I give to *this* ministry above all others?” This is the question that effective marketing seeks to answer. What is unique about this ministry? How does it faithfully fulfill its purpose? How does that purpose resonate with the general public? It is not enough to do the work consistently, creatively, and effectively if no one understands what is happening or cares enough to want to learn about it. What is it about this work that captivates the heart of

people and informs, challenges, and grabs them to the point that they cry out, “Yes! Here is my check! What more can I do to help?”

Third, this is an issue of *good public relations*. One of the common fears of a mission director or program director is that one or more of her hard decisions will come back to haunt her publicly. That same woman that she had to ask to leave her mission for drinking shows up at the door of a contributing church and tells an exaggerated story about that insensitive mission person who “threw her out in the cold.” The same mother with children who has to go out in the daytime because she is staying at a mission with no day services will be a topic of conversation at a ladies’ circle meeting at the next church where the minister happens to be speaking, since she was the daughter of a neighbor of one of the members of the circle. The same chronically-homeless person who intentionally skipped chapel and was denied a stay shows up at the hospital with a health issue that is determined to be related to being out in the elements, and the social worker at the hospital calls, incredulous that anyone would do such a thing. This is not uncommon, by the way. Many rescue missions have nightly chapels, which must be attended by all residents or applying residents before they may be housed for the night. In some places it is what is commonly called the “sermon, soup, and shower” or “Bible, bed, and breakfast” method, for better or worse. In each of these examples, there is a legitimate reason according to mission policy and principle to deny stay, yet in each case, there is the risk of a public relations nightmare. What if the person who is denied a stay for any reason was expelled from a shelter in January in Fairbanks, Alaska, instead of in Miami, Florida? The fallout is from a public judgment, sometimes caused by the belief that anyone who cannot get into a shelter when it is cold will by necessity die out in the

elements. The reality, something that mission workers understand but the general public may not know, is that the homeless are frequently both hardy and resourceful, and usually survive in virtually any element. Even though that is true, the public perception is that even Christian workers can be “cold and callous”. Any rescue minister who has been around for any length of time runs out of fingers and toes in counting the number of times she has heard the phrase, “And you call yourself a Christian mission!”

Because rescue missions help to alleviate the socio-political problems of hunger and homelessness in communities, the public sometimes overlooks or forgets that the real charter and purpose of rescue ministry is something else entirely. They tend at times to be treated like any other social agency in the grand scheme of things, and the expectations made of them are based on public perception rather than faithfulness to the call of God. The response to this is a delicate tightrope that rescue ministers walk that is the statement of the problem: *Rescue missions struggle with the tension that exists between being faithful to the core convictions of the gospel and the socio-political responses to serving the poor.* Money often plays a factor in these decisions. It is not always about money, though, even if fundraising is a necessary evil in the operation of a rescue mission.

#### *Purpose of the Study*

The “delicate tightrope” mentioned above is a real issue for many rescue missions and ministers today. They cannot afford to reduce the restrictions of a structured program and environment for the sake of their clients, they cannot afford to eliminate the evangelistic aspect of their approach without being faithless to God, yet they also cannot afford to alienate the public from supporting their efforts. What is a rescue minister to do?

The purpose of this study is to encourage those in rescue ministry to learn how to communicate their vision and mission effectively to the public in the context of a caring but controlled environment. It is possible for mission directors or ministers to learn to develop statements that are meaningful, expressive, and clear while remaining faithful to their core convictions, no matter what they are. With a focused effort, rescue missions can discover methods both of evangelistic and discipling outreach and also of fundraising that bridge the gap between the problems of the tightrope. Conviction should not have to be sacrificed for convenience, nor what is fundamental for the sake of funding.

### *Research Methodology*

Where are the answers for these questions? The key is of course in the last six letters of the word “research”. While these answers are within reach, and have been demonstrated by certain successful rescue ministries over the years, the challenge of bringing together those who know the need with those who need to know is something that requires a thorough “search”.

The search begins with finding those rescue ministries who have been relatively successful at the issues of faithfulness, marketing, and public relations. The Association of Gospel Rescue Missions (hereafter AGRM) is an organization that helps to coordinate and educate rescue ministries around the world. Their publications might identify missions who have experienced unusual growth or success, along with the names of personnel and contact information. Using these resources, this study would attempt to single out and contact key individuals in the mix who might consent to interviews to discuss these issues. After all, who does not want to talk about their successes?

It should even be possible, given the number of large rescue missions in the Midwest, to visit a few and see firsthand what has made them leading examples of faithful leadership before church and community. Again, this would require diligence in determining the best candidates for a site visit.

The website of the AGRM was somewhat of a disappointment when it came to searching out the types of printed materials that address this issue of balance between ministry visions and marketing plans. It is hoped that contacts with successful rescue ministers will also uncover good sources of information. The Internet is by nature a fountain of information, but only to him who knows how to turn the right tap. Early research in matters like the “Social Gospel” and similar subjects have shown some promise of helping to identify topics of study.

#### *Research Questions*

The first question focuses in on the issue of the call to serve versus a culture that may not appreciate it:

*(1) If rescue missions are truly counter-cultural in their ministries, how can they draw support from that same culture?*

Other questions follow:

*(2) What challenges have rescue ministers faced or anticipated facing that bring into public question the legitimacy of ministering the gospel in the context of serving the poor?*

*(3) How have rescue missions had to compromise their convictions because of the challenge of finding private donations and, if so, to what extent?*

*(4) What are the contributing factors that impact the public relations of rescue missions with their support base?*

The first question deals with the matter of this basic tension in the task of ministry in the midst of a culture that is not necessarily favorably disposed towards that ministry. Perhaps one aspect of this question to explore is whether the ministry truly is counter-cultural. Does the ministry call people to live in such a way that a change is anticipated in their lives? To accomplish this, is there a genuine sense of call in the heart of the rescue minister, with a clear purpose and direction? But this question also deals with issues of fundraising and public relations. The rescue minister needs to be able to communicate their requests for help from the community in such a way as to not alienate a non-Christian culture while all the time looking to fund Christian programs.

The second question addresses the issue of conflict and tension even more clearly. Again, matters of communication with the general public require careful handling in order to avoid alienating the very donors that the rescue mission needs to fund its programs. But the core issue in this statement is “the legitimacy of ministering the gospel in the context of serving the poor.” If this is challenged by the community, how will the rescue minister meet the challenge? Is she ready to give a defense of the hope for the hopeless that she carries within her (cf. 1 Pet 3:15)? Even if she does, what issues have come along already or will come along in the future that test that defense? Will she be able to adjust her ministry to include unforeseen situations or will there be conflicts of an irreconcilable nature between the issues and her core convictions? Even more, what are those specific situations or issues that have created conflicts or will likely create them in the future? Remember that it is not a total catastrophe if there is a conflict here; spiritual

and worldly values are frequently known to clash. The important question is how she handles the differences.

The third question plays off the second. If the rescue minister has had to “adjust her ministry,” as stated above, to what extent has she done that? It could be nothing more than a change in strategic approach, but it could also be a change in policy and core conviction. Again, this question certainly addresses the area of basic core conviction, but it is also a marketing issue. Fundraising is an important part of the work of any non-profit agency, including rescue missions. Without that lifeblood in its veins, there is the chance that many missions will cease to exist. Lacking adequate ongoing major donors or that endowment of sufficient size that rarely exists for missions, it is essential for them to seek out new sources of revenue. For some missions, it is an activity that consumes the time, energy, and worries of its staff. For others, the challenge comes to be meeting the criteria set out by the foundation or organization from whose funding the rescue mission is endeavoring to draw. Some donors will not fund agencies with a religious emphasis. If the mission encounters these in sufficient numbers, there may be a sense that they must give up their religious affiliation or activities in order to acquire this funding. Or is there a creative way to deal with this, say like separating the religious emphasis from the work of housing and feeding the homeless through some type of re-packaging? How does this alteration affect the existing donors or the services of the mission? Will it so change the emphasis of the mission that it can no longer be called a true “mission”, becoming instead simply a shelter with an emphasis on service?

The last question sets out to identify the issues that lie behind the potential conflicts with the public. What is it that has caused the tightrope of the tension that rescue

missions face? The truth be known, it may well come from the way that the keepers of the truth handle that truth.

It is no secret that some Christians, perhaps too many of them, feel and act towards non-Christians in such a way as to communicate a sense of personal superiority or greater birthright. Knowing that they have the treasure of the gospel in their earthen vessels (cf. 2 Cor. 4:7), a treasure that the people of this world do not possess, they respond in a way that alienates rather than draws such people. Instead of saying, “We have a wonderful treasure; come and experience with us how good it is,” they repulse the listeners by saying, “We have a treasure that you don’t have,” somehow seeming to delight in their self-perceived privileged status. This will never reach the world with the truth, and it is unworthy of Christianity. This will be further explored in Chapter Three.

The conflict might also be a basic difference in philosophies over how to accomplish the same end, yet with different methods. For example, in the aforementioned case at the beginning of this chapter, the disagreement was not whether the mission should preach the gospel to its residents, but that it should not require their attendance in doing so. One side argued from the perspective of personal judgment, while the other side made their presentation on the basis of historical precedent. It is important to identify these issues, if for no other reason to be on guard against unnecessary provocation of the mission’s donor base. To be forewarned is to be forearmed and proactively prepared.

### *Significance of the Study*

Although this writer has served in pastoral ministry for eighteen years, this study is not about pastoral ministry in the traditional sense of that term. A pastor stands up on Sundays and addresses the congregation whom he serves and generally sees the same

faces, week after week, with some small variance. These are the faces that he visits in the hospital, for whom he performs weddings and funerals, who come to him for counseling, and who pay his salary. A rescue minister, on the other hand, while often a licensed or ordained pastor in his denomination, also stands up on Sundays and addresses the congregation whom he serves, although the faces are in a constant state of change. Unless there is a large long-term program at the mission, the rescue minister will see a steadily-changing group of people every week, some of whom have very little interest in attending any type of worship service. They frequently come because it is a condition of stay, not because they may be actively working on their personal relationship with the Lord. Yet while he may or may not visit them in the hospital or perform their weddings, he still freely gives his service to them, because they are definitely not paying his salary.

For the past thirteen years, this writer has been involved in rescue ministry. It is different from pastoral church ministry in several ways. For that reason, it is possible that a discussion of the perils of rescue ministry may be of minimal value to many pastors, unless they have a vested or very strong interest in rescue. It would not, of course, do any harm to many pastors to learn more about the difficulties of working in para-church ministries with the poor or homeless.

Be that as it may, let the reader be warned that this discussion is a matter of intense importance to the writer, and also to many of those like him in the field of rescue ministry. It is still ministry, but it sometimes feels like a whole different world. All of ministry has certain common problems, to be sure, and these are of concern to the rescue minister as well as anyone else serving in ministry across the globe. There are concerns about funding. There are concerns about providing proper leadership and qualified

workers for the ministries. There are concerns about the resistance faced both from outside the walls of the ministry and from within the ranks of the servants. Ministers have all wondered how long they should endure the problems they face, trying to determine when it is time to move on to other works. Ministers wear out their pants at the knee at times more so than at the seat in dealing with these issues. Prayer becomes a much-needed resource.

Even without an audience of pastors in the area who are breathlessly waiting for the release of this project, however, there are many mission directors and rescue ministers who stand to benefit from a serious discussion of the issues. The Christian world as a whole probably does not see the need for much marketing, and as a result probably does not place too much emphasis on fundraising. While many churches have extra activities to raise funds for special events, the majority of the income for many churches comes from the freewill offerings of its members during Sunday morning collections. For missions, though, it is unrealistic and unproductive to pass the basket and take up a collection on Sunday mornings. The funds that enable the ministry to work do not come from those present at the mission, but from those who believe in and support the mission from the outside. Fundraising is a key issue for rescue ministers, an area where mission workers constantly look for ways to expand and improve.

The other area of genuine importance for both mission personnel and for the Christian world in general is that rescue ministries are in fact faithful to the core convictions of the gospel. A rescue minister needs to be faithful to preach the gospel and make application to the lives of her ever-changing “congregation”. She needs to be able and faithful to help her “parishioners” to work through the issues of their lives by

applying godly, biblical principles to life. She needs to be able to engage in the fundamental work of *rescue*, where she perceives her responsibility to be drawing sinners out of the traps of their addictions and into the waiting arms of Jesus. This kind of faithful pastoral work is a ministry with which no one in the Christian world should be able to find fault. As a matter of fact, everyone who understands what is happening at the rescue mission should lift their hands and voices to God to praise him for the work of salvation and rescue that is going on there. Everyone can and should appreciate this kind of faithful service to the tenets of the gospel.

#### *Assumptions and Limitations of the Study*

The personal experience of this writer over the years of work in rescue ministry has been that the larger the mission grows, the more it has to deal with the issues named in this study. It is also the presumption of the writer that he is not alone in this, and that other rescue ministers have faced similar if not identical challenges. Hence, this study has taken shape. There is a genuine need to find support if not outright solutions for this dilemma.

Having made that statement, it is not this writer's purpose to provide a full answer for the whole gamut of problems faced in rescue ministry. It is also not his purpose to pretend to be an authoritative source for all rescue missions everywhere. Due to restraints of time, travel, and budget, the research for this project will be limited to working within the Midwestern region of the United States, for the most part, gathering data and conducting interviews within this smaller sphere. Within the missions in this area, there is a wide variety of sizes, programs, ethnic identities within the neighborhood, and public relations challenges. A plan of action that works for one may not be effective in every

setting. Nonetheless, it should be possible and be of benefit to all missions to identify certain aspects of professional and personal wisdom that would have universal applicability.

Recognizing that the methods of administrating a rescue mission that the writer uses in his ministry are not the only methods, it becomes possible that these methods might not even be the best ways to handle the problems. This writer has taken a very traditional approach to rescue ministry and dealing with the residents of the Mission and the public. There are of course other approaches. For example, there is a growing trend among many rescue missions today to adopt a method that focuses more on *grace* than on *rules*. The idea is to give emphasis to the *person* being helped rather than the person's ability or inclination to adhere to the rules. Is this a better way to handle residents and run a mission? Perhaps it is, but it is not the method that this writer uses. Therefore it should be recognized that some rescue workers who read this project may have to make allowances to adapt what they read for their own situation.

Also, based upon an early foray into the field, it does not appear that there is a ready supply of literature for this specific topic upon which this project may draw. It may well be that this project will have to be creative, combining from different fields to produce what prayerfully will be a useful tool for rescue ministers to read and consider.

#### *Definition of Terms*

AGRM – stands for Association of Gospel Rescue Missions, located in North Kansas City, Missouri, endeavors to provide resources for, certification for, and communication between rescue missions across the world

“Bible, Bed, and Breakfast” – a phrase sometimes used by rescue workers to describe the three-fold essence of what they offer to the homeless (spiritual direction, shelter, and food)

Board Member – one who serves as a trustee on a board of trustees for a rescue mission, responsible to help provide direction and support for the mission and for the mission’s leadership

Board of Trustees – a group of people who fill the legal capacity of ownership of a mission, who are responsible for the mission, and who work with the director(s) to help provide direction and support for the work

Chapel – the term for a regular time of worship of the residents of a mission, may be held weekly, daily, or otherwise, under the direction of the mission leadership, is often times mandatory for residents to stay at the mission

Flophouse – slang term for a place where people who are “under the influence” may “sleep it off”, without repercussion, is not associated with gospel rescue missions

“Intake” – slang expression to identify a person who wishes to register to stay at a rescue mission, also the process in which information is gathered from the person who wishes to stay

Marketing – the attempts to promote an organization, such as a rescue mission, or its programs, to the general public or to a specific group, in hopes of raising funds, a commitment, or just general interest

Mission – a place where a church or a para-church ministry offers services to the (poor) public, such as food, clothing, shelter, or spiritual services, usually without charge

Mission Director – the person who is responsible to the board of trustees to administrate and run the daily operations of a rescue mission

Para-Church Ministries – services to the public that are run by an organization that does not fall directly under the auspices of a church, often has its own legal organization of a charter, a constitution, and a board of trustees

Program Director – an employee of a rescue mission that has the responsibility over a particular major program, such as men's, women's, long-term, or recovery programs

Public – a public relations and/or marketing term used to identify that part of the general public that the Mission intends to target for purposes of funding, identifying volunteers, and other related matters

Recovery – used to describe the process of helping a person to leave their addictive behavior(s) and find new life in Christ

Rescue – the general term to describe the type of spiritual ministry that tries to draw people out of addictions and similar issues through steps of recovery and programs of discipleship in the gospel of Jesus Christ

Rescue Minister – someone who has been called by God or a mission to work in the business of spiritual rescue, usually at a gospel rescue mission

Rescue Ministry – the work of saving souls from the pit of addictions and similar issues, whether in a small group or at a rescue mission

Same-Sex Couples – two people of the same sex who present themselves as married and who wish to stay (usually together) at a rescue mission

“Sermon, Soup, and Shower” – another alliterative way to express the same concept as “Bible, Bed, and Breakfast”

Transient – part of the vocabulary of rescue workers to refer to the guest at the Mission who is not a local resident but is passing through the area on his or her way to some unidentified destination

### *Organization of the Study*

This study is organized according to the following outline:

Chapter One: Introduction to the Project

Chapter Two: Biblical and Theological Foundations

Chapter Three: Review of Literature and Other Sources

Chapter Four: Research Methodology and Procedures

Chapter Five: Results and Analysis of Data

Chapter Six: Summary, Findings, Conclusions, and Recommendations

Chapter One serves to introduce and familiarize the reader with a statement of the problem to be studied. This problem is identified in its proper context and delineated clearly. The research methodology, the manner in which this problem will be approached, is also discussed, along with specific questions on which the researcher will focus to accurately identify the issues and hopefully find some workable solutions. The significance of the study for similar types of ministry is discussed, as well as the possible interest of Christian pastors and ministers in general. After stating the assumptions and limitations of the study, there is a definition of terms commonly used throughout the paper, so that the reader is not left to wonder about the proper definition of the phrases read within. The chapter concludes with a description of the outline of the project.

Chapter Two sets forth the biblical foundation for the study, looking at the issues from a biblical and theological standpoint. What does the scripture have to say about marketing and fundraising? Are there examples of evangelists in scripture who used marketing techniques in presenting a fundamentally Jewish story of salvation into a Gentile environment? What did they have to say about how the church raises its funds? There are surely multiple examples of leaders who have had to deal with defending their core convictions against challenges from without and within the church.

In Chapter Three the scope is widened to include other sources besides the holy scriptures. This would include not only printed materials down through the years from knowledgeable, experienced writers, but also oral data gathered from conversations and interviews with persons within the writer's personal sphere.

Chapter Four involves the actual procedures followed in the gathering of the data for examination in this study. How was the information obtained? What was done with it after it was received? How was it organized? What methods were used to organize, sort, and categorize the raw material?

In Chapter Five the process of analysis is explained. What do all these pieces of data mean? Do the pieces all fit together to make a consistent and meaningful whole? How effectively do they relate to the questions of study suggested earlier?

Chapter Six finishes up with a final summarizing of the study, examining the findings as they have been uncovered, and expressing the conclusions and recommendations of the researcher.

## CHAPTER TWO

### BIBLICAL AND THEOLOGICAL REFLECTION

It is every rescue mission director's nightmare. Whether it happens to her or to her staff, there is no difference. She answers the door at the mission. There is a man standing there, a potential "intake", looking nervous and uneasy. In the process of the early discussion, it becomes obvious that the conversation is not going well. The man is becoming more agitated by the moment, even though she recognizes that the anger that he is experiencing is disproportionate to the moment. There is an obvious imbalance in this person's mind, she realizes, something that is just not right. She also realizes that she is not following proper security protocol and begins a gradual but strategic retreat to a more secure vantage point. Suddenly the man goes into his bag, reaches in, and pulls out a weapon. She cannot move quickly enough and falls victim to yet another situation of violence at a rescue mission at the hands of a dangerous stranger. In the service she has rendered in her life of rescue ministry, she has given the ultimate sacrifice. She has been faithful even to the point of death (Rev. 2:10 [NIV]). Even though there is a crown of life awaiting her, there is little solace for those family members and co-workers who remain. Their memories are full of "what if's" and "if only's".

While such incidents are fortunately quite rare in the world of rescue ministry, it is an ever-present reality when considering the facts that missions constantly open their doors every night to strangers and run the risk that those strangers could potentially be

dangerous. This is theoretically true in churches as well, putting pastors, lay leaders, and members at risk. Ideally churches are open to all outsiders; anyone is supposed to be able to attend a service of worship. They *can*, of course, but whether they *will* is another question. In the minds of most transient travelers, churches cannot compete with rescue missions in terms of what they have to offer. Missions offer food, clothes, a warm place to sleep, and security from what is outside. Churches offer a spiritual message of some kind, often with some light refreshments, and people who frequently want to ask lots of questions. At a mission there is more of an opportunity to be anonymous and blend into the crowd, even if the traveler has to sit through a chapel message. No offense is intended to churches by this comparison; the perspective comes from the homeless themselves. Many of them would never darken the door of a church building, but they would consider a chapel service at a mission if it meant getting a free meal, a warm bed, television, snacks, an opportunity to shower, and a chance to do their laundry.

In considering all this, then, the mission is actually engineered to *attract* people to itself. Most of those who come are relatively harmless; they just want whatever they can get from the mission staff and are willing to endure some personally uncomfortable circumstances to secure it. Some of them, however, are potentially dangerous. Unfortunately not every mission staff person or volunteer is adequately prepared to discern the signs in advance to take adequate precautions to protect herself. The question then becomes, “Why do it if there is such a risk?”

The answer is very simple: because God wants it done. He is on record as saying so.

*The Practice of Hospitality*

It was Jesus who said:

Then the king will say to those at his right hand, ‘Come, you that are blessed by my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world; for I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, I was naked and you gave me clothing, I was sick and you took care of me, I was in prison and you visited me.’ Then the righteous will answer him, ‘Lord, when was it that we saw you hungry and gave you food, or thirsty and gave you something to drink? And when was it that we saw you a stranger and welcomed you, or naked and gave you clothing? And when was it that we saw you sick or in prison and visited you?’ And the king will answer them, ‘Truly I tell you, just as you did it to one of the least of these who are members of my family, you did it to me.’ (Matt. 25:34-40 [NRSV])

Jesus produces a divine insight here, that Christians are not only to look after “strangers”, but that doing so is considered the same as directly serving Christ himself.

This concept has biblical roots. The Israelites were reminded on several occasions in the Torah furthermore to care for the needs of the wanderer, also called the “stranger” or the “alien”:

When a stranger resides with you in your land, you shall not do him wrong. The stranger who resides with you shall be to you as the native among you, and you shall love him as yourself; for you were aliens in the land of Egypt: I am the LORD your God. (Lev. 19:33-34 [NASB])

He administers justice for the fatherless and the widow, and loves the stranger, giving him food and clothing. Therefore love the stranger, for you were strangers in the land of Egypt. (Deut. 10:18-19 [NKJV])

When you have finished setting aside a tenth of all your produce in the third year, the year of the tithe, you shall give it to the Levite, the alien, the fatherless and the widow, so that they may eat in your towns and be satisfied. Then say to the LORD your God: ‘I have removed from my house the sacred portion and have given it to the Levite, the alien, the fatherless and the widow, according to all you commanded. I have not turned aside from your commands nor have I forgotten any of them.’ (Deut. 26:12-13 [NIV])

It was interesting and appropriate that the Lord should bind such behavior upon Israel as a reminder that they had once walked in the shoes of the stranger, when they lived in the land of Egypt. The path of life had come full circle. They were now in the position of avoiding the temptation to oppress their neighbors, as they had once been oppressed. Instead of mistreatment and injustice, they were to act uprightly with those non-Israelites who lived among them, again with the reminder of their own experience in Egypt (cf. Ex. 22:21-22; 23:9).

This distinctive behavior comes from three assumptions:

(1) *An “alien” is not one of the local community, and is not welcomed as such.*

Take for example the young man who had this experience when he moved from northern Indiana to serve as a pastor in eastern Kentucky. It was truly a culture shock of the unexpected variety. In trying to fit into the community, he was constantly reminded either verbally or by the reactions of his neighbors that he was in fact “different”. When people would ask where he was from, not wanting to reveal that he was a northerner, he would hedge and respond simply that his wife was born in eastern Kentucky. That always seemed to satisfy the inquirer.

(2) *An “alien” does not have the same rights as do current members of the local community or others of similar cultural background.* Returning to the young man’s experience, it often seemed that while living in Kentucky, he had to endure some thoughtless comments and jokes about not being from that part of the country. As the “alien” among locals, he was not afforded the same common courtesy that locals received in casual conversation. He also noted that while he often tried to invite local church members and residents to his home for social visits, his action was not often reciprocated.

Fortunately, he did not have the experience that some “aliens” have had in more backward and more tightly structured cultures in some parts of the country of being harassed by local authorities!

(3) *An “alien” is frequently suspect and therefore mistreated by the community.*

If in fact a stranger to a new culture or residential area is not accepted by the locals, and does not enjoy the privilege of equal protection or status under the law or simply in the eyes of the residents, mistreatment is a distinct possibility. The young pastor noted that while he tried hard to fit in with the eastern Kentucky culture, it was scarcely two years before it was clear to him that he was not going to be accepted. No one threw rocks at his house or threatened his family, but when he determined to move away, there was a significantly smaller number of people who showed up to help him load the moving truck as opposed to those who had come to help him unload in the first place. It was not that he suffered *poor* treatment, but that he failed to experience *good* treatment in a place where he would have expected better: the church. Even Christians become victims of their own culture.

The practice of hospitality was even intricately tied to the worship and religion of Israel. The prophet Isaiah, in witnessing the lack of compassion among the peoples of the early first millennium B.C., addressed the impact that this thinking had upon their practice of the religious or personal fast:

Shout with the voice of a trumpet blast. Tell my people Israel of their sins! Yet they act so pious! They come to the Temple every day and seem delighted to hear my laws. You would almost think this was a righteous nation that would never abandon its God. They love to make a show of coming to me and asking me to take action on their behalf. ‘We have fasted before you!’ they say. ‘Why aren’t you impressed? We have done much penance, and you don’t even notice it!’ I will tell you why! It’s because you are living for yourselves even while you are fasting. You keep right on oppressing your workers. What good is fasting when you keep

on fighting and quarreling? This kind of fasting will never get you anywhere with me. You humble yourselves by going through the motions of penance, bowing your heads like a blade of grass in the wind. You dress in sackcloth and cover yourselves with ashes. Is this what you call fasting? Do you really think this will please the LORD? No, the kind of fasting I want calls you to free those who are wrongly imprisoned and to stop oppressing those who work for you. Treat them fairly and give them what they earn. I want you to share your food with the hungry and to welcome poor wanderers into your homes. Give clothes to those who need them, and do not hide from relatives who need your help. If you do these things, your salvation will come like the dawn. Yes, your healing will come quickly. Your godliness will lead you forward, and the glory of the LORD will protect you from behind. Then when you call, the LORD will answer. ‘Yes, I am here,’ he will quickly reply. Stop oppressing the helpless and stop making false accusations and spreading vicious rumors! Feed the hungry and help those in trouble. Then your light will shine out from the darkness, and the darkness around you will be as bright as day. (Isa. 58:1-10 [NLT])

This passage has become the banner of many rescue ministers. They serve the wanderer, they invite her into our places of shelter, not because they are looking for the status of a light shining in darkness or securing salvation like the dawn through good works. They serve the wanderer because it is the will of God, and they lift up the purpose and plan of God in spite of their personal fears, failings, or fickleness. God’s plan is good, God’s plan is right, and for this reason they submit themselves to its implementation.

Not written in the Bible but still a part of Judaism was the understanding that Israelites were expected to offer hospitality to strangers. To fail to do so was tantamount to insulting the guest and dishonoring God. There was a responsibility on both sides: the host was expected to be hospitable, and the guest was expected to be grateful. This was intended for a short visit, no more than three days. The *Midrash Tehillim* stated, “On the day a guest arrives, a calf is slaughtered in his honor; the next day, a sheep, the third day, a fowl, and on the fourth day, he is served beans” (Scheib 2008, 1).

In the New Testament church, there were those who traveled from place to place carrying the message of the good news of the gospel. Frequently this would put the

missionaries among people who did not know them at all, either on a personal level or a spiritual one. Their character and message would both be examined by the community of faith. Once they had been approved, it became the responsibility of the believers to support their work in any number of ways.

Paul presented such a missionary in the person of the deacon (or possibly the deaconess) Phoebe as she traveled from Cenchrea, when he asked the churches at Rome to “welcome her in the Lord as is fitting for the saints, and help her in whatever she may require from you, for she has been a benefactor of many and of myself as well” (Rom. 16:2 [NRSV]). Her ministry, a benefit to Paul and to others, was worthy of their support.

John applauded the efforts of his close friend Gaius in this detailed description:

Dear friend, you are doing a good work for God when you take care of the traveling teachers who are passing through, even though they are strangers to you. They have told the church here of your friendship and your loving deeds. You do well to send them on their way in a manner that pleases God. For they are traveling for the Lord and accept nothing from those who are not Christians. So we ourselves should support them so that we may become partners with them for the truth. (3 John 5-8 [NLT])

John revealed a great deal about these missionaries in this passage. They were not indigenous to the community. They were strangers on a personal level. They required the support of Christians, an act that partnered them together in relation to the truth.

It may be surprising to some readers that early church leadership was to some degree contingent upon the practice of hospitality. When listing the qualities of those who would be recognized by their actions and character as the leaders of God’s church, Paul on two occasions directed that a bishop must be “given to hospitality” (1 Tim. 3:2 [KJV]) or “a lover of hospitality” (Tit. 1:8 [KJV]). Simply put, he must be both proficient in the practice and joyful about it at the same time.

Even the women in the church were admired for their acts of hospitality. Paul specifically names several demonstrations of proper treatment of guests in the home when giving direction to Timothy concerning which widows were to be included in a list to be supported by the church, no doubt in response to their lifelong acts of selfless service, including “if she has shown hospitality to strangers” (1 Tim. 5:10 [NASB]).

Finally, there are those specific passages from the writers of the New Testament that specifically enjoin the Christian to practice hospitality:

- “*Share with God's people who are in need. Practice hospitality.*” (Rom. 12:13 [NIV])
- “*Cheerfully share your home with those who need a meal or a place to stay.*” (1 Pet. 4:9 [NLT])
- “*Do not neglect to show hospitality to strangers, for by doing that some have entertained angels without knowing it.*” (Heb. 13:2 [NRSV])

Twenty-first century Christians might laugh at the idea that God sends angels to be their guests (although they might not, considering the current rise of interest in angelology in today’s spiritually-enlightened society). In light of Abraham’s experience of Genesis 18, however, the possibility remains. It was said of Abraham that he “kept all four sides of his tent open, for guests to easily enter” (Scheib 2008, 1). From this vantage point, Abraham would have easily seen three travelers approaching. He was commended for jumping up and quickly providing for the needs of these three travelers, who ended up proving to be more than human (Gen. 18:2-8).

There is an extrabiblical source from the earliest of times in the church, from either the later first century or early second, called the *Didache*. *Didache* is the Greek

word for “teaching”, and contains what is generally considered to be the basic teachings that the church used to train early converts in the practice and teaching of the truth of the gospel. The *Didache* covered a wide range of subjects, including the treatment of the traveling missionaries. Note the following reading, translated from the Greek text:

If, on the one hand, the one coming is a traveler, help him/her, as much as you are able; he/she will not remain, on the other hand, among you, except for two or three days, if ever there should be a necessity. If, on the other hand, he/she wishes to settle down among you, being a craftsman, let him/her work and let him/her eat. If, on the other hand, he/she does not have a craft, according to your understanding, plan beforehand how a Christian will live among you, not [being] idle. If, on the other hand, he/she does not wish to act thus, he/she is a Christ-peddler. Beware of such ones! (Milavec 2003, 31)

It is not that rescue ministers are any more righteous than any other brother or sister in Christ in regards to these directives. It is that because of their work, they of necessity must pay attention to these commands, for it is to this that the Lord has called them.

### *The Courage of Core Convictions*

Another issue that was identified in chapter one as being significant to the situation of the rescue minister and her ministry is the matter of remaining true to what she believes, regardless of the consequences. This is a fundamental truth when it comes to biblical history. The Bible is replete with examples of men and women who gave everything to stand up for that which they truly believed.

There were heroes like Job, for example. The story of Job is a familiar one to most Bible students. Blessed beyond measure by God, Job stood as a testimony to the goodness of the Creator, and enjoyed fellowship with his God. The accuser, however, came before God and charged that Job was faithful only because he had received such

great physical blessings from the Lord, and that if Job were to be stripped of these blessings, he would surely turn from God in grief and anger. This did not prove to be true, though, as Job endured the loss of property, wealth, and even family, but did not lose his faith. When his wife seemed to fold in the face of this pressure and called upon Job to “curse God and die,” he responded with the classic statement, “Shall we accept good from God, and not trouble?” (Job 2:9-10 [NIV]). Job had that strong kind of faith that can accept hardship as discipline from the Lord. Because of this, he was able to endure almost anything, including bad advice from three friends.

The significant thing about Job was that he had two very strong core convictions: (1) *he had the conviction that he had not done anything wrong in this situation* (or certainly not serious enough to warrant such punishment from the hand of God) and (2) *he had the conviction that God never does anything wrong*. Job’s friends operated from that timeless theory that if a man suffers, it is because God is punishing him for his sins. As they sat with Job in his personal trauma, genuinely suffering with him, they continually urged him to confess his sin to God and ask for forgiveness, so that God might mercifully bring the punishment to an end. Job accepted their companionship and their counsel, but he disagreed strongly with their conclusions. Going against the conventional wisdom of the time, Job stubbornly held onto his core convictions and continued to believe that God was good, all the time. He was convinced that he had not sinned before God, and would not yield on this point with his friends. He was equally convinced that God still loved him, and that he still loved God. Even though everyone around him believed otherwise, Job was still able to cling to his faith. For this he was

ultimately blessed beyond belief, as God would restore to him everything that he had lost in Satan's attacks (Job 42:12-17).

There were heroes like Paul. Originally known as Saul of Tarsus, Paul was a man who lived according to his convictions. Whatever he believed to be the truth, he acted in accordance with that truth. At the time that he believed Christians to be enemies of the truth of Judaism, he acted in accordance with that truth, and did so with all of his might, persecuting Christians and putting them to death. After he converted his thinking, though, Paul had the conviction that Christianity *was* right after all, and put all his energies into spreading the message of the Lord Jesus Christ. Paul's life was a living testimony to taking a stand for one's core convictions.

There is one incident in Paul's life that illustrates this faithfulness better than any other. In Galatians 2:11-14, Paul recorded this event:

But when Cephas came to Antioch, I opposed him to his face, because he stood condemned. For prior to the coming of certain men from James, he used to eat with the Gentiles; but when they came, he *began* to withdraw and hold himself aloof, fearing the party of the circumcision. And the rest of the Jews joined him in hypocrisy, with the result that even Barnabas was carried away by their hypocrisy. But when I saw that they were not straightforward about the truth of the gospel, I said to Cephas in the presence of all, 'If you, being a Jew, live like the Gentiles and not like the Jews, how *is it that* you compel the Gentiles to live like Jews?' [NASB]

This is truly a significant text. In the infancy of the church, in its first few decades, at a time when solidarity would have been critical to the faith, here was an instance of conflict between two of its primary leaders. Paul's evaluation of Peter here was that Peter "stood condemned". Peter was in the wrong, according to Paul. The truly amazing thing was that the wrong was so severe in Paul's mind that it merited a face-to-face confrontation, apparently in full view of other believers. Peter's hypocrisy pushed

one of Paul's buttons, violating a core conviction that Paul held, that Gentiles were equal to Jews in the kingdom of God. They were free to follow Christ and just be Gentile, rather than being forced to accept Jewish ways and customs. Peter violated this principle by reversing his previous practice of exercising fellowship with Gentiles to withdrawing from them whenever Jewish believers were present. Paul interpreted this action as hypocritical and condemned Peter for it. It was an incredible action for Paul to take, rebuking one of the twelve apostles, especially when his own apostleship was constantly under question, but it was very much like Paul to act this way. It was just like his earlier response when the Jews tried to force him to circumcise Titus, who was not at all Jewish: "We did not submit to them even for a moment, so that the truth of the gospel might always remain with you" (Gal. 2:5 [NRSV]). When it comes to the bedrock principles of the truth, there are those times when Christians should not give an inch.

There were heroes like Daniel. The enemies of Daniel were lost when it came to finding any misconduct or malfeasance in his official governmental dealings. After all, are not all political figures corrupt? This is an interesting thought, and reveals the true nature of these men's own corruptness. Daniel, however, "was trustworthy and neither corrupt nor negligent" (Dan. 6:4 [NIV]). His integrity was unquestioned. The only ploy that his enemies could imagine was to turn his habits against him. They all knew that Daniel had a regimen of daily devotions and prayer to his God. When they manipulated the king to make any prayers illegal to any god except the king, Daniel was in a crisis. Note how he responded: "Although Daniel knew that the document had been signed, he continued to go to his house, which had windows in its upper room open toward Jerusalem, and to get down on his knees three times a day to pray to his God and praise

him, *just as he had done previously*” (Dan. 6:10 [NRSV], writer’s emphasis). There was no struggle over the decision. There was no hesitation in response. There was only a continuing to do what he had always done.

Daily prayer involving intimate time with God was a core conviction with Daniel. This was not going to be changed by the edict of the king, by pressure to capitulate, or by anything else this world could do or bring against him. He knew the consequences. He had served in the king’s court with distinction. He knew how the king thought, and he knew the law. None of this altered his determination, because this decision had been made years before, when he dedicated his heart to faithfully serve God, no matter what. The test of the faithful believer is that he will keep his word, “even if it hurts” (cf. Psa. 15:4 [NLT]).

Did this decision cost Daniel his life? The answer is both “yes” and “no”. Had this been any ordinary situation, Daniel would have become the latest version of Purina Lion Chow. Because God honored Daniel’s commitment to his core conviction, however, Daniel survived while his enemies and their families filled the lions’ hunger (Dan. 6:24). Daniel’s faith became a great witness to the power of God and caused the king to announce an unprecedented and incredulous new decree, that “in every part of [his] kingdom people must fear and reverence the God of Daniel. For he is the living God and he endures forever; . . .” (Dan. 6:26 [NIV]).

There are many more examples that could be cited, but these are given as reminders that God will always honor those who honor their commitments, who stand firm on their convictions, and who hold fast to their faith.

*Marketing the Cause*

It would be so basic, so simple for the rescue minister to just pretend that her ministry is all about preaching and teaching. Spending one's time in the Word of God, ministering that Word to people who truly need it, this is very satisfying for any minister, regardless of her parish. It would also not be true. Remember that the rescue minister does not enjoy the same privilege as the church pastor in one important aspect: what is the source of her support? While churches have the potential to be self-supporting financially, if they have the age or maturity to do so, rescue ministries preach the gospel to those who cannot afford to make the laborer worthy of her hire. While there are many believers among the homeless, just like any other part of the general population, this segment lacks the finances to fully support its ministers. If the rescue minister is going to support herself, she is going to have to go to market!

Marketing or selling the ministry is one of those tasks that, while it is necessary, it is not always pleasant. Just as the televangelist must mix marketing in with the message, so the rescue minister can face the charge of just doing it for the money. This is a ridiculous charge, of course, for anyone who has tried to live on a missionary's pay. Even though some pastors may be well compensated for their spiritual services, and maybe even some rescue ministers, the common fact is that most ministers in any kind of ministry are sorely underpaid. They are not getting rich off the gospel.

Effective marketing is essential for a successful rescue ministry. The sources of income are found outside the ministry, in the hearts of those who either participate, follow, or just believe in the work.

Michelle Smith, who is the marketing person for Winebrenner Theological Seminary, has some interesting thoughts concerning marketing from a theological perspective. On a physical level, it is the practice of marketing to use one of our five primary senses to help the audience to help the message to “resonate” with the audience (Smith 2007, 1). The Bible frequently spoke of spiritual needs using the same terminology as the senses. For example, Jesus spoke of those who “hunger and thirst after righteousness” (Matt. 5:6 [NIV]). David said, “O taste and see that the Lord is good” (Psa. 34:8 [KJV]). Paul described gifts delivered by a co-worker as “a sweet-smelling aroma” (Phil. 4:18 [NKJ]). He also spoke about the need to be holy, “Therefore, come out from their midst and be separate, . . . and do not touch what is unclean” (2 Cor. 6:17 [NASB]).

Michelle also suggests that the difference between marketing today and that of two thousand years ago is the valuing of “youth and attractiveness over the traditional biblical values of age and wisdom” (Smith 2007, 2). Further, because of the superficial nature of our culture today, marketing is in danger of becoming “distorted into an unadmirable form of communication” (Smith 2007, 2).

It is important to understand that marketing was a part of the strategy of the missionaries of the first century, just as it is in the twenty-first century. Smith suggests that the ministry of John the Baptist demonstrated marketing technique. In the context of Matthew 3:1-12, John attempted to sell God’s message to two separate audiences, each of which demonstrated radical differences. The basic message was the same in both instances: calling people back to God. The difference was in John’s approach (Smith 2007, 1). On the one hand, he called the common people to repent at the proximity of the

kingdom of God. On the other hand, however, with the Pharisees and Sadducees, John was more direct, requiring them to “produce fruit in keeping with repentance” (Matt. 3:8 [NIV]). Their lives, like that of the common people, were out of sync with the will of God. John, however, was more critical of the leadership, as was Jesus himself. More was expected of them. Therefore, they needed a clear and visible display of their change of life, something that might perhaps set a greater example for the Jewish people. A different audience required a different approach in marketing technique.

Smith put forth the incident of Zaccheus as yet another example of a marketing technique. Sometimes in the process of trying to sell a product or entity, there is a problem with the image of said product. The entity or business may have experienced a bad public relations problem and be suffering in the eyes of the public. One of the goals of effective marketing in these situations becomes the challenge of “re-branding” the product to make it more acceptable to the masses (Smith 2007, 1). This was certainly the situation of Zaccheus. His status in the community as a Roman-sympathizing tax collector, combined with his apparent confession of having cheated people out of extra monies while collecting taxes (cf. Lk. 19:8), only served to isolate and brand him as an enemy in the eyes of his community. Along came Jesus, who not only reawakened a sense of honesty and integrity in Zaccheus through their brief encounter, but also effectively re-branded him as a person acceptable to his peers in his confession and offer of reparations to any damaged party. The call of a return to righteousness is a call that benefits the entire community, because it produces a higher quality of citizens all around.

A final thought on the nature of marketing is that there is nothing immoral or even questionable about seeking funding for ministry. From the time of Paul’s insistence that

he would not be a burden to the churches where he preached (cf. 2 Cor. 11:8) to the charges today against the televangelist that all he is interested in is money, marketing has seemed to always have this potential stigma attached to it. There are so many good works out there for people to support these days that it is difficult for an upright non-profit agency that is operating in the name of Jesus Christ to carry out his ministry and purpose in the world to get their market share of the charity dollars. Ideally all ministries could just remain passive and let God provide all the funds through whatever means he chooses. This is, however, neither the experience nor the pattern of the ministry as we read it in the New Testament. John and the other apostles instead had to encourage people to support the work of the missionaries (cf. 3 John 5-8). Paul made a personal choice not to take funds from the churches where he was currently working, but chose to accept monies from outside the mission field (cf. 2 Cor. 11:7-9). His statement in verse seven, “Was it a sin for me to lower myself in order to elevate you by preaching the gospel of God to you free of charge?” (NIV) reeks of sarcasm, which would seem to indicate a bit of displeasure on Paul’s part that he may have felt forced to take this avenue. Paul even had a trade that he utilized on occasion to support himself when he was in a community for an extended period of time (cf. Acts 18:2-3).

While all of this was Paul’s personal choice in dealing with the matter, he also defended more than once the right of the gospel worker to be paid through the gospel. In speaking to his young protégé Timothy about those for whom the church should *not* be responsible to support financially (cf. 1 Tim. 5:16), Paul went on to discuss those gospel workers who *were* worthy of such support. He used statements in verse eighteen from the Hebrew scriptures such as, “You shall not muzzle an ox while it treads out the grain” (cf.

Deut. 25:4 [NKJV]), and “The laborer is worthy of his wages” (cf. Lev. 19:13 [NKJV]).

The message is clear and unmistakable.

In a related passage, Paul elaborated on the muzzling of the ox:

For the law of Moses says, ‘Do not keep an ox from eating as it treads out the grain.’ Do you suppose God was thinking only about oxen when he said this? Wasn't he also speaking to us? Of course he was. Just as farm workers who plow fields and thresh the grain expect a share of the harvest, Christian workers should be paid by those they serve. We have planted good spiritual seed among you. Is it too much to ask, in return, for mere food and clothing? If you support others who preach to you, shouldn't we have an even greater right to be supported? Yet we have never used this right. We would rather put up with anything than put an obstacle in the way of the Good News about Christ. (1 Cor. 9:9-12 [NLT])

Note that Paul made it very clear here that “Christian workers should be paid by those they serve.” The sarcasm is also much softer: “Is it too much to ask, in return, for mere food and clothing?” This is a basic human right, that people should not expect others to perform services for them for nothing. Just because the service is spiritual in nature does not abrogate the responsibility. Even if someone might argue that Paul said here that he had never exercised this right has no relevance to the existence of the right in the first place. There is a difference between Paul’s *choice* and Paul’s *right* in relation to that choice, just as there is with any other minister.

There is nothing wrong or immoral about marketing one’s ministry. Even in the face of criticism concerning the same, it would be good for some in the ministry to remember what Jesus said: “See, I am sending you out like sheep into the midst of wolves; so be wise as serpents and innocent as doves” (Matt. 10:16 [NRSV]). The minister may need to learn that in order to survive in this dog-eat-dog world, that she should not be surprised when she sees what may end up on her plate.

*Public Relations Nightmares*

In considering the challenges that rescue ministries face from the public, there was a recent incident where a local pastor showed up at the door of the Mission on a very cold night, half an hour before curfew, with a homeless person that the pastor wanted to have admitted for the night. The monitor on duty recognized the homeless person as a “regular” and as someone who had just checked out that morning after spending all of his allowable nights for the month. The pastor was unhappy to learn that the man would be denied a stay, and began to challenge the decision and policy of the mission concerning admissions to the shelter. The pastor even questioned whether this was a Christian mission, charging that it was the pastor’s belief that a mission cannot turn away someone in genuine need of shelter, especially on such a cold winter’s night. The pastor also remarked that the church took up special collections and brought food on occasions and supported this mission. The implications were obvious.

No rule at a rescue mission exists as an arbitrary decision. Every precept has been discussed, debated, and either discarded or adopted as a result of careful and prayerful determination. Missions do not turn people away for capricious or frivolous reasons. Not everyone who comes to the door of the mission is aware of this fact, but unfortunately not everyone who comes to the door would necessarily agree with the rule or the reasoning behind it. The guest on the outside of the door, however, does not have to live with those who are on the inside. There is a different perspective, necessitated by the circumstances on the inside of the door. People have scoffed at the idea that the front door of the mission remains locked twenty-four hours of the day, and even when the workers tried to

explain it to those who ask, there is frequently a failure in adequately communicating the sense of need for safety after experiencing a dangerous situation.

What is the answer? It is the firm belief of this writer that those outside the mission need to learn to trust the judgment of those on the inside. Those who have given their lives to rescue ministry have done so from the same type of heart of love for the homeless and a desire to make a difference as the person who brings food, clothing, or a financial gift. The difference is what is commonly called the “School of Hard Knocks” or experience. When a rescue minister or worker has been through the experience of being threatened, slapped, or thrown down a flight of stairs by an angry resident, there is the beginning of understanding as to why there need to be boundaries or rules. The donor who also sees no problem with handing fifty dollars to a homeless individual has no different a heart than the rescue worker who loves that person just as much, but realizes from previous conversations with homeless people exactly what might be done with that fifty dollars. Many physical or chemical addictions are funded in exactly this way by well-meaning Christians who just wanted to help. One local church worker was led to think again about a situation where he had been asked by a traveler to help to buy oil for the traveler’s car. Ten dollars would be enough, he was told. When he able to think about it and to actually produce several cans of oil from the trunk of his own vehicle, where he kept an adequate supply, he was surprised to have the traveler become angry and refuse the gift. Apparently only cash would be accepted.

Christian missions exist to provide an outlet for those who just want to help the situations of the homeless and needy. They have been trained by personal experience or the experience of other veterans of service to think not just with their heart but with their

head as well. The impulse to give everything and anything away is tempered with the question of knowing what is best for a person. Is it always good to put money in the hands of those who squander it on things that will hurt themselves? Contrary to public opinion and the policies of some governments, all problems are not solved by throwing money at them. Sometimes it is necessary to walk with people and help them to understand the consequences of their actions and the possibilities of other choices that are more healthy and productive for them in the long run.

The situations being described in this chapter and in the previous one come from actual experience. The local mission really did get a call from an angry hospital worker about a resident who had been put out for alcoholism who was having symptoms of exposure-related illness. It really did happen that when a mission director went out to speak to a ladies' group at a local church, that one of the members of that circle group had some open complaints about her neighbor, whose daughter and her children were not allowed to stay all day inside the mission. It did not matter that the mission had no provision for anyone staying inside during the day, being only an evening and nighttime shelter. It was simply that they had put this poor girl and her children out every day with no concern for her situation, and the poor mother had to take them in during the day. This is the stuff from which public relations nightmares are made.

These are also the situations that those who market the mission have to face when seeking funding from the community. Does the mission not care about families being out in the daytime with no place to go? Do the people who work there have no heart for a person who has a drinking problem but still needs a place to sleep? Are those who run the shelters so rigid that they cannot think of anything except rules when it comes to people?

These are all rhetorical questions, by the way. They are also not easy questions. There are documented incidents at the mission of workers who let their compassion cloud their judgment and admit someone who was totally inappropriate for the mission and who had to be removed by law enforcement after later incidents, each of which could have been avoided. Of course, these are not the situations of which the community learns when making these judgments. They might simply conclude it would be better to err on the side of compassion than to be uncaring. Mission staff might respond that it is better to err on the side of caution than to end up being sorry or injured.

There are, of course, times when rules are stretched to accommodate an unusual situation for a resident. This is a better expression of Christian compassion, when it is determined by the staff that it is in the best interest of the mission, the resident, and other residents to make an exception. Ministry truly is about people, not rules. There is, however, a healthy balance that is the product of years of experience.

In the meantime, is there anything from scripture that might help us with the issue of the public relations nightmare? Perhaps the case study of Saul of Tarsus might yield something that might be helpful.

If there was ever anyone who had public relations issues, Saul began his ministry right in the heart of a huge one. How does a man outlive the mistakes of his past or the reputation that comes from it? The first mention of Saul was at the stoning of Stephen. Saul gave approval to Stephen's execution (Acts 8:1), allowing the angry mob to lay their outer garments at his feet (Acts 7:58). The next mention is a few verses later, where Saul was said to be setting out to "destroy the church. Going from house to house, he dragged off men and women and put them in prison" (Acts 8:3 [NIV]). This severe persecution

caused the church to scatter, an event that precipitated the spread of the gospel all over the known world at that time (Acts 8:4). After the narrative followed a couple of other characters, it returned to Saul in chapter nine. His rage at the Christians has not abated. It was reported that he was “still breathing threats and murder against the disciples of the Lord” (Acts 9:1 [NAS]). He was trying to expand his reach, having spoken with the high priest for permission to go to Damascus and bring other Christians bound to Jerusalem for further punishment (Acts 9:2).

What a horrible thing to do, threatening and murdering innocent believers! Who could live with such a monster? Who would and could ever forgive him? But something incredible happened: this monster suddenly reversed his course, halted his persecutions, and re-evaluated his position. He showed up in Damascus as scheduled (or maybe just a few days behind schedule) and started preaching boldly in the synagogues that Jesus was the Son of God (Acts 9:20). The immediate reaction was one of total confusion and a good deal of disbelief. “And all those hearing him continued to be amazed, and were saying, ‘Is this not he who in Jerusalem destroyed those who called on this name, and *who* had come here for the purpose of bringing them bound before the chief priests?’” (Acts 9:21 [NAS]). In order for Christians to survive these times of persecution, they needed a good information network, some way to get advance warning of dangerous situations. Yes, the Christians in Damascus knew all about Saul. He was a truly dangerous man, someone to be avoided at all costs. He was certainly a person that no one wanted to see around the disciples.

Saul no doubt realized that he had a full-blown public relations nightmare. It was not likely that these Christians were going to accept him, especially since a week ago it

was known that he had come, in effect, to kill Christians. Instead of running away or running to the church while crying to be accepted, he began to do what he knew God had called him to do: witness to the people about Jesus Christ. The next verse records, “But Saul increased all the more in strength, and confounded the Jews who dwelt in Damascus, proving that this *Jesus* is the Christ” (Acts 9:22 [NKJV]). This action, while perfectly understandable in his obedience to Christ, would unfortunately create another problem for Saul, a public relations gaffe on another front. All this time Saul had been a Jew among Jews, championing the anti-Christian cause. The Jews were no doubt proud to have him, and felt confident that with this type of young Jewish prodigy on their side, that the Christian movement would surely soon be brought to its knees.

Saul’s sudden change of heart also changed the Jews’ perception about him. Now Saul was a traitor to his own countrymen. Treason, even today in this country, is the only other act besides murder to be considered a capital crime. Predictably, the Jews began to make plans to kill Saul (Acts 9:23). Fortunately, the information network was still functioning, and when word came to Saul’s few friends about the plan to assassinate him, they helped him to escape by night and return to Jerusalem (Acts 9:24-25).

Back in Jerusalem, Saul made the very bold move of approaching the disciples and wishing to join their fellowship. The reaction of the church was recorded as being “afraid” of him, not wishing to trust him. They did not believe that he really was a disciple (Acts 9:26). After all, could this not be a ploy, a deception to identify more believers and drag them off to prison? The disciples could not afford to be fooled again. At this point, it looked very much as though Saul was doomed to forever be on the outside, a source of constant suspicion, fear, and distrust. It may have stayed that way,

but thankfully a very trusting believer of some stature named Barnabas stepped forward and put himself on the line for Saul. Barnabas told Saul's story, recounting the vision on the road to Damascus and the preaching he had done in the synagogues there (Acts 9:27). Because of Barnabas, Saul was accepted into the fellowship. He soon after resumed his preaching in the synagogue, "speaking boldly in the name of the Lord" (Acts 9:28 [NIV]). When he began to enter into some serious dialogue with some Grecian Jews there, the cycle began all over again. They sought his life, and Saul needed help to escape the region. He returned to his home in Tarsus, and the church experienced a powerful time of encouragement, strength, and growth in the Lord (Acts 9:29-31).

Saul's public relations problems did not end with these few months of his life. Even after he was recalled from Tarsus into missionary travel with Barnabas and later Silas and visited churches all over the world and wrote letters to the same, there was still opposition. It centered on his claim to apostolic authority. Many Christians had known or had heard of the Twelve. They probably knew at least some of the names. Along comes Saul and claims that he is one of that group. Simply put, not everyone believed him, and he fell under criticism for pursuing this claim.

The key question is, how did Saul handle his image problem? What did he do to encourage faith in his person and his abilities? This writer respectfully suggests that there were three things worthy of note:

(1) *Saul was faithful to his mission and call.* Days after his conversion, Saul was out preaching in the midst of the people, using every opportunity to uphold this same Jesus that he had just previously torn down. It was not penance but repentance. He did

what he knew he had been called to do, regardless of the judgments of others. He understood that it was God whom he must please and not people.

(2) ***Saul was honest about his mistakes and owned up to them.*** Even when he was trying to establish his apostolic authority, he put the whole thing in a realistic and honest perspective when he said,

Then he appeared to James, then to all the apostles. Last of all, as to one untimely born, he appeared also to me. For I am the least of the apostles, unfit to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church of God. But by the grace of God I am what I am, and his grace toward me has not been in vain. On the contrary, I worked harder than any of them-- though it was not I, but the grace of God that is with me. (1 Cor. 15:7-10 [NRSV])

Saul never denied that he was a sinner. He even laid claim to the title “chief” of sinners (1 Tim. 1:15 [KJV]). The sins of his past were a constant reminder to him of the greatness and majesty of the grace of God, who truly could forgive a monster like him. Plus, notice the term “unfit”. It was not his choice or his idea to enter into ministry. It was God’s idea.

(3) ***Saul kept telling the story of his conversion.*** Whether it was in the audience of royalty (Acts 26) or just trying to answer an angry mob (Acts 22), Saul told his story. It became a part of his message, to tell how Jesus had turned him around and made him see the truth. It truly was his *witness* to the world.

There was once a young Christian boy who was befriended by a kindly old man and his wife in the church who always went out of their way to show love and concern for him. He was shocked years later to learn that this kindly old man was, in his youth, a homosexual offender with a horrible reputation in the community. To alleviate his confusion, his father, who had told him about the man’s history, said not to worry, because sometimes God is gracious and forgiving and allows us to outlive our

reputations. Like Saul, this man had truly changed and was graciously allowed in his later years to live out his life in witness to the amazing grace of God.

## CHAPTER THREE

### REVIEW OF LITERATURE AND OTHER SOURCES

The reason that this project has to be written is identical with the problem that one encounters when looking for sources of information. Other than conversations with people in the know, the amount of printed materials on certain aspects of the problem is miniscule. The need for studying this issue therefore is apparent.

#### *Ancient Sources*

Rescue missions struggle with the tension that exists between being faithful to the core convictions of the gospel and the socio-political responses to serving the poor. Even though rescue missions have existed for only about two hundred years, the problem goes back much earlier. The research for Chapter Two uncovered two extra-biblical sources that illustrated the need for hospitality. One was from a website that introduced the reader to the Jewish Virtual Library, a division of the American-Israeli Cooperative Enterprise. It was a short article, less than a page, but was full of good information and had a good hook at the end. It discussed the *haknusat orchim* (transliterated Hebrew for “bringing in of strangers”), which is considered as a Jewish commandment and expected of the Israelites. Abraham’s example of welcoming the three strangers, who turned out to be angels in human appearance, is the first solid demonstration of hospitality in the Torah (Gen. 18:1-5). A few chapters later the future bride of Isaac also demonstrated kindness

towards strangers when she offered to water the horses of the search party that was actually looking for her (Gen. 24:28-32).

The article went on to point out that every house in Israel needed to be ready and available to receive strangers. It was even said of Abraham that the sides of his tent were always open so that guests would have no problem entering. The Seder meal at Passover was an open invitation to strangers, particularly those who were hungry or otherwise needy. Ariel Scheib, the writer of the article, reported that this practice moved on into the Middle Ages, where a guest house was provided for the poor, a house that later came to be termed a *hekdesch* (“sanctuary”) (2008, 1).

Scheib concluded his article by addressing the responsibilities of both guests and hosts. Hosts were expected to provide for the needs of their guests and not cause them to feel duly uncomfortable. Guests were expected to be thankful, to offer blessings for their hosts, and not to impose on their hosts longer than was reasonable or culturally acceptable. It was at this point that the “three days” quote became a source of amazement (see previous chapter). The City Mission, where this writer has served for years, has based its sense of hospitality on the three-day rule. The Mission offers three days of open welcome to strangers freely and without obligation, but if a guest desires to stay beyond three days, the entire dynamic changes. The guest must demonstrate genuineness of heart, seriousness of purpose, and a willingness to work in exchange for a continued stay. Did the founder of the Mission know something about the teachings of the Midrash?

Another unexpected source of information that aided the writing of Chapter Two was a Christian document of a time around the late first or early second century, the *Didache*. In the introduction to his work entitled, *The Didache: Text, Translation,*

*Analysis, and Commentary*, Aaron Milavec characterizes the nature of this ancient document as “. . . the preserved oral tradition whereby mid-first-century house churches detailed the step-by-step transformation by which gentile converts were to be prepared for full active participation in their assemblies” (2003, ix). The book was anonymously written, probably a codification of the oral traditions that has been passed down to churches and believers from their teachers. It did not, in fact, have a name originally attached to it. Those who used it knew exactly what it was and used it as an authoritative source for conduct within the church. Its first known name was “The Training of the Lord through the Twelve Apostles to the Gentiles” (Milavec 2003, ix-x). Modern scholars have shortened the name to the lone first word of its title in the original Greek tongue, “*didache*”. Over time the book was lost to antiquity and was not “rediscovered” until a complete copy was found in an Istanbul library of ancient church documents in 1873.

There is a myriad of subjects covered in the *Didache*, a book that is about a third of the size of the Gospel of Mark and is, like Mark, divided into sixteen sections. It is section number twelve that addresses the situation of hospitality to traveling missionaries, one who is “coming in the name of the Lord” (Milavec 2003, 31). The stay of such a person was expected to be no longer than two or three days, unless, of course, the person used their “craft” and went to work to help support themselves. If they did not offer to work and still expected to stay on, this was unacceptable in the *Didache*, at least in terms of how a Christian lives among her brothers and sisters. The key phrase was “not being idle” (Milavec 2003, 31).

The first time this writer heard this teaching, he was once more amazed. The idea of offering open hospitality to travelers for two or three days as a maximum again

paralleled the charter of the Mission perfectly. It is as though its early founders, Mary Carman and Mabel Lee, were students of early Christian documents and practices. They were not, of course; at least there is no indication of such. It has been helpful to this work to be able to vindicate from outside sources the practice of a three-day stay to those transient guests who offer themselves to stay at the Mission. It is not by coincidence that each of these sources agrees on a specific time frame; the staff and directors of the Mission have all learned from experience that this is in fact the best policy. When guests extend their stay beyond three days, the dynamics of the relationships change, and it brings both them and the Mission to a different level of consideration for their circumstance.

### *Missiology*

Lesslie Newbigin writes in his book *The Open Secret: An Introduction to the Theology of Mission* about the need to rediscover a way to communicate the good news to a pluralistic world. The attitude described above comes across as self-righteous hypocrisy, as though Christians were the only good people in the world, who cannot see any good in anyone else, and would never enter into meaningful dialogue with other faiths on equal terms. It is not a question of whether or not the rescue worker or any other Christian minister believes that Jesus is the answer. That should never be a matter of debate in the heart of the Christian. The problem is in the approach to the pluralistic society of today.

Newbigin suggests a new way of thinking. He suggests not being afraid to risk personal understanding of truth in coming to the world in open dialogue. Newbigin's model for this is Peter's meeting with Cornelius. Peter came with the notion that he was

the person of privileged status before God because of his Jewish faith and heritage, but when he approached Cornelius, God used the occasion to change his understanding and attitude (Newbigin 1995, 185). When Christians approach the world as *superiors* in any way, the results will be little short of disastrous.

Christians should begin to adopt the thinking that instead of already having all truth, that they believe in their heart that they represent the God who reveals all truth and desires to bring all men into unity with it. Newbigin describes this understanding as a “Trinitarian model”:

The Father is the giver of all things. They all belong rightly to the Son. It will be the work of the Spirit to guide the church through the course of history into the truth as a whole by taking all God’s manifold gifts given to all humankind and declaring their true meaning to the church as that which belongs to the Son. The end to which it all looks is “a plan for the fulness of time, to unite all things to him, things in heaven and things on earth” (Eph. 1:10). [NRS] (1995, 179)

The point of this, at least in part, is to help Christians to understand that they do not have a monopoly on the saving power of the gospel. Newbigin quotes from the prologue of John’s gospel in 1:9 that Jesus was the light that was coming into the world “that enlightens every man” [NAS] (1995, 170). The Christian minister desperately needs to understand that the treasure of the gospel is not *hers*; it belongs to *everyone*, even that person with whom she is trying to have an evangelistic conversation. With this perspective, it is not the possessor trying to proselytize an outsider into possession, but rather one joint-owner trying to help another joint-owner to discover the birthright for which he was created. This is more like the common identification of true evangelism at work, that of one beggar telling another beggar where to find bread. Indeed, Newbigin talks about the role of the Christian in dialogue with the non-Christian as less of the authoritarian teacher and more of the “obedient witness to Jesus Christ” (1995, 182).

Newbigin uses a visual illustration of a set of stairs, descending from the left and ascending again to the right. In the center, at the bottom of these stairs, stands the cross. Just like it happened when a person meets God, which takes place at the bottom of the stairs (Jesus came to call sinners, not righteous people – cf. Matt. 9:13), so also any meeting with non-Christians must mean that Christians are willing to come down from their lofty positions and humble themselves.

“Christianity” as it develops in history takes on the form of one of those stairways. Christians also have to come down to the bottom of their stairway to meet the adherents of another faith. There has to be a *kenosis*, a “self-emptying.” Christians do not meet their partners in dialogue as those who possess the truth and the holiness of God but as those who bear witness to a truth and holiness that are God’s judgment on them and who are ready to hear the judgment spoken through the lips and life of their partner of another faith. (1995, 181-182)

Truly Christianity will not begin to fulfill the Lord’s purpose until Christians are willing to humble themselves before Christ and do things God’s way.

### *Contemporary Context*

There are, no doubt, many books that address matters of hospitality and proper etiquette between guest and host, even when the guests far outnumber their hosts. But it is hospitality in a religious context, and especially in the setting of a rescue mission, that is of special interest for this study. One source that was tapped in this research included books that recounted the historical development of rescue missions, books that told the story about how specific missions came to be, what their work entailed, and the challenges that they faced in dealing with the public. Those challenges are the things with which this rescue minister could identify while reading these books.

One such book was a work that was just sitting on a shelf in the Mission office. It had been purchased at an AGRM (Association of Gospel Rescue Missions) convention

years earlier. As a matter of fact, it was a copy that had been autographed on the inside cover by the author. It had been printed by a web-based publishing firm called XLibris.com. A check of their website revealed the fascinating story of how they work. This writer even bookmarked it for the time when he might be ready to publish some of his own works. The co-director at the Mission had read the book beforehand and mentioned that it was quite interesting. Her perspective at the time was to see what other missions were doing and what the Mission might begin to do that has proved successful in other locations. When this writer picked it up to read it, his perspective came from this study: What have other missions had to face in terms of problems with the public, and how did they successfully overcome the issues? Within the book, there were discovered about six instances where the data were appropriate for this study.

The book is entitled *Enacted Christianity: Evangelical Rescue Missions in the United States and Canada*, and the author is Arthur Bonner, a former journalist who worked as a foreign correspondent in India for CBS. He traveled across America, staying at rescue missions as a resident while doing investigative work for this book. The book is actually a sequel of sorts to his earlier biographical work on the life of pioneer rescue mission worker Jerry McAuley, who lived from 1839-1884. This work focused on the missions that had grown, in one way or another, from McAuley's work. Bonner held up McAuley as a prototype of mission directors in the nineteenth century, and noted that many have followed in his wake and emulated his example of self-sacrificing service to the poor.

The first part of Bonner's book, however, starts much earlier than the nineteenth century, going all the way back to the 1700s to John Wesley, ". . . whose teachings are

the bedrock of today's rescue missions. . ." (Bonner 2002, 11). Wesley was ahead of his time. He believed, contrary to his contemporaries and even many of those who followed him, that there were no "unworthy poor". Wesley pointed to the scriptural teaching that we are to do good to *all men* (Gal. 6:10), regardless of whether they were worthy or deserving. His holiness practice and teachings have moved many Christians over the years to act compassionately towards the poor and to offer their money, their time, and their hearts to help. Even today at the City Mission in Findlay, Ohio, a good percentage of the funds that support the work come from Methodist (Wesleyan) churches.

From Wesley the discussion moved in the second chapter into the nineteenth century. From Wesley's work came religious tract societies, who first tried to reach the poor with the gospel in printed form. From there, around the year 1848, the outreach expanded to offer food and housing assistance to those in dire need. The first mission work that can accurately be termed a "rescue mission" by the definition used in this study came into existence through the work of Jerry McAuley. The son of a counterfeiter, McAuley himself spent time in prison until he responded to the message of the gospel. Working side by side with his wife, he opened the "Helping Hand for Men" home in October 1872. Bonner described this ministry in the following:

Men deep in drink, or simply homeless and shabby, discovered this place that would never turn them away and the room was crowded every night for singing and testimonies, after which the men stretched out to sleep on wooden benches or the floor. A report of its first year counted 26,261 meals served, lodgings for 5,144 and various clothing dispensed. Its expenses were \$2,291.38. During its first two years, it reported 55,445 attended the night meetings. (2002, 47)

The third chapter deals with the formation of the AGRM, formerly called the IUGM (International Union of Gospel Missions). The term "union", which originally referred to the union of Protestant Christians working together to help the poor, was

dropped in this generation due to the unpopular comparison to big business labor unions. Their history dates back to 1906, when it was previously called the National Federation of Gospel Missions. This group was also joined in 1923 by the former Western Brotherhood, which had been centered in Grand Rapids, Michigan. The IUGM worked in the shadow of the Salvation Army, whose fundraising machine allowed it to serve massive amounts of people. The work of rescue missions continued nonetheless. It was at this point in this chapter that the first real reference was found of the classic struggles of rescue missions in competing for fundraising dollars while encountering potential and real problems with public perceptions:

Whatever excuses a man has used to paper over his troubles are held up to him for what they are. Eventually, a man is expected to face the truth about himself. Often, when the probing comes too close to his real trouble, the man walks out to return to the Bowery or is never seen again. The attrition rate is high. The mission could easily keep a man longer by putting less of an emphasis on religion or by relaxing some of its other rules. It could also serve a far larger number of men by limiting itself to transients and serving free food to all comers several times a day. This could be justified as elemental Christian charity. It would result in impressive statistics regarding the number of men served and perhaps make it easier to raise funds. But few, if any, men would be rehabilitated either socially or spiritually. (Bonner 2002, 66)

How significant are these observations! By sacrificing its ministry of rescue, a mission could easily inflate its numbers and impress the public with sheer numbers and raise more funds. What difference, however, would it make in the lives of those they serve? Why sell out the power of the gospel for the sake of bigger numbers? Bigger ministry does not necessarily mean better ministry.

The rest of the book consists of stories, history, and interviews with various rescue missions across the country. The specific emphasis in the book is how they have followed the path of Jerry McAuley, and occasionally there is a gem to be found for this

study. For example, in the next chapter there is a look at the Union Gospel Mission in St. Paul, Minnesota. There was an interesting incident in 1964 when a local judge took note of the rising juvenile delinquency problem in the city, while also acknowledging the high success that the Union Gospel Mission was having with its youth camps. The courts asked the mission to begin to care for youth from the community in foster home arrangements.

Everything was going well until the predictable happened:

All went well until a social worker came to observe one of them and was invited to stay for supper. Of course, grace was said at the start of the meal. The social worker came back the next day and said, 'Everything was fine but you can't have this religious component.' The homes' director replied, 'If we can't say grace we're not going to do it.' With that, the mission withdrew from all the homes. (Bonner 2002, 82)

Missions do understand that social workers have their place in society. As a matter of fact, there are missions who employ social workers to help with their case load of clientele. They also understand that social workers in the secular field do not have the luxury of supporting one religious group over another. They also understand very clearly, however, that they cannot allow secular society to dictate terms to missions about their spiritual services. Not being able to say grace at meals may sound like a small thing, but the director recognized that he was fighting to preserve his principles, his core convictions about the ministry of Christ. What makes this even more interesting is that one can read between the lines that this arrangement most likely included a financial component, which would have been lost with the dissolution of the contract. Remember that missions do not come by financial support easily.

Several years later another interesting incident was documented that involved the cooperation of civil authorities with the mission. This one had a happier ending. The

director in the 1990s recognized the need for the mission to be more than “just an overnight dormitory,” and expanded their facilities and their services to allow for programs for women and children and an educational program for men to increase their personal productivity so that they could start giving back to society. To help direct the men into such programs, they ran a large shelter that was viewed by the community as a hotel for the poor. The director described the services:

We want this to be a place where they are comfortable so we can minister to them. It has always been the housing of last resort. The county kind of expects that from us. Two of the dorms are for men who pay \$4.50 a night for beds and they are out working all day. We’re trying to find a way to move them on to affordable housing. The county also allows people who receive welfare assistance to use our hotel. It’s up to them: If they don’t like our religious ideas they can live somewhere else. They choose us because we are the cheapest and safest place in town. (Bonner 2002, 84)

If moved out of its context, the next to last sentence could sound rather sanctimonious. The reality of rescue ministry, however, is that no one stays at a mission and experiences a religious element against their will. No one is forced to stay. People choose to stay because staying at the mission is overall better than the alternatives. The other issue is hidden in the last sentence: the safety of mission housing. At the City Mission of Findlay, everyone is reminded that the security of the building and the safety of the guests are paramount. The policies of the mission are built around this bedrock principle. It is one of the key reasons that people attend the mission. It is not that some of them prefer to sit through chapel or attend Bible studies; it is that, unlike sleeping under a bridge or behind a public building, there is real safety in sleeping in a mission bed. Any genuine threat by one resident against another that is verified by multiple witnesses is cause for expulsion.

In the process of typing this, this writer received a call from a member of his Board of Trustees concerning a letter to the editor two days prior from a Robert J.

Dowell, who had been quite angry with the quality of service he had been receiving from the local helping agencies in Findlay. Claiming to be disabled from two heart attacks, he was turned down for services because he did not have an income, something not uncommon in the community. He was angry as a result at the community and took it out on the one agency he had *not* contacted, the City Mission of Findlay. His exact words were, “Sure, there is the city mission, but you can’t trust anyone there, especially when you are on as many medications as I am” (Dowell 2008, 1). Hopefully he was not insinuating that mission staff would interfere with, restrict, or abscond with his medications in some way. More likely he was referring to the other residents of the mission. The problem was that Mr. Dowell had never *stayed* at the mission, and his statements may lead some to think that he had had a bad experience here. The Mission chose to respond to the letter by chalking it up to “sour grapes”, even though Mr. Dowell did not identify the agencies that did not help him. He only mentioned an agency he had not approached for help. That was more bad fortune and another potential public relations problem for the Mission.

The Mel Trotter Ministries in Grand Rapids, Michigan, are named after the great rescue minister at the turn of the century. Tom Laymon, the executive officer at the mission at the time of Bonner’s writing, shared why he did not accept government funding:

These days, everything in this country is dictated by a couple of factors. One of them is obviously the press. What you do is always at your doorstep. For us here, the news is always good news. We always get great press. The other thing that seems to guide this country is lawyers and liability, not personal liability so much as civil rights liability. You get sued by the American Civil Liberties Union and they usually sue you for things they feel begin to breach the barriers between church and state.

The law might allow you to hire people who agree with you, but it will also say you cannot educate and proselytize, and evangelization is our primary focus. The law says you can't force someone to accept your religion, which none of us does—it's a voluntary thing. It is most strong in saying you cannot mention religion in such a way as to influence someone to actually join your religion. That is the very reason we are in existence. (Bonner 2002, 138)

Laymon's arguments are quite persuasive as they continue in the book. He is convinced that while the government is not "evil," neither is it friendly to the ideals of rescue ministry, especially as it relates to the message of the gospel of Jesus Christ. His response is to forego the funds that might otherwise be available for assisting the poor in a number of programs. He sees the combination of the two as creating an unavoidable conflict. This writer's reaction to Laymon's statements is that while it might be possible to have certain parts of your programs funded with public money, it is generally best to avoid sources that come with strings attached.

Finally, there is a quote in Bonner's book from another book, this one written by a Howard Bahr in a 1973 work on Skid Row. The tone of the writing is full of skepticism, reflecting a society that does not look kindly at those who frequent rescue missions, and sometimes not well at the missions themselves.

Some Skid Row men speak well of the missions. Many receive emergency help from them. But most speak disparagingly of them, reaffirming the negative image of the 'mission stiff,' the man who has prostituted himself to the mission. More than anything else, the 'strings attached' charity, which demands the façade of penitence, interest in religion, and repudiation of the values of homelessness, seems to rankle. The typical Skid Row man knows that his heart has not changed, merely the level of his blood sugar. He seeks not eternal salvation but immediate surcease of hunger. The message of the missions is 'we will help you, but you must be what we want you to be.' The kind of help the homeless man seeks, but rarely finds: 'We will help you, because you are you, because you are a man.' (Bonner 2002, 157-158)

This is a harsh reading, and the decision to include it in this project was not without struggle. This is frequently the reality of the situation in dealing with the perceptions of

people. It is a reality that this writer deals with every day at the City Mission of Findlay. While a few observers may be convinced of the genuineness of the hearts of the staff at the mission, it will probably not change the judgments of others. Rescue ministers have to face the pressures from both inside and out from residents of the mission and residents of the surrounding communities to be sure that the Mission is treating its guests with the greatest of respect. Rescue workers have to be sure they are not just looking to pad the statistics without caring about the people involved. If the Mission is not a business about people, what is it? It is an easy answer to say, “We are about the gospel!” The reality, however, is that those who do not love the people they serve will not last in rescue ministry.

A similar look at the historical context of rescue ministry can be found in Norris Magnuson’s book, *Salvation in the Slums: Evangelical Social Work 1865-1920*. Norris began with the efforts of William Booth, beginning in 1865, when he determined to leave his parish work with the Methodist Church to live among the tragic poor of East London (Magnuson 1977, 2). This was the beginning of the Salvation Army, a religious group that has grown to become a giant in the annals of social relief for the poor. Booth set the standard for ministry to the poor, and his original emphasis was strong on evangelism. Preaching and teaching and converting the poor were probably his strongest core values, and the reason that it is the “Salvation” Army and not the “Volunteer” Army. Magnuson said, “The ‘salvation’ they sought extended beyond individual reformation to all human problems. William Booth thus emphasized across his long life that salvation was the only cure for the world’s ills, and that any purported remedy omitting it was a mockery” (Magnuson 1977, 8). The Army was born into a time when compassion was lacking in

the treatment of the poor, and Booth's work helped to raise the standard for rescue missions to serve the spiritual and social needs of the poor for decades to come. Although he met with resistance from the community in the early part of his ministry, he eventually came to be accepted for his work and was able to have audience with kings, emperors, and presidents, each of whom stood in admiration of his work.

Another "harsh" book is *The Tragedy of American Compassion* by Marvin Olasky. Olasky also took the historical track to show the reader what has worked in helping the poor over the years, and then gave missions a solid indictment of not matching their accomplishments of the past, thinking instead that throwing money is the ultimate solution. At one point, he likened that search for compassion to the character Inigo Montoya in the movie *The Princess Bride*. All of his life Montoya searched for the six-fingered man who had killed his father. When at the end he found him, after besting him in swordplay, he pressed his sword against the six-fingered man's chest and makes him promise to make up for all the things he has suffered as a result of his loss. When the six-fingered man had promised everything, Montoya ran him through with his sword, shouting that he wanted his father back. Olasky concluded his illustration by saying, "Instead of offering money, we need to find ways to bring back the fathers" (Olasky 1992, 216). The sad observation is that perhaps the search for compassion in this culture today is something that will be, for most people, about as difficult as resurrecting the dead. That is God's work.

In addition to those books that outline parts of the history of the rescue mission movement in America, there are books written from an entirely different perspective. They are the stories of those who have lived among the poor or homeless and have come

out to write about it. One such person, Barbara Ehrenreich, a Ph. D. with lots of financial security, set out to live in the world of the working poor. While she had plenty of real-life assets waiting for her after her experience was over, her stated goal was “just to see whether I could match income to expenses, as the truly poor attempt to do every day” (Ehrenreich 2001, 6). She tells her story of a several-month trek across America working as a hotel maid, a waitress, and as a Wal-Mart associate. Her book is aptly entitled *Nickled and Dimed: On (Not) Getting By in America*. The final chapter is an evaluation of her experience, and has some interesting insights on the difficulty of maintaining the rent on an apartment while working at these jobs of low status and pay.

Another similar work is written by Mike Yankoski, called *Under the Overpass*. It is similar to Ehrenreich’s book in that it tells the story of poverty from the inside, but the experience was not an experiment for Mike and his friend Sam. Since their poverty was brought on not so much by choice as by circumstance, their struggle to survive on the streets and live off the generosity of others is a powerful story. Books like these help those who are not on the frontlines of rescue ministry never to forget what it is truly like to be homeless. For those who work every day with the homeless, it is a reminder of where the battle truly is.

In the process of searching, this writer ultimately recalled an unpublished manuscript that he had read several years before, written by the Doctor of Ministry program’s own Linda S. Davison. Linda had written this work twenty years ago, when she was researching and following the call of her heart towards ministry to the poor, and before she went to work at the Mission. Her call took her to faraway places like India and Africa, where she ministered to the local communities, traveling to villages and

mountaintop communities, preaching the message of salvation and release from oppression. She also encouraged the local pastors and their families to remain true to the work to which they had been called. But it was the perspective that she gained on poverty in these “third world” areas that continued to shape her heart to minister to those who have nothing. Six months after marrying this writer in May, 1994, both he and she entered together into the formal work of rescue ministry, trying to help improve the physical and spiritual state of the poor in their own community. It was early in that ministry that Linda shared her manuscript, which was read with great interest. It was and is entitled *Highway to Holiness: Sanctification through Service to the Poor* and can be found on several hard drives and flash drives around the Davison home. The manuscript is a biblical survey of the call of God to help the poor, tracing the mandate from the writings of Moses all the way through the New Testament. This writer realizes now that reading and absorbing Linda’s manuscript has probably shaped his heart for rescue ministry more than any other printed work he has found.

There was an unexpected source of information that came available through the list-serve for Chief Executive Officers (CEOs) from the AGRM. On February 13, 2009, Stephen Trost, the president of the Rescue Mission of Salt Lake, posted an entry that described the opposition they were facing from industrial neighbors to a five-building expansion project. He described the fears of the businesses of having a rescue mission nearby as being, “They envision crime increasing and increased liability from our folks in the street which they run their heavy trucks on” (Trost 2009). He then posed the question to the other CEOs who were listening whether they had any similar experience, and wishfully whether “any of you have letters or newspaper articles, crime statistics or

anything else that could demonstrate initial opposition by neighbors to a Mission but later an endorsement by the same folks that initially opposed the project?” (Troost A 2009).

The response was overwhelming. Within less than five hours, Trost had generated nine postings by four different individuals in a reciprocal conversation. Another posting appeared two days later. Some interesting points were raised. There were a couple of referrals to contact some Missions who had experienced similar situations, at the San Diego Rescue Mission (Anderson 2009) and the Union Gospel Mission in Yakima, Washington (Burger 2009). James Lewis, the CEO for the Long Beach Rescue Mission, however, had some very concrete suggestions. His first one was:

We have won over our local neighborhood association, central planning area commission, a community activist group, and the city council person of our district, redevelopment, etc. It started by hosting the neighborhood association board meetings at the mission and their monthly meetings, giving tours, sponsoring the student of the month of the middle school next door, aggressively mitigating each negative issue we create in the area (“you are INSIDE or you are GONE”, started a street clean-up program using our case mgt clients, etc.), including a park next door and the middle school, sponsoring community events, working with law enforcement, etc . . . before we even thought of building anything new. Now that we are seeking to build they are all supporting our project when just three years ago there was missive rejection of a 30 bed transitional shelter nearby.

It takes understanding who your “publics” are – anyone who has a stake (positively or negatively) in your operations and can affect you good or bad. NIMBY issues can be lessened but not totally eliminated. You need to focus on your outside supporters and have them fight for you (let another’s lips praise you, not your own). (Lewis A 2009)

Lewis’ response is definitely proactive. Anticipating the potential negative response of the community, he has worked hard to demonstrate to the community the commitment that his rescue mission has to giving back to society. Particularly insightful was his final comment, “. . . focus on your outside supporters and have them fight for you . . .” Trost responded to this by saying that they had lots of support from the area residents, but it

was the businesses that were trying to thwart the planned construction. He indicated that they had met all their objections, yet still were met with, “It shouldn’t be here.” Trost agreed in conclusion that it was probably a “NIMBY” (“not in my back yard”) issue (Trost B 2009).

Lewis’ follow-up response asked if Trost’s Mission was involved in any business associations or even the local Chamber of Commerce, which he said “can provide a lot of support and a forum to local businesses” (Trost B 2009). He closed with a statement he had made to his local Chamber to promote his Mission’s missions: “We are a resource for local business to give back to the local business to give back to the community and support . . . those least among us – and remember, if the homeless are walking through OUR doors, they’re not panhandling in front of YOURS!” (Trost B 2009). Not only is Lewis’ quote both clever and catchy, it reminds rescue missions of the need to carefully package their services in such a way as to solve problems, meet needs, and communicate clearly. Trost’s final response was to admit that they were in fact members of the local Chamber and to thank him for helping to uncover a resource that was already available.

There is, finally, a very interesting book by John W. Pearson and Robert D. Hisrich on *Marketing Your Ministry: Ten Critical Principles*. Written in an easy-to-read narrative format, the story that is told between a rescue mission director and a marketing person reveals ten important principles that will turn around a non-profit agency that is losing money and head it in the right direction. It has practical, helpful advice illustrated in the story of the book. The reader learns how to find out where the mission’s strengths are and how to communicate them to its supporters. One learns to work with a target audience, instead of trying to be all things to all people. This is communicated by simple,

catchy phrases like, “Try to be the biggest fish in a small pond” (Pearson and Hisrich 1990, 72). The importance of spending lots of money on researching and understanding the customer base is also emphasized. Finally there is the importance of spending time just listening to what the customer has to say. This was an excellent book, written in a pleasant style. Marketing your ministry is a major challenge for most rescue ministers, and if they do not learn how to do it reasonably well, they will not be able to compete in today’s market. Rescue ministry will be left in the dust.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### RESEARCH METHODOLOGY AND PROCEDURES

Rescue ministry is different than pastoral ministry. This statement has been illustrated earlier in this study, and it remains true. Another way that the two are distinct is the times and manners that rescue ministers interact on a personal level. Having been in pastoral ministry for eighteen years, this writer knows that many pastors get together with other pastors on a regular basis. He used to meet with other pastors from his area once a month for years on end. These times allowed for fellowship, mutual exchange of ideas, and opportunities to share with those who shared similar hearts for ministry. It was a time to be with others of their own kind, other pastoral ministers. In the case of rescue ministers, that desire is probably no less real. The occasions for getting together, though, are far less frequent.

This writer has been in rescue ministry for fifteen years now, and he can count on the fingers of one hand the number of times he has gathered with workers from other rescue missions that were not his own. Even less frequent were the number of times he had free and open exchange and discussion with other directors. These meetings were usually the annual meetings of the AGRM (Association of Gospel Rescue Missions), but they often happened in places too far away for his small mission's budget to consider.

This is why what happened in Lancaster, Pennsylvania on September 22, 2008, was so unique. On that day, this writer had the opportunity to meet with other rescue

mission directors in a day-long discussion of ideas. It was a meeting that had not taken place in approximately ten years. The AGRM, in an attempt to build camaraderie among member missions at the regional level, encouraged regional leaders to begin again to have regional meetings in the fall. This would provide more fellowship at an opposite time to the annual meeting, which always occurs over Memorial Day weekend.

Invitations were sent to all member missions in the region, and even though the relatively small mission in Findlay Ohio ended up being the most distant of all those who attended the AGRM Mideast Region meeting, this writer felt almost compelled to accept the invitation and to attend.

Perhaps it was the need of the minister to spend time with other ministers who understood and identified with his struggle. Perhaps it was the fact that the agenda was open, meaning that they would decide for themselves what topics were most important. The announced topic was “Development,” which caught his interest, too. Either way, it turned out to be well worth the overnight round trip of one thousand miles.

At the conference, which was held at a beautiful lodge in eastern Pennsylvania, this writer had a most unexpectedly marvelous experience. Besides the wonderful accommodations, the opportunity to meet rescue workers of all sort from all over Pennsylvania, Maryland, Delaware, Ohio, and the District of Columbia, he met the largest concentrated number of mission directors he had ever interacted with at one time. There were ten directors altogether. Most of them worked at larger missions than the mission in Findlay; only one other mission may have been smaller. Instead of being an established rescue mission, that one was relatively new, and was considered a “mission mission,” which refers to a mission planted by an existing mission in a new area. This

writer had met a few of the men (all ten were male – there are female rescue directors, but none in this assembly) before at annual gatherings, but many of them were personally new to him. He was welcomed into the discussion and felt a part of a greater group.

Several topics of interest were discussed that day, from the quandary of staff health insurance to the role of directors' spouses in the ministries to how development was being accomplished at the missions. This writer greatly benefited from these discussions, but of even more interest to him that day was getting to know nine other men who truly knew what it meant to run a rescue mission. This writer viewed them as personal resources to help unlock the answer to his question about the work of the rescue mission in our society.

#### *Email Conversations*

Realizing that there are no coincidences in the life of the active believer, this writer gave praise to God for dropping this incredible resource opportunity into his lap. Here were his initial resources for tapping information on the issue of discussion: How do rescue missions struggle with the tension that exists between being faithful to the core convictions of the gospel and the socio-political responses to serving the poor?

Now, it might seem odd to learn that even though this writer had a “captive” audience for his personal discussion, he did not in fact present his problem before the entire group. The agenda for the day was fairly loose, but there was a thread in the discussion, and although he wanted to bring it up several times, he felt that the topic of conversation was going in another direction that day. He therefore deferred to the flow of the conversation and decided to wait to bring up his topic.

The meeting afforded him contact information for each of these rescue mission directors. He spent some time talking with several of them as the day proceeded, getting to know them, and thereby building a base from which to draw at a later date. Email conversations became a part of the plan, and these nine were the first to be contacted about their input into the problem.

This may seem like a long narrative to explain how this writer was able to begin his research, but it was such a unique event, he felt it was worth mentioning. After praying for several months on how to find the best way to begin this project's research in earnest, he was given this opportunity.

#### *Internet Survey*

In the process of praying over the project, it also occurred to this writer that he had another resource at his fingertips as well. One of his colleagues in the Doctor of Ministry program at Winebrenner, Jason Arant, had successfully gathered information through an Internet site called Zoomerang, a tool that allows users to gather data through online surveys. It is available for a price, and the concept is easy to use. This writer considered using this resource for his own study, but it came to him during the few months that followed that he has an even better resource that would be able to tailor a survey specifically for his needs, his oldest son Bill. Bill is a gifted computer programmer who was not only *able* to create what he needed, but he was also *willing* to do so. This writer formulated the questions that he wanted to use, told his son who his target audience was, and Bill provided him with the rest. He was given a link to provide to those whom he wanted to approach, which they could use to go to the survey site and fill

in the questions. He decided that he would approach mission directors for their input first, later expanding to other mission staff as interest existed.

The AGRM provided this writer with another excellent resource at this point, a couple of “listserves” to which he had subscribed. These “listserves” reach out both to mission CEOs and to other mission personnel. The only problem he perceived with announcing his survey over the “listserves” is that he had no control over revealing it to a smaller group first. Once it is sent out on the server, it goes to everyone who subscribes to the “listserve”. He also gave some consideration to whether he should expand it to an even larger audience, something beyond actual mission staff, but he decided to wait to see what type of response he would get from the first groups.

### *Interviews*

The next logical step beyond talking to those whom the writer personally knew and then inviting those who shared his work in rescue missions around the nation was to invite those who had more to share than just answering survey questions. Sometimes people have a story to tell. Sometimes there are questions that trigger more discussion or explanation. Either way, included in the survey itself was an invitation to contact the person conducting the survey for a personal interview. Recognizing his own limitations in a busy schedule and in particular a limited budget for travel, he determined that the best way to handle interviews came down to three choices: (1) “snail mail” (meaning using the Post Office); (2) email; or (3) telephone.

The advantage of the first choice is that it allows a person time to consider their answers and not feel rushed to respond. The disadvantage is that “snail mail” is a dying art, and many people do not want to take the time to write a letter.

The advantage of the second choice is that it is quick, relatively painless, and (at least for the present) it is free of charge. The disadvantage is that people tend to be careless in emails or hurried and may not be as accurate or thoughtful as possible. They themselves or their Internet filter might consider the email inquiry as “spam” and end up blocking it away from the intended audience.

The advantage of the third choice is a more complete and communicative exchange with instant responses. The disadvantage is that there is more pressure to answer and less opportunity to reflect on what is said. In this age of instant communication and technology, one might consider a fourth method also, that of “instant message” or “chat”, both referring to immediate communication methods accomplished on-line on the Internet. The problem with that idea is that one must find a venue for accomplishing this instant communication and be sure that the other person has the technology and skill to do the same.

#### *The Case of the Public Protest*

Another method of approaching this research was through the avenue of the *case study*. The following case study follows the outline set forth in Mahan, Troxell, and Allen, the book that serves as the standard for writing case studies at Winebrenner, as established by the late Dr. Leslie L. Lightner, who used it in his classes requiring case study reflection. This case is a real incident that occurred in conjunction with the City Mission of Findlay during the time of this research. The name of the antagonist, however, has been changed.

## Background

Truman has been coming to the City Mission of Findlay for as long as this writer has been connected with it. During the very first month of this writer's tenure at the Mission, Truman checked in to stay, along with a nuclear family with which he had previously been staying. The family disappeared soon afterwards, but Truman continued to come to the Mission in the years that followed, usually just coming in for a meal and to check for new clothes that had arrived in the previous week's donations. He was always quiet and respectful and never made any trouble at the Mission, except for the occasional stretching of the rules as to the areas where he was permitted to enter and those that were off-limits to him and other guests.

## Detailed Description

There had not appeared to be any trouble with Truman or any other Mission guest of anything out of the ordinary prior to the events of the fall of 2008. Quite almost by accident, a Mission volunteer reported seeing a poster in the window of a local video rental store, announcing a public gathering of some type in response to services to the homeless in Hancock County, the locality in which Findlay, Ohio is found. The volunteer did not have the poster, but did remember clearly reading some things on the poster that were uncomplimentary to the City Mission of Findlay.

Another call came later that same day from one of the pastors in town, who had recently had a get-acquainted meal with this writer a couple weeks before, about a man who had come into the church, asking to hang up a poster about a civic gathering concerning the homeless. The pastor promised to read the poster and the man left it with

him. After he read it, he discarded it as being too unkind to the Mission and called the Mission to inform the director about it.

With this forewarning, the Mission director and trustees discussed their planned course of action, and for this occasion decided to commit the matter to God. There was nothing to be done to stop the gathering, nor was it felt that drawing even more attention to the situation by speaking out would help the Mission's cause.

The event came and went. It was attended by less than ten homeless persons and four representatives of local helping agencies (including two Mission trustees and a staff person). The newspaper was there, the mayor met with the entourage, inviting them up to his office, and the interview was in the paper the following day. Little was said about the Mission and what was said was not altogether unhelpful. The tenor of the article was more about helping the homeless to get through the hard times. A few quotes from the principals involved were less antagonistic towards the Mission and more accusing of the city in general for not doing enough to help the plight of the homeless. A few days later another article appeared that gave a clearer view of the perspective of those who were serving the needs of the homeless, outlining the services that were available to help.

### Analysis

It would appear that the worst fears for this situation never came to pass, as it did not turn into a negative public relations experience for the Mission. It also appeared that the more that Truman was allowed to speak and the more that his speaking was recorded, the more that an attitude of entitlement came through loudly and clearly. He made the statement that he felt the city should provide a place for him and other homeless persons to go anytime and have coffee and donuts and apparently little else. He also made a

disparaging comment or two regarding the wealth of the community, that it should be shared with the homeless, and that the city should just give a downtown building freely to the homeless for a place to stay.

This line of thinking actually helped the cause of the Mission by effectively alienating many of the hard-working citizens of Findlay, who strongly believe that people who can work should work and support themselves. The mayor likewise reaffirmed this position of working towards self-sufficiency. The Mission was vindicated in the article that followed, when this writer pointed out the quandary of having services designed to help the hungry and homeless that are not being utilized to their fullest extent.

#### Evaluation

It is the judgment of this writer that the Mission board and the writer acted appropriately by not panicking and rushing to ward off an event that never happened. Instead of looking frightened and defensive, the Mission looked composed and unworried. They did send a couple of their trustees to the gathering to observe, and they were allowed to basically remain as anonymous observers. The one staff person who attended was new enough that the homeless who were present did not feel threatened or intimidated by his being there.

This writer, as the director of the Mission, had already opted not to attend, so as to allow free communication and flow of ideas without the fear of intimidation, contradiction, or interference in any way. In all, the Mission was perceived as having faith in God's ability to direct the outcome.

### Theological Reflection

The first thought about this whole event is that the Mission personnel were able to put the passage into practice that says, “Give all your worries and cares to God, for he cares about what happens to you” (1 Pet. 5:7 [NLT]). The principle that can be seen in the lives of Paul, Peter, Daniel, Job, and many others that God is able to bear the burdens and worries of his people much better than they is a principle that is hard for many to accept. Can people truly be self-sufficient if they are treating God as all-sufficient?

This incident also illustrated the teaching to wait on the Lord. The Psalmist said it well in 37:7, “Be still in the presence of the Lord, and wait patiently for him to act. Don’t worry about evil people who prosper or fret about their wicked schemes” [NLT]. Even though Truman did not “prosper” in his plans against the Mission, God worked something even greater than what Truman had ever envisioned. Out of the concerns that were expressed before the mayor and, later that evening, before the city council, several agencies other than the City Mission decided to begin planning on how the city’s resources could be arranged to better respond to the hunger problem that the homeless face.

### *Causes for Concern Among Rescue Workers*

There are those matters that arise at rescue missions that cause concern for staff, when they have to deal with situations that threaten their sense of morals or ethics. The homosexual question is one that was raised in an earlier chapter, especially when the idea of gay marriage came into question. How would a rescue mission respond to having a gay marriage being thrust upon it as being a legitimate type of marriage? Questions like these are the things of concern for rescue workers in many places.

The AGRM list-serve was very busy in May with a discussion of a similar, although far less prevalent, type of issue. Kitty Killian, who manages the Women and Family Shelter of the Coachella Valley Rescue Mission in Indio, CA, introduced this subject on the list-serve on 18 May 2009 with her question regarding the best way to handle what she termed “pre-op transgenders”. Her original post described the problem of dealing with an individual who has elements of both genders, including female breasts but with male genitalia (Kitty Killian, May 18, 2009, e-mail message to AGRM list-serve). This post gathered twenty-five responses from other rescue mission workers across the country in the few days following. There was concern, some confusion, and a lack of a clear answer, even though some admitted that they have dealt with the situation in the past.

The local rescue mission in Findlay, Ohio, had dealt with this situation two or three times in the past couple years with an individual who had come offering himself (herself?) as being female while having some very clear male characteristics, including a deep voice and the beginnings of a dark beard. This person, who had been housed in the mission’s women’s dormitory twice, was considered threatening by the other female residents of the dorm, who were convinced that the Mission staff had placed a man in their room. It was not until three years later that it was confirmed by local law enforcement authorities that this person had in fact experienced a sex-change operation, in spite of the deep voice and beard.

Fortunately for those on the list-serve, Lorraine Minor of the City Union Mission in Kansas City, MO, represented a mission that had been proactive in facing the problem. She responded by saying that CU Mission had a policy already in place, what she

described as a “position paper” (Lorraine Minor, May 19, 2009, e-mail message to AGRM list-serve). Understandably, Lorraine received several requests for a copy of the paper, which she made available to anyone on the list-serve on the day following the original post. Lorraine intimated that it was on advice of legal counsel that such a document was created, and she encouraged all other rescue missions to follow their lead.

The document itself was a statement of the intent of the mission to offer “compassionate emergency services” to anyone, regardless of their sexual orientation or other considerations. At the same time, the policy clearly addressed the issue of having residents who stayed at the mission in a “congregate living” arrangement (such as a dormitory setup) “dressing and conducting themselves gender appropriately” in such an arrangement (Congregate Living Policy 2009). This type of proactive stance would certainly go a long way in setting clear boundaries in a situation where sexual boundaries seem to be in question.

Less than a month later, on 11 June 2009, another post appeared in the list-serve that offered an alternative for missions to refer those with transgenders and other issues. The post identified a Bishop Yvette Flunder, founder and pastor of a “City of Refuge” church in San Francisco that reaches out to the homosexual community.

In reviewing Flunder’s credentials, unfortunately, it appeared to this writer that she had given up on her theological foundation from a conservative Christian upbringing and was unclear in her current theology. This post received some opposition from at least one Mission pastor, who expressed deep concern about encouraging Missions to send “an individual to a group that would not counsel them to seek life change through Jesus Christ, but encourage them to continue in sinful behavior,” calling it “wrong and

completely irresponsible on our part” (Pastor Justin Fisher, June 15, 2009, e-mail message to AGRM list-serve). Pastor Fisher concluded by saying, “We must be a light to the rest of the world and show them that we love the sinner, but we hate the sin. If we start to deviate from that course, then everything that we do is pointless” (Fisher 2009). The author of the original post humbly agreed, acknowledging that in retrospect it was not good counsel. This writer applauds both the stance of the pastor who spoke up and the humility of the one who originally made the suggestion.

These are the types of issues that this writer anticipates finding as the research continues on this project. Compassionate but firm responses from mission workers are helpful, but only if there is agreement and a clear stand on the core values of the ministry.

### *Personal Concerns*

As the research phase continued, there turned out to be a sizable delay in the progress of this project, due to several factors of a personal nature that will not be enumerated here. The delay, though, led to some difficulty in refocusing on the work of the project, creating a sort of writer’s block. Specifically, this writer experienced difficulty in the creation of proper and effective questions for surveys and interviews. For a long time there was no inspiration forthcoming, and he gained little insight from his peers in the program. Finally he was challenged by the new program director, who said that one of the best things a person could do in the research process was to research how to do research, something the program director had learned from his own personal experience. That made sense, and the process of researching research began.

The next several months after this decision, this writer searched for information on-line and in the library for research on research. He knew that just asking questions

without the ability to draw out the type of answers he needed for his project would be a waste of time and potentially disastrous for something that was already five years in the making. The assigned texts for the program were extremely limited in this regard. On-line investigation, though promising at first, did not yield the clear results that he had hoped. It was in the library, however, that he found success. Those who had written successful and effective surveys seemed to have empathy for others who struggled with similar tasks, and there were several texts that were interesting and potentially helpful, two books in particular.

#### *Additional Review of Literature*

One such text was the book *Survey Research: A Decisional Approach* by Donald S. Tull and Gerald S. Albaum. These two authors walk the potential survey writer through the entire process from start to finish, writing (at least at first) in words and ways very easy to understand. Take for example this quote that defines the process:

*Survey research* is a term that is susceptible to a variety of interpretations. As most often used, it connotes a project to get information from a sample of people by use of a questionnaire. The questions may be designed to obtain information that is retrospective, concurrent, or projective with regard to time. They may be asked in a personal interview, by telephone, or sent to the respondent by mail. A survey may involve observation of respondent [members of the sample . . . who supply information actively through answering questions and/or passively by being observed] behavior, or evidence of such behavior, in conjunction with or separately from the asking of questions. Observations may be made personally or by devices that record some aspect of behavior. The sample may be discarded after a single use, or it may be used over successive time intervals. (Tull and Albaum 1973, 2)

Tull and Albaum also mentioned that while conducting surveys as a means of gathering information is a phenomenon that has taken hold in the last century, its roots actually go back a thousand years ago (Tull and Albaum 1973, 1). Later in the book, as the process

moved more into specifics of the forms of research, of course the writing became more appropriately complex, but at least the reader was able to approach it gradually and not become lost in the whole process from the very beginning.

The other book that this author found extremely helpful was Richard E. Davies' *Handbook for Doctor of Ministry Projects: An Approach to Structured Observation of Ministry*. It is perhaps that, unlike the first book, this work is obviously directed at the Doctor of Ministry project that this author found it quite valuable. While maintaining a level of professional quality in survey research, Davies makes the specific application to ministry, which gives this book a unique and useful slant. This author was gratified to read early on in the book that its major concerns were "four methodological concerns: questionnaire design, sampling, adequate questionnaire return, and data analysis" (Davies 1984, 20). Thank you, Lord, for anticipating the needs of your humble servants.

This writer must readily admit that he has virtually no experience in the writing of surveys for research purposes. For this reason, the research that he conducted on gathering research was illuminating, to say the least. Reading what others have written about the pitfalls and successes of survey research has hopefully prevented major mistakes in the formulation of this critical stage of his project.

For example, one must consider the counsel of Davies: "Plan to spend time designing, testing, and refining your questionnaire, because it is the heart of any survey project. . . . You should also plan to spend time, effort, and expense on getting the completed questionnaires back. This may mean postage, phone calls and visits. Follow-up mailings should be part of your initial plans" (Davies 1984, 20).

The advice on planning and spending time working on the survey reaffirmed what the program director had said, but the ideas of follow-up, extra phone calls, additional mailings, etc. were new thoughts. Several writers, in fact, agreed with the importance of investing oneself in the time and expense necessary to insure an adequate return on the survey. Most of them talked about potential problems like the time lag from mailing, whether or not readers perceive the invitation to participate in the survey as junk mail, or similar issues.

Mail has of course stepped up in technology since the writings of most of the books with the advent of electronic or e-mail, although new methods also have perils. Sending an electronic survey or an invitation to a website where the participant can go to fill out the survey may unfortunately be an invitation for the person to perceive the whole thing as *spam* and trash the note completely. Since seventy percent of those who receive mailings do not respond on the average, it is a fair assumption that this is in fact a common perception. In considering these and other matters, the challenge for this writer became how to prepare and present his survey in such a way as to maximize the response.

Davies, in helping the researcher get started, shared what he called “A Horror Story.” It consisted of a fairly simple questionnaire with eight questions, sent to a target audience of religious broadcasters back in 1980. At first glance, the questions seemed harmless enough, but upon further reading and consideration, the whole survey turned out to be fairly useless in gathering the type of information that it sought.

Davies even invited the reader to evaluate the survey critically, in hopes that seeing how not to create survey questions might help the researcher to avoid such

problems in formulating his own survey (Davies 1984, 121-122). In addition, Davies then challenges the researcher to think proactively about his project:

Before trying to write a questionnaire, spend some time writing a memo to yourself about what you really want to find out. Then limit your questionnaire to the essentials. Your final questionnaire may be long, but don't make it longer than it has to be.

Given your statement of purpose, determine how you should analyze the information you get. Will you be using statistical analysis? What kind? Will you be asking open ended questions and doing content analysis? Does the information you are seeking break into easily recognized categories? Will you simply tabulate responses, or is a more complex analysis required? There are many things to think about. The point: What form of questionnaire will best meet your need?

Then think about the person completing the questionnaire. How much time can/will this person devote to it? How strongly motivated is the person? Is there any motivation for the person to lie? Does the person have enough education to accurately complete a questionnaire? (Davies 1984, 122)

These are the types of beginner's tips that were very helpful in creating survey research questions. Two statements in the above quote were of note to this writer. The first was the invitation to keep the questionnaire on track, avoiding the temptation to ask superfluous questions, which would make the survey longer than it needs to be. The other was the thought that one should consider the persons who actually will be answering the questions. Do they have the time, motivation, and honesty to give the needed responses? If the survey is too long or does not grab their attention, why would they spend the time or energy to help out a stranger? What incentive do they have to participate at all?

This writer had to consider the incentive question, as he must admit that he also has received invitations to participate in surveys on a regular basis. Some of these were from vendors where he had recently made a purchase or from businesses that had just serviced his vehicle or something similar. He recognized that the incentive he needed to fill out the surveys were balanced by the overall impression he had received, based upon his experience with the company, and the amount of time that it would take to fill out the

questions. Indeed some questionnaires that he completed, while probably well written, seemed tedious, long, and frankly quite boring.

In order to provide incentive for the people whom he hoped would fill out his survey, this writer determined that he would keep it short, succinct, on target, fairly simple, and interesting. Hopefully this combination, along with the fact that the survey was about the ministries in which the survey participants were involved, would cause the person to complete the questions.

### *Back on Track*

The actual process of creating the survey questions took months to complete. Writing the questions, reading them over and over again, trying to anticipate the responses of others to just reading and comprehending them, checking them against the stated questions at the beginning of the project to be absolutely sure that they represented the true scope of the project, all of these concerns took a great deal of time.

This writer worked literally for months to create what he thought and hoped was a credible, interesting, and reasonably simple product, one which would not be quickly discarded at first glance. He sent a draft of the survey to three fellow faculty members who had experience in such things. Two of those individuals were people whom he knew well and were invested in his doctoral project, and those persons responded with positive, substantive comments and suggestive improvements. The other individual was personally unknown to the writer and although indicating possible interest when contacted, did not in fact respond to the submission of the survey material. This writer interpreted this as a strong reminder that whenever possible, in order to anticipate a return from a field of inquiry, that field does better when properly plowed and planted.

CHAPTER FIVE  
RESULTS AND ANALYSIS OF DATA

**Introduction**

Rescue missions in the United States and a few other countries are fairly independent in nature. They generally answer to a board of trustees or some similar structural authority, but there is no inherent governing structure over all missions that by its very right of existence expects all such missions to follow its legislative rules. That having been said, however, there is an organization that has existed for nearly a century, to which many missions across this and other nations pay their allegiance. This organization is the Association of Gospel Rescue Missions (hereafter referred to as the “AGRM”). It is currently headquartered in Colorado Springs, Colorado, having moved there since the time of the beginning of this project from North Kansas City, Missouri.

The AGRM is not a supreme governing body. It was not created for that purpose. According to the AGRM website, it was brought about to produce “fellowship, cooperation with all engaged or interested in gospel missions, and other rescue work throughout the United States and in other lands, in the mutual advancement of the cause of our Lord Jesus Christ” (AGRM 2011). This writer can testify that over his personal experience with the AGRM, he has seen a professional approach of advice, resources, and education offered without any sense of obligation or superiority, only a desire to help any and every rescue mission to grow into whatever it can become.

Following the suggestions made in the previous chapter, this writer began to research the AGRM itself, to see what resources were available to this project. It was discovered that while there seems to be a dearth of currently printed materials available, there was an even greater resource that could be uncovered, which was the many rescue ministers all over the expanse of the AGRM. The experience, knowledge, and wisdom of these workers was a potential gold mine, if only it could be tapped. The stated purpose of this study was to find out if **“Rescue Missions struggle with the tension that exists between being faithful to the core convictions of the gospel and the socio-political responses to serving the poor.”** Was that really true? With the use of a membership directory that was five years old and a member login and password that opened access to membership files on the AGRM website, the mining operation was begun.

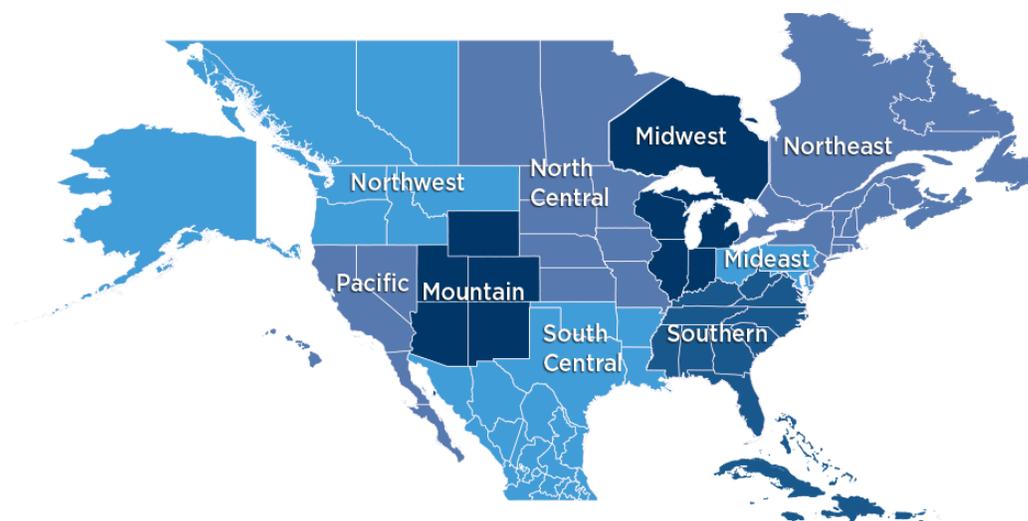
### **Historical Background and Composition of the AGRM**

The AGRM is not the original name of the organization. The earlier organization, called the International Union of Gospel Missions (IUGM), came into existence on September 17, 1913. The first location of the IUGM was New York City, where it was incorporated on October 14 of that same year. After several moves, each dependent on the situations of the organizational leaders during their tenures, it came to rest in Kansas City in 1966, then North Kansas City in 1990, and finally to Colorado Springs in 2009. On May 31, 2000, at the 87<sup>th</sup> Annual Convention of the organization, the name IUGM was changed to the current Association of Gospel Rescue Missions (AGRM 2011).

The AGRM is divided into nine districts that cover the United States and Canada. These nine districts span four regions. The East Region consists of the Mideast and the Northeast Districts. The Southern Region has only the large Southern District. The

Central Region consists of three districts: the Midwest, the North Central, and the South Central. Finally, there is the West Region, which has three districts: the Mountain, the Pacific, and the Pacific Northwest.

**FIGURE 1: Map of the Nine Districts of the AGRM**



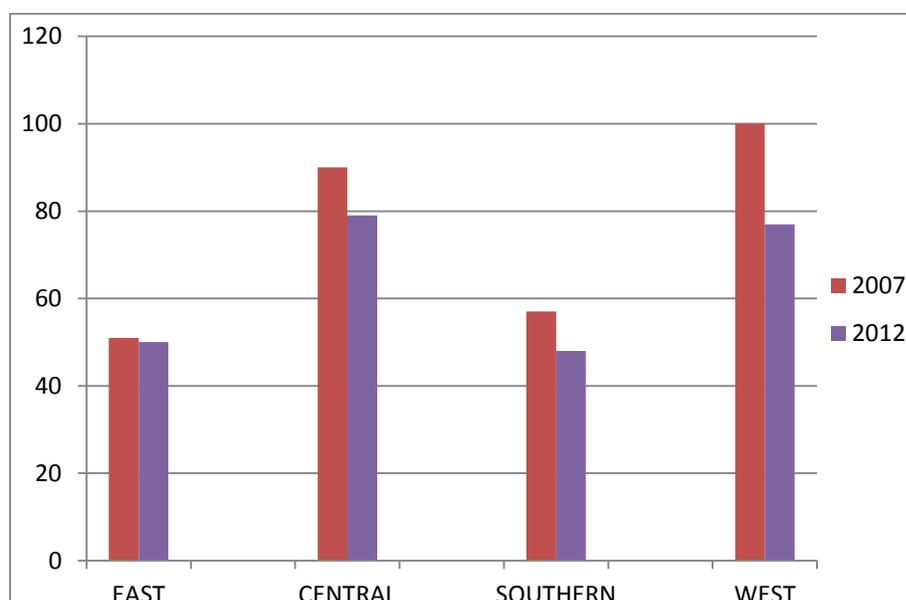
©2013, Association of Gospel Rescue Missions. Used with permission.

There are also five places outside North America where there are member missions of the AGRM: in Africa, Australia, Germany, India, and South America (AGRM Membership Directory 2007, 74). The decision not to include these other missions in this study was made for reasons of communications, culture, and distance.

Using the information about member missions as given in the 2007 directory, names, significant leaders, websites, and e-mail addresses were able to be extracted. To be complete, though, and recognizing that some of this information would be subject to change, websites of each of the member missions were checked one by one, to update the information to be as current and as accurate as possible. There were predictably many changes in the data.

Before long, a surprising and sad fact was discovered. In the 2007 listings, the number of AGRM member missions stood at 298. (Only North American missions were considered for this study.) In the five years from 2007 to 2012, several of these missions became no longer affiliated with the AGRM, for unknown reasons, whether voluntary or involuntary. The exact number of the reduction was eighty-seven (87), which decreased the number of missions to 211.

**FIGURE 2: Number of AGRM Member Missions**



These absent missions were to some degree replaced by other missions that were either new or young enough to have sought AGRM membership during that five year period. The number of new missions, though, was lesser in number to those leaving the AGRM, by a ratio of forty-three (43) to eighty-seven (87). This resulted in an overall reduction of AGRM member missions by 14.8 percent. This was not an even decrease in every region, because the largest decrease was in the West (down twenty-three percent), while the smallest decrease was in the East (down less than two percent). Was the AGRM actually shrinking? Was this decrease connected in some way to this writer's thesis for this study?

This writer was not privy to the information concerning the rationale of those missions who no longer maintained AGRM membership. Perhaps they no longer met the standards of membership. Perhaps through some sort of clerical or administrative neglect on their part, they lost their membership. The mission to which this writer belonged experienced this very thing. The mission was omitted from a current list of AGRM members a few years back, which was quite a surprise, since there was no intention of surrendering such status.

It was discovered upon investigation that there was indeed a clerical error on the mission's part, which somehow prevented the presenting of the bill for the annual membership fee to be paid in a timely manner. This was corrected quickly, and membership was restored. This writer presumed that this was not the situation for most of the missions who left the AGRM, for it seemed that they have not or are not actively reclaiming their membership. The only conclusion this writer could fairly assume is that he did not have the information to answer the question. The main reason for this is that only current member missions were approached during the project. Those missions whose membership disappeared for one reason or another during the time from 2007 to 2012 were simply not contacted. This was not a judgment upon those missions; it was a conscious decision to include active member missions, whose perspectives would reflect active AGRM status. It was the 211 remaining missions and the forty-three (43) new missions that were the focal point of this research.

### **Administering the Full Survey in Earnest**

On Monday, 29 October 2012, the preparations were over (see Appendix C) and it was time to begin. On the twenty-ninth and thirtieth, invitations were sent to all of the executive directors that had been located in the Mideast District. There were nineteen (19) Mideast missions with e-mail addresses for not only the executive directors but for other staff members as well. Eleven other Mideast District missions were identified for which there was only a generic e-mail for the whole mission or only one e-mail to be uncovered, probably belonging to someone else besides the executive director. The group of nineteen was addressed first, on the twenty-ninth, while invitations to the other eleven were sent on the thirtieth.

### **Launching Out Into the Mideast**

As promised, invitations were then sent on the first and second of November to all those other e-mails that had been collected from the websites of the nineteen (19) missions that gave multiple addresses for staff members. By the end of the second of November, 148 invitations to take the survey had been offered to Mideast District mission workers, and responses were beginning to be reported.

Many of the responses came in quickly. People seem to make up their minds about taking a survey and do so either quickly or not at all. There are of course exceptions to that general rule, but it is still the rule. The creator of the website, this writer's son, had engineered the survey to not only record the results in a workable format, but it instantly e-mailed those results directly to this writer. It was gratifying to

see the responses, many of which contained additional comments, the very thing that had been hoped for, along with the survey answers themselves.

### Reaching Out to All Levels of Rescue Workers

All levels of mission staff were contacted. At the beginning of the online survey, participants were asked to identify if they were executive directors, other directors, non-director staff persons, volunteer non-paid staff persons, or members of a board of trustees at a rescue mission. They were also invited to include their exact position title, if they chose to do so. Some did; some did not.

At the end of the first week of the survey in earnest, the count of responses from the 148 invitations numbered around thirty-three (33), which was over a twenty percent success ratio. By the end of the survey, this number had grown to forty-five (45) responses, and a success ratio of 30.4%.

It should be noted that this was the greatest statistical response of any district to the survey. This writer accounted this to the fact that this number included all of the responses from the City Mission of Findlay, Ohio, where he worked. It was also entirely possible that there might have been some name recognition among some of the other missions in the area, given the fact that this writer had served multiple positions as a director for this mission over the past nineteen (19) years.

### Reaching the Original Mideast Target Audience

There was an extended reference in chapter four to a number of executive directors with whom this writer had spent some time at a Mideast (ME) conference in 2008. As these names were encountered during the process of sending out the invitations

to Mideast executive directors, personal messages were added to the cover letters to greet those individuals, in the hopes of jogging their memories and hopefully eliciting their responses to the survey. The effort was not entirely successful. Several of those leaders had retired, moved to other missions in other areas, or simply did not respond.

### Reaching Out to More Districts

On the second week of the full study, not only were invitations sent to the Midwest District executive directors, but to the Northeast District ones as well. (See Appendix C for the explanation for expanding the study sample.) The responses from these districts were less than the one from the previous week, as the results ultimately showed success rates of 24.4% out of 127 invitations to the Midwest (MW) and 15.0% out of one hundred (100) invitations to the Northeast (NE) from the East Region (EST).

The solicitation process continued for the other districts of the Central Region (CTL). 111 invitations were sent to the North Central District (NC) and 168 to the South Central (SC). The successes were better with the North Central, as an 18.9% score was better than the 8.9% result from the South Central. This writer offered no explanation for the divergences in these results, nor was any resulting judgment made upon the districts.

The Southern District (SO) in the South Region (STN) was sent 289 invitations, but the responses numbered seventeen (17) percent at forty-nine (49), the largest bulk of answers from any district to that point.

The West Region (WST) was the last to be solicited, and the response was surprisingly rich. Between the three districts, 537 invitations were sent out with 107 responses for a 19.9 percent success ratio. The Pacific Northwest District (PN) in

particular was extremely responsive, with the single largest group of answers at fifty-five (55), outdistancing even the Southern Region.

**FIGURE 3: Responses to Invitations**

REG:	EST	EST	EST	CTL	CTL	CTL	CTL	STN	WST	WST	WST	WST	AGRM
DIST:	ME	NE	TOT	MW	NC	SC	TOT	SO	MT	PC	PN	TOT	TOT
Invitations	148	100	248	127	111	168	406	289	117	189	231	537	1480
Responses	45	15	60	31	21	15	67	49	23	29	55	107	283
%	30.41	15.00	24.19	24.41	18.92	8.93	16.50	16.96	19.66	15.34	23.81	19.93	19.12

On December 17, 2012, this writer decided to stop taking survey responses. At that point there were 283 total responses for a 19.1% success ratio for the whole AGRM. Additional surveys had been trickling in every few days, just enough that the statistical results had to be changed with each new response. At some point there needed to be a final count, and that happened in mid-December of 2012.

#### How Many Missions Were Represented in the Sample

This survey was not answered by every *person* to whom it was sent, and it was not answered by every *mission* to whom it was sent. Of the thirty (30) Mideast missions, half of those had no response from anyone representing the mission. Three of those missions had no contact information, or the one e-mail that was found was returned as undeliverable.

**FIGURE 4: Percentage of Missions Where There Was a Response**

REG:	EST	EST	EST	CTL	CTL	CTL	CTL	STN	WST	WST	WST	WST	AGRM
DIST:	ME	NE	TOT	MW	NC	SC	TOT	SO	MT	PC	PN	TOT	TOT
Missions	30	20	50	26	27	26	79	48	17	30	30	77	254
Responded	15	9	24	12	12	7	31	23	6	13	21	40	118
%	50.00	45.00	48.00	46.15	44.44	26.92	39.24	47.92	35.29	43.33	70.00	51.95	46.46

While a fifty percent response from the Mideast missions was impressive, it was second to the response that came later from the Pacific Northwest, where the survey results came from seventy percent of its missions. The lowest response came from the South Central, where the survey was answered by only 26.9% of its missions. The total response from all missions to the survey across the AGRM was 46.5%. (See Figure 4.)

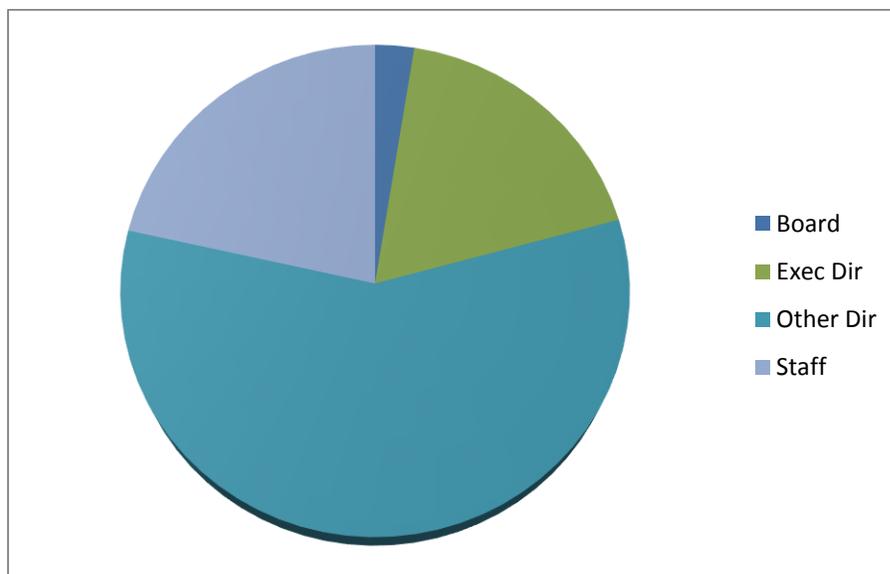
Of the missions that did respond, there were several who had multiple responses from staff members at the same mission. The Mountain District, for example, had twenty-three (23) responses from the individual rescue workers who worked at the six missions that had responses to the survey. These 3.83 responses per mission was the highest average of all other districts. These multiple responses offered some interesting comparisons, since mission workers in the same environment had different perceptions of rescue ministry and its current challenges. They also give different answers; one example of this is one rescue mission who had four respondents. When asked what the capacity of their mission was, three staff all identically said it was forty-six (46). The executive director, however, gave the number as one hundred (100).

### The Personal Data

In the first part of the survey, when asked for the name of the mission and its location (city and state or province), some respondents apparently became confused and gave their own personal name instead of the mission name. That was perfectly understandable and quite correctable, since with the city and state filled in, the name of the mission was a matter of record, drawn from this writer's files of research.

*The Level of the Rescue Worker*

**FIGURE 5: Level of the Rescue Worker Survey Participants**



The next question asked about their level of association and work with a rescue mission, whether executive director, another type of director, member of the board, paid non-director staff, or non-paid staff or volunteer. The opportunity to name the specific job title was given, although some did not include such information.

In short, there was the option of taking the survey anonymously, if the person did not wish to reveal herself or simply elected not to fill in specific answers. The entire survey was voluntary, even the information up front, before the actual survey questions.

To demonstrate the diversity of the sample for this study, it was discovered that the respondents included fifty executive directors (17.7% of the whole), 158 other directors of various types (55.8%), fifty-nine (59) non-directorial staff (20.9%), seven board members, and two volunteers. The latter two groups were difficult to gauge because of the small numbers. The seven board members included four that came from the City Mission of Findlay, Ohio, the mission where this writer has served for the past

nineteen years. As a result, those results might have lost some validity, although they were offered in the study nonetheless, and the readers can make their own determinations about that. Of the two volunteers, one did not answer any of the twelve survey questions but only gave personal data. This writer therefore has not included the answer of that volunteer in these results at any point.

It was significant to this writer, though, to have had responses from 267 paid rescue mission workers. The disproportionately large “other directors” category was probably due to the facts that: (1) they far outnumber executive directors at their missions; and (2) they were much easier to locate on mission websites than other types of staff members.

It was also significant to have fifty executive directors to give their own contributions into this study. Executive directors are a unique group who generally has deep reservoirs of wisdom and experience. It added to the strength of this study to have input from fifty different head mission executives, not to mention over 150 other directors and almost sixty other staff persons, who all brought their own wisdom and experience to the project.

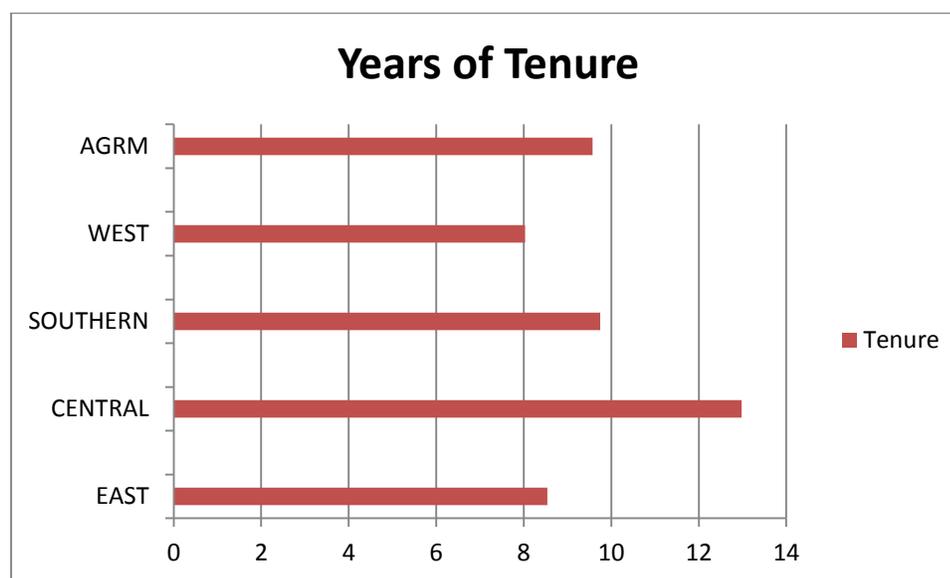
### *Reporting Tenure Numbers*

Following the identification of the work of the respondents, there were a couple of questions involving quantitative data. The respondents were asked for their length of tenure in years, and also for the capacity of the mission where they served. In order to tabulate the responses statistically, it was necessary to convert some of the responses into more definite numbers. For example, if the respondent said that he had been “20+” years

in ministry, the number was adjusted upwards by ten percent, so that it was recorded as twenty-two (22). Partial years were converted into decimal equivalents, and so on.

The same type of conversion was made for the latter question on the capacity of each mission to house residents. Many of the answers were given in ranges: for example, 180-300. In this case, a median response of 240, half-way between the two extremes, was recorded. If the respondent clarified the number by comparing beds as opposed to cots, or capacities according to cold versus warm weather, each of these were taken into consideration in determining an actual numerical value for mission capacity. Many missions predictably indicated that they were operating above their capacity.

**FIGURE 6: Average Tenure of Rescue Workers**



In terms of the tenure of rescue workers from region to region within the AGRM, it became very clear that the Central Region had the staffs with the longest tenure. Of the sixty-one (61) respondents from the Central, the average tenure was 12.98 years. All three districts recorded in double figures: the Midwest at 11.85, the North Central at

14.12, and the South Central at 13.87. It should be noted that these three districts were the *only* districts to average over ten years tenure.

After the Central Region, the next highest were the Southern Region with an average of 9.75 years and the East Region with an 8.54 average. Within the East, the Northeast District's fifteen (15) responses averaged only 7.46 years, the lowest of any district in the AGRM. At the bottom of the rankings was the West Region with an 8.03 average. The overall average of all four regions together for the entire AGRM and its 283 respondents was 9.75 years average tenure.

#### *Computing Tenure Ranges*

This number of 9.75 years provided the means to create limits for categorizing the tenure of rescue workers for this study. It became possible to think in terms of three divisions: *short tenure*, *medium tenure*, and *long tenure* (for the sake of comparative research). The bottom third of the sample would be the short tenure, the middle third the medium tenure, and the top third as the long tenure. The number 9.75 years became the median number, so that the bottom/short range would be anything up to 6.41 years, the top/long range would be anything over 12.73 years, and the middle/medium range anything in between those latter two numbers.

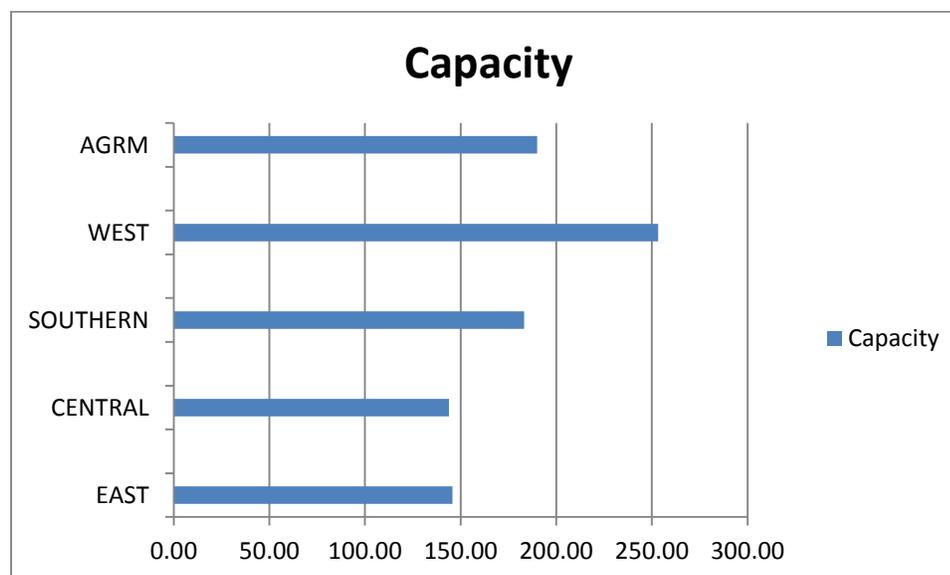
The practical application of these divisions was that now there was an actual statistical measure of tenure, and another means to compare answers to other questions. Did rescue workers with short tenures give the same answers to a given question as did workers with long tenures?

### *Reporting Resident Capacity Numbers*

The same thing happened with the question of each mission's resident capacity. It seemed that the largest missions were very clearly in the West Region, where the average capacity of the 107 missions who had a response to the survey was 253.3 residents. The Mountain District had the highest reported numbers at 348.9, a number that might have been slightly skewed by twelve responses alone from one very large mission. The estimates of the resident capacity from those twelve rescue workers, interestingly enough, ranged from two hundred to one thousand. Two of the twelve offered no number at all.

This was not, however, definite proof in and of itself of an abnormality in the statistics, because this mission was only one of three missions in the AGRM that reported a resident capacity of one thousand in the survey. A full sixteen missions reported they could handle at least five hundred residents at once. These are spread all over the map, incidentally; they are not limited to the west.

**FIGURE 7: Average Resident Capacities of Rescue Missions**



Besides, in the West Division, in addition to the impressive numbers reported by the Mountain District, the Pacific District averaged a capacity of 272.1 and the Pacific Northwest offered 201.2. No other district had an average capacity over two hundred.

The Southern Region had the next highest capacity after the West by having reported a number of 183.2. Note again that the Southern District is the lone district of the Southern Region.

The Central and East Regions put up surprisingly close numbers of 144.0 and 145.6, respectively. The Central Region had the wider divergence between its districts: the South Central came in at 191.7, while the Midwest declared a 149.6, and the North Central came in lowest of all districts in the sample with an average of only ninety-five (95.0). This was almost matched by the Northeast District of the East Region with a 96.2 estimate. The Mideast District estimated their average resident capacity at 170.0 per mission.

All of these numbers came together with a total average across the AGRM missions who responded to the survey of a 190.0 resident capacity.

#### *Computing Resident Capacity Ranges*

This again made it possible, using the process described earlier for the question of rescue worker tenure, to establish classifications of size and capacity to separate between *small* missions (of less than 127 resident capacity), *large* missions (larger than 252), and *medium* missions (falling between 128 and 251). Did large missions give substantively different answers to the survey than small or medium-sized missions? This method supplied this study with a way to quantify the responses for comparative purposes.

Readers from the AGRM might have their own parameters for determining average mission size, and it was certainly not the purpose of this study or this writer to invalidate or contradict those numbers. It was the fact, however, that such separate parameters were not available to this writer, and therefore he sought his own, which he thus offered.

### *Reporting the Reason for Workers to Continue in Rescue Ministry*

Before beginning the examination of the twelve actual questions that were asked in the online survey, there was one other item that the study attempted to draw out of the respondents. The last thing asked of each person surveyed was, “What would you say is the primary reason that you continue to work at a rescue mission?”

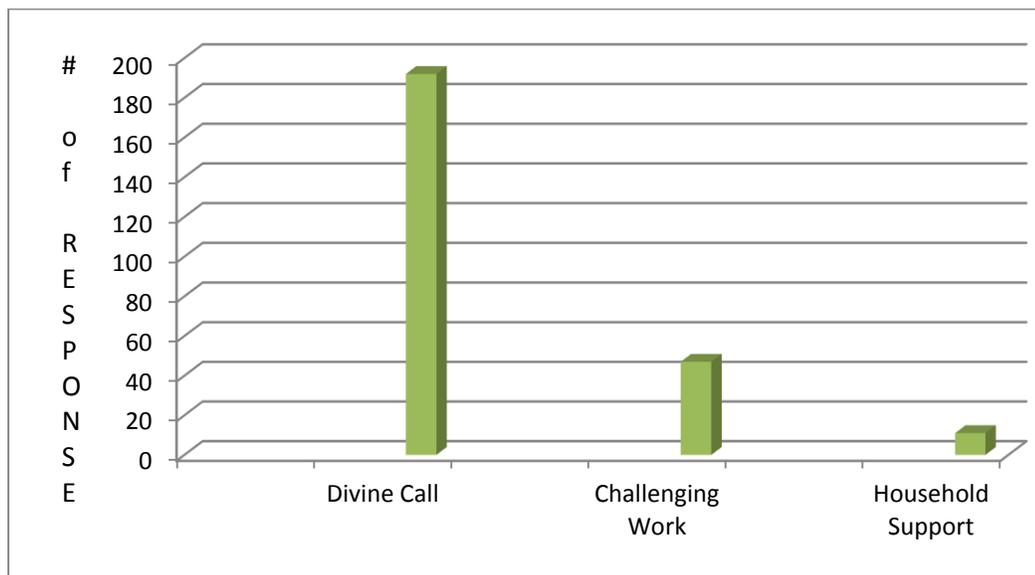
There were three possible responses: (1) the need to support one’s household; (2) finding the work challenging or fulfilling; and (3) a sense of divine call to ministry. No doubt there were other possible responses, but these were chosen as representative responses of the rescue minister who: (1) works because he needs the money; (2) truly enjoys and feels good about his work; and (3) continues to do it because God wants him to persevere. For reporting purposes, this study will refer to these responses by simplifying each of the answers: (1) *household support*; (2) *challenging work*; and (3) *divine call*.

The total responses to this question were as follows: 3.1% of the respondents said *household support*, 17.9% declared *challenging work*, and 79% claimed a *divine call*.

The significance of that statistical result could not be missed. If in fact nearly four out of every five mission worker who took the survey claimed that God had called them into rescue ministry and they continued with their work because of this motive, this

surely has had a positive effect on their work outcomes, their work environments, and their co-workers.

**FIGURE 8: Reasons for Continuing in Rescue Ministry**



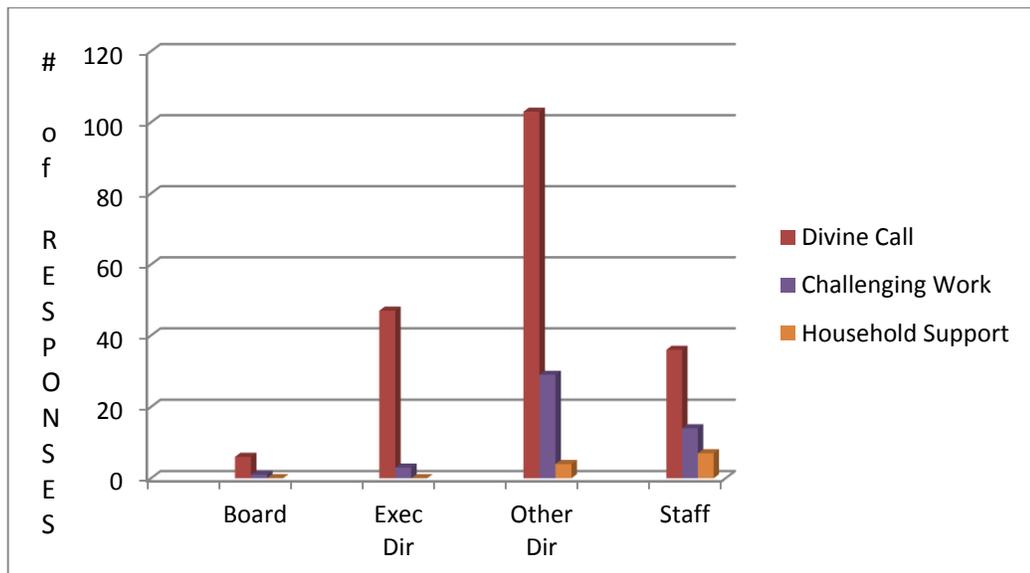
*The Numbers Measured by the Personal Data*

Were there different responses from different levels of rescue mission workers? The answer was yes: of the different levels of workers, there was a noticeable difference in the answers to this question. Among non-directorial staff members, 7.4% said *household support*, 25.9% offered *challenging work*, and 66.7% saw *divine call*. Note that the percentage of divine call dropped from four out of five to two out of three.

For directors that were not executive directors, 3.0% said *household support*, 20.7% perceived *challenging work*, and 76.3% called it a *divine call*. The trend appeared to be that the higher the position, the higher the sense of divine call.

That certainly was true of the executive directors: absolutely none said *household support*, 6.0% recognized *challenging work*, and a noteworthy 94.0% knew it was a *divine call*.

**FIGURE 9: Reasons Among Rescue Worker Levels**



For board members, this question had a little different significance. Board members are generally not remunerated by their missions, so *household support* would not be a consideration, and appropriately none of the seven respondents gave this answer. One (14.3%) said it was *challenging work*, while other six (85.7%) helped their missions because of a sense of *divine call*.

Did geography affect these choices? Was it greater in the East than in the West, for example? There was no huge discrepancy in the numbers, but the largest percentage of staff members who sensed the *divine call* was in the Central Region. The Midwest District had the largest concentration, followed by the North Central and the South Central. The East Region came next, just ahead of the Southern Region.

**FIGURE 10: Reasons Among Regional Areas**

REG:	EST	EST	EST	CTL	CTL	CTL	CTL	STN	WST	WST	WST	WST	AGRM
DIST:	ME	NE	TOT	MW	NC	SC	TOT	SO	MT	PC	PN	TOT	TOT
Divine	37	10	47	26	14	11	51	37	13	20	35	68	203
calling	84.09	76.92	82.46	89.66	82.35	73.33	83.61	80.43	72.22	76.92	71.43	73.12	78.99
Work	7	3	10	2	3	2	7	8	5	4	12	21	46
challenging	15.91	23.08	17.54	6.90	17.65	13.33	11.48	17.39	27.78	15.38	24.49	22.58	17.90
Support	0	0	0	1	0	2	3	1	0	2	2	4	8
household	0.00	0.00	0.00	3.45	0.00	13.33	4.92	2.17	0.00	7.69	4.08	4.30	3.11

If there was any noticeable difference, it was in the West, where the rate was almost ten percent lower. Two of the districts, the Mountain (MT) and the Pacific Northwest, scored the lowest on this matter, at respective scores of 72.2% and 71.4%. This could probably be accounted for by the fact that these two districts had the lowest percentages of responses by executive directors, at thirteen and eleven percent, also respectively. It might also have been affected by the fact that the Pacific Northwest had the highest percentage of response from non-directorial paid staff. This group, as mentioned earlier, had a lower overall reported sense of *divine call*.

The effect of tenure on the sense of *divine call* was also present to some degree. In the survey, the number of those who had short tenure who claimed *divine call* (77.3%) was within one percent of those who medium tenure (76.4%). The distinction was among those with high tenure, where the ratio rose to 83.6%. This may have been due to the fact that about forty-six percent of the high tenure sample that claimed *divine call* were executive directors.

The size of the capacity for one's mission keeping residents similarly had an unpredictable effect on the sense of *divine call*. Rescue workers who worked for missions defined in this study as *small capacity* (meaning less than 128) had the sense of *divine call* 78.6% of the time. Those at missions with *medium capacity* scored 85.5%. When the

level rose to *large capacity*, however, that number dropped fairly significantly to 71.7%, about as far as the *small* result was below the *medium*. There were no obvious factors that might have related to this variance.

### **The Answers to the Twelve Questions**

The study has now reached directly to the twelve questions that were asked in the online survey, which tried to get to the heart of AGRM rescue workers.

To keep it simple for compilation purposes, the multiple choice format was used for most of the questions. Additional comments were solicited and accepted for those who desired to share more than the requested information.

#### Question One: On Being Counter-Cultural

Question number one in the survey asked, **“How would you describe the counter-cultural nature of the Mission where you serve?”** Remember that the purpose of this study was about the potential problem of missions who were *counter-cultural* needing to raise funds for operation or expansion over and above their Christian donor support base. By going outside their normal Christian funding, they may be going to those potential funding sources who want to help but who may be opposed to the gospel emphasis of the mission.

There were three choices offered in answer to the first question, and they were worded in a way as to help respondents who may not have grasped the idea of *counter-cultural* in the question. The first multiple choice answer was, **“Rarely counter-cultural, focusing on meeting physical needs rather than changing lifestyles.”** The second choice was, **“Somewhat counter-cultural, helping people who wish to leave any anti-**

**Christian culture for a Christian lifestyle.” The final choice was, “Truly counter-cultural, directing people to change away from any anti-Christian culture.”**

The apparent difficulties that respondents had with the concepts that were within the survey were captured with the very first question. According to the results, nine people who had given information up to the point of the first question stopped answering after reading this question, and gave no further responses. Another seven answered the first question, but then progressed no further, perhaps after seeing that the second question expanded on the first. Two of the sixteen people that did not respond verbally commented that they truly did not understand what the question was asking or what the writer was meaning. There were, however, other respondents who clearly did understand.

#### *Question One Comments*

A process for coding the additional responses to the survey was developed. Extra comments that respondents made were divided into five categories: (1) questions of clarification; (2) critical feedback; (3) answers that gave multiple responses; (4) affirmations of counter-cultural ministry; and (5) miscellaneous statements of self-evaluations. The fourth category by far outweighed all other categorizations.

For an example, one person clearly explained, “Counter-Cultural is an apt description of what we do. Neither we nor any follower of Christ is currently part of our nation’s sub-culture!” (Steven Jessen, November 21, 2012, online survey response).

Another person wrote, “The culture is one of entitlements. We are counter-culture when we teach people how to work and support themselves, free from government support. In teaching about sin, forgiveness and personal responsibility we again go counter to the prevailing cultural norms” (Jim Harriger, November 12, 2012, online survey response).

Yet another respondent demonstrated that he understood the problem caused by the clash of culture with the way of Christ when he said, “The cultural values of most of our guests have contributed to their situation of homelessness. Therefore, we are daily involved in influencing those values to be redirected, for them to be conformed to Christlikeness, without insisting on their confession of Christ as Savior and Lord -- which is an individual decision based on free will, in which we rejoice when it does occur” (anonymous, November 15, 2012, online survey response).

There were other responses to the question. One director talked about the power of “attraction” when he said, “We accept everyone where they are and hope to lead them to Christ through attraction . . . meaning we ‘walk the walk’ more than just ‘talk the talk’ and pray that others will want what we have and then we can show them they can only get it through the blood of Christ” (Tom Bond, November 5, 2012, online survey response). Another rescue worker spoke of the true cost of transformation, “We do not force change we live transformation with great love. It costs you everything!” (Stephanie Boardman, November 12, 2012, online survey response).

There was also some critical feedback on the question. One anonymous respondent disliked the wording of the answers and said, “I do not like to pick from three things that you made up, *aka* being put in a box” (anonymous, November 9, 2012, online survey response). Other rescue workers did not agree with the choice of the phrase “anti-Christian”, as if there were perhaps some aggressive or hateful response to Christianity. There seemed to be a common interpretation of the question among many who said that trying to move people out of their sinful lifestyles and into a more Christian culture or lifestyle was the same as “forcing” them to change. Many declared that they would never

reject someone on the basis of that person not surrendering to the call of Christ. One writer put forth her understanding that ministry does not have to always bring about conflict by saying, “Counter-cultural but not confrontational” (anonymous, November 9, 2012, online survey response).

### *Question One Statistics*

As to the actual answers to the question, only 3.2% of AGRM workers said that their missions were *rarely* counter-cultural. It would be axiomatic, a self-evident truth, to say that transformation of a person is a challenging, time-consuming, yet rewarding work. It was significant to read that only a handful of missions would admit that they do not engage in the process of transformation as much as they ought or would like.

The second answer was that some missions are *somewhat* counter-cultural. The description of this state included “helping those who wish to change.” This answer seemed to be more palatable to rescue workers, who perhaps did not agree with the wording of the third answer, “directing people to change,” a distinction that did not go unnoticed by several respondents. Those who identified their missions as *somewhat* counter-cultural numbered 41.7%; those who identified them as *truly* so were 55.1%.

### *Question One Responses by Region*

These percentages again encourage the rescue worker who struggles to see his efforts at leading or directing others towards transformation in Christ in knowing that there are many of his peers who continue to make every effort to bring as many into the fold of salvation as possible. Some are more successful than others, for many and varied reasons. One executive director announced, “In 2012, 327 men accepted the Lordship of

Jesus Christ over their lives” (Denny Bender, January 22, 2013, e-mail message to this writer).

**FIGURE 11: Responses to question # 1**

REG: DIST:	EST ME	EST NE	EST TOT	CTL MW	CTL NC	CTL SC	CTL TOT	STN SO	WST MT	WST PC	WST PN	WST TOT	AGRM TOT
Rarely	0	1	1	0	0	3	3	1	1	1	1	3	8
%	0.00	7.69	1.82	0.00	0.00	21.43	5.08	2.17	5.56	3.85	2.00	3.19	3.15
Somewhat	23	5	28	9	7	5	21	15	6	9	27	42	106
%	54.76	38.46	50.91	31.03	43.75	35.71	35.59	32.61	33.33	34.62	54.00	44.68	41.73
Truly	19	7	26	20	9	6	35	30	11	16	22	49	140
%	45.24	53.85	47.27	68.97	56.25	42.86	59.32	65.22	61.11	61.54	44.00	52.13	55.12

While some might look at that statistic and pass it off as possibly a by-product of huge crowds at a very large mission, it was noteworthy that this comment came from a North Central mission that had a resident capacity of fewer than one hundred. By the definition discovered in this study, that would be classified as a *small capacity* mission. God is not limited to large venues in order to produce great results.

The notion that location had something to do with the degree of counter-cultural nature was also examined in this research. Where was the concept of directing others to change from the cultures of this world towards being Christ-centered most strongly seen in the AGRM? The answer was the Southern Region, where 65.2% of responses agreed to being *truly* counter-cultural. The Central Region was first runner-up with a 59.3% response, even though its Midwest District was the highest among the nine districts with a rating of 69.0%. The West Region was third among the four regions in percentage of being *truly* counter-cultural, with a variance between the Mountain and Pacific Districts being at about the same range while the Pacific Northwest was about sixteen percent lower.

In this aspect of mission work, the East Region was the lowest of the four regions in being *truly* counter-cultural. The Mideast District nearly duplicated the results of the

Pacific Northwest, having a 45.2% *truly* rating to go with a 54.8% *somewhat* response. It was probably noteworthy, though, that the Mideast District, in spite of the lower *truly* percentage, had a *zero percentage* response to any of its missions being *rarely* counter-cultural. This unusual situation also occurred with the Midwest and North Central Districts in the Central Region.

### Question One Responses by Personal Data

**FIGURE 12: Responses to question # 1**

	Board	Exec Dir	Other Dir	Staff	Short (0-6)	Med Tenure (7-12)	Long (13+)	Small (1-127)	Med Capacity (128-252)	Large (253+)	Divine Call	Work Chall	Supp Hous
Rarely	0	0	4	3	3	3	2	7	0	1	6	1	1
%	0.00	0.00	2.74	5.66	2.36	5.45	2.74	5.38	0.00	1.85	3.03	2.17	12.50
Somewhat	2	13	63	27	63	17	26	59	18	22	78	22	4
%	40.00	27.08	43.15	50.94	49.61	30.91	35.62	45.38	30.00	40.74	39.39	47.83	50.00
Truly	3	35	79	23	61	35	45	64	42	31	114	23	3
%	60.00	72.92	54.11	42.59	48.03	63.64	61.64	49.23	70.00	57.41	57.58	50.00	37.50

An interesting thing occurred when looking at the perceptions of different levels of rescue workers in regards to the first question. The percentage of non-directorial paid staff members who said that their missions were *truly* counter-cultural was 42.6%. That percentage increased with the increase of staff position. “Other directors” (meaning those who are not executive directors) said their missions were *truly* counter-cultural was some 11.5% higher than the rest of the staff. Executive directors scored the highest at this, almost nineteen percent higher than other directors. Board members only scored sixty percent, an unexpected dip from the executive directors’ score.

The truly interesting thing about those numbers, though, is that they do not represent different individual perceptions about different missions; they represent different individual perceptions about the *same* missions. How can this be? How do the

executive director, another director, and a staff person, who are all working at the same mission, come up with a different response about the status and work of that mission?

The answer, of course, is that the answer is not absolutely one way or another. It is the way that the individual *perceives* it to be. Truth may be truth, but personal judgment of a situation is relative to the person who is making the judgment. It may also be that questions were answered by those on the inside in the way that they *want* or *wish* that they were. The staff member had one perspective and saw the efforts to be counter-cultural from a different angle than the directors or even the executive director, who may have believed that the mission reflected his own beliefs, desires, or convictions about being counter-cultural. It might also have been possible that since it was a major responsibility of executive directors to raise funds, that the reality of their situations might be affected by the image that they might have wanted to project for their missions.

The one thing that definitely seemed to have been true, though, is that the percentage of those rescue workers who saw their missions as *truly* counter-cultural increased the farther up the ranks that were examined. The staff numbers were not as high as those of the mid-level directors, which were not as high as that of the executive directors. There was a slight drop in that number from the highest level employee to the board of trustees to which the executive director answered.

Would not the perception or the belief of the members of the board have been even higher than that carried by any employee, even those at the top? Did not the dream of shaping the perception and planning of the mission in making it more counter-cultural come from the highest point of the chain of command? Or was it the case that the executive director was the one who had originated the dream of true transformation

among mission residents? If the percentages uncovered in this survey were true and representative of most missions, perhaps the latter is the answer. It may be, of course, that the sample of board members is too small to be representative of most other missions. That part of the question may remain unanswered.

One question that can be answered was whether the issue of tenure played any part in the perception of one's mission as being *truly* counter-cultural. The numbers seemed to be fairly consistent across the board, as for example those with *medium tenure* were almost identical to those with *long tenure*. The difference was in those who had *short tenure*; their score was considerably less, almost fifteen percent less. (See Figure 12.) Was it the case that the sense of being *truly* counter-cultural in nature was something more likely to be recognized or practiced with time and experience? Or was there something else that lowered this number, like perhaps the age of the workers?

The relationship between the perception of being *truly* counter-cultural and the resident capacity and size of a mission was also explored. The results showed some variance. Rescue workers who served at missions with *small capacity* perceived their mission as being *truly* counter-cultural just less than half of the time. Those at missions with *large capacity* were more prevalent at about eight percent higher. When the numbers for the *medium capacity* missions were discovered, though, there was a jump of over twenty percent from the *small capacity* numbers. This was the same type of increase noted earlier among those who claimed *divine calling*. The *medium capacity* mission was identified in this study as housing between 128 and 252 residents. What made them so unique so as to account for these peaks in percentages? Was it an anomaly of the numbers in the survey? Or was it that there was something to be said about not being too small and

not being too large? While the variances could not fully be explained, but they did indeed seem to be real.

The correlation between the perception of being *truly* counter-cultural and those who claimed *divine call* was more predictable. Both questions relate to the work of God in the lives of those who work at rescue missions, so the correlation was readily present. Those who saw their work as a *divine call* had the highest perception of their missions being *truly* counter-cultural at 57.6%. Those who looked at their work primarily as *challenging work* had a lower sense of being *truly* counter-cultural at an even 50.0%. Those who worked to *support household* had the lowest numbers at 37.5%. A natural decrease was found where one would have expected to find it.

#### Question Two: Quantifying the Measure of Counter-Culture Nature

The second question of the survey simply asked the participant to put a number to their answer to the first question. The second question read, **“Please rate your perception of the counter-cultural of the Mission where you serve on a scale of 1 (rarely counter-cultural or not at all) to 10 (truly counter-cultural, calling people into Christian lifestyles):”** The respondent was then invited to enter a number from one to ten. The rationale of this question was to allow the rescue worker to quantify her answer from question number one in a way that could be more easily used for the computations of the survey results.

By the way, this writer admits an error at this point of the survey by quoting the question *exactly* as it appeared on the website. It left out a word. The phrase from the first question, “counter cultural nature” was somehow shortened to just “counter cultural”

with no antecedent. One respondent who caught the mistake verbalized the error, which the writer has now acknowledged.

This quantification served another important purpose, too. It also caused the respondent to verify their answer, which also led to an examination to determine if the answers were in fact consistent with one another. If, for example, someone said that their mission was *rarely* counter-cultural in the first question, yet rated that nature as a nine or ten in the second question, where was the consistency? Had the respondent changed his mind about his answer to the first and had simply not taken the effort to change it? Which answer was to be trusted: the first or the second? Or was this another anomaly of people who take surveys, that their answers were not always congruous?

#### *Question Two Statistics*

After having examined the comparison between the answers to question one and question two, it was clear that there was a very close correlation. Almost without fail, those who answered the second question with an answer from one to three were about 75% *rarely* responses in the first question. Those who answered the second question with an answer from four to six were over 89% *somewhat*. The rest of the responses were *rarely*; none were *truly*. If the answer to the second question was a seven, 66% of the responses were *somewhat*. The rest were reversed from the previous section: none of the other responses were *rarely*; all of the rest were *truly*. If the answers to the second question were eight to ten, the majority of the answers were *truly*, and there were no *rarely* responses. The percentage of *truly* responses increased as the number response from question two increased: 54% with the answer “eight”, 81% with “nine”, and 86% with “ten”.

There was only one true anomaly in the entire correlation. There was one respondent who had originally rated the counter-culture nature of his (or her) mission as *rarely*, yet that person quantified that response in question two with the answer “ten”. Outside of that single response, the correlation between the two questions was consistent and validated each response within the parameters of this survey.

With this new means of measure, a more concrete number measurement could be attached to the perception of the mission’s counter-cultural nature. By taking the average of all the numbers throughout the entire AGRM in the study, the average number by measure was 8.11.

**FIGURE 13: Responses to question # 2**

REG: DIST:	EST ME	EST NE	EST TOT	CTL MW	CTL NC	CTL SC	CTL TOT	STN SO	WST MT	WST PC	WST PN	WST TOT	AGRM TOT
1	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	1
%	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	7.14	1.69	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.40
2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
%	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	2	0	2	3
%	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	2.27	0.00	7.69	0.00	2.13	1.20
4	1	0	1	1	0	0	1	1	0	0	1	1	4
%	2.38	0.00	1.85	3.57	0.00	0.00	1.69	2.27	0.00	0.00	2.00	1.06	1.59
5	1	1	2	1	3	0	4	2	1	1	4	6	14
%	2.38	8.33	3.70	3.57	17.65	0.00	6.78	4.55	5.56	3.85	8.00	6.38	5.58
6	3	0	3	2	0	1	3	0	1	0	3	4	10
%	7.14	0.00	5.56	7.14	0.00	7.14	5.08	0.00	5.56	0.00	6.00	4.26	3.98
7	15	2	17	3	2	1	6	8	5	6	14	25	56
%	35.71	16.67	31.48	10.71	11.76	7.14	10.17	18.18	27.78	23.08	28.00	26.60	22.31
8	13	5	18	5	2	2	9	5	3	11	9	23	55
%	30.95	41.67	33.33	17.86	11.76	14.29	15.25	11.36	16.67	42.31	18.00	24.47	21.91
9	3	0	3	6	1	2	9	10	6	1	4	11	33
%	7.14	0.00	5.56	21.43	5.88	14.29	15.25	22.73	33.33	3.85	8.00	11.70	13.15
10	6	4	10	10	9	7	26	17	2	5	15	22	75
%	14.29	33.33	18.52	35.71	52.94	50.00	44.07	38.64	11.11	19.23	30.00	23.40	29.88
TOT	42	12	54	28	17	14	59	44	18	26	50	94	251
AVG	7.69	8.25	7.81	8.43	8.47	8.43	8.44	8.48	8.00	7.69	7.96	7.89	8.11

#### *Question Two Responses by Region*

The ranking of the four regions remained the same: Southern (8.48), Central (8.44), West (7.89), and East (7.81). The variances between the numbers, however, were

not nearly as wide. The differences between the three districts of the Central Region, for example, were only four one-hundredths of a point.

### *Question Two Responses by Personal Data*

The same scale as the answers for question one also held true for the level of rescue worker. The numbers rose from non-director staff to other directors to executive directors, and then dropped again for board members. This drop was more drastic than was seen for the response to the first question.

**FIGURE 14: Responses to question # 2**

	Board	Exec Dir	Other Dir	Staff	Short (0-6)	Med Tenure (7-12)	Long (13+)	Small (1-127)	Med Capacity (128-252)	Large (253+)	Divine Call	Work Chall	Supp Hous
1	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	1
%	0.00	0.00	0.00	1.89	0.00	0.00	1.39	0.00	0.00	1.89	0.00	0.00	12.50
2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
%	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
3	1	0	1	1	2	0	1	3	0	0	3	0	0
%	14.29	0.00	0.70	1.89	1.60	0.00	1.39	2.34	0.00	0.00	1.55	0.00	0.00
4	0	0	2	2	3	1	0	4	0	0	4	0	0
%	0.00	0.00	1.41	3.77	2.40	1.89	0.00	3.13	0.00	0.00	2.06	0.00	0.00
5	0	2	9	3	8	3	3	8	1	3	9	4	1
%	0.00	4.35	6.34	5.66	6.40	5.66	4.17	6.25	1.69	5.66	4.64	8.70	12.50
6	0	2	4	4	5	3	2	8	1	1	6	3	1
%	0.00	4.35	2.82	7.55	4.00	5.66	2.78	6.25	1.69	1.89	3.09	6.52	12.50
7	1	7	35	13	31	12	13	23	15	18	38	17	1
%	14.29	15.22	24.65	24.53	24.80	22.64	18.06	17.97	25.42	33.96	19.59	36.96	12.50
8	3	11	31	9	28	8	19	32	9	11	46	6	1
%	42.86	23.91	21.83	16.98	22.40	15.09	26.39	25.00	15.25	20.75	23.71	13.04	12.50
9	0	7	18	7	19	8	6	13	13	6	25	6	2
%	0.00	15.22	12.68	13.21	15.20	15.09	8.33	10.16	22.03	11.32	12.89	13.04	25.00
10	2	17	42	13	29	18	27	37	20	13	63	10	1
%	28.57	36.96	29.58	24.53	23.20	33.96	37.50	28.91	33.90	24.53	32.47	21.74	12.50
TOTAL	7	46	142	53	125	53	72	128	59	53	194	46	8
AVG.	7.71	8.52	8.13	7.68	7.92	8.25	8.31	7.95	8.56	7.92	8.22	7.80	6.88

The numbers rose as tenure increased, albeit slightly. The results for resident capacity at missions had the same unforeseen result as in the previous question. While the ratings for *small capacity* missions and *large capacity* missions were almost identical, it was the *medium capacity* missions who scored a surprising a full six-tenths of a point higher. This was not just a small rise; it was deemed a significant and consistent pattern.

Lastly, the question of why the rescue worker continues to work in rescue ministry saw a rise in this counter-cultural measure as the results worked through the three choices, with fairly dramatic increases. Those who saw their work as a means to *support household* had a mission counter-cultural rating of 6.88. Those who experienced *challenging work* had a rating of 7.80. Those who had a sense of *divine call* scored a rating of 8.22.

Besides the error that this writer acknowledged in the wording of the question, there were a couple of other concerns expressed about the question from the respondents. A couple of people questioned the working definition of “counter-cultural” by indicating that they believed that all cultures, no matter their origin or philosophies, tend to overlap in spite of their differences. This writer would respond to this by acknowledging that there would still be differences, as the respondents also admitted, and it was the differences that might well require a change of direction. Another respondent simply stated that he thought the question itself was poorly worded.

#### *Question Two Comments*

As with the comments on the first question, and inasmuch as there was an overall score of 8.11 for question two, it was not a surprise to have a strong sense of mission and transformation voiced in the comments. One executive director simply wrote, “If we are not consistent in telling the salvation story all we are is another social service” (Gary Rowell, November 26, 2012, online survey response). Another executive director put it even more succinctly, “To us it doesn't matter if you get someone off of drugs, teach them a good paying job, and help them to be faithful parents if at the end of their lives

they are sent to hell! We do all the above, but the most important is the Gospel of Christ!” (John E. Saltee, November 26, 2012, online survey response).

There was also the sense that missions do not try to force any sort of obedience or discipleship to the cause of Christ, that the gospel is presented to mission residents, but what they do with it was their own choice. One survey respondent wrote, “We use holistic approaches to training and teaching with a Christ-centered focus. We teach lifeskill classes and addiction recovery classes and more. Just to emphasize we use a Christ-centered focus but not a shove it down your throat method” (anonymous, November 26, 2012, online survey response).

Another respondent added to this by saying, “We present the gospel to all our guests daily. It is, however, their choice to receive it. Every night of the week we have chapel. We also offer Bible Studies, The Genesis Process, and the Biblical answer to Anger Management” (D. Clary, November 26, 2012, online survey response). Yet another person stated, “We do not force people to become Christian. You can go all the way through and never make a profession, but it won't be because you weren't asked or didn't know what we believe & practice” (Bob Rogers, November 27, 2012, online survey response).

Rescue workers also included in their responses the conviction that real change was deep and difficult to obtain. One executive director simply stated, “Change is not lasting if it does not start in the heart” (Dean Gartland, October 29, 2012, online survey response). Another writer also talked about the difference between internal and external change, when he said, “Again, I don't see us merely trying to change people externally. . . the military does a pretty good job at ‘behaviour modification’ but a terrible job at

transforming a person from the inside out. Lifestyle change isn't the goal - transformation of the heart is - then actions/behaviors change!" (Darryl Bartlett, November 7, 2012, online survey response).

Finally, several responses voiced the absolute conviction that transformation is God's work and that he is ultimately the one who makes it happen and who should get the credit. The following quote probably best sums up the sentiment that this writer found in the survey comments: "It is impossible to step into faith, following Jesus, if your hand is not on the plow looking forward. We are all here as a witness to the life-changing power of Christ. We are called to share His love and His TRUTH. Whether others fully hear or have eyes to see is not in our power. We do our part and God causes the increase" (Donna Scully, November 26, 2012, online survey response).

#### Question Three: Counter-Cultural Nature Then and Now

The third question in the online survey read, "**How does the current counter-cultural nature of the Mission where you serve compare with its past counter-cultural nature?**" There were three answers from which to choose. The first answer was that it had become *less* counter-cultural over time. The second said that it was the *same*, that it had not changed dramatically over time. The third was that it had become *more* counter-cultural over time. The choices were *less*, the *same*, or *more*.

The general subject was still the counter-cultural measure of the home mission, but with the third question the specific application was to compare any change or adjustment by the mission today with the stance of that same mission in its historical position. Have missions stood firm over time for the need for transformation in Christ or have they accommodated themselves to the current culture in order to survive the

challenges of the economy and other issues? Or does the answer lie somewhere in the middle of these two extremes?

As respondents approached this third question, there were some inherent issues with the wording of the question. The exact time frame was not established, for example. One rescue worker noted this omission and indicated that in her seven years at her mission, things had not changed in respect to the counter-cultural nature of the mission (anonymous, November 26, 2012, online survey response). This person made mention of events before her tenure at her local mission, though, that will be introduced later.

With this intended omission of a time frame, there were some rescue workers who felt they could not answer this question, due to their short tenures with their missions. In total, 20.3% of all of those AGRM rescue workers who took the survey responded to question three by saying they simply did not know the answer. Indeed, someone *was* going to be excluded if a time frame was given. If, say, the question had asked for a comparison to circumstances twenty years before, many respondents would have had no idea. As it was, many of the respondents imagined a time in their mind prior to their own coming, and were unable to answer the question accurately as a result. Ultimately it did not matter; 79.7% of the respondents *were* able to answer the question, and that was enough of a sample to validate the answers.

#### *Question Three Responses by Region*

Of the 79.7% of the total sample who did answer, 5.2% said their missions had become *less* counter-cultural, 27.5% said they were *more* so, and 45.3% said they were substantially the *same* as before.

**FIGURE 15: Responses for question # 3**

REG:	EST	EST	EST	CTL	CTL	CTL	CTL	STN	WST	WST	WST	WST	AGRM
DIST:	ME	NE	TOT	MW	NC	SC	TOT	SO	MT	PC	PN	TOT	TOT
less	2	1	3	1	2	1	4	1	1	3	1	5	13
%	4.76	8.33	5.56	3.85	11.76	7.14	7.02	2.22	5.26	11.54	2.00	5.26	5.18
same	16	5	21	17	8	4	29	25	12	11	20	43	118
%	38.10	41.67	38.89	65.38	47.06	28.57	50.88	55.56	63.16	42.31	40.00	45.26	47.01
more	14	3	17	3	3	6	12	14	2	8	16	26	69
%	33.33	25.00	31.48	11.54	17.65	42.86	21.05	31.11	10.53	30.77	32.00	27.37	27.49
don't know	10	3	13	5	4	3	12	5	4	4	13	21	51
%	23.81	25.00	24.07	19.23	23.53	21.43	21.05	11.11	21.05	15.38	26.00	22.11	20.32
TOT	42	12	54	26	17	14	57	45	19	26	50	95	251

Of the four regions of the AGRM, the ranking of those who had declared that they had become *more* counter-cultural over time saw the East Region with the highest percentage at 31.5%. All regions reported higher percentages of those missions staying the *same* over those who were *more* counter-cultural, but the East Region had the closest of the two numbers.

The Southern Region was second in percentage of missions having become *more* counter-cultural. Interestingly enough, the Southern Region had a noticeably high percentage of missions staying the *same* at 55.6%, along with the lowest percentage of missions reporting they were becoming *less* counter-cultural at 2.2%.

The West Region had the third highest percentage of missions reported as being *more* counter-cultural. The Pacific and Pacific Northwest Districts were both high in this regard, having registered scores of over thirty percent, while the Mountain District had a score twenty percent lower. It should be noted, however, that the Mountain District also had the second highest score of missions staying the *same* at over sixty percent.

The lowest percentage of missions having reported a *more* counter-cultural response was the Central Region. There was a wide variance among its districts, though.

The Midwest and North Central scored fairly low, while the South Central had the highest percentage of all nine districts, almost ten percent higher than the second place Mideast District of the East Region.

*Question Three Responses by Personal Data*

**FIGURE 16: Responses for question # 3**

	Board	Exec Dir	Other Dir	Staff	Short Tenure	Med Tenure	Long Tenure	Small Capacity	Med Capacity	Large Capacity	Divine Call	Work Chall	Supp Hous
less	1	1	9	4	4	7	2	6	1	6	7	4	1
%	14.29	2.13	6.38	7.27	3.23	13.46	2.74	4.65	1.72	11.76	3.63	8.70	12.50
same	0	29	62	21	50	24	42	61	30	24	88	26	3
%	0.00	61.70	43.97	38.18	40.32	46.15	57.53	47.29	51.72	47.06	45.60	56.52	37.50
more	4	16	40	12	32	13	24	35	20	9	58	7	3
%	57.14	34.04	28.37	21.82	25.81	25.00	32.88	27.13	34.48	17.65	30.05	15.22	37.50
don't know	2	1	30	18	38	8	5	27	7	12	40	9	1
%	28.57	2.13	21.28	32.73	30.65	15.38	6.85	20.93	12.07	23.53	20.73	19.57	12.50
TOT	7	47	141	55	124	52	73	129	58	51	193	46	8

When it came to the level of worker at the rescue mission, there was only one type of rescue minister who was adequately able to answer the question of how the current counter-cultural status of a mission measures up against the status from a time before the present. Board members tend to have limited terms of service, for the most part, and as a result were unable to determine the counter-cultural nature of the mission from the past. Two of the seven board members from the survey did not know how to answer the third question. The same was true for more than twenty percent of the other directors and almost a third of the non-directorial staff.

Only executive directors could truly answer the question of past and present counter-cultural status (only 2.1% did not know), and this was most likely because of the average long tenure of many executive directors. These chiefs of staff reported through the survey that they believed their missions had become *less* counter-cultural than past

comparisons a paltry 2.1% of the time, *more* so 34.0% of the time, and the *same* 61.7% of the time. Because of these facts, this writer was led to believe that executive directors were the best source of information for this comparison over a period of time, and that their findings were indeed valid.

The only real surprise from other respondents was that the numbers for the board did *not* follow suit with each of the groups of employees. Of the seven board members, four saw their missions as *more* counter-cultural, but only one saw them as *less* counter-cultural. Did board members perhaps believe that missions were always in flux and seldom stayed the same in their long-term natures?

The effect of tenure on the perception of changes in counter-cultural nature over time was analogous to the situation of the understandings of the executive directors. The fact that they had the longest tenure on average of any rescue workers meant that their percentages matched up well with *long-tenured* rescue workers. Those with *short tenures* did not really know (almost a third of the time), and were of limited help with this question, as their numbers consistently fell short of those reported by those with *long tenures*. The only other number of note was the relatively high number of *medium-tenured* workers who said that their missions were *less* counter-cultural than before.

The size of the mission and their resident capacities had an odd effect on this question and on the *medium capacity* missions in particular again. Those who said that their missions stayed the *same* in counter-cultural nature were about the same, no matter what their capacity size. Those who did not know and could not offer an answer were very close at the *small* and *large* levels, but *medium* capacity missions seemed to be more able to answer, as only 12.1% of the *mediums* said they did not know.

The other estimations, though, were quite varied according to the source. When it came to those who claimed that their missions had become *less* counter-cultural over time, the results from those from *small* and *medium capacity* missions were dwarfed by the number from *large capacity* missions. That variance was on a scale of 1:7 when comparing the perspective of those from *medium* and *large capacity* missions. That would seem to be significant. (See Figure 16.)

The final factor to consider for each section is the view of the respondent in terms of her reason for continuing to work at a rescue mission. Of those who maintained a *divine calling*, almost a third saw their missions as being more counter-cultural over time. Those who saw their ministry as *challenging work* were half as likely to see their missions as *more* counter-cultural than before, but more likely to brand them as *less* or the *same* as in previous years.

### *Question Three Comments*

In examining the comments on question three it was discovered that there were answers on both sides of the question. One person acknowledged that he believed his mission was *less* counter-cultural than before, and offered as evidence that attendance at chapel was a firm requirement before receiving the evening meal twenty-five years before (Rob Swiers, November 18, 2012, online survey response).

Another *less* response was given by a Southern mission director who shared his thoughts concerning their past and its effect on the present community:

Miracle Hill has had a strong Bob Jones University influence through the years. We have moderated our views in the past 20 years to be more collaborative with other agencies seeking to help individuals. We believe that there are many in the Homeless Continuum of care who are sincerely committed to helping those in need that may not share our strong faith position. Our goal is to always work in

the best interest of our guests. (Ken Kelly, November 29, 2012, online survey response)

Sometimes the wisest course when you have erected walls against the world around you is to learn the fine art of building bridges instead. This mission has recognized that they, like the rest of the AGRM missions, have not existed in a vacuum and can certainly not continue to exist without truly being a part of a community. It is impossible to be light to the world if one is unwilling to take one's candles outside.

There were also the comments of the respondent who was earlier quoted as saying that in her short time at her mission, things had not changed in the scope of being counter-cultural. There was more to her statement, though, when she observed:

However, since its inception one hundred years ago, it has decreased its demands such as no longer insisting that people listen to a sermon prior to receiving services. But I would not say that is less counter-culture than before, since the whole culture was more spiritual then. In other words, that would have been acceptable in the culture at the time. It was not counter cultural at the time to do that. (anonymous, November 26, 2012, online survey response)

This new idea is worth some consideration. Has the culture so changed so that what once was deemed to be normal has now become counter-cultural? Was there a time when the world of the rescue mission intersected so closely with society that it was considered to be a part of the same culture? If this be true, and the culture has changed so radically that the rescue mission has been left behind in the cultural shift, it has become little wonder that missions struggle to determine their place and their niche for raising the funds necessary to continue to operate.

This thought was also referenced by another respondent, who said, "We are more counter-culture today because the prevailing culture has changed. Such as, in the area of dependency, the culture has moved for individuals to be even more dependent on the

government than ever before. We still do much the same ministry . . . the culture has moved” (Jim Harriger, November 12, 2012, online survey response).

As Jim has just stated, missions continue to do the same ministry that missions do, but it is the current culture that has changed. This makes the mission *counter-cultural* by default. It is therefore not an issue of whether a mission *is* counter-cultural or not; the question is *to what degree* this would be true for a given mission. It is of course possible for a mission to change what they do to try to align more closely with the culture, but for what purpose? There might be a legitimate need to do so, but that was what this study has been trying to ascertain.

Many of the other comments made about question three fell into the common ground of acknowledging that a change of administration at the mission had caused a change of emphasis, and generally moved the mission towards being more counter-cultural. Most of those comments specifically gave credit to the new leadership or the administration who became more grace-oriented or focused on transformation or the like. One respondent spoke about the personal situation of his mission when he said, “From our history there was a time, because of finances, where keeping the doors open were almost on the same level as ministering the gospel. These things have changed in the past 6-7 years and our ED, Board and Senior Staff are on board that this is the ‘Gospel Mission,’ not a social wellness drop in center” (Lester Mesenbrink, November 26, 2012, online survey response).

This situation leads into the next question in the survey: what happens when the need for funds for the mission affects the ministry position of the mission? It does happen; Pastor Mesenbrink’s comment has brought it onto the table for consideration.

#### Question Four: Affecting Fundraising

Question number four read, **“Does the degree of your Mission’s counter-cultural nature affect its ability to raise money from the community?”** This question, like the first three, still focused on the concept of the counter-cultural nature of the mission. It also attempted to get to the heart of the issue of this study: have missions become so counter-cultural that they cannot effectively raise funds from that culture when necessary? If missions would attempt to move people away from modern cultures that at least in part believe and work against Christianity, how could they then look to that same culture for financial support?

As with some of the other questions, the answers helped to explain the question. There were three answers that were offered as multiple choices to question three. They were: (1) **“Yes, the community has objections to giving monies for the Mission’s religious ministries,”** (2) **“Sometimes, people have on occasion indicated that they are more interested in just helping the poor than ministering the gospel,”** and (3) **“No, the community appears to have real confidence in the Mission and does not object if it carries out religious ministries with the monies that are given.”**

These three choices represented the spread of responses that this writer has seen or experienced in the process of fundraising. The first were those groups or organizations out of our modern cultures (cultures shaped by Humanism or Socialism, for example) that simply would not allow their monies to be used for any religious purpose. Many missions have experienced the disappointment of searching for new funding sources among foundations or other public organizations, only to discover these sources readily excluded

religious organizations or helping agencies that employed religious methods or practices. Many of the respondents to the survey voiced that exact frustration.

The second answer represented many of the individuals and local organizations that themselves have no religious affiliation, but simply wanted to do good for people in need. The innate desire to be sympathetic for people who are suffering has driven them to respond to pleas for help from private non-profit organizations that have tried to fill those needs.

The third answer came from those Christians or churches who actively seek to fulfill their own senses of compassion and helping by supporting missions with their time and monies. Many of them have given *because of* the aspect of religious services or the preaching of the gospel and salvation. A mission might get an inquiry that wants to know if the way of salvation is preached every day to mission guests. If the caller is told that the mission has chapel every day, he will be satisfied.

It was expected that the great majority of the responses would be the second and third answers, because outside of inquiries to foundations for support, missions hopefully do not encounter a lot of aggressively negative donors. Out of all the 244 AGRM workers who chose to answer this question, only 2.9% gave the *yes* answer, the first of the three multiple choice responses. According to the way that answer was worded in the survey, this meant that 2.9% of the AGRM respondents felt that the community did indeed have issues of some kind with giving money to the mission that might be used for the mission's religious ministries.

If that were the case, how might the mission respond if it was afforded the opportunity to make alterations to its structure in order to answer these objections?

Would it make the changes, or would it stand on conviction and refuse to change? What if the response to this situation would mean the difference between having the funds to operate or shut down all or some of the operation? These were indeed hard choices.

Of those who did not answer *yes* to the possibility that people would not give to a mission because they did not want to fund religious programming, the remaining 97.1% was divided into 34.8% who said that this happened *sometimes*, and 62.3% who said *no*, this did not affect their fundraising efforts.

Remember how the answers were worded: a *sometimes* response meant that the donor was not concerned primarily with whether or not the mission used the money for its religious programs. The donor's primary concern was with the opportunity simply to do good to help people. There was no apparent attempt by the donor to control what it is that the mission does with the funds that are donated.

The reader should note the significance of that last phrase. Unless the donor had stipulations on the gift, sometimes called *directed funds*, at the time of the gift, and the mission agreed to those stipulations, the gift was a totally free gift. Once a person has given a free gift, that person has given up all rights to tell the mission what they must do with the gift. When the gift has left the hands and the control of the giver, the authority to determine what to do with the gift falls to the recipient of the gift. It is the mission who would then have possession and authority to decide.

It is very possibly for this reason that some individuals or organizations have refused to give funds to a mission. Even if the gift were a *directed* gift, say, for only buying food to feed the hungry, the donor might sense that the mission may feel justified in using it for another purpose and would not honor the gift. This of course would amount

to a lack of trust, and it would bring up the question of whether the donor has trust issues or the mission has had any history of justifying a change in the *directed* nature of such gifts.

It was the *no* response that meant that it was the perception of the rescue worker that “the community appears to have real confidence in the Mission and does not object if it carries out religious ministries with the monies that are given,” as was the exact wording of the question. If such a perception was always accurate, this could be understood to be a statement of approval for the counter-cultural nature of the mission.

**FIGURE 17: Responses for question # 4**

REG:	EST	EST	EST	CTL	CTL	CTL	CTL	STN	WST	WST	WST	WST	AGRM
DIST:	ME	NE	TOT	MW	NC	SC	TOT	SO	MT	PC	PN	TOT	TOT
yes	1	0	1	0	2	0	2	2	1	1	0	2	7
%	2.38	0.00	1.85	0.00	11.76	0.00	3.51	4.65	5.88	4.17	0.00	2.22	2.87
sometimes	12	5	17	5	6	5	16	21	7	13	11	31	85
%	28.57	41.67	31.48	19.23	35.29	35.71	28.07	48.84	41.18	54.17	22.45	34.44	34.84
no	29	7	36	21	9	9	39	20	9	10	38	57	152
%	69.05	58.33	66.67	80.77	52.94	64.29	68.42	46.51	52.94	41.67	77.55	63.33	62.30
TOT	42	12	54	26	17	14	57	43	17	24	49	90	244

#### *Question Four Responses by Region*

The numbers were overwhelming in favor of the *no* response. The 62.3% total was broken down by region with 68.4% in the Central, 66.7% in the East, 63.3% in the West, but only 46.5% in the South. The Southern District in the South Region and the Pacific District in the West Region were the only two districts in which their rescue workers reported a higher percentage of *sometimes* answers than *no* responses.

#### *Question Four Responses by Personal Data*

When the level of the rescue workers who answered the questions was considered, there was an unexpected result. Previous questions tended to place executive

directors at the top of the percentages in response, with other directors and staff at lower percentages. With this question, however, that trend was reversed. 61.7% of the executive directors who responded said *no* to the idea that their mission's counter-cultural nature negatively affected its ability to raised funds from the community. Of the other directors who answered this question, 62.0% also said *no*. Among non-directorial paid staff, the percentage was the highest, at 65.4%.

**FIGURE 18: Responses for question # 4**

	Board	Exec Dir	Other Dir	Staff	Short	Med Tenure	Long	Small	Med Capacity	Large	Divine Calling	Work Chall	Supp Hous
yes	1	2	4	0	2	1	4	6	0	1	6	0	0
%	14.29	4.26	2.92	0.00	1.65	1.92	5.63	4.72	0.00	2.00	3.19	0.00	0.00
sometimes	3	16	48	18	44	19	22	42	21	20	64	16	5
%	42.86	34.04	35.04	34.62	36.36	36.54	30.99	33.07	37.50	40.00	34.04	36.36	62.50
no	3	29	85	34	75	32	45	79	35	29	118	28	3
%	42.86	61.70	62.04	65.38	61.98	61.54	63.38	62.20	62.50	58.00	62.77	63.64	37.50
TOT	7	47	137	52	121	52	71	127	56	50	188	44	8

The responses that said *yes*, there were objections from the community to funding the mission with its religious activities, had similar decreases in percentage moving down the mission ranks. 4.3% of the executive directors said *yes*, while only 2.9% of the other directors agreed, and amazingly, not even one of the non-directorial paid staff acknowledged that there were any such objections to their knowledge. Was it that the staff was so confident about their relationship with the community that they did not consider this to be an issue at all? Did the executive directors know more than they were communicating to their staff? Which of the levels of rescue workers had the most effective contact with the community?

Tenure did not seem to be a factor in the answers to question four, as the differences between the three groups were less than two percent. The only difference in

tenure results across the board was that those with *high tenure* said *yes* three times more often than those with *low* and *medium tenure*. That ratio of 3:1 was noteworthy.

The resident capacity of each mission was likewise not a large factor in question four. The numbers from missions with *low* and *medium capacity* were about equal, dipping only for *large capacity* missions, by about four percent. The percentages for those who answered *somewhat* rose according to resident capacity. It was also noted that of those from *medium capacity* missions, not one worker answered with a *yes*, that there was any sort of conflict of which they were aware.

When rescue workers who felt *divine call* responded, their response was within one percent of the response from those who saw *challenging work*. Those who answered *support household* said *no* at a rate more than twenty-five percent less, but the small of only eight responses probably affected the number.

#### *Comments on Comments*

Comments from respondents brought out information in addition to just answers to the questions. Comments were welcome, and the online instructions allowed for and encouraged them. The comments that were returned were not evenly distributed among all segments of the sample, though. In gauging the number of comments offered during the survey, it was discovered that the largest concentrations came from the North Central and Pacific Northwest Districts; from executive directors and from staff; from those with *medium tenure* and from those with *small capacity*, and who felt the sense of *divine call*. All parts of the sample offered from one to eleven separate extra statements, and the total percentage of AGRM workers who filled out the survey who did so numbered 62.7%.

### *Question Four Comments*

Selected comments on question four are presented as follows:

One comment was an eye-opener: “This is not an objective question. Those who run counter to the Mission's culture do not contribute. There are plenty of counter-culture service organizations that they contribute to. The real question is: Is the community polarized? The answer is ‘Yes’. This community has always been polarized between (for want of better terms) liberal and conservative” (Tim, November 27, 2012, online survey response). Tim suggested that the real question was whether or not the community was “polarized” to one side or another, in this case apparently of the political spectrum. If this writer has interpreted Tim’s statement correctly, he would seem to be saying that this has a greater effect on the mission’s fundraising than whether or not one pursues the “culture”, the same one to which the mission may well run counter.

Tim was not the only person to indicate that the “culture” is not the best source for fundraising, and may not be even worth the time to pursue. There were several comments, but the clearest and simplest was, “The Christian community is generally positive, whereas the secular community is generally opposed. We do not go to the secular community” (Gregory Stetski, November 12, 2012, online survey response). Another rescue worker indicated that not only was it *possible* that people might object to the mission’s receiving funds, he saw it as *probable*, “We assume that people would object, so we would rather chase the real money” (Jay Thompson, November 29, 2012, online survey response). The notion was to spend the time where it was likely to have the greatest result.

It would be a wonderful scenario if indeed all any rescue mission had to do was to go to the Christian community for all of its funding. This was apparently not true for all of the respondents to the survey, though. If that were the case, there would not have to be discussion about finding other additional funding sources. While it might be the ideal scenario for fundraising, it has not always proved to be adequate for the need. When missions have needed to expand, build, or add programs or people, from where has the money come?

Many in rescue ministry believed that the funds come from God. One respondent made this statement of faith in the providential nature and power of God:

The Lord promised to provide all of our needs and does it in ways we don't expect. Others have joined us because we won't compromise the truth that sets us free for filthy lucre. What God initiates, God supports! Where God guides, God provides! We just need to seek His divine direction in all matters and obey. He will provide out of his riches in glory!! (Jim Brackman, November 23, 2012, online survey response).

There was also this very powerful personal witness that one rescue worker has obviously carried in his heart (as well as on his wall):

I have a response card that is on my wall by my computer to remind me that I'm doing something right. The letter says; "Please remove me from your mailing list. I cannot support you particularly since you have the unfounded (underlined) belief that there is only one way, your way, to believe in God. I cannot believe you are so unenlightened in this day and age." If a donor (or ex-donor) can conclude by our newsletter that Jesus Christ is the "only way", then we are doing something right. They can choose (or not choose) to support a ministry that meets physical and spiritual needs without being ashamed. If the culture eventually is repulsed by the Gospel then we'll obviously do much less or God's people will have to give much more. Either way, God is in control. To God be the Glory! (Mark Criss, November 15, 2012, online survey response)

Obviously this discussion is not a matter of whether or not rescue workers believe, because there are too many who have spoken to the deep level of faith in God that has permeated their hearts and lives. Rescue ministers have learned to trust in God

for everything, in the same way that their fellow pastoral ministers have also learned to do. The Lord's arm is not shortened; of this rescue workers have all been convinced, many times, through repeated demonstrations.

In closing this section, representative comments from each of the three perspectives were presented. First there was the comment from someone who answered the question *yes*, "Rarely do we hear objections from 'the community' about our overtly missional work. But we have been excluded from applying to numerous grant-making organizations (local and regional) because of our religious pursuits" (Denny Bender, November 12, 2012, online survey response).

Two responses that were from respondents who answered *sometimes* represent different experiences with the community. The first was a more negative response from the public, "There are definitely those who don't support our gospel focus and thus don't give . . . more foundations are moving away from supporting our Christ focus" (Bill Miller, November 26, 2012, online survey response). Bill later added, ". . . many new friends (including foundations) have stepped up to fill the gap left by those that choose not to fund our Mission because of our Christian principles. Foundation funding has shown steady gains despite of loss of some generous friends" (Bill Miller, January 16, 2013, e-mail message to this writer). The second quote was even closer to the exact statement of the *sometimes* response from the survey: "Most of our donors love the Lord. We occasionally receive notes from people stating they want to give and don't really care that we are Christians. Some people know we do 'good work' and want to support that work" (Sarah, November 26, 2012, online survey response).

From the responses that said *no*, there have been no objections, there were these kinds of statements:

“We are the largest non-profit in our community. We are blessed to live in a community where Christ is embraced, not only by our supporters, but our City leaders as well” (Donna Scully, November 26, 2012, online survey response).

“The Rescue Mission appears to have the support of our community, but most all it is God that allocates resources for His kingdom-building. The challenge is we do not accept government funding” (Brent Stachler, November 9, 2012, online survey response).

“... I think many of our donors are strictly interested in helping the poor (as opposed to evangelism), but that I know of there is not a lot of objection to ministering the gospel along with it. But if they did object, it wouldn't matter because we know what our priorities are and that God will prosper what He has called us to do” (Robert, November 13, 2012, online survey response).

#### Question Five: Current Challenges

The fifth question of the survey began to explore some of the current challenges that missions were facing. The question suggested some from which to choose, but the respondent also reserved the right to suggest his own. Question five read, “**What challenges from the community have you faced personally in Mission ministry in the past or present?**”

There were again three multiple choice possibilities: **A – Complaints over the limitations of Mission services; B – Charges of unfair or mis-treatment of Mission guests; and C – Challenges related to funding or other issues.** The C response allowed the survey respondent to add an additional choice, if they so chose. This was the point

where the intersection of theory and praxis was anticipated. If the mission was faithful to its core values of Christian witness and service, what types of resistance had been brought against it already?

Before this study looked at the final results of this question, it was discovered that in coding the comments in response to question five, this question, more than any other in the survey, elicited more comments of the “none of the above” or “all of the above” variety. Respondents declared that either they had simply not experienced these things in their missions, or that they had been through them all. One comment in particular was probably quite correct: “There is always great resentment by some toward the preaching of the gospel and Biblical principles for living” (Cal Nelson, November 6, 2012, online survey response). Such is the nature of a “challenge”.

#### *Question Five “Charges” Answer by Region*

With the answers to question five, the C answer (funding or other issues) was clearly the most commonly chosen response. It was the top choice of 54.6% of all the AGRM workers who took the survey, and was the clear choice of eight of the nine districts. This might have happened because the previous questions were leading respondents in considering the issue of funding. It might also have been because it allowed *other* challenges to be named, and indeed they were.

Answer B, which was the *charges* of unfair or mistreatment of Mission guests, was the least chosen of the three options. Complaining by guests who believe they have been mistreated is neither surprising nor uncommon all across North America. This writer has seen more than his share of men and women in whom the mission had invested much time and energy and care, but who chose to leave in a fit of anger, disgust, and with

much complaining about their stay. Perhaps they were creating a scene that justified their sense of separation. If the mission was so bad to them, then in their minds they were right to leave it. As with many issues of public relations, it is not about reality. It is about individual perception of reality. This is not to say that mistreatment does not happen at rescue missions; this writer is convinced that it does, else the *charges* would have no basis in fact at all. Each mission must take the situation seriously and respond appropriately to it.

**FIGURE 19: Responses for question # 5**

REG:	EST	EST	EST	CTL	CTL	CTL	CTL	STN	WST	WST	WST	WST	AGRM
DIST:	ME	NE	TOT	MW	NC	SC	TOT	SO	MT	PC	PN	TOT	TOT
Limitations	12	1	13	11	4	1	16	10	5	8	7	20	59
%	30.77	11.11	27.08	42.31	26.67	7.69	29.63	25.00	35.71	34.78	17.95	26.32	27.06
Charges	4	2	6	6	3	2	11	8	2	4	9	15	40
%	10.26	22.22	12.50	23.08	20.00	15.38	20.37	20.00	14.29	17.39	23.08	19.74	18.35
Other	23	6	29	9	8	10	27	22	7	11	23	41	119
%	58.97	66.67	60.42	34.62	53.33	76.92	50.00	55.00	50.00	47.83	58.97	53.95	54.59
TOT	39	9	48	26	15	13	54	40	14	23	39	76	218

This problem of *charges* of mistreatment was reported by 18.4% of rescue workers across the AGRM, the smallest response of the three. The highest incidence of reporting these came from the Midwest and Pacific Northwest Districts, while the lowest was from the Mideast and Mountain Districts.

#### *Question Five “Charges” Answer by Personal Data*

Among the levels of rescue workers who reported *charges*, the group of other directors was the highest. It was the percentage for board members that was noteworthy, though. Even with the lower sample of only nine respondents, five of those nine named

this as a challenge for their missions. 55.6% was the highest percentage reported of *charges* of mistreatment for any portion of the survey.

**FIGURE 20: Responses for question # 5**

	Board	Exec Dir	Other Dir	Staff	Short (0-6)	Med Tenure (7-12)	Long (13+)	Small (1-127)	Med Capacity (128-252)	Large (253+)	Divine Call	Work Chall	Supp Hous
Limitations	1	12	34	11	30	10	18	35	12	10	46	10	1
%	11.11	27.91	26.15	25.58	27.03	23.26	30.00	31.25	22.64	22.73	27.22	26.32	16.67
Charges	5	7	29	8	17	14	8	16	12	8	34	5	0
%	55.56	16.28	22.31	18.60	15.32	32.56	13.33	14.29	22.64	18.18	20.12	13.16	0.00
Other	3	24	67	24	64	19	34	61	29	26	89	23	5
%	33.33	55.81	51.54	55.81	57.66	44.19	56.67	54.46	54.72	59.09	52.66	60.53	83.33
TOT	9	43	130	43	111	43	60	112	53	44	169	38	6

Other higher percentages for the *charges* response were those with *medium tenure* and those from missions with *medium capacity*. Those who had *divine calling* scored half again higher than those of *challenging work*. None of the *support household* respondents gave this answer.

#### *Question Five “Charges” Answer Comments*

The comments from those who identified *charges* as their answer were illuminating. One respondent voiced what several others said when he reported that these charges come from residents who “. . . relapse or have to leave for disciplinary reasons” (Hugh Burns, November 26, 2012, online survey response). Another rescue worker offered that sometimes the *charges* come from outsiders, who tend to get only a part of the story: “People tend to advocate for the perceived ‘victim’. So we will occasionally get a call from a well intended dragon” (Dewey Harris, July 23, 2012, online survey response). Some of these *charges* can be quite specific when coming from outsiders, such

as, “Some folks think a mission should be free. Others do not understand when you must ‘BAR’ someone from the mission” (anonymous, November 26, 2012).

These outsiders could have been other agencies who try to help the homeless. One rescue worker pointed out that this was another difference between rescue ministry and other social services in the community: “We have boundaries that other social service providers do not have and so we are at times charged with being unfair. This is most often unfounded” (Jeffery Levine, November 30, 2012, online survey response).

In this context, *charges* are often viewed as a form of attack, which in turn is seen as a part of warfare, and some respondents identified this as spiritual warfare. One person summed it up when she simply said, “. . . The enemy is always prowling for opportunity. We simply respond in Truth and trust the Lord to lead us. . . .” (Donna Scully, November 26, 2012, online survey response).

There has been little that has been more likely to put missions on the defensive over the years as a perception of spiritual warfare. Here are some well-formed responses from survey respondents to *charges*:

“Most of what is spoken against us is based on patently false information. We have found that our website is the most effective weapon we have against lies which have been spoken” (Steven Jessen, November 21, 2012, online survey response).

“Once or twice a year I am challenged by someone who says we only help those who profess faith or jump through hoops and that we only truly help those who have done x, y, or z to ingratiate themselves to us. And yet we have good solid board to floor staff policies that guarantee inclusiveness in blessing of all people regardless of faith or lack thereof” (Lester Mesenbrink, November 26, 2012, online survey response).

One rescue worker who tried hard to hear and understand the charges said:

Though the sentiment of unfair treatment is there, all are treated equally (of course) and no one attempts to backup their sentiment with either personal experience or data gathering. That is probably the hallmark of polarization. We run a day room. Just as the community is polarized, so are the guests. Those running counter to the ministry harbor the sentiment of unfair treatment to anyone not in line with the ministry. (Tim, November 27, 2012, online survey response)

#### *Question Five “Limitations” Answers*

The fifth question also allowed for the challenge of *limitations* of the services of the mission. This response was chosen by 27.1% of all AGRM survey respondents, half again as many as chose the answer of *charges*. This response was most frequent in the Midwest, Mountain, and Pacific Districts, but least in the South Central and Northeast.

Executive directors were the highest rank of rescue workers to note this challenge, with other directors just one percentage point behind and non-directorial paid staff another one point lower. Those workers with *long tenure* named it slightly more often than other tenures. Resident capacity did not seem to be an issue, except for *small capacity* mission workers, who responded at a rate some nine percentage points higher than any other size mission. (See Figure 20.) It would seem to make sense that smaller missions would have more limitations because of smaller facilities and smaller budgets. This writer has worked all of his life in a *small capacity* mission, and has acknowledged this to be true in his own experience.

Those who had a sense of *divine calling* scored this higher, only slightly more than those with *challenging work*. The numbers for those who *support household* were much smaller.

*Question Five “Limitations” Comments*

*Limitations* were for most of the respondents a matter more of frustration than of a sign of a spiritual attack. There was a sense of accomplishment and satisfaction among rescue workers in what rescue missions were currently able to do, but an unhappy realization of limitations on what they wanted or hoped to do, but were unable. Note what one young lady said about her work: “In my job capacity, we cannot provide for everyone we encounter -- families with children cannot utilize Day Center services at the current time due to space constraints. This is a challenge presented both to residents and to the community, as there are few community resources that provide access to family-oriented services that mimic what we provide at the Mission” (anonymous, July 19, 2012, online survey response).

A similar problem was echoed in regards to services for women and children by another respondent, who said, “In our Women and Childrens’ shelter we can only take boys under the age of 12. This has created issues at times with women who have older boys” (Dean Gartland, October 29, 2012, online survey response).

Many of the other comments from rescue workers to the survey dealt with the expectations placed upon the mission from the community to handle a variety of issues. One respondent said, “They want us to provide housing for mental health, retirement and those wanting a flop house” (Chuck Fidroeff, November 21, 2012, online survey response). Another worker said, “We have a limited infrastructure at this time that limits our capacity to serve those with severe mental issues and those who are physically handicapped” (Jim Echement, October 29, 2012, online survey response).

As much as rescue ministers would like to meet those challenges and requests from the community that fall within the scope of their mission statements, it has not been possible to be all things to all people. Missions have not had unlimited funding and ever-expanding space for all that they would have wanted to do. Because of funding restraints, missions have had to say “no” to opportunities that are very genuine. Unfortunately, each “no” has not ingratiated them to their communities. It takes funding.

#### *Question Five “Funding” Answers*

Funding was the third choice of an answer to the fifth question, which allowed for “challenges related to funding or other issues,” as the answer was worded. This was the most frequent answer to the question in the survey. Only the Midwest and Pacific Districts voted less than 50% for this choice.

Executive directors and non-directorial paid staff were surprisingly equal in percentage for the third response, with other directors four percentage points behind.

Tenure was fairly evenly split as a factor in giving this response, except for those with *medium tenure*, who scored over twelve percentage points lower than other lengths of service. The reason, as mentioned above, was that a third of this segment of the sample declared more concern for *charges* of mistreatment.

The size of the mission was not a serious determining factor, either. Those from *large capacity* missions named the funding and *other* issues answer 59.1% of the time, about five percentage points higher than *small* and *medium* sized missions.

The reason for continuing to work at a rescue mission had an interesting effect on the percentages of this *other* response. Those with the sense of *divine calling* gave this answer 52.7% of the time, while those with *challenging work* were 60.5% and *support*

*household* topped everyone with an 83.3% score. It would have certainly made sense that for individuals whose main concern is having a consistent income, issues of funding would be prominently mentioned.

*Question Five “Funding” Comments*

As stated in the *other* answer, funding was a chief element of concern for many rescue workers. Note the following expressions of concern, which were quite representative of the feelings of many rescue workers:

“Some foundations and wealthy individuals will not give to a Christ-based Mission” (Andy Bales, November 26, 2012, online survey response).

“When we rent lists to prospect new donors, many complain that we are wasting money. I have the occasional ‘atheists are good people too’ comment on our clearly Christian approach to helping the needy” (Amanda Walker, November 29, 2012, online survey response).

“We have been trying to wean our Mission from government funding from HUD but have not been able to raise enough funds yet. Donations have been increasing nicely and grant funding has been going down but we can't quite make the leap” (David, November 26, 2012, online survey response).

When the funds have been short, missions have had to take special care with their donations and make tough decisions about programs. Not exercising accountability and responsibility with funds can be extremely detrimental for rescue missions. Leadership in Christian ministries can make several kinds of mistakes, but financial malfeasance can be the most damaging to fundraising. (See an example of this on page 212.) Any hope to expand has been built on this sense of responsible choices.

Here is a proactive response offered by one rescue worker:

Although the mission has not had an issue with contracting donations, we have expanded programs and are continually looking to create more and better services throughout the organization - due to the fact that we do not receive any government funding (and very little corporate giving) we do still struggle to meet our vision for the mission with what we have coming into the coffers :- ) (Frank Grill, November 5, 2012, online survey response)

Part of the response of responsible financial management has meant taking a proactive stance to recognize the problem in advance and take steps to resolve it or compensate for it. The following two responses showed that type of preparation:

“We have decided not to accept any government funding, though what we received was nominal, due to the limitations placed on religious programming. The community has more than taken up the slack financially” (D. J. Hejtmanek, November 27, 2012, online survey response).

“Because of the economy and the lack of city, county and state funding, we have to be innovative in how we use the money donated to Mission. We have an amazing volunteer department and have approximately 1 volunteer for every paid staff hour” (Jann S., November 26, 2012, online survey response).

Responsible choices combined with creative solutions have always been a bonus for any organization, including rescue missions. Many missions have been able to take full advantage of volunteer services to supplement staffing or program needs. It has been a positive step for everyone involved, and worth noting in this study.

#### *One Particular Comment*

Before leaving this point, there was one comment from a respondent that simply must be included here. The rescue worker challenged the idea that missions *should* be

going to non-Christian sources for funding, and the reasoning was something that must be considered. “One thing I have never understood is why we solicit (via direct mail) the unbelieving community to support the spread of the gospel. I see no Biblical precedent for asking for public monies to support spread of the gospel. The political community keeps a distance because we are faith-based, but they do secretly admire what we do” (John Zimmermann, November 25, 2012, online survey response).

This writer went through a similar experience several years ago during a capital campaign. His mission was approached by a local government agency, who thought that the capital plans for expanding the mission might make a good addition to their funding proposal that they were sending off for government funding for the city. One of the city council members, who herself supported the mission, opposed the measure vocally, affirming that it was not right for this type of government money to go to private non-profit agencies of any kind. The other council members did not agree, however, and voted 5-4 to give the mission an unprecedented large sum. In this case, accepting public funding contribute to what became a very successful campaign.

#### *Question Five “Other” Answers*

Funding was not the only issue among the comments for the *other* response. The remarks fell under several categories: (1) complaints from the neighborhood about the homeless population; (2) the need to relocate the mission to another location; (3) misunderstandings about the nature of mission services; and (4) building good relations with local agencies and businesses. There was a logical progression to these concerns.

First, there has been an acronym used among rescue workers for years in reference to community attitudes about the homeless: NIMBY, which means “Not In My

Back Yard". Many people want the needs of the homeless to be taken care of, but to have it done somewhere else. It was okay to build a new rescue mission, but not too close to their neighborhood. They wanted a place for them to go in the daytime, but not on the properties of their businesses. There has been an expectation from the community that the homeless shelters were supposed to meet all the needs of the homeless. The homeless would get shelter, food, clothing, medical care, hygiene needs, and anything else they needed or wanted, along with a place to spend their empty time.

*Question Five "Other" Comments*

The following comments were examples of the types of situations rescue workers have had to face:

"... people not wanting the homeless around the rapidly developing downtown area, millions of dollars being spent to bring in a new downtown culture, and homeless people don't fit well with that" (Lee Bartel, November 30, 2012, online survey response).

"We have a tense relationship at times with neighboring business owners who believe that we hurt their business by bringing the homeless to our location" (Kevin Campbell, November 26, 2012, online survey response).

"Multiple negative comments over the idea that once we build a bigger shelter, more lower income individuals/families will come to Findlay. The perception is that we will attract [homeless] people to Findlay" (Craig Rogghe, July 18, 2012, online survey response).

Secondly, the answer to being told that the homeless were not welcome in a certain area was to relocate the mission, to move it to another neighborhood. Predictably, the solution came with problems of its own:

“We have faced challenges from the city about zoning issues that limit us to expand our downtown shelter and add more beds due to the high need in our community” (Logan Hoffman, November 29, 2012, online survey response).

“Our biggest problem in the past 10 year is trying to relocate the mission. Community consistently says they love our work but don't want us in their back yard” (Roger Howell, October 30, 2012, online survey response).

“In trying to move our facilities we received a lot of challenges from the local community and fought misconceptions over several years. Also have not received any support from the city itself” (anonymous, November 28, 2012, online survey response).

Remember that these are answers to the question, **“What challenges from the community have you faced personally in Mission ministry in the past or present?”**

“The City Mayor wants the Mission to move from its current Downtown location - he blames the Mission on the vagrant population that is present in the downtown area!” (Lee-Ann Mills, December 4, 2012, online survey response).

“We had some NIMBY problems in our relocation. Mostly our difficulty has been the economy, hurricanes Ivan & Katrina, BP oil spill, etc. We recently moved a couple miles north of Downtown area...we used to be the reasons they were there, now some want to know when we are going to come Downtown & pick up ‘our people’” (Bob Rogers, November 27, 2012, online survey response).

It was easy to see the presence of the NIMBY response in several of these comments. Missions have faced an uphill battle by doing their best to serve the needs of the homeless in the ways they knew best, only to see that their best never seemed to be

good enough. This led to the third concern, that the community did not understand what the mission was supposed to do. Observe the following comments:

“The greatest challenge faced is that many in the community do not realize that we provide so much more than a bed and meals. We are currently working to help our community to understand the totality of the services” (Onita Yost, November 26, 2012, online survey response).

How does the mission help the public to understand? It is through education:

Educating the public as to all that we do is a constant challenge. The Lighthouse has been in operation as a men's shelter since 1999. Some still think we are solely a soup kitchen while others think we only provide the typical "3 hots and a cot." Many are surprised when we tell them of our other services and usually respond by saying, "I never knew that." (Chris Ellison, November 27, 2012, online survey response)

The last comment on this point came from a respondent that chose not to be identified: “One of the largest challenges that we have faced is the difference in our philosophy on helping the homeless from that of the community. The community's perspective is more in line with the thought of enablement than actual assistance” (anonymous, November 30, 2012, online survey response).

Unless there was a proper understanding of the role of the mission in the community, the people and businesses who have lived in it cannot possibly know what to expect from the ministry of rescue. This understanding, though, if it can be worked out, would enable some communities to bring the mission into the good graces of businesses, neighbors, and new relationships and potential sources of income. This was the fourth concern of the respondents: that the mission would build positive relations with local agencies and businesses.

These agencies were identified by one respondent as “hospitals, law enforcement, community groups, city officials”, and the admonition was to “work with [them] . . . and not against them” (anonymous, November 26, 2012, online survey response). Missions that have not learned how to work with local law enforcement and other groups have been operating at a great disadvantage. These groups may have not yet realized it, but they need the local rescue mission at least as much as the rescue mission needs them.

It should also be mentioned that missions have always needed to work with other agencies. There are some rescue workers or leaders who have felt that other agencies were rivals for the same fundraising dollars that missions have pursued. The truth, though, was that each agency was unique. Unless the mission was going to do it all, which has already been demonstrated above as an unrealistic impossibility, missions need to start seeing other agencies as partners instead of competitors, partners that have learned to consistently refer residents back and forth for services.

#### Question Six: Future Challenges

Like the fifth question in the survey, the sixth question asked about the problems that missions face. The difference was that instead of looking into the past, the rescue worker was asked to look into the future, to try to anticipate what types of challenges they might be facing in the years to come. The sixth question read, **“What challenges do you anticipate arising from the community in the future in your Mission ministry?”**

There were again three choices, but this writer must admit that he had difficulty with his creativity at this point. Two potential challenges came readily to mind, but a third one could not be imagined at the time, so that the third choice is the familiar *other* response. The three responses read as follows: **A – Changing expectations and/or**

**conditions of potential funding sources; B – Changing attitudes or laws about same-sex partners that challenge the Mission’s positions on this or similar issues; and C – Other issues.** These answers will hereafter be referred to as *funding*, *laws*, and *other*, respectively.

Unlike the responses from AGRM workers to the fifth question, the sixth question had a great diversity in the answers. This could probably be explained that while question five reflected the actual experience of the AGRM, question six anticipated what could be the case, and apparently imaginations varied from region to region.

#### *Question Six “Funding” Answers*

**FIGURE 21: Responses for question # 6**

REG:	EST	EST	EST	CTL	CTL	CTL	CTL	STN	WST	WST	WST	WST	AGRM
DIST:	ME	NE	TOT	MW	NC	SC	TOT	SO	MT	PC	PN	TOT	TOT
Funding	20	2	22	12	3	7	22	14	7	7	18	32	90
%	50.00	25.00	45.83	54.55	20.00	50.00	43.14	33.33	41.18	28.00	42.86	38.10	40.00
Laws	6	2	8	7	7	4	18	12	5	6	12	23	61
%	15.00	25.00	16.67	31.82	46.67	28.57	35.29	28.57	29.41	24.00	28.57	27.38	27.11
Other	14	4	18	3	5	3	11	16	5	12	12	29	74
%	35.00	50.00	37.50	13.64	33.33	21.43	21.57	38.10	29.41	48.00	28.57	34.52	32.89
TOT	40	8	48	22	15	14	51	42	17	25	42	84	225

The overall answer most chosen was *funding*, which was named 40.0% of the time. Three out of four regions agreed; only the Southern Region chose *other* issues over it. It was chosen by 50.0% of the rescue workers who took the survey from both the Midwest and South Central Districts, and even higher from the Midwest District. The lowest percentages among those who chose *funding* came from the Pacific, Northeast, and North Central Districts. No doubt the fact this answer was the subject of the previous two questions contributed to its prevalence.

Executive directors overwhelmingly chose this answer, as it accounted for nearly half of their responses to question six. Board members were slightly lower, and other directors ten percent less. Non-directorial paid staff was surprisingly the highest percentage among all rescue workers who reported, naming concerns about future *funding* issues a couple of percentage points higher than did executive directors.

Among tenure, capacity, and work reason factors, only those with *medium tenure* scored it the highest of three answers, while those who served at *medium capacity* missions were the only group **not** to name it the most. *Small capacity* mission personnel were the highest, with *large capacity* missions just behind. Those with the sense of *divine calling* were the only group of the three work reasons to name *funding* concerns highest for the future.

**FIGURE 22: Responses for question # 6**

	Board	Exec Dir	Other Dir	Staff	Short Tenure (0-6)	Med Tenure (7-12)	Long Tenure (13+)	Small Capacity (1-127)	Med Capacity (128-252)	Large Capacity (253+)	Divine Call	Work Chall	Supp Hous
Funding	3	19	46	22	41	22	26	48	17	20	71	16	2
%	42.86	45.24	35.94	47.83	36.61	48.89	38.81	43.24	31.48	40.00	41.04	38.10	28.57
Law s	1	15	38	6	21	12	28	25	21	13	52	8	0
%	14.29	35.71	29.69	13.04	18.75	26.67	41.79	22.52	38.89	26.00	30.06	19.05	0.00
Other	3	8	44	18	50	11	13	38	16	17	50	18	5
%	42.86	19.05	34.38	39.13	44.64	24.44	19.40	34.23	29.63	34.00	28.90	42.86	71.43
TOT	7	42	128	46	112	45	67	111	54	50	173	42	7

### *Question Six “Funding” Comments*

Those who commented on their *funding* choice to answer question six on the future challenges they anticipated from the community were concerned about several things. One thing in particular that was extremely noteworthy was the fact that younger donors seemed to be harder to draw than older, established donors. As the older generation of donors has been growing older and many of them passing away, it has been

a challenge to find new, younger donors to take their place. Two comments in particular caught this writer's attention because of their insights and suggestions:

“Younger generations of donors are asking different questions than older donors. Younger donors seem to trust less and want more proof of impact. This is not a negative, but an observation that will change how we communicate” (anonymous, November 8, 2012, online survey response).

One director even suggested some specific ways to avoid the problem:

We will be calling our donors that have elapsed over the past two years. We can only get phone numbers for approximately half of them . . . but at least it is something. We'll share the many changes that have happened since they last chose to support the ministry of rescue. The "younger" generation doesn't seem to have much loyalty to any group or organization. They are like the "older" generation that has proven themselves to be so faithful. We have to essentially "win them over" every year in order to receive a donation. Our list of donors that haven't given in two years continues to grow. The challenge is "getting our message out to another audience". New methods, new ways, same glorious story. :) (Mark Criss, November 15, 2012, online survey response)

One respondent suggested a problem that has continued to grow over the past few years, a problem that has kept the various fundraising companies busy as they vie for the opportunity to help missions find new funding sources. “In development, there is a shift of funds from direct mail to the Internet and relational giving. We will have to figure out how to cope with that since Direct Mail has been our bread and butter for as long as we can remember” (Logan Hoffman, November 29, 2012, online survey response).

This writer has never believed that missions were afraid to change. He has come to the opinion, however, that they might be afraid that the change might not work as well as things had in the past. Truly “direct mail” has been the “bread and butter” for a lot of missions for many years, and many missions have become very successful at it. Would

they, though, be as successful were they to have to change to a new method? These have been valid concerns for now and into the future.

*Question Six “Laws” Answers*

While the *laws* response to question six was not the most frequently chosen, it nonetheless drew a great deal of response. Many Christians and rescue workers alike have been used to dealing more with traditional sexual values and traditional, nuclear families. There were respondents who indicated that in their communities, or at least at their missions, they had not dealt with the types of issues brought up by this response. It might well be out of some Christians’ “comfort zones” to deal with abnormal sexuality, but it has been happening more and more. The missions who have not dealt with it are becoming more of the exception rather than the rule.

The percentage of those rescue workers from the survey who identified *laws* as their answer to question six was 27.1%, which meant that more than one in four had concerns about the future of their ministries being affected by changing laws or attitudes about issues that have traditionally been marked by Christians as forms of sexual deviance. Same-sex marriages were specifically named in the text of the answer, but this would also include transgendered persons and any other situation that has become a challenge for rescue missions to house.

Regionally the concern was about the same, as the West Region was closest to the national level, followed by the Southern Region. The highest was the Central Region, where over a third of those who answered this question identified *laws* as a chief concern. The lowest was the East Region, where the response was about one in six. This included the Mideast District, which was the lowest of the nine AGRM districts. (See Figure 22.)

Executive directors led the way in their concerns for this issue, followed by other directors. Neither board members nor non-directorial paid staff rated this concern nearly as high, with numbers far less than half those of the directors.

The longer the tenure of the rescue worker, the greater the concern was for the potential challenge of this issue. Those with *short tenure* were less than those with *medium tenure*. Those with *long tenure* expressed their concern as greater than any other challenge, even *funding*.

The mystery of the *medium capacity* mission workers continued with this issue. While those from *small capacity* missions named the *laws* challenge 3.5% less often than those from *large capacity* missions, those from *medium capacity* missions named this challenge more than 16% more often. There was no apparent reason for this high number that this writer could detect. Have *medium capacity* missions simply encountered this type of problem more often?

Those who felt *divine calling* expressed concern over the potential of changing *laws* about 11% more often than did rescue ministers with *challenging* work. Of the seven rescue workers who stayed at their mission to *support household*, not one of them named this issue.

#### *Question Six "Laws" Comments*

The comments on these *laws* issues actually have come from this and earlier questions in the survey, going all the way back to the second question, like the following comment: "I think that our battle will continue to worsen--our community just voted and overturned the decision of our city commissioners that made a special class of persons for lesbians, gays, transgenders and bisexuals. At least for now we have overturned this

ordinance that our commissioners passed” (anonymous, November 12, 2012, online survey response).

It was significant that this last person termed this a “battle”. Besides the challenge of not knowing how to respond when members of the LGBT community have presented themselves for services at rescue missions, it has always seemed that this was a moral issue for Christians, whether they served at missions, churches, or anywhere else.

One comment that surfaced during discussion of question four indicated another arena for that battle: “We do have trouble with issues like Homosexual Churches who want to come and minister and are upset when we are not comfortable with that” (anonymous, November 20, 2012, online survey response). This writer has always noted in his experience with all the rescue ministers he has known, that they have always tried to be fair in dealing with others, but how far should that sense of fairness extend? Should missions offer a forum for everyone who has something to say, even in the name of Jesus Christ? Of a certainty, no one would agree that such a blank check could be offered to just anyone with a word to say, without first checking one’s spiritual barometer and understanding of what the scriptures have said on the issue. It has become more than a battle; it has been for years a spiritual warfare for many, and lines have been drawn.

Take for example the following statement that appeared in the comments on question five:

We have had protests against our stand on homosexuality. We do not ask about sexual orientation on our intake form, but we do have a statement on Marriage and Sexuality that guests must agree to abide by while a guest. Specifically, the practice of homosexual activity is not allowed while a guest. Guests do not have to agree with the statement but must agree to abide by it during their stay. (Harold Youtzy Jr., November 12, 2012, online survey response)

In most battles, wise participants have learned to be both careful and proactive in their preparations. When they have determined where the conflict will escalate, they have worked in advance to prepare themselves for any foreseeable contingencies. This has proved of course to be a wise move, as it has been much easier to deal with complaints or resistance when one could point to a policy that was already in place.

This proactive stance in some situations has taken the form of a “lifestyle covenant”, into which both residents and rescue workers alike have entered. For the resident, it may have been a condition of stay at the mission. For the rescue worker, it has been a way to hold up a standard that, since he has required it of others, he has first committed himself to the same. Other missions have written faith statements that directly addressed wholesome, godly living choices. One director reported that their specific lifestyle covenant that they have had, which included staff and volunteers, has been “challenged regularly” (Adele Plett Bartel, November 20, 2012, online survey response).

A few more pertinent comments follow on the *laws* issue:

“Mostly complaints are that we do not have specific housing areas for the LGBT community” (Janelle James, November 10, 2012, online survey response).

Discrimination has always been a serious charge. Unfounded or not, charges of discrimination have been dangerous weapons of war of the enemy. People listen to such charges, and their senses of fairness and freedom have not always worked in the mission’s favor.

“. . . there are (occasionally) gender issues at our shelters (men who believe themselves to be women and want to stay at our women's shelter, etc.)” (anonymous, November 9, 2012, online survey response).

“. . . other missions are reporting legal discrimination challenges concerning housing of trans-sexuals” (Beverly Atkins, July 19, 2012, online survey response).

“We have not been faced with same sex partners yet. We would tell them we are not able to meet their need at this time. Homosexuals do stay with us but cannot practice or show their male preferences. 98% of the men are very disgusted with that life style” (Ray Raines, November 6, 2012, online survey response).

“Long Beach has a large LGBT community and so while we do not discriminate whom we serve we find in the case of a transgender client it is best to refer to resources specifically designed to assist people in that situation” (anonymous, November 30, 2012, online survey response).

This was another one of those situations where missions have needed to outsource for services that they have not offered. The previous commenter simply said they could not meet their needs. These plans have worked for some in the past, but will they be able to continue as viable options in the future?

“We have worked with ADF to develop a policy in regard to this issue” (Howard Blomberg, November 21, 2012, online survey response). “ADF” meant the Alliance Defending Freedom, an organization that has assisted non-profits in dealing with these types of issues.

One rescue worker perceived a growing problem in this area:

The GLBT agenda is going to have a tremendous effect on our ministry. Equal rights for homosexuals and transgendered individuals poses tremendous hurdles for homeless service providers. Having a homosexual in a single sex dormitory poses enough issues, but as transgenders become more and more accepted and common, we also will have to deal with where to place a transgendered individual, where to draw the line between what is male and female, protecting those individuals who identify as a different sex than they exhibit, and protecting others from individuals seeking to take advantage of the nebulous nature of

transgender laws and "walking on eggshells" atmosphere that our overly litigious society have created. (Jeffery Levine, November 30, 2012, online survey response)

The following final comment was very insightful. "We have faced the issue of same sex relationships and transgender clients in our shelters and have developed policies. When you think about it, what is the difference between providing food and shelter to someone with one sin than someone with another sin? And who among us is sinless and really DESERVES food and shelter?" (anonymous, November 26, 2012, online survey response).

This writer has assumed that this discussion was never about the value of the person. Sinners and saints alike have never *deserved* grace. This was always about the fact that sinners and saints have all *received* grace from God, irrespective of character or actions. As for whether one sin is worse than another, that would be a debate for another venue. The penalty for sin across the board has always been clear. The effects or consequences of sin may vary a great deal. The point is taken, though. Jesus did not appear to come to *categorize* sin, but to overcome it.

These comments all represented the serious nature of the problem of the *laws* issue as it has appeared in recent years. For those who have not yet encountered it, it is just a matter of time. Missions who take a proactive stance will be much more likely to be prepared spiritually, socially, and legally for what repercussions might follow.

#### *Question Six "Other" Answers*

When a survey question had two choices, and the respondents chose the third, non-specific answer, there were usually two reasons: either the respondent did not agree with either of the stated choices, or they were able to think of another alternative answer.

For the survey, 32.9% of those who answered this question, which was just under a third of them, gave the answer “*other*” issues. This answer was most frequent in the Southern Region, followed closely by the East Region and the West. Only the Central Region scored was significantly lower.

While three of the seven board members named *other* issues for question six, the paid staff had the lowest percentages at the top executive levels. Executive directors named *other* issues less than one time out of five, having chosen instead to follow the two named options. Other directors scored it fifteen percent higher and non-directorial paid staff twenty percent higher. (See Figure 22.)

Longer *tenure* of rescue workers decreased the percentages. *Short tenure* was extraordinarily high at 44.6%. Could it be that they had simply not worked long enough to anticipate what might be coming, giving instead this non-specific answer? *Medium tenure* was twenty percent less, and *long tenure* twenty-five percent less. *Capacity* of the mission was not a factor, as there was a dip of less than five percent for *medium capacity* missions from *small* and *large capacity* missions.

Those with the sense of *divine calling* named this answer less than thirty percent of the time, less than either *challenging work* or *support household*, the latter of which was almost two and a half times higher.

#### *Question Six “Other” Comments*

The comments made by the rescue workers who responded indicated a variety of issues. Many of them were the same as discussed with earlier questions: NIMBY issues from the community towards mission locations, whether near a particular business or just in the downtown area; challenges brought on by having to replace an aging and dying

donorbase; needing more volunteer help to defray costs of operations; limitations of services to families, women, and children; and similar items.

There were, however, comments on other issues that had not been discussed before. The first couple comments deal with community expectations:

“The community to dictate who should be our guest” (Chuck Fidroeff, November 21, 2012, online survey response).

“Anger by some members of the community that we would seek to minister to ‘those people’” (anonymous, November 26, 2012, online survey response).

“The perceived job openings here draw clients from all around our state and the country. The community may not want an influx of homeless people from other places. A similar challenge is just the opposite. Some want us to take anyone from anywhere at any time” (Stephen Wing, November 17, 2012, online survey response).

Each of the situations were challenging to deal with, made more so because community members voice their own opinions on what missions should be doing. In some of the cases above, the community did *not* want missions to take in certain people; in others, they most certainly *did*.

There were also at least three statements relating to stays for clients:

“A lack of affordable housing and a degenerating economy may cause our residents to be here longer than in the past” (Cassey St. Rose, November 29, 2012, online survey response).

“Issues relating to services and housing for felons, especially registered sex offenders” (Denny Bender, November 12, 2012, online survey response). Sex offenders have been one large taboo for many missions, especially if they have also housed women

and children. The suggestion earlier that there are some situations that needed to be outsourced to other agencies equipped to help those situations and persons would certainly apply to sex offenders.

“Sin is sin. There will always be sin issues. Economic basis is not going to change much. Our location is not industrial or business focused. We are in the state capital - the main funding source is individuals who are state workers. The biggest challenge this Mission faces is growing number of guests” (Tim, November 27, 2012, online survey response).

There was also a comment about sin and people and their response to God: “There will always be opposition to God's Word and his laws. People don't take kindly to others pointing out sin in their lives!” (anonymous, November 12, 2012, online survey response).

Even after all of this was said, it was not enough to discourage the faith-filled comments, of which two are quoted here:

“I do not anticipate any challenges that our LORD has not already overcome. We must remember to not tell our God how big our problems are, but rather tell our problems how BIG our God is:-)” (Onita Yost, November 26, 2012, online survey response).

Not only must Christians know the power of God, they must also trust him:

We are trusting in God to bring us through whatever challenges may arise and we would not want to focus too much on whatever those potential challenges may be, in obedience to the call of Christ to not fix our eyes on the trouble in this world, or to be involved in the civilian affairs of this world, as Paul wrote in 2 Timothy 2:4. We recognize and depend upon the sovereignty of Christ and know that the guidelines of rescue ministry are founded on eternal truth. Come what may in this world, we trust that the truth of God's Word will prevail. We do not anticipate any certain challenges arising from the community other than normal challenges such as we have already encountered. (anonymous, November 15, 2012, online survey response)

A slightly different interpretation of 2 Timothy 2:4 may be helpful at this point. The specific verb in the original language of that verse refers to the process of entangling, interweaving, and otherwise so involving a person in worldly pursuits to the point of the exclusion of spiritual pursuits. Trying to be aware, on guard, and proactive against a threat from the evil one is something Christians are instructed to do (1 Pet. 5:8; 2 Co. 2:11; Eph. 6:18; et al.). The commenter's point was well taken, though, since it might certainly be possible to be so intellectually engrossed in battle preparations that one might forget to actually take up the panoply of God and fall victim to the enemy as a result.

#### Question Seven: Changing the Religious Position of the Mission

It was at this point that it was necessary to ask a very tough question of the rescue workers who responded to the survey. Had it become necessary, for either funding, public relations, or legal reasons, for their mission to change its religious position? Question seven specifically read, “**Has your Mission had to change its religious position in order to maintain or draw funding sources?**” The reason that this was such a tough question was evident from the response that was received.

Before examining the results, though, there were three possible responses to question seven: **A – Yes, religious services are now incompatible with funding requirements and have become optional, only for those who voluntarily seek them;** **B – Yes, to some degree the Mission now offers religious services as reduced from its previous emphasis;** or **C – No, the base of financial donors supports the religious position of the Mission.**

The dilemma was fairly clear: was the position of the mission strong enough with its Christian support base that it could continue to maintain its religious emphasis, or had it become necessary to change or adapt the program to meet funding requirements? In the compilation of responses, “C” answers were *no*, “A” answers were *yes*, and “B” answers were termed *some*.

To put it into a simple analogy, from the responses and comments received to this question, it seemed as though the very suggestion of doing such a thing was like committing an unpardonable sin. It was not of course inherently sinful, but there was a VERY strong negative “C” response to the question.

#### Question Seven “No” Answers

**FIGURE 23: Responses for question # 7**

REG:	EST	EST	EST	CTL	CTL	CTL	CTL	STN	WST	WST	WST	WST	AGRM
DIST:	ME	NE	TOT	MW	NC	SC	TOT	SO	MT	PC	PN	TOT	TOT
Yes	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	1	0	1	2
%	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	7.14	1.79	0.00	0.00	3.85	0.00	1.11	0.83
Some	2	0	2	0	0	0	0	1	1	1	3	5	8
%	4.88	0.00	3.85	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	2.27	6.25	3.85	6.25	5.56	3.31
No	39	11	50	26	16	13	55	43	15	24	45	84	232
%	95.12	100.00	96.15	100.00	100.00	92.86	98.21	97.73	93.75	92.31	93.75	93.33	95.87
TOT	41	11	52	26	16	14	56	44	16	26	48	90	242

95.9% of everyone who answered question seven said *no*, they had not done that and would not do that, not even *sometimes*. Three AGRM districts responded with a 100% negative response, including all twenty-six (26) rescue workers from the Midwest District who took the survey, as well as the North Central and the Northeast Districts. The two lowest district scores on this question were the Pacific and the South Central. Among the four regions, the highest was the Central Region, followed by the Southern Region, the East Region, and the West Region. These were very clear results.

Executive directors said *no* 100% of the time, as did board members. Other directors were the lowest by about six percent, while non-directorial paid staff were a couple of percentage points higher.

**FIGURE 24: Responses for question # 7**

	Board	Exec Dir	Other Dir	Staff	Short (0-6)	Med Tenure (7-12)	Long (13+)	Small (1-127)	Med Capacity (128-252)	Large (253+)	Divine Call	Work Chall	Supp Hou
Yes	0	0	1	1	1	0	1	2	0	0	1	0	1
%	0.00	0.00	0.74	1.85	0.85	0.00	1.43	1.63	0.00	0.00	0.54	0.00	12.50
Some	0	0	7	1	4	1	3	4	0	4	3	2	1
%	0.00	0.00	5.15	1.85	3.39	1.89	4.29	3.25	0.00	7.55	1.62	4.35	12.50
No	7	46	128	52	113	52	66	117	57	49	181	44	6
%	100.00	100.00	94.12	96.30	95.76	98.11	94.29	95.12	100.00	92.45	97.84	95.65	75.00
TOT	7	46	136	54	118	53	70	123	57	53	185	46	8

*Medium tenure* was the spike on the chart for tenure comparisons. *Medium capacity* also was the high point of capacity considerations, as all fifty-seven (57) respondents said *yes* for a 100% score. Those with a sense of *divine calling* said *no* 97.8% of the time. Those with *challenging work* came in two percentage points lower. The *support household* response, though, was the lowest of all groups by some 22%.

#### *Question Seven “No” Comments*

It was obvious where most everyone stood just from the comments. There were several rescue workers who simply declared that their missions did not pursue or take any government funding, so that in effect this was a moot issue. These rescue workers declared that their missions only pursued churches or Christians, not the community.

Many respondents made strong, clear statements to the negative on question seven. Some of them, though, gave specific reasons for their mission’s choice, and these were enlightening:

“We will never change our position. It is the core of why we exist” (anonymous, November 26, 2012, online survey response).

“If we changed, then we would not be a Mission” (Tim, November 27, 2012, online survey response).

“We chase money, but do not accept money that would require a change in our position” (Jay Thompson, November 29, 2012, online survey response).

“The community could not change our position! We've had impact on them changing theirs!” (Trish Rumph, November 29, 2012, online survey response).

In addition to these responses, there were others that indicated an unwavering faith in God and a conviction that the ministry would never compromise for money or any other reason.

“I'm not sure how to answer this with the options that you've given to me. We would not change our religious position in order to maintain or draw funding sources. God will supply” (anonymous, November 23, 2012, online survey response).

“We are not interested in changing our core function of sharing the Good News. We are confident that the God of all creation is still in charge of His works and we just need to be faithful in our work of sharing the Gospel while taking up our responsibility of asking, seeking and knocking for the needs of the Mission while allowing God to give the increase. This is a constant effort as we rely upon God for our daily sustenance as an organization” (Jim Ruff, November 15, 2012, online survey response).

“We have chosen not to accept government funding or any funding that discriminates against religious organizations. We are amazed to see how God continually provides” (Sarah, November 26, 2012, online survey response).

“We are and have been privately funded since 1893 and we will not deny or obfuscate our Biblical Based ministry for funds, political, social, or other influence” (Jim Echement, October 29, 2012, online survey response).

“We refuse to change our religious position for any reason. We would choose to close our doors before we would ever ‘water down’ or change our religious position” (Carol, November 20, 2012, online survey response).

“We would not change our religious position even if the base of donors did not support the Mission, I believe” (anonymous, November 26, 2012, online survey response).

“We decided at our inception 60 years ago to not accept funding that would encroach or jeopardize our religious liberty & God has blessed us for this stand” (Bob Rogers, November 27, 2012, on-survey response).

“We will never back down from sharing God's Word and the saving knowledge of Christ. We trust God for our funding no matter what!” (anonymous, November 12, 2012, online survey response).

There were a few other responses that went further to explain that there apparently has not always been a conflict over funding sources in every location:

“We are very open and up front with the fact that we are Christ-based. To date, that has not been an issue for us in receiving funds from individuals or business organizations” (Duane Wykoff, October 30, 2012, online survey response).

“We are government funded and the balance of our needs are supported by donors that support the religious position of the mission” (anonymous, November 12, 2012, online survey response).

“Probably more so now than ever before, thanks to our new leadership bringing in more conservative donors” (anonymous, July 18, 2012, online survey response).

“Though our answer is NO, we do carefully craft our communication with some donors especially in the world of foundations or Corporate support. We do not lie and they know we are a faith-based ministry, however, we do not always express the extent to which we are overtly Christian” (anonymous, November 10, 2012, online survey response).

#### *Question Seven “Some” Answers*

There were eight total responses to the survey in which the respondent gave the “B” response for a 3.3%, answers which were coded as *some*. Of the eight, three rescue workers gave comment. In neither of these cases was the reason given as being the need to find new funding sources. They were instead tied into changes to the concept of mandatory chapel, a subject that was covered by question ten.

#### *Question Seven “Yes” Answers*

Did anyone give the “A” response, that they had exchanged their religious element for the sake of funding sources? There were two such responses, for a percentage of 0.8%. Neither respondent commented on this question, but it did show up in question eight, which follows shortly. There was virtually no common factor with these two responses, except for one: both rescue workers came from *small capacity* missions. Was it possible that there was a sense that in order to grow the mission, there might have had to be some radical changes?

### Question Eight: The Rationale for the Change

In all the survey, question eight was the least answered of any of the questions. This was of course by design, since the survey purposely informed the respondent that if she answered *no* to question seven, the survey would skip question eight entirely. One respondent even sent an e-mail to this writer to report that he had not received the opportunity to respond to question eight, and was concerned. Upon investigation, it was discovered that it was indeed because he had said *no* to question seven.

So what was this mysterious question eight? Simply put, it was intended to find out that if indeed the mission had changed its religious position, WHY had it done that? The question read, **“What do you think is the main reason your Mission has had to make a change in its religious position?”** The answers were **A – Because of objections to the concept of mandatory chapel or religious services in general; B – Because funding sources that would support religious services became inadequate to fund the Mission; and C – Because of another reason.**

Because of the fact that 95.9% of the respondents had the survey automatically skip this question, there was very little response. Three rescue workers gave the “A” answer (hereafter coded as *objections*) for a 1.2% response. Two gave the “B” response, which was coded as *funding*, a 0.8% response. Six gave the “C” response, which was coded as *other*, for a 2.5% response. None of these numbers were significant, only that over 95% of the sample was excluded.

#### *Question Eight “Objections” Answers*

Three respondents said that *objections*, either to the religious services of the mission or its mandatory chapel, were the impetus for changing. Two of these were from

the Pacific Northwest District, the other from the South Central. Two of them identified themselves as “other directors”; the other was non-directorial paid staff. The three came from each length of *tenure*, one each from *short*, *medium*, and *long tenure*. Two were from *small capacity* missions, one from a *large capacity*, and none from *medium capacity* missions. None had a sense of *divine calling*, one had *challenging work*, and two needed to *support household*.

**FIGURE 25: Responses for question # 8**

REG:	EST	EST	EST	CTL	CTL	CTL	CTL	STN	WST	WST	WST	WST	AGRM
DIST:	ME	NE	TOT	MW	NC	SC	TOT	SO	MT	PC	PN	TOT	TOT
Objections	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	2	2	3
%	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	7.14	1.75	0.00	0.00	0.00	4.44	2.25	1.24
Funding	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	2	2
%	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	5.56	3.85	0.00	2.25	0.83
Other	2	0	2	0	0	0	0	1	1	1	1	3	6
%	4.88	0.00	3.85	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	2.33	5.56	3.85	2.22	3.37	2.49
N/A	39	11	50	27	16	13	56	42	16	24	42	82	230
%	95.12	100.00	96.15	100.00	100.00	92.86	98.25	97.67	88.89	92.31	93.33	92.13	95.44
TOT	41	11	52	27	16	14	57	43	18	26	45	89	241

#### Question Eight “Funding” Answers

Of the two respondents who said that *funding* problems were instrumental in the change of the religious emphasis of the mission, both came from the West Region, one each from the Mountain and Pacific Districts. Both were “other directors”, had *short* and *medium tenures*, and both came from *large capacity* missions. Was that last note significant? One of them had the sense of *divine calling*; the other did not identify a reason for continuing to work at a rescue mission.

### Question Eight “Other” Answers

Six respondents named *other* issues for the change at their missions. Three of these were in the West Region, one from each of its three districts. Two were from the Mideast District in the East Region and the other was from the Southern Region. Five were other directors while one was a non-directorial paid staff person. Four had *short tenure*, two had *long*, and there were none with *medium tenure*. Four came from *small capacity* missions, two came from *large capacity* missions, but none were from *medium capacity* missions. Five had a sense of *divine calling*, one has *challenging work*, and there were none who *support household*.

**FIGURE 26: Responses for question # 8**

	Board	Exec Dir	Other Dir	Staff	Short (0-6)	Med Tenure (7-12)	Long (13+)	Small (1-127)	Med Capacity (128-252)	Large (253+)	Divine Call	Work Chall	Supp Hous
Objections	0	0	2	1	1	1	1	2	0	1	0	1	2
	0.00	0.00	1.50	1.85	0.84	1.96	1.45	1.64	0.00	1.89	0.00	2.22	25.00
Funding	0	0	2	0	1	1	0	0	0	2	1	0	0
	0.00	0.00	1.50	0.00	0.84	1.96	0.00	0.00	0.00	3.77	0.54	0.00	0.00
Other	0	0	5	1	4	0	2	4	0	2	5	1	0
	0.00	0.00	3.76	1.85	3.36	0.00	2.90	3.28	0.00	3.77	2.70	2.22	0.00
N/A	7	47	124	52	113	49	66	116	56	48	179	43	6
	100.00	100.00	93.23	96.30	94.96	96.08	95.65	95.08	100.00	90.57	96.76	95.56	75.00
TOT	7	47	133	54	119	51	69	122	56	53	185	45	8

### Question Eight’s One “Other” Comment

Of these six who named *other* issues, there was but one comment, but it was noteworthy. One respondent said simply, “We have been involved in high profile court cases” (Roger Page, November 25, 2012, online survey response). Note the plural noun at the end of the comment. This mission has been in “high profile court *cases*” (emphasis added).

It was quite challenging to envision being called into court over a public relations issue of some kind. For those who have been there, it was frightening. Even the threat of litigation has been enough to drive mission leaders together to ask tough questions about “what if?” and “why didn’t we?” and “should we?” and “is it time now?” in regards to their policies.

Is there a time when mission leadership has to reevaluate its position and policies and alter its presentation of its services in order to survive? Would other missions who have not been through multiple “high profile court cases” be truly able to judge such decisions?

It should be noted that the person who made this comment answered question seven with the *some* answer. This meant, according to the precise statement of the answer, “Yes, to some degree the Mission now offers religious services as reduced from its previous emphasis.” This mission has not given up being a mission. They have not stopped offering a daily chapel. The respondent rated his perception of the counter-cultural status of his mission as a nine (9) on a scale of one to ten, and this status had not changed over time. In other words, this mission has not stopped being like many other missions. It has just had to deal with some things that other missions have never faced.

#### Question Nine: The Daily Chapel Issue

Rescue missions have offered many services to the general public of the homeless population over the years. They have offered hot meals, a place to sleep, the opportunity to enter programs that were designed to help *rescue* people who were trapped in cycles of addictions, warm clothes in cold weather, and more. The one thing, though, that has possibly defined the rescue mission the most clearly, in the eyes of both the general

public and the homeless population, has been the daily chapel. Along with the traditional “three hots and a cot”, there has always been the presentation of the saving message of the gospel of Jesus Christ. In virtually all of the rescue missions across the continent, there has been some type of daily gathering where the message of the Bible has been proclaimed to those who needed to hear it.

Question nine read, “**Does your Mission have a daily chapel for residents or guests entering the Mission?**” To this question there were three possible responses. Other options were suggested by rescue workers in their comments, but the three given answers were: **A – Yes, there is a daily chapel; B – No, the chapel meets once or more per week, but not daily; or C – No, the Mission no longer has chapel meetings.** For coding purposes, “A” answers were *daily chapel*, “B” answers were *not daily chapel*, and “C” answers were *no chapel*.

#### *Question Nine “Daily Chapel” Answers*

Of all the rescue workers who responded to the survey question, 84.9% of them identified that their missions indeed conducted a *daily chapel*. Regionally this was highest in the East, then in the Central, followed by the West and the Southern. The

**FIGURE 27: Responses for question # 9**

REG:	EST	EST	EST	CTL	CTL	CTL	CTL	STN	WST	WST	WST	WST	AGRM
DIST:	ME	NE	TOT	MW	NC	SC	TOT	SO	MT	PC	PN	TOT	TOT
Yes daily	35	10	45	22	15	12	49	32	17	24	35	76	202
%	87.50	90.91	88.24	84.62	93.75	85.71	87.50	76.19	94.44	92.31	77.78	85.39	84.87
Yes not daily	1	0	1	3	1	2	6	10	1	2	7	10	27
%	2.50	0.00	1.96	11.54	6.25	14.29	10.71	23.81	5.56	7.69	15.56	11.24	11.34
No	4	1	5	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	3	3	9
%	10.00	9.09	9.80	3.85	0.00	0.00	1.79	0.00	0.00	0.00	6.67	3.37	3.78
TOTAL	40	11	51	26	16	14	56	42	18	26	45	89	238

highest districts were the Mountain, the North Central, and the Pacific. The lowest were the Southern and the Pacific Northwest.

The level of the rescue workers responding to the question did not show much variance, as all four levels were within 3.5% of each other. *Tenure* was likewise a relatively small influence on *daily chapel* statistics, although the numbers went up as did the amount of tenure. Of the *capacity* size for mission residents, it seemed that *small capacity* mission workers claimed a *daily chapel* only 76.3% of the time, the lowest percentage of any factor in this answer, while *large* and *medium capacity* missions were much higher, some 14% and 16.5%, respectively. This writer has yet to find a plausible explanation for the continued higher numbers reported by missions whose resident capacity is between 128 and 252. (See Figure 28.)

**FIGURE 28: Responses for question # 9**

	Board	Exec Dir	Other Dir	Staff	Short (0-6)	Med Tenure (7-12)	Long (13+)	Small (1-127)	Med Capacity (128-252)	Large (253+)	Divine Call	Work Chall	Supp Hous
Yes, Daily	6	41	113	41	95	44	61	90	54	48	159	35	5
%	85.71	87.23	84.33	83.67	83.33	84.62	87.14	76.27	94.74	90.57	86.41	81.40	62.50
Yes, Not Daily	0	5	14	8	15	5	7	21	3	3	18	6	3
%	0.00	10.64	10.45	16.33	13.16	9.62	10.00	17.80	5.26	5.66	9.78	13.95	37.50
No	1	1	7	0	4	3	2	7	0	2	7	2	0
%	14.29	2.13	5.22	0.00	3.51	5.77	2.86	5.93	0.00	3.77	3.80	4.65	0.00
TOT	7	47	134	49	114	52	70	118	57	53	184	43	8

Those who claimed a *divine calling* reported the presence of *daily chapel* at their missions 86.4% of the time, while those with *challenging work* saw a number five percent less, compared to a low 62.5% for those who *support household*.

*Question Nine “Daily Chapel” Comments*

In the comments that were offered by respondents, there was much more information over the frequency, type, and essential nature of the chapel times. Some missions had multiple chapels every day. Some met morning and evening. Many met at meal times at lunch and dinner, with times of worship, either chapels or devotionals. With most of the comments from this segment, there was a sense that all meals should be accompanied with a message.

*Creative Approaches: The “Not Daily Chapel” Answers*

Creativity was also clearly seen in the comments made by the respondents to this question. Chapel was not limited to the traditional prayer and sermon that many would expect. Some of these creative approaches were expressed as follows:

“There is not a chapel service every day, but there are discipleship classes or chapel every day” (Debbie, November 19, 2012, online survey response).

“We have chapel service 6 nights a week. We also have a church for the homeless on Saturday mornings called, ‘The Peoples Church’. We also have a service on Sunday for our residents, along with other weekly Bible study activities” (Billy Anaya, November 28, 2012, online survey response).

“Each evening there is the choice of Chapel service, Bible study, or going to the day room for quiet reflection/meditation” (David Howard, October 31, 2012, online survey response).

“There is a daily chapel offered along with elective classes; guests may choose a class or chapel. Classes may consist of Financial planning, foundational truths of

scripture, Biblical masculinity, etc.” (Cal Nelson, November 6, 2012, online survey response).

“We have a daily chapel at 6:00 in the evening, which is the free evening meal in the community. Men checking into our Victory Square are not required to go to chapel, they are invited. It is the evening meal, if you want it” (Jim Harriger, November 12, 2012, online survey response). Equating the evening meal with chapel was an especially creative approach. Many missions *required* chapel before serving a meal; this mission simply combined the two.

In addition to these creative versions of a chapel program, there was one other person who stated, “We have 7 devotional /Bible study opportunities throughout the day” (anonymous, November 2, 2012, online survey response).

#### *Target Audience for Chapel*

The comment above by Harriger suggested another aspect of this chapel question, and that was whether the chapels were for everyone at the mission or for specific segments of the mission population. At many missions, long-term recovery program residents were required to attend chapel, while overnight guests were not under the same compulsion. In other missions, emergency guests attended the chapel, while long-term residents had alternative options to daily chapels. The following comments along these lines were noted:

“We have daily devotionals and Bible studies for all men in our transitional living program and devotionals every evening for our homeless shelter guests” (Chuck Cameron, November 26, 2012, online survey response).

“This is a voluntary option available to our clients however if someone is in our substance abuse program it is required” (Steve Sabens, December 5, 2012, online survey response).

“Chapel is not mandatory for guests but is required for drug/alcohol recovery program members” (Sarah, November 26, 2012, online survey response).

“Guests are required to attend all chapel services for the first 30 days. After 30 days they must attend 3 per week and all community meetings” (Ken Kelly, November 29, 2012, online survey response).

It was not just that it *seemed* that chapel was considered vital by rescue ministers; chapel truly was at the core of what they believed about the mission and its inseparable connection with the gospel. Note the following:

“The Gospel is preached each and every day” (John E. Saltee, November 26, 2012, online survey response).

“Every night for 63 years, no exception” (Denny Bender, November 12, 2012, online survey response).

There is something in talking about the chapel that raises the level of excitement:

Hurting people need to find their answers to life in Christ alone! The law of the Lord is perfect restoring the soul! Gospel missions exist to tell the Good News of the Gospel to those who come our way! I have seen too many lives changed in our daily chapels and bible classes to compromise the purpose of why we exist. Gospel ministry is primarily about people's eternal souls and not just providing food and shelter. All the temporal ministry we engage in is in hope that they will see Jesus love for them and be reconciled to God! The goodness of God is to lead a person to repentance! Those who don't repent are storing up wrath unto the Day of Judgment!! Our culture doesn't understand this or believe this foundational truth in Christ. How can we not warn them that come through our doors! Their blood would be on our hands before God! Woe unto us if we don't preach the Gospel! (Jim Brackman, November 23, 2012, online survey response)

The last comment was reproduced in its entirety to demonstrate the passionate approach that this man exhibited in his commitment to sharing the good news with mission residents through the chapel. It was the same type of commitment that made the person who wrote the previous comment proudly proclaim that it had been carried out for over 22,995 straight days. Chapel has always been integrally connected with the gospel mission. To many community members, it has been the defining visible characteristic of its ministry.

*Question Nine “No Chapel” Answers*

The survey also revealed that there are missions that do not have a chapel program at all. It was also learned that it was not for lack of love for the presentation of the message of the gospel. There were extenuating circumstances, some of them temporary situations, some of them permanent.

The percentage of those who gave the “C” response to this question was only 3.8% across all the rescue workers who took the online survey. The highest concentration was in the East Region, where 9.8% of the respondents said *no chapel*. The West Region also had some results of *no chapel* with a 3.4% response. There were three districts in particular where these results were found: the Mideast, the Northeast, and the Pacific Northwest. All other districts had negligible numbers.

Executive directors gave a 2.1% response to the *no chapel* answer. Other directors answered *no chapel* 5.2% of the time. Only one of the seven board members said *no chapel*. None of the non-directorial paid staff members gave responses of *no chapel*.

*Tenure* was not much of a factor in separating responses of *no chapel*, but *capacity* issues were a little more clearly defined. *Small capacity* mission workers

reported *no chapel* 5.9% of the time and *large capacity* mission workers scored a 3.8% number. *Medium capacity* missions again had no responses of *no chapel*.

Those who had *divine calling* answered *no chapel* 3.8% of the time. Those with *challenging work* gave this response 4.7% of the time. The sample for *support household* was too small to give a significant result, not offering any responses of *no chapel*.

#### *Question Nine “No Chapel” Comments*

Why would missions not have a chapel? The comments given in answer to this question that said *no chapel* fell into three categories: (1) lack of qualified personnel; (2) lack of adequate facilities; or (3) restrictions of government funding. In some cases the mission had temporarily lost its chaplain. In other cases the mission did not have any area that was large enough to accommodate the size of a chapel gathering. When this was the case, the mission either offered small groups studies or shipped residents out to a local church or churches.

There is at least one mission that has actually built its budget around federal funding, with its restrictions on any type of religious services. At missions like these, ministry would happen, but it would be on a one-on-one basis, not in gatherings. The following were comments from workers at one such mission:

“No chapel meetings as this is not permissible under church/state rule”  
(anonymous, November 12, 2012, online survey response).

“There is not a chapel service every day, but there are discipleship classes or chapel every day” (Debbie, November 19, 2012, online survey response).

“We are government funded and the balance of our needs are supported by donors that support the religious position of the mission” (anonymous, November 12, 2012, online survey response).

“We speak the truth in love and are open with our gospel presentation. We provide Bibles, hold Bible studies and case managers are open to and sometimes direct conversations to spiritual matters thereby giving the gospel a platform. We are hampered by separation of church and state due to government contract” (anonymous, November 12, 2012, online survey response).

“I think all of our staff are deeply committed to seeing women being transformed by Jesus Christ. It doesn't mean that all of the students necessarily have the same goal in coming into our center. . . as they may be looking for shelter only. However, they must participate in all the Bible classes, prayer, church, etc. to be a part of our program” (Debbie, November 19, 2012, online survey response).

The chapel discussion has always been a lively one. The discussion stepped up a notch, though, when the question advanced to whether attendance at chapel was by invitation or by requirement.

#### Question Ten: Mandatory Chapels

One of the chief questions that people have had in talking with rescue mission staff dealt with the way or ways in which missions drew people to attend the religious programming that the mission offered. Did they really force people to attend chapels? Have they coerced residents by mandating Christian practices from them? What if people practiced some other religion beside Christianity? Would they still be required to attend a

service where they would have to listen to the presentation of the gospel? Why would a mission offend those who do not believe by making them attend chapel?

Question ten addressed this issue. The question specifically asked, “**Is this chapel mandatory for people to attend?**” The question also offered three possibilities of answers: **A – Yes, the chapel is an integral part of the Mission’s programming;** **B – No, but the Mission provides incentives for people to attend;** or **C – No, the chapel is optional; it is for those who choose to attend.** For purposes of coding in this study, these three responses will be termed *yes*, *incentive*, and *no*, respectively.

#### *Question Ten “Yes” Answers*

How many rescue missions have the policy of mandatory chapel? According to the rescue workers who took the survey, the answer was that 63.4% of those who answered said *yes*, their mission had mandatory chapel. Surprisingly enough, the variance from region to region was quite large. The greatest occurrence was among those from the Southern Region, where the *yes* percentage was 88.1%. This was followed closely by the Central Region, where it was 83.6%. There was a big drop to the third region, the East Region, at 60.0%, and an even larger drop to the West Region, which was only 40.9%. From 88.1% down to 40.9% is a ratio of over 2:1, and extremely significant.

The highest concentration of *yes* responses among the nine AGRM districts was found in the Midwest, the Southern, and the South Central. The lowest district numbers were from the Mountain and the Pacific Northwest.

The differences between the levels of rescue workers who said *yes* to the mandatory chapel question was not significant, as there was less than 3.5% between the responses of all paid staff. Only board members were lower.

**FIGURE 29: Responses for question # 10**

REG:	EST	EST	EST	CTL	CTL	CTL	CTL	STN	WST	WST	WST	WST	AGRM
DIST:	ME	NE	TOT	MW	NC	SC	TOT	SO	MT	PC	PN	TOT	TOT
Yes	22	8	30	23	12	11	46	37	5	17	14	36	149
%	56.41	72.73	60.00	92.00	75.00	78.57	83.64	88.10	27.78	68.00	31.11	40.91	63.40
Incentive	4	1	5	1	2	2	5	0	7	2	5	14	24
%	10.26	9.09	10.00	4.00	12.50	14.29	9.09	0.00	38.89	8.00	11.11	15.91	10.21
No	9	1	10	0	2	1	3	5	6	6	23	35	53
%	23.08	9.09	20.00	0.00	12.50	7.14	5.45	11.90	33.33	24.00	51.11	39.77	22.55
N/A	4	1	5	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	3	3	9
%	10.26	9.09	10.00	4.00	0.00	0.00	1.82	0.00	0.00	0.00	6.67	3.41	3.83
TOT	39	11	50	25	16	14	55	42	18	25	45	88	235

The factor of *tenure* on those who answered *yes* to mandatory chapel did not show hardly any variance, as all three levels were within two percentage points of each other.

Those from missions of different resident *capacities* showed a larger variance, around fourteen percent, with *medium capacity missions* again spiking in the middle.

**FIGURE 30: Responses for question # 10**

	Board	Exec Dir	Other Dir	Staff	Short Tenure (0-6)	Med Tenure (7-12)	Long Tenure (13+)	Small Capacity (1-127)	Med Capacity (128-252)	Large Capacity (253+)	Divine Call	Work Chall	Supp Hous
Yes	3	28	86	31	72	32	44	73	40	30	119	25	4
%	42.86	60.87	65.15	63.27	63.16	65.31	63.77	61.34	71.43	57.69	65.38	58.14	50.00
Incentive	2	7	10	5	10	4	8	9	8	7	18	6	0
%	28.57	15.22	7.58	10.20	8.77	8.16	11.59	7.56	14.29	13.46	9.89	13.95	0.00
No	1	10	29	13	28	10	15	30	8	13	38	10	4
%	14.29	21.74	21.97	26.53	24.56	20.41	21.74	25.21	14.29	25.00	20.88	23.26	50.00
N/A	1	1	7	0	4	3	2	7	0	2	7	2	0
%	14.29	2.17	5.30	0.00	3.51	6.12	2.90	5.88	0.00	3.85	3.85	4.65	0.00
TOTAL	7	46	132	49	114	49	69	119	56	52	182	43	8

The reasons for continuing to work at a rescue mission decreased down the scale, as those with a sense of *divine calling* identified mandatory chapel almost two times out of three, while those with *challenging work* were lower by some seven percentage points, and those who *support household* chose it exactly half of the time.

*Question Ten “Yes” Comments*

The comments made by rescue workers on the issue of mandatory chapel represented a wide variety of thought. Many missions had the same rules concerning chapel attendance for everyone who entered their facility.

“If you want to stay a night or get dinner, you must attend chapel” (Bill Whittlesey, November 27, 2012, online survey response).

“Evening meal is served and chapel for those staying in shelter is mandatory” (Cathy Byrd, November 21, 2012, online survey response).

“We take attendance at the chapel to verify resident attendance” (anonymous, July 18, 2012, online survey response).

Sometimes there was a difference between just coming in to eat and actually spending the night, and there were contradictory regulations. There was no absolute standard from mission to mission.

“The chapel is mandatory if they want to eat, however they could sleep there without chapel” (Lee Bartel, November 30, 2012, online survey response).

“Chapel attendance is mandatory for overnight guests and optional for those who come to the Mission for the evening meal only” (Tom Hall, November 12, 2012, online survey response).

“Chapel attendance is only required for emergency overnight guests. All other emergency services are open to the public without mandatory chapel participation” (anonymous, November 20, 2012, online survey response).

“The incentive is the meal. No chapel, no evening meal. We actually separated the chapel from the bed back in the mid-90's. If a person chooses to skip the chapel, he

chooses to skip the meal, or he eats somewhere else” (Jim Harriger, November 12, 2012, online survey response).

“Yes and no. It is required for those who are in the program, but for those who come in for a meal from the community it is not required but encouraged” (anonymous, November 26, 2012, online survey response).

In other missions a distinction was made between those who stayed on an emergency overnight basis and those who were in a longer-term program.

“It's an integral part of the Mission's programming for most clients, but for clients in certain shelters, it is invitational” (anonymous, November 8, 2012, online survey response).

“Our Men's New Life Program residents are mandated to attend. Men seeking shelter in our Overnight Emergency Shelter are not mandated to attend but strong encouraged” (anonymous, November 12, 2012, online survey response).

“It is required of residents who are in the New Life Program. It is not a requirement for Overnight Emergency Shelter or Gateway” (anonymous, November 26, 2012, online survey response).

“New Life Program participants are all required to attend all religious meetings. In the evening chapel is optional for the emergency shelter guests, but we find 95% attend anyway. It used to be mandatory, but making it optional has greatly reduced disciplinary problems in the services” (John Zimmermann, November 25, 2012, online survey response).

“The answer is really yes and no, for we require our new program men to attend chapel once a week for 4 weeks. But the guests who come in for food, can volunteer to

attend chapel each night, and many do” (John E. Saltee, November 26, 2012, online survey response).

*Dealing with Resistance to Mandatory Chapel*

Those who reported that their missions had mandatory chapel also commented on the difficulties they faced when they tried to administer it. This has been a potential sore point with outsiders as well, who have been concerned about the propriety of the policy. How did the mission handle it appropriately if a resident refused to attend, for example?

“Resident clients are strongly encouraged to attend nevertheless, we do not withhold any service to those who choose not to attend” (Jim Echement, October 29, 2012, online survey response).

“We do not force people to attend although it is required that people attend. What that means is if I have someone who is absolutely adamant about not attending we are willing to allow them to sit in the lobby during the service. Those occasions are rare” (Jeffery Levine, November 30, 2012, online survey response).

“We've never dragged anyone out of the Mission for not wanting to attend our chapel services. We have a responsibility to make the services as challenging and meaningful as possible. We shouldn't be preaching down to anyone, but sharing as one beggar trying to show another beggar where to find the bread OF LIFE!” (Darryl Bartlett, November 7, 2012, online survey response).

In addition to dealing with difficult situations that arose from the mandatory chapel policy, several of the respondents felt it was important to explain their reasoning as to why the policy was so important. The more significant of those comments follow:

“We're in the soup, soap and salvation business. Our guests can't receive the first two without first hearing about the third” (Denny Bender, November 12, 2012, online survey response).

There is passion in the opportunity to present the gospel for the rescue worker:

If it is not mandatory, many would not come! I have prayed for many people to receive Christ that did not want to be in the chapel service the night they were saved. I have prayed for many a backslider to rededicate their lives back to Christ who were forced to be in that very chapel service. Jesus said to compel them to come in!! We don't give them a choice! When all of their best thinking, and resulting choices, have lead them into homelessness, addiction, domestic violence, and crime, shouldn't someone love them enough to teach them how to get out of their self-destructive lifestyles and let the Truth set them free!! That is why Gospel missions exist! Don't let the enemy rob us of our God-given existence and be bullied by a secular society! We serve the Lord Jesus Christ alone! He died for us to be eternally saved and He ever lives to make intercession for us! He has our back and will continue to provide all of our needs because He called us to stand in the gap for the poor, the needy, the widows, and the orphans. What an honor and blessing to see the Lord provide! (Jim Brackman, November 23, 2012, online survey response)

This long quote began with a phrase that probably represented many rescue workers across the continent: “If it is not mandatory, many would not come!” Many missions have considered taking the mandatory requirement out of their chapel in hopes that residents would take the opportunity to attend voluntarily, by choice rather than compulsion, which has always been better. The risk, of course, is that residents will choose NOT to come, and chapels will be much emptier than before. How can missions get people to do what they *should* do even when they are not *inclined* to do so?

In one case, a director went to the residents themselves for the proof:

I asked a graduate from our Life Transformation Program (i.e. Bible-based substance abuse program) if he would have come into the chapel if it was optional when he was a transient. He said; "No way! I didn't want to hear that 'God stuff' when I was homeless." Then I asked him; "What changed your life?" His response was; "That God stuff!!" Steve didn't know what he needed when he was living in sin; he only knew what he wanted. He needed to hear the glory for the Gospel.

This, again, confirms the Apostle Paul's position; "I am not ashamed of the Gospel because it is 'the power of God' unto salvation for everyone that believes..." If this is the power of God, then we would be foolish stewards if we didn't boldly proclaim it. (Mark Criss, November 15, 2012, online survey response)

This writer has chosen to include several block quotations here to demonstrate how important this issue has been historically for the rescue ministry:

We have 4 chaplains, guest pastors and ministers that provide bible study classes during the day; we have guest laypeople, such as deacons that provide an evening chapel service after the dinner meal. Since it is part of programming, the men are required to attend. They also are required to attend Sunday services at a Protestant church of their choice in order to become part of a church family, gain strength and growth in their Christian walk and to have that church home once they graduate from the program a year or more after they enter the program and even when they are in the Transitional Living phase of the program. (anonymous, January 17, 2013, e-mail communication with this writer)

“I know there are a lot of missions that have left the requirement for chapel services. However, following the example given by Jesus He preached and taught the people first then fed them. In the spot survey we do for the A.G.R.M. 87% said they appreciate the spiritual part of our services” (Gary Rowell, November 26, 2012, online survey response).

Perhaps it should also be that missions ought to think in terms of earning the right to share the good news with someone in the mission:

I feel we have earned the right to share Christ with the men because of the main support that we get is because we share the Gospel. A man may disagree with what we teach but he is asked to listen and attend because of who supports the mission. If he is Jewish, Muslim, Atheist we suggest that he go on down the street to that mission. He says where is that and of course there are no such places. Only the Christian community provides such a place as the Gospel Rescue Mission. (Ray Raines, November 6, 2012, online survey response)

The mandatory chapel policy has always been debated. For some, it was a truth that seemed non-negotiable. There are other viewpoints, though, as represented by the other two answers to question ten.

#### *Question Ten “Incentive” Answers*

Answer “B” was the *incentive* answer. In the survey it read, “**No, but the Mission provides incentives for people to attend.**” 10.2% of all those rescue workers who took the online survey gave the *incentive* response. This was highest in the West Region, followed by the East Region and the Central Region. In the Southern Region, the concept of *incentives* for chapel attendance was not practiced, according to the respondents.

The districts where *incentives* for chapel attendance was more widely practiced was the Mountain District at 38.9%, followed far behind by the South Central District at 14.3%. This was an extremely wide disparity. It was practiced the least by the Southern District (0.0%) and the Midwest District (4.0%).

The concept of *incentives* for chapel attendance was apparently a favorite notion to board members (28.6%) and executive directors (15.2%). Other directors did not seem to favor it (7.6%), and non-directorial paid staff was only slightly higher at 10.2%. It was also highest among those with *long tenure*, *medium capacity* missions, and those who with *challenging work*.

#### *Question Ten “Incentive” Comments*

The comments from those who supported the idea of *incentives* were not all that specific as to how the incentives were offered, or what in fact they were. Two of these comments follow, however, because they were pertinent to the overall discussion.

“We strongly encourage people to attend. If they do not wish to attend, we will meet with them one on one to share the gospel with them. It is much more effective, anyway. :)” (anonymous, November 26, 2012, online survey response).

“We don't tell people it is optional so the only time someone would not attend is if they specifically said they did not want to attend. That hasn't happened yet” (Dan Doty, November 12, 2012, online survey response).

#### *Question Ten “No” Answers*

The survey also uncovered that there were several missions where chapel is held on a regular basis but it was not required of residents during their stay. It was already suggested above that there were some missions where certain segments of the population were exempt from mandatory chapel requirements, but there were also those missions who no longer had such rules for *any* of the guests. This was option “C” in the survey, which read, “**No, the chapel is optional; it is for those who choose to attend.**” This *no* response was the answer chosen by 22.6% of the survey participants.

Regional locations definitely played a part in determining this response of *no* mandatory chapel. The West Region was the top area for this idea with a 39.8% response from the rescue workers who filled out the survey. The East Region followed with a 20.0% response, while the Southern Region scored an 11.9%, and the Central Region a 5.5%. It was noted that this was a significant variance. The Pacific Northwest District was the leader by a large margin, along with the Mountain and Pacific. At the bottom were the Northeast, the South Central, and the Midwest Districts. Note that the Midwest District of the Central Region actually had *zero* responses for *no* mandatory chapel.

The idea of *no* mandatory chapel seemed to gain numbers as the level of rescue worker descended. Board members, who were at the top, reported this only 14.3% of the time, for example. Executive directors were more at 21.7%, followed by other directors at 22.0% and non-directorial paid staff at 26.5%. Might the fact that this policy had less support at upper levels be the reason why it has not been practiced more often?

*Tenure* did not seem to be a determining factor, as the difference between the top score and the bottom score was about four percentage points. *Capacity* for residents at missions was probably also a non-factor, except for a significant dip at the *medium capacity* mission level. Those with a sense of *divine calling* chose the *no* mandatory chapel option 20.9% of the time, while those with *challenging work* chose it 23.3% of the time, while the small sample of *support household* named it four choices out of eight.

#### *Question Ten “No” Comments*

There were a few additional comments that were of note from those who said that their missions practiced a non-mandatory chapel.

“Our overnight guests know that they can opt out of our evening chapel service, which happens after our dinner service” (Kristopher Sharrar, November 5, 2012, online survey response).

“No strings attached” (Trish Rumph, November 29, 2012, online survey response).

“There is little discussion about chapel. No memos, no announcements etc.” (anonymous, November 27, 2012, online survey response).

Creative responses like the following help establish the outreach of the mission:

If someone does not want to hear the devotional they stand outside and wait until it is finished and the doors are open to the public to enter and eat. In some ways I like what I grew up with, Great Falls and Billings, Montana Rescue Missions and the having to attend and I wish we did that here. On the other side after 4 years I see the value of non-coercive gospel presentation that leaves a grace filled and loving response open to the hearer because he or she has finally bowed their head and heart because of their desire before God and not a seemingly forced issue of obedience and attendance to receive the blessing of food. (Lester Mesenbrink, November 26, 2012, online survey response)

#### Question Eleven: Negative Public Relations Issues

As the survey wound down to its last two questions, it was deemed important to discuss public relations issues that missions face. Three options were offered, with the hopes that respondents would also suggest others in their comments. The first of the two questions approached this from a negative perspective.

Question eleven read, “**What do you think is the leading factor that might cause the community to stop supporting your mission?**” The three answers were: **A – An incident with a resident or donor that becomes a public relations problem; B – A poorly planned or poorly executed marketing plan; or C – The perception that the mission is no longer being faithful to its charge to serve the poor and homeless and bring them the gospel.** For purposes of coding, these responses were termed *incident*, *marketing*, and *perception*, respectively.

#### *Question Eleven “Incident” Answers*

How many rescue workers thought the worst thing that could happen to their mission’s chances of raising community support was to have an *incident* with a resident or donor that became a public relations issue? Across the AGRM members who took the

survey, which numbered 221, fully 22.6% of them saw *incident* as the one thing that might stop community support of the mission.

**FIGURE 31: Responses for question # 11**

REG:	EST	EST	EST	CTL	CTL	CTL	CTL	STN	WST	WST	WST	WST	AGRM
DIST:	ME	NE	TOT	MW	NC	SC	TOT	SO	MT	PC	PN	TOT	TOT
Incident	9	2	11	3	5	2	10	10	4	5	10	19	50
	23.68	22.22	23.40	11.54	38.46	16.67	19.61	25.64	25.00	23.81	21.28	22.62	22.62
Marketing	5	2	7	3	2	3	8	8	2	7	9	18	41
	13.16	22.22	14.89	11.54	15.38	25.00	15.69	20.51	12.50	33.33	19.15	21.43	18.55
Perception	24	5	29	20	6	7	33	21	10	9	28	47	130
	63.16	55.56	61.70	76.92	46.15	58.33	64.71	53.85	62.50	42.86	59.57	55.95	58.82
TOT	38	9	47	26	13	12	51	39	16	21	47	84	221

The Southern Region was the area that identified the answer *incident* most often, followed by the East Region, the West Region, and the Central Region. The variance between the numbers was not large enough to be deemed significant.

**FIGURE 32: Responses for question # 11**

	Exec	Other		Short	Med	Long	Small	Med	Large	Divine	Work	Supp	
	Board	Dir	Dir	Staff	Tenure			Capacity			Call	Chall	Hous
					(0-6)	(7-12)	(13+)	(1-127)	(128-252)	(253+)			
Incident	1	12	28	9	22	11	17	25	9	14	38	9	1
%	16.67	29.27	22.05	18.75	20.00	26.19	25.37	21.93	19.15	28.00	22.62	21.43	12.50
Marketing	0	3	23	15	26	7	7	22	13	5	30	9	2
%	0.00	7.32	18.11	31.25	23.64	16.67	10.45	19.30	27.66	10.00	17.86	21.43	25.00
Perception	5	26	76	24	62	24	43	67	25	31	100	24	5
%	83.33	63.41	59.84	50.00	56.36	57.14	64.18	58.77	53.19	62.00	59.52	57.14	62.50
TOT	6	41	127	48	110	42	67	114	47	50	168	42	8

The single highest district in terms of percentages was the North Central District of the Central Region with 38.5% of their rescue workers identifying *incident* as their answer to the eleventh question. They were followed by over thirteen percentage points by the Southern District and the Mountain District. The lowest scores among the districts were the Midwest and the South Central Districts.

Executive directors were the most concerned about *incidents* at their missions interfering with their ability to raise funds, with a percentage score of 29.3%. Other directors were next with a 22.1% score, while non-directorial paid staff identified it 18.8% of the time. Board members were the lowest with a 16.7% score, one out of six.

*Tenure* has apparently not been a large determining factor in this study, and again that was the case with the *incident* response, except that those with *short tenure* scored consistently lower than the others. The *capacity* for residents at their missions also did not have a wide variance, as there were nine percentage points between the numbers for those at *medium capacity* at the bottom and *large capacity* missions at the top. Those with a sense of *divine calling* and those with *challenging work* were not far apart, while those who *support household* were about ten percentage points behind.

#### *Question Eleven “Incident” Comments*

There were comments made by those who answered *incident* to question eleven that indicated a real confidence that this would not happen to their mission. This was not just blind optimism; the respondents gave reasons along with their confidence to show why this would be the case.

“I do not anticipate this happening. We have broad community support”  
(anonymous, November 26, 2012, online survey response).

“I do not think this scenario would be likely since the director, staff, and board have an emphasis on treating all people with respect and dignity. Even volunteers are trained in how to respond to the public and how to refer potential conflict to the appropriate staff” (anonymous, December 10, 2012, online survey response).

Real reasons for confidence included real community support, which was mentioned by several respondents, real training in de-escalation techniques, and positive efforts at good public relations. The presence of an *incident* could happen at any time and be potentially devastating, as the following comments showed:

“With the advent of social media, even the hint of impropriety, even with no basis in reality, and the entire world can know in moments” (anonymous, November 9, 2012, online survey response).

“Such as incident could be a major blow to any rescue mission. We are attempting to build strong relationships throughout the county. Ability to do so can be a major asset if you find yourself involved with a sticky public issue” (Duane Wykoff, October 30, 2012, online survey response).

“Our vulnerability is greatest among residents who could repeat criminal acts from their past (crimes against a person, sexual misconduct, molestation, etc.)” (Denny Bender, November 12, 2012, online survey response).

The sense of confidence that was expressed by the respondents took two forms: one was a faith in a God who has made and continues to make all things possible, and a belief that people have stood and will continue to stand behind an organization that has done things right.

“I believe that God provides and touches the heart of the community to give. We need to develop good marketing plans, handle problems quickly and efficiently and in a Godly manner, and ensure the community that we are faithful in sharing Jesus to our community” (Chuck Fidroeff, November 21, 2012, online survey response).

Here is an unusual illustration from a mission director:

I don't have specifics. I just assume that people are very petty at times and influenced by the media. So far, the media always gives us "credit" and knows there are two sides to every story. Recently, I had a marijuana shop want to do a fundraiser and I politely declined their offer. He, of course, was going to make a big deal of it and call "the media". We suddenly don't care about the poor...and they do?! The local TV stations and newspaper didn't buy it and it never went anywhere. (Mark Criss, November 15, 2012, online survey response)

*Question Eleven "Marketing" Answers*

How many rescue workers thought the worst thing that could happen to their mission's chances of raising community support was to have a *marketing* plan that was poorly planned or poorly executed? The answer was 18.6% of their total number. The concentration of *marketing* responses was highest in the West Region, then the Southern Region, the Central Region, and the East Region. The highest scores among the nine districts were the Pacific, the South Central, and the Northeast Districts. The lowest were the Midwest, the Mountain, and the Mideast Districts.

There was a large variance among the levels of rescue workers, somewhere in the range of a 9:2 ratio. Executive directors only named *marketing* problems 7.3% of the time. They were far outdone by other directors, who said *marketing* 18.1% of the time, and even more so by non-directorial paid staff, who gave the *marketing* answer an amazing 31.2% of the time. Not one member of a board identified *marketing* issues as the largest potential problem for causing a loss of community support. This was quite surprising, since in the experience of this writer, it has always been the board and the ED who were the most concerned about a good *marketing* plan.

For once, *tenure* apparently *was* a factor in who was concerned about the *marketing* issues. According to the numbers, the longer the *tenure*, the less the concern

with *marketing* problems. (See Figure 32.) *Capacity* issues had an even larger variance than *tenure*, but it was neither even nor linear, as the zenith was from *medium capacity* missions, with *large capacity* missions at the bottom.

The stated reason that rescue workers continued working at their rescue missions seemed also to be connected with this question, with increasing numbers of about four percentage points with each response. Those with a sense of *divine calling* named *marketing* problems the least, with increases up to one in four with those who *support household*.

#### *Question Eleven “Marketing” Comments*

The comments that accompanied the *marketing* responses took the discussion back to fundraising issues and echoed some concerns that arose earlier in the study. There were a couple of statements, for example, about the challenges in replacing aging donors.

“I choose this answer only because it’s the most applicable of the three. We have an aging donor base and the challenge is to get new, regular donors from the younger population” (anonymous, November 26, 2012, on-line survey response).

“The majority of donors are close to retirement age and we need to secure younger donors who will support the mission” (anonymous, November 26, 2012, online survey response).

Donors do grow older, and the likelihood that they will be able to continue to give for many years has become a real concern for many missions. If missions have not determined how or have already been successful at reaching a younger generation, their vision for the future may not survive the current generation. This has been and will continue to be a real concern for mission leaders. Note the following response:

“I think we have all had the problem with a disgruntled client or donor but those are rare. People recognize the source and understand and trust the mission. But poor marketing could lead to trouble. I am always asking what will the supporters think? Trying not to over state the issues or the need” (Ray Raines, November 6, 2012, online survey response).

There was one additional comment, which on the surface is somewhat ambiguous. “We are growing rapidly in faith without a proven plan to fund the growth” (Kevin Campbell, November 26, 2012, online survey response). This could be interpreted in several ways, but this writer accepted it as part of the challenge of finding the sources to fund a growing need.

#### *Question Eleven “Perception” Answers*

How many rescue workers thought the worst thing that could happen to their mission’s chances of raising community support was to have a *perception* that the mission was no longer being faithful to its charge to serve the poor and homeless and bring them the gospel? This response of the three listed seemed to ring true more often with the AGRM respondents, because *perception* was chosen by 58.8% of the respondents, more than the other two answers combined.

This *perception* of a change in direction of the mission was the top choice of all the rescue workers from the four regions of the AGRM. The largest concentration of those who named *perception* came from the Central Region, followed by the East, the West, and the Southern. The highest districts who said *perception* in answer to question eleven were the Midwest and the Mideast. The lowest districts, and the only ones who were under 50%, were the Pacific and the North Central. (See Figure 32.)

The level of those who chose *perception* of a mission's change of direction as a legitimate concern to a mission's ability to raise funds from a community decreased with the level of authority at the mission. Six out of seven board members named this concern, while executive directors identified it 63.4% of the time. This was followed by other directors at 59.8% and non-directorial paid staff at 50.0%. The percentages increased, however, with the length of *tenure* of the rescue workers, beginning with 56.4% for those with *short tenure*, and topping out at 64.2% for those with *long tenure*.

The factor of resident *capacity* among missions was uneven. The percentages ranged from the low of 53.2% from those from *medium capacity* to those from *large capacity* who named *perception* 62.0% of the time. The same pattern occurred with those with a sense of *divine calling* (59.5%), as opposed to those with *challenging work* (57.1%) and those who *support household* (62.5%). In the latter case, the small sample of *support household* might have broken the pattern of diminishing numbers, rather than continuing what happened with the *capacity* factor.

#### *Question Eleven "Perception" Comments*

In question eleven, most of the comments from the *perception* response fell into one of two categories. Either it was: (1) an affirmation that a *perception* of failing to fulfill the mission's call to ministry was bad news for funding; or (2) the experience of the mission was hopefully long enough and consistent enough to leave the lasting impression upon the community of the mission's commitment to service.

"If we abandon our call, then the community should abandon us, but I doubt if that would ever happen" (anonymous, November 26, 2012, online survey response).

“We have been faithful in doing this for over 124 years. We are very blessed not to have a perception problem” (anonymous, November 26, 2012, online survey response).

“Our strong base of support is from the evangelical community. If we stopped sharing the Gospel, we would lose our community funding” (Jim Harriger, November 12, 2012, online survey response).

“We have a strong reputation in the city and the faith community after continually operating for 84 years. I do not foresee the community ceasing to support us unless there was a major shift in the implementation of vision or in the integrity of our mission. We have excellent leadership respected both in the faith, governmental, NGO and ecumenical communities” (anonymous, December 4, 2012, online survey response).

“Complainers come and go but people support Boise Rescue Mission because we have an excellent track record of serving the poor and needy in our community. If we ever stray from that, our support base will fade away” (Sarah, November 26, 2012, online survey response).

One respondent in particular saw not only the potential problem but took solace in the knowledge that God was in control:

Anytime a ministry is seen as untrue, it will lose its base. However, this is not about our donors' response. This would be God's response to us. If we are not doing His will, it would make sense that support would fail. This is far different that "shift in economy." God has a need to stretch our faith; to venture forward when the world would say, "Turn back!" So we expand when we feel God is leading us to do so and we store up when He leads us. Does this make sense? We do not look at merely \$\$ to know how we are doing. (Donna Scully, November 26, 2012, online survey response)

Not surprisingly, there were a number of respondents that indicated that any of the three choices of the answers to the eleventh question could have created the described

problem. In some cases the respondents chose a specific answer, in others they left the answer blank. In still other cases, whether they chose an answer or not, they commented on another factor to consider. One of those was the personal integrity of the mission staff.

“None of the above. A moral failure among our staff would be the most damaging thing that could occur” (John Zimmermann, November 25, 2012, online survey response).

“Personal integrity is also a large factor” (Steven Jessen, November 21, 2012, online survey response).

“I think the greater issue is if something happens (moral failure) within the upper management of the mission” (Harold Youtzy Jr., November 12, 2012, online survey response).

“The major reason for us is our Christian lifestyle covenant for all staff and volunteers, which includes total abstinence from alcohol. We lose potential volunteers and perhaps financial support over this part of our covenant” (Gregory Stetski, November 12, 2012, online survey response).

There has never been any doubt that the world has taken careful notice of those who minister the word of God. Ministers, whether they were rescue ministers, pastoral ministers, or lay leaders, have always been held to a high standard of behavior. If they have told others what they should do, they have been judged by their own actions. If the community has given them money, they were held to the highest standard in relation to those funds. There has apparently never been a worse sin that ministers could do than to misappropriate the funds with which they were entrusted.

“Mishandling of funds entrusted to us to provide for the needy population of our community” (Trish Rumph, November 29, 2012, online survey response).

“We have had a public relations problem in the recent past with a former Executive Director misusing funds that caused a couple of years of reduced support” (David, November 26, 2012, online survey response).

There were other issues directly related to funding:

“None of those answers. . . We have a solid reputation . . . maybe just finances . . . have had about 10 faithful donors stop giving this year because their income changed . . . but we also attained new donors” (Stephanie Boardman, November 21, 2012, online survey response).

“The economy and with fewer dollars to give, it becomes a choice of priority, the church, missions, etc.” (anonymous, November 26, 2012, online survey response).

“. . . A difficulty we have is that there are hundreds of charities competing for funding in a challenging economic environment. . . .” (Terry Seeberger, November 2, 2012, online survey response).

“Inability to deduct charitable contributions” (Carol, November 20, 2012, online survey response). With the tax code always subject to change, the lifeline that is the ability to deduct contributions to charity would certainly be a disastrous loss to rescue ministry everywhere.

There was also a faith-filled statement that concerned finances, a reminder that God has always been the source of income for rescue missions. Remember that question eleven read, **“What do you think is the leading factor that might cause the community to stop supporting your mission?”** This answer said, “When God wants it

to stop. I have seen God fund us when people refuse” (anonymous, November 20, 2012, online survey response). This makes it all the more important that rescue ministries have worked to please God. Without God there is no funding and no ministry.

#### Question Twelve: Positive Public Relations Issues

Just as the previous question dealt with negative public relations issues, the final question of the survey was about positive public relations situations that would benefit rescue missions. Question twelve read, “**Which of the following would you think might have the greatest impact in increasing community financial support for your mission?**” Three options were offered to answer: **A – Increasing numbers of decisions for Christ; B – Front-page publicity about the growing need for mission services; or C – Word-of-mouth endorsements from satisfied residents, donors, or volunteers.** For project purposes these answers were coded as *decisions*, *publicity*, and *endorsements*, respectively.

#### *Question Twelve “Decisions” Answers*

What did rescue workers think about the impact of increasing numbers of *decisions* in increasing community support for the mission? The total percentage of all those rescue workers who took the survey and chose the *decisions* answer was 4.3%. This was a markedly small percentage, which obviously meant that this was not the major determination of rescue workers. This percentage was highest in the East Region, followed by the Central Region, the Southern Region, and the West Region. The highest concentrations among the nine districts of the AGRM were in the Northeast District and the South Central District. There were two districts that had zero rescue workers identify

*decisions* as the greatest impact for their mission's support: the Mountain District and the Pacific District.

**FIGURE 33: Responses for question # 12**

REG:	EST	EST	EST	CTL	CTL	CTL	CTL	STN	WST	WST	WST	WST	AGRM
DIST:	ME	NE	TOT	MW	NC	SC	TOT	SO	MT	PC	PN	TOT	TOT
Decisions	3	1	4	1	1	1	3	1	0	0	2	2	10
%	7.50	9.09	7.84	3.85	6.25	7.69	5.45	2.38	0.00	0.00	4.26	2.30	4.26
Publicity	11	4	15	4	5	2	11	13	7	3	17	27	66
%	27.50	36.36	29.41	15.38	31.25	15.38	20.00	30.95	43.75	12.50	36.17	31.03	28.09
Endorsements	26	6	32	21	10	10	41	28	9	21	28	58	159
%	65.00	54.55	62.75	80.77	62.50	76.92	74.55	66.67	56.25	87.50	59.57	66.67	67.66
TOT	40	11	51	26	16	13	55	42	16	24	47	87	235

The percentage level of those rescue workers who chose the *decisions* answer increased in inverse proportion to the level of the workers themselves. Executive directors, at the top level of rescue ministers, had the lowest percentage, while other directors scored and non-directorial paid staff who reported *decisions* were considerably higher. Board members scored even higher, even though it was only one out of seven.

**FIGURE 34: Responses for question # 12**

	Exec	Other		Short	Med	Long	Small	Med	Large	Divine	Work	Supp	
	Board	Dir	Dir	Staff	Tenure			Capacity		Call	Chall	Hous	
					(0-6)	(7-12)	(13+)	(1-127)	(128-252)	(253+)			
Decisions	1	1	4	3	6	1	3	7	1	1	9	1	0
%	14.29	2.17	3.08	5.88	5.22	2.04	4.29	5.83	1.79	2.00	4.95	2.27	0.00
Publicity	3	12	32	19	37	11	18	38	13	12	51	11	3
%	42.86	26.09	24.62	37.25	32.17	22.45	25.71	31.67	23.21	24.00	28.02	25.00	42.86
Endorsements	3	33	94	29	72	37	49	75	42	37	122	32	4
%	42.86	71.74	72.31	56.86	62.61	75.51	70.00	62.50	75.00	74.00	67.03	72.73	57.14
TOT	7	46	130	51	115	49	70	120	56	50	182	44	7

For both *tenure* and *capacity* issues, it was the pattern that the smaller factor of *short tenure* and *small capacity* had the highest percentages. This was followed in both cases by a much smaller percentage for the *medium* samples of each, roughly on a

variance of about a 3:1 ratio. The *long tenure* and *large capacity* were slightly larger than their medium counterparts.

The reason that the respondents continued to work in rescue ministry followed a decreasing pattern. Those with a sense of *divine calling* named *decisions* 5.0% of the time, while those with *challenging work* were less than half that, and those who *support household* had zero responses of *decisions*.

#### *Question Twelve “Decisions” Comments*

With so few *decisions* answers, there were few comments as well. There were, however, two that were worth quoting.

“We talk a lot about how people accept Christ and their lives are changed. Because of that we have a lot of residents, donors and volunteers that tell others about what we do” (Gary Rowell, November 26, 2012, online survey response).

“Since we are a Christian Human Resource Agency and Rehabilitation Program, we parallel what churches are doing, and that is bringing healing and hope to those who do not know Jesus and leading them to salvation and a new life through Him. We believe that all true believers should work together to help one another as the Bible instructs. We are one body, and we work for His glory, being obedient to serve the poor, homeless and addicted in our communities” (anonymous, November 12, 2012, online survey response).

#### *Question Twelve “Publicity” Answers*

How many respondents chose the *publicity* response to question twelve of the survey? The percentage of all the rescue workers who participated was 28.1%. This was

highest in the West Region, with the Southern Region virtually tied with them, then the East Region, and the Central Region with the lowest response of the four.

Among the nine districts of the AGRM, the highest incidences of the notion that front-page *publicity* concerning the growing need for mission services would have the greatest impact on community support was in the Mountain District, the Northeast District, and the Pacific Northwest a close third. The lowest numbers were from the Pacific District and the Midwest and South Central Districts, who were tied.

There was no simple pattern in the remaining factors. The greatest concentrations of those who named *publicity* to question twelve were non-directorial paid staff, those workers with *short tenure*, workers at *small capacity* missions, and those who *support household*. The lowest concentrations were other directors, workers with *medium tenure*, from *medium capacity* missions, and those with *challenging work*.

#### *Question Twelve “Publicity” Comments*

Front-page *publicity* is admittedly a perilous proposition, of course. As one anonymous respondent noted, “Front-page publicity does not always generate positive opinions. Though it may 'get the word out', it may also generate negative publicity” (anonymous, July 19, 2012, online response). Another worker said, “Good publicity is always good. Bad publicity can cripple the support” (Denny Smith, November 2, 2012, online survey response).

The key, of course, was the reason for the front-page publicity in the first place. Usually a front-page reference to the mission that was unexpected was seldom good news. This writer had an experience during a capital campaign many years ago in which the local newspaper took a positive interest in what the mission was trying to do, and the

mission ended up with four front-page articles that spoke about the need for the expansion for the mission, the work the mission had been doing, and a slant so positive that it helped bring the mission into the community spotlight in a way that has continued to benefit the mission many years later. That kind of front-page publicity cannot be bought; it was a gift.

#### *Question Twelve “Endorsements” Answers*

By far the preferred response among rescue workers to question twelve was the idea of word-of-mouth *endorsements*, as they responded at a 67.7% clip. The Central Region was the highest, the Southern and West Regions tied for second, and the East region was the lowest. The three highest districts were the Pacific at an amazingly high 87.5%, with the Midwest and the South Central within ten percentage points. The lowest districts were the Northeast, the Mountain, and the Pacific Northwest. The variance between the highs and lows within the West Regions were noteworthy.

Among the other factors discussed earlier, the middle choices were consistently the highest occurrences of the *endorsements* response. Other directors chose this answer 72.3% of the time, while those with *medium tenure* were at 75.5%, those from *medium capacity* missions at 75.0%, and those with *challenging work* at 72.7%.

#### *Question Twelve “Endorsements” Comments*

The idea that *endorsements* were the key to unlocking community support for the mission brought a lot of endorsements from rescue workers:

“The testimony is always the thing that brings folks to the mission” (Chuck Fidroeff, November 21, 2012, online survey response).

“The word-of-mouth publicity is stronger than anything else for a Mission. Front page news is here and gone. The testimonies of twice born men go on forever” (Jim Harriger, November 12, 2012, online survey response).

“Volunteer and peer-to-peer fundraising, along with impactful communications that validate the ‘investment’ of the donors' gifts will have a greater impact than most every other source of good news or ‘celebrity’/public endorsements” (Kristopher Sharrar, November 5, 2012, online survey response).

“Public awareness. Who we are, what we do, why, with whom we collaborate, what's different about us, etc. Many of our stalwart donors are amazed when they come in for a tour, first time, and discover the actual scope of what goes on at our Mission” (Jim Echement, October 29, 2012, online survey response).

“A solid reputation, along with seeing lives transformed brings communities together to support such a great cause” (Billy Anaya, November 28, 2012, online survey response).

“We have had our share of front page stories over the years but the endorsements of the community from every perspective are what gives credibility to the mission program. Having an impeccable business manner also helps to give highest respect for the program and its leadership” (Ray Raines, November 6, 2012, online survey response).

The message was that rescue ministry was truly about transformation, and that such rescue work was the work of God.

“Included in the word-of-mouth endorsements are the testimonies from those we serve who have experienced transformation, confirming to donors, volunteers, and the

community in which we serve that we are truly changing lives for good” (Brent Stachler, November 9, online survey response).

“. . . or a better understanding that we are truly transforming lives--for Christ and for self sufficiency” (David Bugher, November 20, 2012, online survey response).

“Of the three possible answers, word-of-mouth endorsements will probably help us the most. However, I know that our mission is completely in God's Hands and therefore the greatest impact for increased support will be through His providence” (Duane Wykoff, October 30, 2012, online survey response).

“The same is true of any act in faith. We speak what we believe. Where our heart is. . . It is all poetic. We love the Lord, so we share His love. Others experience His power and Love and do likewise. Those who witness, follow. Those who follow and love place their financial support behind it. We will never serve 2 Masters. We serve God, not money. Because of that, we work in Gods economy. . . unending resources” (Donna Scully, November 26, 2012, online survey response).

“Probably an unfair choice of options. Clearly, we are here to share the Gospel and to see souls saved. However, even if all this is for one soul, it's still worth the effort and financial investment. I don't believe God rewards us because souls are saved, He rewards us because we are good stewards of His provisions and He is glorified in the ministry of rescue. God saves souls . . . we preach the Gospel” (Mark Criss, November 15, 2012, online survey response).

One respondent pointed out that not only does the community respond to word-of-mouth *endorsements*, but that guests prefer the structure, discipline, and security of a Christian mission:

There are a number of other organizations in our community that serve some of the same populations that we do, some completely secular in nature, others quasi-religious that have won the hearts of our community largely because of their willingness to isolate the homeless from the community by offering enabling services to keep them occupied and out of the community. However, our clients have been verbose in their regard for our organization, stating that our Mission is better overall, due to our structured and disciplined nature. Our chief rival for funding has been labeled "the zoo" by the community homeless population, and has seen an enormous staffing turnover, and at least one, major drug bust since opening its doors just over a year ago. (anonymous, November 30, 2012, online survey response)

The last comment was from a rescue worker who once again gave reminder that it is all about the work that God has sent his ministers to do:

I have seen "ministers" manipulate a crowd into making a "decision" to accept Christ and boast of how many people came to Christ in their meetings. I believe that the long-term success of our programs to help a person leave his old life and begin to live a new life in Christ will have much more eternal impact than just keeping numbers. Changed lives means changed families! Changed families means changed Churches! Changed churches means impact on society either through revival or persecution. Both bring glory to God and lay up treasures in Heaven for the true Christian. It is always a win/win with the Lord! He causes all things to work together for those who love God and are called according to His purpose! (Jim Brackman, November 23, 2012, online survey response)

### **Conclusion**

There was great wisdom shared from many levels and regions of ARGM workers in this survey. Many of the comments led this writer to think even more about the issues in ways he had not considered before. Other comments require follow-up. There is still much to do in this study.

The original thesis for this project was the statement, “*Rescue missions struggle with the tension that exists between being faithful to the core convictions of the gospel and the socio-political responses to serving the poor.*”

To try to uncover the validity of this statement, four questions were posed:

*(1) If rescue missions are truly counter-cultural in their ministries, how can they draw support from that same culture?*

*(2) What challenges have rescue ministers faced or anticipated facing that bring into public question the legitimacy of ministering the gospel in the context of serving the poor?*

*(3) How have rescue missions had to compromise their convictions because of the challenge of finding private donations and, if so, to what extent?*

*(4) What are the contributing factors that impact the public relations of rescue missions with their support base?*

Chapter Six summarized all of this information, gave a more complete analysis of what needs to be learned from the findings, developed conclusions, and suggested recommendations. What has been learned? What should be recommended for the future success of counter-cultural rescue ministries in trying to survive in the present culture?

## CHAPTER SIX

### SUMMARY, FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS, RECOMMENDATIONS

The journey to discover the response to the problem statement of this project, *“Rescue missions struggle with the tension that exists between being faithful to the core convictions of the gospel and the socio-political responses to serving the poor,”* has been a challenging one. The project came about because this writer believed that the statement was true, based on his own personal experience and the comments of some rescue workers from other missions. If indeed the problem statement were to be true, changes would be in order in the way that missions marketed themselves to the public, as well as some of the ways that missions ministered to their residents.

#### *Summarizing the Project*

Chapter One set the stage for the project. It described the problem through an opening illustration and the identification of the nature of the problem, a tension between the rescue mission and the world. Those who support the mission may or may not agree with the idea of Christian ministry to the homeless, but to the rescue minister, it is not an option. It is not just feeding, clothing, and housing the homeless, as though missions were big warehouses. It is about trying to help the homeless to gain or regain the purpose of God in their lives. Rescue ministers believe that this is what the homeless *truly* need. The chapter went on to describe three areas that touch the heart of the issue: (a) faithfulness to

the core convictions of the gospel; (b) the need for consistent and effective marketing; and (c) good public relations. To get to the heart of the issue, four questions were posed:

*(1) If rescue missions are truly counter-cultural in their ministries, how can they draw support from that same culture?*

*(2) What challenges have rescue ministers faced or anticipated facing that bring into public question the legitimacy of ministering the gospel in the context of serving the poor?*

*(3) How have rescue missions had to compromise their convictions because of the challenge of finding private donations and, if so, to what extent?*

*(4) What are the contributing factors that impact the public relations of rescue missions with their support base?*

The research phase of the project reflected the thrust of these questions.

### Biblical and Theological Considerations

Chapter Two looked at the biblical and theological basis for this project. It discussed the subject of hospitality, certainly a topic of importance to rescue ministry. It is also a subject that receives a great deal of attention in the Bible and in other religious or theological material. It discussed the subject of standing true to one's core convictions, and used the examples of Job, Paul, and Daniel to illustrate. It discussed the subject of marketing, again using biblical examples to illustrate the need for consistent and effective marketing of a spiritual product. It closed with a discussion of the challenge and problems of public relations, trying to give the perspective of the rescue worker, rather than someone on the outside that was uninformed on a given situation. There were also biblical illustrations given on this and each section of the chapter.

### The Current Body of Literature

Chapter Three looked at the existing body of literature on the subject of the project. For most of the aspects of this issue, the amount of writing on the subjects is miniscule. The chapter did, though, review some sources from ancient times, from Hebrew and early Christian cultures. There was a presentation from a book on Missiology by a Christian theologian. The chapter also presented several books written from a rescue mission perspective, including books on mission history and practice, going back to the 1800s. There were also books on real-life experiences related to living and working in poverty and trying to live out the homeless lifestyle outdoors. An unpublished manuscript by a fellow worker at this writer's mission was discussed, as was also a book on marketing ministry. The chapter closed with some dialogue from one of the Association of Gospel Rescue Mission's listserv conversations.

### The Plan and Process of Research

Chapter Four discussed how the research for the project would be gathered. It began by describing an event that opened the eyes of this writer and gave him the opportunity to sit in a regional meeting of the AGRM and hear the perspectives of ten executive directors, which was the beginning of his research. E-mail conversations were utilized. The original plan was to contact the afore-mentioned executive directors, but in reality he found more interaction in the process of the greater part of the research, an online survey that he conducted. There were case studies, one of which appeared in its entirety in Chapter Four. There was also the AGRM listserv (actually more than one) mentioned in the previous chapter, which was a valuable source of varied kinds of information. The plan for creating the online survey was also discussed. The last type of

research to be engaged was the interview, and these were conducted both by phone and by E-mail.

### Seeing the Results of the Research

Chapter Five became the heart of the research of this project, which was the online survey that this writer conducted. The research grew quickly to include not only the regional missions in his part of the Midwest, but also missions from the Northeast, the South, the Plains, and the Pacific states as well. The enormity of this research was accented by many extra comments made by those rescue workers who were interested enough to respond to the survey. These extra comments proved to be an invaluable part of the research. Their availability greatly increased this writer's understanding of both practical and factual issues regarding the problem. There could be no greater source of information about the problems of rescue ministry than those who have faced them. The survey itself consisted of five personal questions to identify the perspective of the participant, followed by twelve more questions that reflected the concerns that were quoted in Chapter One. In analyzing the responses, the answers to the twelve questions were categorized by the perspectives of the rescue workers who responded, anything from the location of the missions where they served to their length of service to their motivations for continuing in rescue ministry. All of this produced an enormous amount of detail to consider, but an overall response that proved to be consistent and reliable. All of this leads to Chapter Six, the end of the journey.

### *The Findings of the Research*

In this project, Chapter Five represented not only the larger share of work, but the largest share of the writing itself. Gathering information from fellow rescue workers of the AGRM was an essential part of being able to answer the project questions. Twelve multiple-choice questions were employed that reflected the gist of those inquiries. The four questions were only offered afterwards to a select group of those survey respondents whose answers indicated real insight and thoughtfulness in relation to the problem statement of the project, namely, ***Rescue missions struggle with the tension that exists between being faithful to the core convictions of the gospel and the socio-political responses to serving the poor.*** In either case the percentage of response from the chosen sample was 19.12%.

### Correlating the Survey Questions

Careful consideration was given to the creation of the twelve survey questions so that they truly reflected the four project questions.

The first question, *If rescue missions are truly counter-cultural in their ministries, how can they draw support from that same culture?* led to the first four survey questions, which asked about the *counter-cultural* nature of the specific rescue mission of the respondent. The survey asked the respondent to identify in turn the basic level of the counter-cultural nature of the mission, to quantify that on a numerical scale, to identify if the mission had moved upward or downward on that scale over its recent history, and whether or not that level had affected the ability of the mission to raise funds from the community.

The second question, *What challenges have rescue ministers faced or anticipated facing that bring into public question the legitimacy of ministering the gospel in the context of serving the poor?* was reflected in the next two survey questions. These questions asked what challenges from the community the rescue missions had faced in the past or anticipated facing in the future.

The third question was, *How have rescue missions had to compromise their convictions because of the challenge of finding private donations and, if so, to what extent?* This was covered by the next four questions, which addressed the issue directly, asking whether missions have had to change their religious position for the sake of finding funding sources, and if so, why did they think that was necessary. The latter two of these questions addressed a fundamental part of the core convictions of many missions, the mission chapel: did they have a daily chapel, and was attendance mandatory?

The fourth and last project question was, *What are the contributing factors that impact the public relations of rescue missions with their support base?* This was addressed in the last two questions of the survey, which asked what were the factors that might stop community financial support of their mission and what factors might contribute to increasing that support?

#### And the Survey Said

The 283 respondents to the online survey gave sufficient answers to the survey questions to allow for a consensus of response:

Question One: How did they describe the counter-cultural nature of the missions where they served? Were they *rarely*, *somewhat*, or *truly* counter-cultural? The answer

was that the AGRM respondents were 55.1% *truly* counter-cultural, but they were also 41.7% *somewhat* so. From the question itself, that meant that they were both *directive* towards change and helping those who *wish* to change. Less than 3.2% of the time were rescue missions *rarely* counter-cultural, which the online survey suggested might mean that they were more concerned about meeting physical needs than they were trying to bring about real change in a person's spiritual life.

Question Two: How measurable was that counter-cultural number? On a scale of one to ten, with one being *rarely* counter-cultural and ten being *truly* so, rescue workers were asked to translate their answer to the first question into a number. The resulting composite number for all the survey respondents was an 8.11, which was slightly higher than the midway point between *truly* and *somewhat* responses, exactly where the result should be.

Question Three: How has this counter-cultural nature changed over the years at a mission? Was it *more*, *less*, or about the *same* as it was before? Besides the 20.3% who felt they could not answer the question accurately, more than half of those remaining answered that it was the *same*. Since the previous responses showed that most missions identified themselves as *truly* counter-cultural, this meant that these missions have always tried to direct people towards Christ, and that they were *still* trying to do so. Of the 33.7% not counted so far, 27.5% of those said that their missions had become *more* counter-cultural, while only 5.2% said they had become *less* so.

Question Four: This was a significant question to the project. Has the counter-cultural level of the mission affected its ability to raise funds from the community? Very simply, 62.3% of the respondents said *no*, only 2.9% said *yes*, and 34.8% said it

*sometimes* affected the fundraising. 62.3% is a fairly high percentage of response, but this does not negate the 37.7% that agreed that there is a potential problem, the very situation that caused this project to be written. Three out of eight rescue workers who responded to this question affirmed that it did affect the fundraising.

Question Five: What are the challenges from the community that rescue workers have faced in the past? Three choices were offered. Some respondents said that more than one answer applied; others said that they had experienced none of them. Even with these extra comments, 27.1% of the sample said that the challenge was the limitations of their mission services, 18.4% said that it was charges of unfair or mistreatment of mission guests, but an overwhelming response of 54.6% said that their greatest challenge was related to funding or some other issue.

Question Six: What about the challenges that could be anticipated for the future? Three choices were offered again, although the third one was the *other* response, which was chosen by 32.9% of the sample. The remainder was divided into 27.1% having chosen changing attitudes or laws about same-sex partners and similar issues, while 40.0% chosen changing expectations or conditions related to funding.

Question Seven: Another pivotal inquiry came with the seventh question. Had the mission had to change its religious position in order to keeping funding going? The answer could not have been made more clearly. Ninety-five point nine percent said *no*, and the wording of the answer was that *the base of financial donors supports the religious position of the Mission*. Only 0.8% of the sample said *yes*, that the *religious services are now incompatible with funding requirements*. Three point three percent said

to *some* degree the Mission has reduced their previous emphasis as it related to religious services. It sounded much like a mandate from the sample of rescue workers.

Question Eight: So why did the mission have to change its religious position? The question almost became moot, because 95.4% of the respondents were not able to answer the question. If they answered *no* to question seven, the survey skipped question eight. For those who did answer, 1.2% said it was because of *objections* to the religious services of the mission, 0.8% said it was because changes in *funding* requirements meant that donations had become inadequate to fund the mission, and 2.5% said the reason was *because of another reason*. This was inconclusive.

Question Nine: Was there a daily chapel for mission residents or guests? Eighty-four point nine percent of those who responded said *yes*, there was a daily chapel. Another 11.3% said that they had regular chapel but that it was *not daily*. Three point eight percent did not have any regular chapel. Those numbers seem to overwhelmingly support the idea that the chapel is integrally tied in to the core convictions of most missions.

Question Ten: Was this chapel mandated for people to attend? The answer was not quite as strong, as 63.4% of the respondents said *yes*, while 22.6% said *no*. Another 10.2% indicated that they used a system of *incentive* to elicit chapel attendance. Most interesting about these numbers was the fact that the percentages of *yes* responses was extremely high (almost 90%) in the Central and Southern Regions of the AGRM, while they were lower in the East, and in the West the votes for *yes* and for *no* were almost even (40.9% to 39.8%, to be exact).

Question Eleven: What did the respondents think was a leading factor in causing the community to stop supporting the mission? One of the choices was a public relations *incident* involving a resident or donor, which was named by 22.6% of the survey respondents. Another choice was a *marketing* plan that was poorly planned or executed, which was chosen by 18.6% of the respondents. The first choice of answers, though, was the *perception* by the community that the mission was no longer remaining true to its core convictions of serving the poor and ministering the gospel, which was the choice of 58.8% of the people. This resonated with both question one, in which respondents overwhelmingly indicated that their missions were *truly* counter-cultural, and question seven, where the message was that missions were not going to abandon their religious positions for the sake of funding or anything else.

Question Twelve: What action would have the greatest impact on increasing community support for the mission? Increasing numbers of *decisions* for Christ was one choice, and even though this had a high value for rescue ministers, the perception that it would strongly influence the community to increase financial support was named by only 4.3% of the sample. Front-page *publicity* about the needs of the mission drew more interest at 28.1%. The clear choice, though, was the personal *endorsements* that come by word of mouth, one person telling another about the work of the mission. This factor was named by 67.7% of those who took the online survey.

Simply put, it was discovered that while not everyone agreed, and in some cases a majority of rescue workers surveyed had not experienced the problem described in this study, there was a significant enough sample to validate the research, and to discuss what may be a growing problem in the future.

### Reporting the Interviews

It was the responses that came from the online survey that revealed the best plan for conducting interviews. Some of these interviews were almost spontaneous, as some people responded with answers to the survey that led to follow-up conversation. Other interviews happened in E-mails that this writer initiated after seeing the responses and perceiving the levels of interest and understanding among the respondents. Still other interviews were planned and took place according to a schedule. While the first types had helpful information, especially as it related to resource material for the project, it was the later types that were more formal and had more quotable material.

### *Book Recommendations*

One director talked about a book that he had read that he had found helpful. The book was called *The Social Animal* by David Brooks (Brooks 2011). This person noted that the book was about the *cultures* and how people today are affected by the different *cultures*. He specifically said, “I have discovered that the mission is a collection of five cultures: 1. Professional (Board and executive leadership); 2. Evangelical (Most of our staff, volunteers, and many donors); 3. Social Work (Case management and some program staff); 4. Street/Prison (Those accessing services); 5. Mission (A distinct culture shaped by Talmudic rules and zealous discipleship)” (Bill Russell, November 26, 2012, E-mail communication with this writer). This is an insightful summary of Brooks’ work, which is lengthy but quite interesting.

Two other books were also recommended by several people. They were *When Helping Hurts* by Steve Corbett and Brian Fikkert and *Toxic Charity* by Robert Lupton. The first book set out to help educate rescue workers and anyone else not to make the

mistake of paternalism, which is doing for others what they can and should be doing for themselves (Corbett and Fikkert 2009, 115). Lupton identified another serious mistake made by those who try to help others, when they tend to measure their outreach to the poor in terms of how it made them *feel*, not whether it was the best for the poor they were trying to help. He also noted the irritation that workers feel when they witness a sense of entitlement and a lack of gratitude among the recipients (Lupton 2011, 34). Both of these books should be a part of the library, and the subject of study, of anyone who wants to make a serious difference in the lives of the poor.

#### *Telephone Interview*

There was an interview by telephone with a director who had shared a slightly different public relations issue that his mission had faced. Because of their charter and support base, the mission was strongly connected to the Protestant evangelical community, to the point that they had a policy of not hiring anyone who was not a part of that culture. They did not hire unbelievers. Their expectation was, in his words, that “everyone who works for [our mission] needs to be able to communicate the gospel as we know it” (Ken Kelly, March 18, 2013, telephone interview). This policy had produced an effective ministry, but it also drew criticism from the community, specifically the Catholic community. It cost them some financial support among local Catholics, but at the same time it opened the door to solid support from the Protestant evangelicals.

The interviewee also spoke of trying to gain accreditation for their children’s ministries with an organization that came from another denomination. After close examination following several years of identification with that organization, the mission was told that they needed to change their religious position and start hiring non-

Christians. Their response was to go to a secular accrediting organization, which turned out to have no problem with their policies of hiring only evangelical Christians, since that was in fact who they were as a mission (Ken Kelly, March 18, 2013, telephone interview). The irony is that the secular community had more understanding of and empathy for their identity than did the Christian community.

### *E-mail Interviews*

In looking over the additional comments in the responses that were given to the online survey, eleven respondents were offered an additional opportunity to provide input by being given the actual four project questions. Of these eleven, two responded within a day and a third one a week later. A review of the answers and ideas presented to these questions was the substance of this part of the chapter.

The first question read, *If rescue missions are truly counter-cultural in their ministries, how can they draw support from that same culture?* In response to this, the following statements were made:

The culture is not all bad. Nor are all members of it fully inculcated into it. Furthermore, I might be a mainline cultural icon but still have a soft spot for particular needs or particular ways of reaching people. In short, God has a means to meet the needs of those He will meet the need of. He is not limited by the culture. As the prophet now knows, there were 7000 who had never bowed their knee to false gods in a rampantly godless society. (Howard Blomberg, March 25, 2013, E-mail communication with this writer)

The following comment shows another perspective on the concept of being *counter-cultural*:

From my involvement with rescue missions, I don't see their ministries being counter-cultural per se. Rather, I view rescue missions existing not only to provide temporary assistance to those in need but to also help people address their personal issues, overcome them, and become productive members of society. While we are not successful in all cases, the goal is certainly to provide a helping

hand up to people who need assistance for a variety of circumstances, admittedly some due to bad choices. (Duane Wykoff, April 9, 2013, E-mail communication with this writer)

Thompson is clear in acknowledging the source from which the support comes.

He is equally clear in his insistence of never losing the vision:

“Our first-tier support base should be those who understand and affirm the vision. Support from other groups (second-tier, e.g. secular businesses and celebrities) is worth pursuing, but not at the expense of the vision. If they know generally what we stand for and are still willing to support it, then by all means let’s include them, so long as the vision itself is not compromised” (Jay Thompson, March 21, 2013, E-mail communication with this writer).

One respondent suggested that there was a connection between the problem of fund raising and the approach that has been historically offered:

Rescue missions have largely adopted secular methods of raising funds. Only 7% of the funds my mission raises comes from churches. This percentage is virtually unchanged from year to year. . . . I have attended several conferences and seminars where the subject of fund raising is treated at length. Basically, they teach the best methods they can come up with from experience or from their own ingenuity. In most cases God is completely left out of it. . . . So why is fundraising a problem? Hudson Taylor, a missionary statesman from years back, made a statement that I have never forgotten: “God’s work, done in God’s way, will never lack God’s supplies.” Jn 15:7 NLT – “But if you remain in me and my words remain in you, you may ask for anything you want, and it will be granted!” Are we doing rescue mission work because God has called us to do it at this place and at this particular time? If so, we have every reason to anticipate his support without compromising ourselves to raise it. If we do not have a consistent relationship with Jesus Christ in the conduct of our ministries, fundraising will always be a problem. (John Zimmermann, March 21, 2013, E-mail communication with this writer)

The concept that seemed consistent among these responses is the emphasis on trusting God and not allowing the need to appeal to the culture to change the approach,

the message, and the work of the missions. Blomberg's analogy to the situation of Elijah is not so dissimilar to the situation today.

The second question read, *What challenges have rescue ministers faced or anticipated facing that bring into public question the legitimacy of ministering the gospel in the context of serving the poor?* The first response reflects the wording of the question in the answer:

Clearly the legitimacy of the gospel itself. In a pluralistic society, every answer has an equal voice. As other voice clamor to be heard, the gospel becomes subject to a flurry of objections: not up to date with new trends and fads (not scientific); tainted by association with objectionable positions (i.e., the Bible's stance on homosexuality being what it is, obviously its stance on other things is wrong, too!); and a host of worn out excuses to ignore the gospel.

And, as we—as the wealthy American church—are seen as having done a poor job of serving the poor in many locations, we are not viewed as having 'skin in the game.' Every answer we might provide is tainted by past alignment with political positions and by prior misguided efforts to reach out (pouring money at the problem instead of grace & truth). (Howard Blomberg, March 25, 2013, E-mail communication with this writer)

Another respondent continued that same thought of the gospel itself being the core of what was needed for the person and that needed to be defended:

Is the Gospel sufficient or not for our clients? If it is sufficient, then the primary goal is seeing the Gospel take root in someone's life, even if they remain homeless (e.g. they now have the Holy Spirit to lead and guide them into a new life). If it is not sufficient, then all other outcomes (e.g. housing, job) are the true goal and the Gospel is simply a nice addition. This sentiment seems to be a mirror of American church culture at large. (Jay Thompson, March 21, 2013, E-mail communication with this writer)

The next participant saw the growing problem of Christian missions coming under "closer scrutiny" by the culture:

A major challenge is that our nation is becoming more secular in nature and is tuning out the need to live lives in obedience to the Biblical God. If this is not an issue currently to Christian rescue missions, it certainly could become one in the near future. As people turn away from Christian beliefs, they could be less likely to support organizations that make ministering of the gospel an essential

element of provided services. The rights of Christian believers are being targeted and challenged more than ever before in the country. Ministering the gospel at any level and to any audience is going to come under closer and closer scrutiny and suspicion. There could also be a backlash against organizations that minister the gospel by other organizations, possibly including government at every level, that are opposed to Christian ideals and beliefs. (Duane Wykoff, April 9, 2013, E-mail correspondence with this writer)

Yet another rescue worker tried to put the emphasis on the real work of rescue ministry, which does not match with what society thinks:

We are not primarily called to do social work. We are primarily called to do evangelism, discipleship, and teaching (Mt. 28:18-20). Social work is a *by-product*, but an important part of the mission to evangelize and disciple. The public, of course, believes our primary mission is to address social concerns. They tolerate evangelism and discipleship but obviously don't see the need for it. This can influence the way mission work is done by their perspective. Are we functioning primarily to please civic officials or Jesus Christ? We work at having the best relationship possible with our civic officials, but never at the expense of our commitment to Jesus Christ and his priorities. There may come a day when our right to require a certain sexual orientation or a certain set of beliefs related to our faith is brought into question. That day isn't here yet, but it appears to be getting closer. Society is moving in that direction. (John Zimmermann, March 21, 2013, E-mail communication with this writer)

Two of the above comments mention an issue that has become a key part of the struggle of rescue missions in today's society, and that is how missions respond to homosexuals and gay marriage in particular. In contrast to public opinion, the biblical basis upon which rescue ministry was founded upholds marriage as being between a man and a woman. Society is still split on the issue, just as the U. S. Supreme Court seems to be currently split in their approach to the two cases of homosexual marriage that are before them. By mid-2013, the court will rule on the issues, and rescue missions will have to deal with the decisions. Can rescue missions continue to have public support while not supporting homosexual marriages? Unless this issue has been seriously

considered ahead of time, the opportunity to be proactive and prepared may escape the unwary.

The third question read, *How have rescue missions had to compromise their convictions because of the challenge of finding private donations and, if so, to what extent?* The responses represented people who had been at various stages of this process, and warned against a “tainted” product:

“had to”? I don’t believe they have “had to.” I believe that they can opt to, might be coerced to, and sometime even want to...but ‘had to:’ I don’t think so. God is able to meet our needs. I do believe that missions often take on a leader’s vision rather than God’s vision and, consequently, divert funds from what God is directing to what Man is directing which results in a financial squeeze. In that way, they can be ‘forced’ to compromise in order to keep even God’s programs open. Obviously, missions that choose to compromise often do so at the cost of focusing on the gospel, reasoning that half a loaf is better. It isn’t...if the half loaf is tainted. (Howard Blomberg, March 25, 2013, E-mail communication with this writer)

One director gave clear warning about what will happen when a mission believes it has to chase money. It is not always easy to stop on a “slippery slope”:

. . . we (the Board and staff) have made the decision that, as a Christian organization, we will not compromise our values to chase dollars regardless of what circumstances we face. . . . The temptation to yield on some of your convictions gets strong when funds are scarce. It becomes easy to rationalize that your organization is helping the less fortunate so why not compromise just a little so you can continue to provide needed services. But, one such compromise often leads to another, then to another. Where does it end? It’s a slippery slope that most often does not work out well in the long run. (Duane Wykoff, April 9, 2013, E-mail communication with this writer)

Then there is another response that questioned the effectiveness of a ministry that is more concerned about bringing in the money:

We shamelessly court the rich and famous and media at the expense of our true vision, because helping the homeless can be a compelling enterprise to those concerned with social justice at large. Our image, our need to be recognized, and our perceived need for finances become things we use to prop up our insecurities, rather than allowing God (with his vision) to truly run our organization. We feel

good when we are known and the money is rolling in, even if we are grossly ineffective at what we are doing. Further, tracking outcomes becomes more about donor pacification than truly measuring effectiveness. (How do you track the Gospel taking root? It is much easier to record housing or job issues, which satisfies the secular eye.) (Jay Thompson, March 21, 2013, E-mail communication with this writer)

The final respondent painted a clear picture of how far this issue can go:

In order to manage the temporary winter shelters in the Los Angeles basin with money provided by the different funding agencies including the government, missions have had to agree that there will be no presentation of religious services or studies in that segment of their work. It is not even permissible to have a picture hanging on a wall in a room that could be interpreted as being religious. Taking the cross out of our mission's logo has been discussed because it causes some people not to want to donate. The push to raise money at any cost seems to have become the primary driving force in too many cases. (John Zimmermann, March 21, 2013, E-mail communication with this writer)

This is a central issue with rescue workers. Ministries need funds to operate, but as Zimmermann pointed out, there is the real possibility that even Christian non-profits may pursue raising money "at any cost". The first writer suggested that this was not something his mission had experienced. The second apparently had no first-hand experience either way, but expressed concern about the possibility. The third spoke from the perspective of having seen principles traded for profits, and he was concerned.

The last question of the four read, "*What are the contributing factors that impact the public relations of rescue missions with their support base?*" One respondent suggested five factors:

- (1) Media bias.
- (2) Misunderstanding of the nature of rescue work.
- (3) Carnal "Christian" churches (& leaders) who preach secular solutions rather than biblical ones.
- (4) Being in a formerly 'Christian'-based culture that doesn't realize it's base has changed so that it is half inoculated to the gospel itself but, at the same time, is so much better off than much of the rest of the world so as not to recognize its own need. (Nor can it attribute its 'better off' condition to the influence of the

gospel in prior generations, as to do so would appear a bias in favor of a particular religion!)

- (5) Mission leaders who retain the form of Rescue work of 100 years ago in order to avoid appearing to change the gospel message in a changing culture that is different than 100 years ago. The result is that some rescue work is done using methods and means that no longer scratch what itches. The message is timeless: the methods are not. (Howard Blomberg, March 25, 2013, E-mail communication with this writer)

“We usually bungle up our media image when cutting corners with staff, money, or procedures gets elevated over consistency, quality, and stability. If we keep our focus on God and his vision for our ministry, we are less concerned with what others think, which ironically, offers a stronger place by which to approach those who may be interested in jumping on board financially” (Jay Thompson, March 21, 2013, E-mail communication with this writer). Jay also gave examples of his “cutting corners” philosophy. Hiring people at low wages who do not share the mission’s values of customer service and safety issues can bring about end results that can frequently be even more expensive to the ministry.

Another response saw three issues that would certainly make a difference in the matter of public relations with the donors:

First, people want to understand how their contributions are being used to positively impact the lives of people being served. . . If you can also positively affect that man’s life so he can become a contributing member of society, that helps validate to supporters that their donations are changing lives and making a difference.

A second important factor is to let supporters know that your organization is an excellent steward of all resources at your disposal. Supporters want to know how their donated dollars are being used. . . Most people work hard for their money and they want to feel comfortable that the money they donate is making a positive impact in lives. . .

A third key factor is the integrity of your organization. If supporters lose faith in the integrity of an organization, the chances are they won’t be contributors for very long. You want to be up-front and transparent with supporters so they never have a reason to question the sincerity or honesty of your organization. (Duane Wykoff, April 9, 2013, E-mail communication with this writer)

The final response also enumerated three issues, all of which tended to demonstrate the danger of sacrificing ministry and truth for the sake of funding: “(1) A focus on the dramatic story . . . even if it is somewhat distorted and occasionally misleading. (2) Working to extract an emotional response rather than a response based on substance. (3) Appealing to people’s perception of homeless issues rather than to the homeless situation as it truly exists” (John Zimmermann, March 21, 2013, E-mail communication with this writer).

#### New Insights or Discoveries

In moving towards the last two sections of this chapter, this writer would like to propose five specific insights from this project that he considers significant, the discussion of which follows in the rest of the chapter:

- (1) There is a firm commitment to the core convictions of the gospel among rescue workers.**
- (2) The problem that this project addresses is not experienced by all rescue missions.**
- (3) Rescue workers are all still learning the best ways to help; it would truly benefit all rescue workers to listen to God’s wisdom and to one another.**
- (4) Missions need to continue to approach the chapel issue as representative of a historical outreach of rescue ministry, an outreach that is not beyond improvement.**
- (5) Rescue missions need to be proactive in their response to the LGBT community; lack of prayer, preparations, and procedures will be damaging to the ministry and the cause of Christ in their communities.**

### *Conclusions: What Has Been Learned?*

Rescue missions have a truly unique ability to reach a segment of society that churches struggle to reach. It may be, as suggested in the earliest part of this project, that rescue missions, in addition to their spiritual emphases to the inner man (or woman), also reach out to meet the physical needs of the person. People have always been more likely to listen to someone who they know will feed them and give them a safe and warm place to sleep. Christians in churches also care about the poor and homeless, but are often not organized to meet their needs in a structured and secure way.

Given this unique opportunity to have the “ear” of the homeless, it is extremely important to the *ministry* aspect of rescue ministry not to become so absorbed in the daily administration of meeting the needs of people that they forget prayer and the ministry of the Word. It does happen; there is a clear biblical precedent (Acts 6:1-4). Note that the biblical example identified that working with people in relief situations can reveal or engender complaints, and that charges of unfairness or prejudice can arise. Note also that when the right priorities are set in place, problems are resolved and God’s work can grow and prosper (Acts 6:7).

### Resources Need To Be Utilized

One resource or series of resources that are available to help the rescue worker today are the printed or visual materials that have been produced. Several of the chapters in this project have identified excellent books that give insight and counsel to those who are dealing with the direct ministry to the poor. There are some resources that help the worker to see the perspective of the poor from the inside. It has frequently been true that many people enter rescue ministry because they have experienced brokenness in their

own lives and want to help others who are broken, but there are also those who simply want to help because they feel God's leading to do so. If those who work in rescue ministry feel frustration or a lack of empathy for people who seem to be stuck in an attitude of entitlement, for example, there are resources that can help the rescue worker. Good books, video presentations, tapes of speeches offered periodically at AGRM gatherings on several levels can help rescue workers to avoid compassion burnout. They also have the advantage of being able to survey both recent and ancient history to look for solutions.

The Bible is an excellent resource for ministry. That might seem like a truism or a totally expected platitude, but truly Jesus was in the business of *rescue*. He recognized need in people everywhere he went and stepped up to opportunities to minister. He never seemed to struggle to find compassion for those in need, even in the midst of pressure, complaints, unreal expectations, ingratitude, opposition, and a host of other issues,. The Apostle Paul spent the rest of his life immersed in a ministry to spread the news to those who were in need. The way that Moses led the people of Israel through the most difficult period in their history, withstanding the troubles that he faced, meeting the needs of the people, all of these are important lessons for ministers of any kind.

Perhaps, though, the most valuable and readily available resource in rescue ministry is the experienced, faithful rescue worker that labors beside the one who needs encouragement. This project has tried to bring some of those voices together by including more quotes than would have been expected to demonstrate that rescue workers can and need to learn from each other. The conventions and conferences of the AGRM are excellent places to meet with and reaffirm one another on those special occasions, but

most rescue workers know the people in their own missions to whom they would go with a problem or issue. If they are reticent to share with an immediate co-worker, they also have the resources of people who work at nearby missions. People are important resources, and can easily be accessible to those who need another perspective or just a little bit of encouragement to deal with that one difficult situation.

### The Resource of Personal Faith

The word “faith” in the Bible appears to have a double meaning. On the one hand, it can refer to what might best be termed an *objective* faith, such as the revelation of God’s will for the body of believers. This type of faith can be seen in passages like Acts 6:7; Galatians 3:23; and Jude 3. This faith can be observed through the knowledge and application of Bible truths. The other type, which might be termed a more *subjective* faith, represents a personal response to the message of the gospel. This type of faith would be seen in passages like Matthew 15:28; Acts 24:24; Romans 1:12; Ephesians 3:15, just to name a few. This is that faith to which rescue workers need to look.

What sustains the rescue worker during difficulties? What keeps her on the track of ministry to others? In this project it was learned that roughly four out of every five rescue workers feel a real sense of *divine call* in their rescue ministry. To what has God called each AGRM worker? God has not only given a *divine call*, he has provided the worker with spiritual equipment to answer the call. God has not left his servants empty or powerless in the face of adversity. He is not just looking to call the equipped to service, he equips the called.

Over and over in the responses from the online survey, the interviews, and the already-extant printed materials from this project, the message has been clear: *trust*.

God's people need to trust God. They need to trust what he has completed in them. They must trust his work and plan to use them to glorify himself in others. God knows what he is doing. The rescue worker must not let his fatigue, his frustration, or his failures in any way stand in God's way. He must let God work. As Paul promised, "And I am sure that God, who began the good work within you, will continue his work until it is finally finished on that day when Christ Jesus comes back again" (Phil. 1:6 [NLT]).

### Standing Firm

This writer shared the results of the online survey with some of the respondents, in hopes of gathering insight from their absorption of the material as well as his own. The one thing that spoke loudly and clearly to most readers was the strong commitment of rescue workers to the core convictions of the gospel in the midst of their ministry. This was typified by the following statement of celebration from one rescue worker who read the previous chapter of this project:

What stands out the most to me having read this chapter is that I see from the mission workers: a love for the Lord Jesus Christ and a desire to be a good witness in His name; a love for the ministry; and especially a love for the people who come to the ministry for hope and direction. Whether the ministry received government funding or not or required chapel services or not, the love for (here's an I.U.G.M. [International Union of Gospel Missions] established phrase) "the least, the last and the lost" was visibly seen in words and in deeds. It is this love for the Lord and the people to whom we minister which drives us to do what we do through the means God has given to us to meet our geographical-specific needs. We serve a mighty God and, in honor of this weekend, serve a risen Saviour. With blessed assurance, we can say, "HE LIVES!!!!!" (Chris Ellison, March 29, 2013, E-mail communication with this writer)

Wherever any rescue worker finds herself on this journey, it is important to be steadfast, to be true to her convictions. She must not let money or public opinion or pressure from the community make her decisions for her. It may not be feasible to ignore

those considerations entirely, but they must not be the determining factor to make a rescue worker do things in which she does not believe. She must know *what* she believes and *why* she believes it. She must be faithful to God in what she knows. She should learn to listen to others and be open to new ideas. She must never forget whose ministry she is doing.

### Reaffirming the Heart Commitment of Rescue Ministry

Those who enter the ministry of rescue frequently have done so because they want to make a difference in the lives of others. There was a clear vision in their minds: that they would serve faithfully, and that people would respond with cooperation, gratitude, and genuine change in their lives. Reality, though, proved to be somewhat different. Even though they may have acted faithfully to serve, they found many of those whom they served to be difficult, uncooperative, and ungrateful. In addition to that, they discovered that they held values that were very different than those whom they served. The lifestyles of the residents may even have been offensive to them.

At this point it becomes hard to remember that *Jesus died for these individuals, difficult as they may be, and that God loves them*. God wants to be in fellowship with them, and he needs ministers who are willing to look beyond the surface actions and see into the possibilities of what might be. In order to be a faithful minister of any kind, rescue workers must be willing to love them without conditions, just as God has always loved. They may not deserve that love. They may well fail the rescue worker and God and anyone else. The truth is, though, that even the rescue worker is subject to the same moral frailty. Workers and residents alike are in fact all sinners. That is exactly why God can use them both.

Can those who work at rescue missions actually love sinners? Can they love adulterers? Can they love liars? Can they love thieves? Can they love homosexuals? Can they love those whose anger is out of control? Can they love transgenders? Which sinners can they allow themselves to love in God's name? They were not called into ministry for their own personal reasons, as some have thought. They were called to reflect the love of God to the unlovable. They have been called, as was Jesus himself, to "seek and to save what was lost" (Lk. 19:10 [NIV]), regardless of the circumstances. They need to become, in the words of the prophet, "a light for the Gentiles, that [they] may bring my salvation to the ends of the earth" (Is. 49:6 [NIV]), a prophecy that was referenced three additional times in the New Testament.

*Recommendations: What Must Be Done?*

In Chapter Five, there were undoubtedly several points that could be made in relation to the problem identified in this project. Further study should be done in the future to uncover more treasures. For the present, though, this writer sees five principles that stand out as a result of the knowledge gained in the pursuit of this research project. These five principles are the resulting recommendations for this study, recommendations that will help strengthen the resolve and strength of the faithful rescue worker.

## Principle Number One

**There is a firm commitment to the core convictions of the gospel among rescue workers.**

- If rescue ministries are to survive into the future, it will take a faithful staff of AGRM workers across the continent to validate the cause of Christ and the legitimacy of rescue mission ministry.
- If residents know that they will be treated with respect, honesty, and justice, they will respond much more readily than when they do not receive basic courtesy, kindness, and hospitality from those who represent Christianity to them. The Apostle Paul's words surely apply to rescue ministers when he said, "Therefore, as God's chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness, and patience" (Col. 3:12 [NIV]).
- Rescue workers must demonstrate in their speech and actions the true nature of the gospel that they speak to others.
- Missions must be fair to residents and give them the opportunity to live within the framework of the rules and to be heard if they have a grievance about how they are treated.
- Mission staff members must not play favorites among the residents, even if some residents are easier to manage or easier to love than other residents.
- At the same time, residents should expect to be held accountable to a standard of behavior and regulations that apply equally to everyone.

- All of this is subsumed within the concept of justice or righteousness, an essential ingredient of working with the society.

### Principle Number Two

**The problem that this project addresses is not experienced by all rescue missions.**

- This was the biggest surprise of the project. The very thing that was thought to be a major challenge for rescue missions, the possibility that there would be community resistance to the religious emphasis of the mission, was not a problem for many AGRM missions.
- The main reason for this was that many missions draw virtually all of their support from the religious community itself; they do not need to go to the secular community to fund their programs. If *all* of the funding needs are met by the religious supporters of the mission, then there is no cause for concern or action, at least not at present.
- This works well for some missions, of course. Others, though, still have the need to ask the general community for help, particularly if their funding base begins to shrink, an older generation of established Christian donors begin to age and pass on, the economy grows poor and funding suffers from a result, or a number of other reasons. There are also capital expenditures on top of general operating expenses, including the need to build bigger and better facilities, which is a venture that usually takes more than just the average donor contributions.

- For those missions that have experienced this need, this is why this study took place. Missions must be sensitive to the feelings, thoughts, and impressions that are made on the secular community by the religious programming of the mission.
- Without sacrificing the core values that makes the mission what it is, the mission must sell the community on the need for their support, the anticipated results of their involvement, and back it all up with real endorsements of those lives that have been transformed by the power of the gospel in action.

### Principle Number Three

**Rescue workers are still learning the best ways to help; it would truly benefit all rescue workers to listen to God's wisdom and to one another.**

- This project has given a voice to many rescue workers who have listened to the problem statement of the project and made a decision to contribute to its results. There are literally dozens of actual quotations from rescue workers across North America in this paper, and most of them are given in their entirety to allow the context of the statement to explain itself.
- The message of all this is simple: *rescue workers need to listen to each other.* There were many substantive opinions, insights, and ideas that were voiced in all of the research. This writer determined to make it possible for as many of them to be heard as he could manage. Just as the AGRM tries to make it possible periodically for rescue workers to get together and talk to one another and exchange ideas and thoughts, this project has tried to do the same thing, without the cost of travel.

- It is unlikely that any mission or rescue worker or group of workers has it all right when it comes to doing ministry. It is very likely, though, that the combined pool of wisdom that comes from directors who have worked for twenty-plus years or younger leaders that have found something that really works and glorifies God, that all of this might be a blessing to those rescue workers who need a little inspiration and encouragement from day to day.
- Rescue workers need to talk to one another.
- They need to listen to new ideas.
- They need to weigh consequences and outcomes. Another mission may have found a way to build a better mousetrap.

#### Principle Number Four

**Missions need to continue to approach the chapel issue as representative of a historical outreach of rescue ministry, an outreach that is not beyond improvement.**

- The mission chapel is almost sacred in its symbolic representation of the ministry of the mission. Over 96% of the missions represented in this study have some type of regular chapel assembly. Almost 85% have it on a daily basis. It is a part of the spiritual landscape. It is not going away, and judging from many of the statements of the respondents in this research, it should *not* go away. Even those who do not currently conduct chapel did not negate its value or discourage its presence.
- The real question that may need continued exploration, though, is how the chapel may be improved. Using the same chapel format today, for example, as what was used one hundred years ago may not be the best use of the chapel

outreach. Blomberg's earlier comment that the message of the gospel is always timely, but outdated methods of delivery may not be, is worth consideration. Is an interactive message a better way to communicate the message than the traditional lecture method? With the onset of a generation of electronics lovers, would a multimedia format be more effective at grabbing the attention of a mission audience than someone reading information to them from a paper? There are many ideas to explore in this light.

- Another idea that was suggested in the research was to diversify the concept of the chapel, to perhaps divide up the topics or have simultaneous multiple chapels to give people a choice for what they might really want to learn. The subject matter or choices of subjects, the manner of presentation, the feedback sought or accepted, all of these are ways that the chapel may be improved.
- On top of this was the question of whether it was more effective to make chapel mandatory or to have it only for those who want or feel the need to be there. The research indicated that while there are several missions who offer chapel strictly on a volunteer basis, it must be noted that the majority of these are from missions with larger resident capacities. The percentage of missions that offer chapels as elective is largest in the West Region, for example, where resident capacity is overall highest in the AGRM. Many missions in the rest of the country might be curious about this practice, but it was noted by some of those rescue workers that if it is not required, people will not attend it. Is it worth the chance to see how effective it might be? Again, this is something that is worthy of further examination and discussion.

- One last idea that was suggested in the research was the concept of offering incentives for people to attend the chapel. If it were part of a greater program for which they could see a tangible benefit, would that reduce apathy or absence for the chapel? At this writer's mission, the idea of *incentive* was added to the mission chapel policy several months ago, as a way to help motivate people to do what they were supposed to do in the first place. The idea was not intended to replace the *mandatory* nature of this mission's chapel, but to supplement it. The idea was basically that each resident started with a bonus of forty points. Six points were deducted daily as the "cost" of staying at the mission. No other points were deducted. Points could be added or replaced by attending chapel, going to work (verification was necessary), and attending classes or individualized instruction in the mission's adult learning day center. Although there were those who always try to "beat" the system, it has been overall successful in diminishing the complaints over daily chapel attendance.

#### Principle Number Five

**Rescue missions need to be proactive in their response to the LGBT community; lack of prayer, preparations, and procedures will be damaging to the ministry and the cause of Christ in their communities.**

- To deny that the Lesbian-Gay-Bisexual-Transgender community is going to have the freedom to practice their lifestyles in a country that prides itself in allowing the practice of individual freedoms is probably naïve. For those missions who have yet to encounter the problem of knowing what to do with

transgenders or married same-sex couples, it is just a matter of time. There will be occasion. There will be decisions that have to be made.

- There will be people who cry, “Discrimination!” Missions will be challenged, particularly by a community who wonders why the mission must make it their business to judge lifestyles rather than just offer Christian relief.
- How much prayer has gone into this issue at missions across the continent? Do missions have a workable, non-discriminatory plan of action? Will it stand up to the scrutiny of others, including the legal system?
- It is past time to *begin* to discuss this issue. If missions are not prepared, if they do not have a well-thought-out and well-prayed-through plan of action, they will be a disaster-in-the-making. The lawsuits and similar troubles that follow will be formidable for those who are not proactive in their planning and implementation on the difficult issues of the future.

### *Conclusion*

This dialogue is not over. This is the end of this project, but there is much yet to learn. Rescue ministers need to keep on thinking, keep on studying, keep on talking to each other, and keep on listening.

Some missions are not facing the issues that are creating a real tension in the outreach of others. They are going only to the Christian community for their support. As long as that works and fully supplies the need, God bless them. But for others who have a need greater than they can supply, there is the challenge of balancing the need to draw support from the same culture to which they are challenging their residents to live counter-culture.

The witness of the mission is an important part of the community. In a generation in which the witness of the Christian mission is diminishing, missions need to be careful not to let their light to the world be extinguished completely. In the words of the prophet Micah, they need “to do justice, to love kindness, and to walk humbly with [their] God” (Mic. 6:8[NAS]).

Some issues merit further research and discussion. What is the best way to conduct the chapel at the mission? How can it have the greatest impact and outreach? Will it be required of everyone, or is there genuine merit in allowing those who want to attend to do so without compulsion? What about the LGBT community? Are missions prepared to love them and try to minister to them? Is there a plan in place? Do missions need to consider the creation of separate facilities to accommodate those whom they cannot place in their traditional male/female facilities, or does this compromise the issue? Rescue workers need to continue to dialogue on these issues, and reach conclusions that will enable rescue missions to truly be in step with the divine plan.

Rescue workers must never forget to whom rescue ministry belongs. They are not doing *their* own ministry. It is clearly *God’s* ministry. If nothing else can be learned, let rescue workers everywhere give every effort to glorify him in all they do and say (cf. Col. 3:17).

The problem statement for this project reads, ***Rescue Missions struggle with the tension that exists between being faithful to the core convictions of the gospel and the socio-political responses to serving the poor.*** Part of those *core convictions* includes rescuing those who need to come out of the culture in which they struggle and to live counter to that culture by choosing a life of faith in Jesus Christ. Those who remain in the

current culture and who do not see or agree with this drastic call to change may never appreciate its wisdom completely. It is, though, the courage and conviction of the rescue workers who not only see the vision, but who carry it out in the name and power of Jesus Christ that are worthy of note. They are the ministers of the gospel who bear a message that must be heard.

At some point in the future, it may be that this tension between those who bear the responsibility of carrying the message and those who consider the challenge of supporting their work should become a real and growing problem with rescue missions across this continent. At such a point, this writer would recommend an additional survey of rescue ministers as before, to see more of the perspective and planning that it will take to continue the ministry of rescue in the face of cultural resistance.

APPENDIX A:  
PROJECT PAGES

## APPENDIX A: PROJECT PAGES

### THE INITIAL INVITATION TO PARTICIPATE IN THE SURVEY:

Greetings fellow rescue minister! My name is Jim Davison. I am the men's director at the City Mission of Findlay, Ohio, an AGRM member, where I have served for 18 years. I am also working on a doctoral project at Winebrenner Theological Seminary, also in Findlay. The project has to do with rescue ministry and public perceptions, plus faithfulness to the gospel and one's convictions. It is going well, but at this point I am looking for a little extra help.

I have created a short survey that I am asking your help with. There are less than twenty questions, but the answers will help me formulate a structure to my next research chapter. Would you be so kind as to help me by taking the survey?

It is located at: <http://florenceky.blogdns.net/>.

I tried to create a hyperlink here, so that you could just click on the address and go there. If that does not work for you, either I was just unsuccessful, Google mail was uncooperative, or some E-mail servers do not allow such links to work. It does work, however, if you just type the address into your browser.

Thanks in advance for your help.

Jim Davison

Men's Director

City Mission of Findlay Ohio

THIS IS THE INTRODUCTORY PAGE TO THE ONLINE SURVEY:

Greetings! My name is Jim Davison.

I am a student in a Doctor of Ministry program at Winebrenner Theological Seminary in Findlay Ohio.

I have also been a director at the City Mission of Findlay for the past 18 years. Currently I am the Men's Director there.

My doctoral project is a study of the problems that Rescue Missions face in raising funds in the world, especially if that Mission is counter-cultural, trying to direct people away from any anti-Christian lifestyles towards life in Christ.

The specific problem statement for my study is, ***“Rescue Missions struggle with the tension that exists between being faithful to the core convictions of the gospel and the socio-political responses to serving the poor.”***

In conjunction with this study, I am attempting to conduct a brief survey, and am asking for your participation.

If you are willing to consider helping, please take the following simple survey. I have worked at making it short and uncomplicated. There are six questions designed to find out who you are, and twelve designed at finding out what you think. Some are basic fill-in-the-blank. Most of them are multiple choice. The survey is designed to allow you to move backwards or forwards through it, in case you need to go back and change any answers. The last page offers you the opportunity for any extra comments that you may wish to make.

My hope is that this survey will be able to identify some problems or trends in rescue ministry and maybe even come up with or suggest some answers with your help.

Finally, after you take the survey, if you think of anyone else at your Mission who might be willing to do the same, please let them know and give this link to them as well.

I am very grateful for your help, and thank you in advance.

Sincerely yours,

*James R. Davison*

Men's Director

City Mission of Findlay OH

I may be contacted at: [jdavison001@gmail.com](mailto:jdavison001@gmail.com).

Question A:

**What is the name and location of the Mission where you are affiliated?**

Please list the name, city, and state, and then press <enter>.

Question B:

**What is your name?**

Please note that giving your name is optional. It is strictly for research purposes. Be assured that no names will be listed in the research project itself without the expressed consent of the person.

Question C:

**What position do you fill in rescue ministry?**

- A – Executive director at a rescue mission
- B – Other director at a rescue mission
- C – Non-director staff person at a rescue mission
- D – Volunteer non-paid staff person at a rescue mission
- E – Member of a board of trustees for a rescue mission

Question D:

**How many years have you served in rescue ministry?**

Please simply <enter> the number of years.

Question E:

**What is the nightly bed capacity at the Mission where you are affiliated?**

It is okay to estimate the number if you do not know the exact answer.

Question F:

**What would you say is the primary reason that you continue to work at a rescue mission?**

A – I need to be able to support my household

B – The work is challenging and fulfilling

C – I have a sense of divine call to ministry

Please <enter> the letter that most closely matches your motivation.

Now that you have been kind enough to tell me who you are, I would appreciate it if you tell me how you think.

The following twelve (12) questions are designed to help gather information for my project.

The format should be simple enough to follow; the questions are mostly all multiple choice.

Please <enter> your choice for each question and move through the survey.

There will be opportunities for review and for any additional comments you might have at the end.

Thank you in advance for your answers.

Question 1:

**How would you describe the counter-cultural nature of the Mission where you serve?**

- A – Rarely counter-cultural, focusing on meeting physical needs rather than changing lifestyles
- B – Somewhat counter-cultural, helping people who wish to change to leave any anti-Christian culture for a Christian lifestyle
- C – Truly counter-cultural, directing people to change away from any anti-Christian culture

Question 2:

**Please rate your perception of the counter-cultural of the Mission where you serve on a scale of 1 (rarely counter-cultural or not at all) to 10 (truly counter-cultural, calling people into Christian lifestyles):**

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Question 3:

**How does the current counter-cultural nature of the Mission where you serve compare with its past counter-cultural nature?**

- A – It has become less counter-cultural over time
- B – The counter-cultural nature has not dramatically changed over time
- C – It has become more counter-cultural over time

Question 4:

**Does the degree of your Mission's counter-cultural nature affect its ability to raise money from the community?**

- A – Yes, the community has objections to giving monies for the Mission's religious ministries
- B – Sometimes, people have on occasion indicated that they are more interested in just helping the poor than ministering the gospel
- C – No, the community appears to have real confidence in the Mission and does not object if it carries out religious ministries with the monies that are given

Question 5:

**What challenges from the community have you faced personally in Mission ministry in the past or present?**

- A – Complaints over the limitations of Mission services
- B – Charges of unfair or mis-treatment of Mission guests
- C – Challenges related to funding or other issues

Question 6:

**What challenges do you anticipate arising from the community in the future in your Mission ministry?**

- A – Changing expectations and/or conditions of potential funding sources
- B – Changing attitudes or laws about same-sex partners that challenge the Mission’s positions on this or similar issues
- C – Other issues

Question 7:

**Has your Mission had to change its religious position in order to maintain or draw funding sources?**

- A – Yes, religious services are now incompatible with funding requirements and have become optional, only for those who voluntarily seek them
- B – Yes, to some degree the Mission now offers religious services as reduced from its previous emphasis
- C – No, the base of financial donors supports the religious position of the Mission

Question 8:

**What do you think is the main reason your Mission has had to make a change in its religious position?**

- A – Because of objections to the concept of mandatory chapel or religious services in general
- B – Because funding sources that would support religious services became inadequate to fund the Mission
- C – Because of another reason

Question 9:

**Does your Mission have a daily chapel for residents or guests entering the Mission?**

- A – Yes, there is a daily chapel
- B – No, the chapel meets once or more per week, but not daily
- C – No, the Mission no longer has chapel meetings

Question 10:

**Is this chapel mandatory for people to attend?**

- A – Yes, the chapel is an integral part of the Mission's programming
- B – No, but the Mission provides incentives for people to attend
- C – No, the chapel is optional; it is for those who choose to attend

Question 11:

**What do you think is the leading factor that might cause the community to stop supporting your mission?**

- A – An incident with a resident or donor that becomes a public relations problem
- B – A poorly planned or poorly executed marketing plan
- C – The perception that the mission is no longer being faithful to its charge to serve the poor and homeless and bring them the gospel

Question 12:

**Which of the following would you think might have the greatest impact in increasing community financial support for your mission?**

- A – Increasing numbers of decisions for Christ
- B – Front-page publicity about the growing need for mission services
- C – Word-of-mouth endorsements from satisfied residents, donors, or volunteers

## ***You did it! Congratulations!***

You have answered all of the questions in the survey. For this I am extremely grateful.

**1) You may want to review your answers.**

**OR**

**2) You may want to give alternate responses to specific questions.**

**OR**

**3) You may want to comment further on a specific question.**

**WHEN YOU ARE COMPLETELY FINISHED, PLEASE REMEMBER MY E-MAIL ([jdavison001@gmail.com](mailto:jdavison001@gmail.com)) AND FEEL FREE TO SHARE THE SURVEY WITH OTHER CO-WORKERS AND TO CORRESPOND WITH ME ABOUT THE SURVEY IF YOU CHOOSE. THANKS AGAIN**

THE REQUEST FOR PERMISSION TO PUBLISH:

Greetings! This is Jim Davison from Findlay, Ohio. You responded a couple of months ago to a request that I sent out. It was for my Doctor of Ministry project, and you filled out my on-line survey and left some comments. I have since read through these many responses and comments, and I would like to ask you if you would grant permission for me to use your name with these comments in my project. Please let me know if you would want: (1) your full name used; (2) only your first name; or (3) neither name, would prefer to remain anonymous. There is no compulsion or pressure to allow this; if you do not mind, though, I will plan to include your name with your expressed thoughts, unless you say otherwise. Please note also I will correct any spelling or grammatical errors before I use your quote.

The project is not for public distribution at this point. I will only be printing a few copies. One will appear in the Doctor of Ministry collection at Winebrenner Seminary. The project, which is slated to be completed by July 2013, will appear in electronic form on the Winebrenner website within the year following.

The exact comment or comments that I am asking about appear below:

[QUOTES FROM PARTICIPANTS GIVEN HERE]

Thank you for your participation in the survey and for your consideration in allowing your name to appear with your comment.

Jim Davison

[jdavison001@gmail.com](mailto:jdavison001@gmail.com)

APPENDIX B:  
PROJECT PERMISSIONS

## APPENDIX B: PROJECT PERMISSIONS

From: agrm-ceo@hub.xc.org [<mailto:agrm-ceo@hub.xc.org>] On Behalf Of Stephen Trost  
Sent: Friday, February 13, 2009 12:59 PM  
To: AGRM Directors List  
Subject: [agrm-ceo] zoning - neighbor opposition

Greetings Brothers & Sisters -

As some of you know the Rescue Mission of Salt Lake is currently engaged in building a 5 building campus. The fund raising is going OK but we have met with incredibly stiff opposition from our industrial neighbors. I've met with each individually with little or no change in position. We've agreed to fence the entire property and make it a gated community but they are still skeptical. They envision crime increasing and increased liability from our folks in the street which they run their heavy trucks on. My question is, do any of you have letters or newspaper articles, crime statistics or anything else that could demonstrate initial opposition by neighbors to a Mission but later an endorsement by the same folks that initially opposed the project? Any endorsements from industrial businesses would be particularly helpful. Thanks.

Grace & Peace,

Steve Trost

President

Rescue Mission of Salt Lake

----- Original Message -----

From: James Lewis  
To: AGRM Directors List  
Sent: Friday, February 13, 2009 6:04 PM  
Subject: RE: [agrm-ceo] zoning - neighbor opposition

We have won over our local neighborhood association, central planning area commission, a community activist group, and the city council person of our district, redevelopment, etc. It started by hosting the neighborhood association board meetings at the mission and their monthly meetings, giving tours, sponsoring the student of the month of the middle school next door, aggressively mitigating each negative issue we create in the area ("you are INSIDE or you are GONE", started a street clean-up program using our case mgt clients, etc.), including a park next door and the middle school, sponsoring community events, working with law enforcement, etc . . . before we even thought of building anything new. Now that we are seeking to build they are all supporting our project when just three years ago there was missive rejection of a 30 bed transitional shelter nearby.

It takes understanding who you "publics" are - anyone who has a stake (positively or negatively) in your operations and can affect you good or bad. NIMBY issues can be lessened but not totally eliminated. You need to focus on your outside supporters and have them fight for you (let another's lips praise you, not your own).

I am also available for you 562-279-3141 cell

Helping the Homeless ~ Changing Lives

Rev. James K. Lewis

President/CEO

Long Beach Rescue Mission

PO Box 1969

Long Beach CA 90801

(562) 591-1292 ext 111

[www.lbrm.org](http://www.lbrm.org)

-----Original Message-----

From: "James Davison (Mission)" <findlaymission@bright.net>  
 Subj: Fw: [agrm-ceo] zoning - neighbor opposition  
 Date: Wed Mar 11, 2009 19:05  
 Size: 4K  
 To: "JLewis@lbrm.org" <JLewis@lbrm.org>

Hello James, you don't know me, but we are in similar work. I am the director of a small but growing rescue mission in Findlay Ohio. I have been in this position for fifteen years, but have been only taking in the AGRM-CEO list serve since late last year.

I ran across this communication between you and Steve Trost, and was intrigued by your response. The reason in particular for my interest is that I am currently researching and writing a dissertation in my studies towards a Doctor of Ministry at the local seminary here in Findlay. The project is about the tension that exists between the world and the mission, particularly in the mission's need to preach the gospel and serve people in a religious context, while the world does not always respect that need. They are more concerned with socio-political aspect of just helping the poor.

Having said all that, I would like to have your permission to use the body of your response in this email in my project. It will be "published" on a small scale (where all doctoral dissertations are published, in a library somewhere). I hope at some time perhaps to write a small book on the issue, if the project comes out well.

May I have your permission to use your words, and to give you credit for them? If you need, I can send you the context in which I will be using this quote.

Finally, would you have any other words or thoughts to share on this issue, or on what I've introduced in this discussion. Thanks in advance for what you will do and have done.

James Davison  
 findlaymission@bright.net  
 City Mission of Findlay, Ohio

Certainly. Please feel free. Just copy me whatever you use. You can also go to my blogs

[www.lbrmceo.blogspot.com](http://www.lbrmceo.blogspot.com)

[www.nonprofitorgs.blogspot.com](http://www.nonprofitorgs.blogspot.com)



I am hoping that presenting this section as I intend to use it will help you decide whether to grant permission to use it. It will be published locally, in the seminary library. I hope to take parts of the project and perhaps present them in another format for more extensive publication, if the project works out as I hope.

If you have any questions, please feel free to ask.

James Davison  
[findlaymission@bright.net](mailto:findlaymission@bright.net)

It is fine with us for you to include the policy with the final draft of the paragraph below.

I would be very interested in your final conclusions. It is a very timely topic.

The local newspaper, the Star, ran a front page side bar article maybe four years ago that lambasted city union mission hiring practices since we would not hire folks in the homosexual life style... the article was highly critical. The next several days the letters to the editor page had a number of responses of people in the community telling the Star what great work the mission does and to not be critical of us!

Lorraine Minor

@@

**From:** James Davison (Mission) [mailto:findlaymission@bright.net]  
**Sent:** Sunday, May 31, 2009 8:54 PM  
**To:** Kathleen Killian  
**Subject:** the transgender question

Greetings Kitty,

Jim Davison here from the City Mission in Findlay, Ohio. I followed your recent post with interest concerning the issue with transgender residents. It created a lot of interest, didn't it?

The reason I am writing is that I am currently working on a doctoral project at the local seminary in which I am researching the issues that bring the community into possible conflict with the core values of rescue missions. This affects marketing, fundraising, and public relations. Your discussion of individuals of genders that cannot be clearly identified I believe fits the type of issue that enhances my discussion. I would like your permission to include your statements in the string you created in my project.

If you have any questions, please feel free to ask. Thank you in advance for your cooperation.

James Davison  
[findlaymission@bright.net](mailto:findlaymission@bright.net)

Absolutely. Feel free to contact me, as well, should you have further questions.

Kitty Killian  
Women and Family Shelter Manager  
Coachella Valley Rescue Mission  
760-347-3512 ext 232 office  
760-578-7137 cell  
760-347-8073 fax  
[kkillian@cvmr.org](mailto:kkillian@cvmr.org)  
[www.cvmr.org](http://www.cvmr.org)

Hebrews 13:1-3 "Let brotherly love continue. Be not forgetful to entertain strangers; for thereby some have entertained angels unawares. Remember them that are in bonds, as bound with them; and them who suffer adversity, as being yourselves also in the body"

@@

**From:** James Davison (Mission) [mailto:findlaymission@bright.net]  
**Sent:** Tuesday, July 28, 2009 8:10 PM  
**To:** jfisher@norfolkrescue.org  
**Subject:** permission to publish

Dear Pastor Fisher, my name is Jim Davison, I am the director for a small-to-medium-sized rescue mission in Findlay Ohio. I am also studying for my Doctor of Ministry degree at a local seminary here in Findlay.

My dissertation is on the tension that exists between remaining faithful to the core convictions of the gospel while still trying to please the general public to the point of maintaining good public relations and fundraising success.

I was following the exchange on the AGRM list-serve when I encountered your post on 6/15 of this year. It fit into the fourth chapter of my dissertation, and I would like your permission to quote you in print on this subject. The dissertation will only be published locally, although in the future I hope it might be good enough to be of interest to the AGRM at large. We will see.

So that you will know exactly how I am quoting you, I will paste in the section of my dissertation that deals with the general subject of ministers to transgender clients. It follows.

The AGRM list-serve was very busy in May with a discussion of a similar, although far less prevalent, type of issue. Kitty Killian, who manages the Women and Family Shelter of the Coachella Valley Rescue Mission in Indio, CA, introduced this subject on the list-serve on 18 May 2009 with her question regarding the best way to handle what she termed “pre-op transgenders”. Her original post described the problem of dealing with an individual who has elements of both genders, including female breasts but with male genitalia (Killian 2009). This post gathered twenty-five responses from other rescue mission workers across the country in the few days following. There was concern, some confusion, and a lack of a clear answer, even though some admitted that they have dealt with the situation in the past. The local rescue mission in Findlay, Ohio, has dealt with this situation two or three times in the past couple years with an individual who comes offering himself (herself?) as being female while having some very clear male characteristics, including a deep voice and the beginnings of a dark beard. This person, who has been housed in the mission’s women’s dormitory twice, was considered threatening by the other female residents of the dorm, who were convinced that the Mission staff had placed a man in their room.

Fortunately for those on the list-serve, Lorraine Minor of the City Union Mission in Kansas City, MO, represented a mission that had been proactive in facing the problem. She responded by saying that CU Mission had a policy already in place, what she described as a “position paper” (Minor 2009). Understandably, Lorraine received several requests for a copy of the paper, which she made available to anyone on the list-serve on

the day following the original post. Lorraine intimated that it was on advice of legal counsel that such a document was created, and she encouraged all other rescue missions to follow their lead. The document itself was a statement of the intent of the mission to offer “compassionate emergency services” to anyone, regardless of their sexual orientation or other considerations. At the same time, the policy clearly addressed the issue of having residents who stayed at the mission in a “congregate living” arrangement (such as a dormitory setup) “dressing and conducting themselves gender appropriately” in such an arrangement (Congregate Living Policy 2009). This type of proactive stance would certainly go a long way in setting clear boundaries in a situation where sexual boundaries seem to be in question.

Less than a month later, on 11 June 2009, another post appeared in the list-serve that offered an alternative for missions to refer those with transgenders and other issues. The post identified a Bishop Yvette Flunder, founder and pastor of a “City of Refuge” church in San Francisco that reaches out to the homosexual community. Unfortunately in reviewing Flunder’s credentials, it appears to this writer that she has given up on her theological foundation from a conservative Christian upbringing and is unclear in her current theology. This post received some opposition from at least one Mission pastor, who expressed deep concern about encouraging Missions to send “an individual to a group that would not counsel them to seek life change through Jesus Christ, but encourage them to continue in sinful behavior,” calling it “wrong and completely irresponsible on our part” (Fisher 2009). Pastor Fisher concluded by saying, “We must be a light to the rest of the world and show them that we love the sinner, but we hate the sin. If we start to deviate from that course, then everything that we do is pointless” (Fisher



Janelle James <janellejames@kzoogospel.org>

Jan  
16

to me

Yes you have my permission. Good luck with the rest of the project!

@@

Director of Volunteering <volunteers@bearescuer.com>

Jan  
16

to me

Good Morning Jim –  
Feel free to use my full name. I am not ashamed of my position in Christ, nor of the Gospel.

Praising Him,

Jim Ruff, Director of Volunteering  
City Rescue Mission of Lansing  
2216 S. Cedar Street  
Lansing, MI 48910  
Phone: [\(517\) 485-0145 x235](tel:5174850145x235)  
Fax: [\(517\) 485-0960](tel:5174850960)  
E-mail: [volunteers@BEaRESCUER.com](mailto:volunteers@BEaRESCUER.com)  
Website: [www.BEaRESCUER.com](http://www.BEaRESCUER.com)

***"...the longsuffering of our Lord is salvation..." 2 Peter 3:15***

@@

Steve Wing <SteveW@hollandrescue.org>

Jan  
16

to me

You may use my full name.  
Steve

Steve Wing

Holland Rescue Mission  
Men's Emergency Shelter Program Leader  
P [\(616\) 928-3419](tel:6169283419)  
F [\(616\) 396-6801](tel:6163966801)  
166 S River Ave  
Holland, MI 49423  
[steve@hollandrescue.org](mailto:steve@hollandrescue.org)

@@

Tom Hall <[thall@nycrescue.org](mailto:thall@nycrescue.org)>

Jan  
16

to me

Dear Jim,

You have my permission to use my full name together with the comments shown below.

Sincerely,

Tom Hall  
Director of Development

**CELEBRATE SOUP**er Bowl Week, as proclaimed by Mayor Bloomberg, Jan28-Feb3

- Savor a different soup every day.
- Volunteer at a [soup kitchen / homeless shelter / rescue mission](#).
- Donate to a [soup kitchen / homeless shelter/ or rescue mission](#).
- Enjoy the big game-- with or without soup/stew/chili-- responsibly.

@@

David Bugher <[DBugher@crmjax.org](mailto:DBugher@crmjax.org)>

Jan  
16

to me

You may use my name

*David Bugher*

Executive Director  
City Rescue Mission  
426 South McDuff Ave.  
Jacksonville, FL 32254

[904-421-5141](tel:904-421-5141) - O  
[904-421-5209](tel:904-421-5209) - F  
[dbugher@crmjax.org](mailto:dbugher@crmjax.org)

Blog: [crmjax.tumblr.com](http://crmjax.tumblr.com)  
[Facebook.com/crmjax](https://www.facebook.com/crmjax)  
Twitter: @CRMJax

@@

Roger Howell <[rhowell@citygospelmission.org](mailto:rhowell@citygospelmission.org)>

Jan  
16

to me

Jim,

You can use my name either full or first name whatever you prefer.

God Bless,

@@

Craig Rogghe <[office@findlaymission.org](mailto:office@findlaymission.org)>

Jan  
16

to me

Images are not displayed. [Display images below](#) - Always display images from [office@findlaymission.org](mailto:office@findlaymission.org)

I give you permission to use my full name.

@@

Rob Swiers <[rob.swiers@fargonlc.org](mailto:rob.swiers@fargonlc.org)>

Jan  
16

to me







962 Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd.  
Youngstown, OH 44510  
Voice [\(330\) 744-5486](tel:(330)744-5486) | Cell [\(330\) 503-6773](tel:(330)503-6773)

**Helping Build a Better Future for the Valley - One Life At a Time**

@@

Ray Raines <RRaines@munciemission.org>

Jan  
17

to me

It will be fine if you want to use my full name. Trust your project comes together as you desire.

*Ray Raines*  
*Executive Director*  
[1-765-288-9122 ext222](tel:1-765-288-9122)

"Where Everyone & Everything Receives a Second Chance"

@@

onita.yost@gfrescuemission.org

Jan  
17

to me

Jim,  
Feel free to use my name if you like. I pray God greatly blesses you in your pursuit of Him.

In Christ,  
Onita

@@

Greg Stetski <greg@gospelmission.ca>

Jan  
17

to me

Dear Jim,

I am fine for you to use my name. Gregory Stetski.

God bless you!

Greg

@@

Chuck Fidroeff <chuck@goodsamaritanmission.us>

Jan  
17

to me

Images are not displayed. [Display images below](#) - Always display images from [chuck@goodsamaritanmission.us](mailto:chuck@goodsamaritanmission.us)

You have my permission to use my comments.

In His Service,

Chuck Fidroeff  
Executive Director  
Good Samaritan Mission  
[541-661-7282](tel:541-661-7282)

@@

Lee-Ann Mills <lmills2359@gmail.com>

Jan  
17

to me

Hi James – sure, you’re welcome to use my name.

God bless

**Lee-Ann Mills**  
Business and Church Relations Manager  
Panama City Rescue Mission  
609 Allen Ave.  
Mailing Address: P.O. Box 2359  
Panama City, FL 32402

cell: [\(850\) 867-0576](tel:850-867-0576)  
ph: [\(850\) 769-0783](tel:850-769-0783), Xt 112  
fax: [\(850\) 763-0099](tel:850-763-0099)

@@

Jeff Levine <JeffL@lbrm.org>

Jan  
17

to me

Hi Jim, I am comfortable with you using my full name.

Grace,

jl

@@

Ken Kelly <kkelly@miraclehill.org>

Jan  
17

to me

James,

I am fine for you to use my full name. You may want to remove the word somewhat from my first quote. I highlighted it below, but I am fine either way.

Thanks

Ken Kelly  
[\(864\) 631-0145](tel:8646310145)

Sent from my iPad



james davison <jdavison001@gmail.com>

Jan  
17

to Ken

Thank you Ken, I will make that change as you requested.

Jim Davison

@@

Debbie Jonnes <djonnes@bowery.org>

Jan  
17

to me

First name would be fine. Thanks for asking! All the best on your project.

@@

Sarah <Sarahz@boiserm.org>

Jan  
17

to me

You can use my first name.  
Thanks!

Sarah Zimik

@@

Duane Wykoff <dwykoff@refugeofhope.org>

Jan  
17

to me

Hi Jim,

Hope this finds you doing well.

You certainly have my permission to use the comments that you have listed below in your project. As far as using my name, any of the three options you listed below are fine with me.

Best wishes for success on your project.

Duane

@@

[name withheld]

Jan  
17

to me

HI Jim,

**Thanks so much, and yes, your further explanation will be a tremendous help. As part of the AGRM, we do enjoy sharing ideas, strategies and in-house operational planning with each other, so I'm sure Ron will approve. I just need to follow through with keeping him in the loop!**







Amanda Walker <amanda.walker@gfrescuemission.org>

Jan  
17

to me

You may use my full name. I wish you well in your endeavor!  
I am from Fostoria, OH. I am sure you know where that is! My dad pastored a Church of God church in Kansas, OH.

[Amanda Walker](#)  
[Great Falls Rescue Mission Administration Office](#)  
[Receptionist/ Clerical Assistant](#)  
[\(406\)761-2653](#)

*...to give unto them beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, and a praising heart instead of a languid spirit Isaiah 61:3*

@@

Lee Bartel <lbartel@john316mission.org>

Jan  
17

to me

Hi, glad your project is moving ahead. I would prefer to not use my name if it will be associated with Tulsa or John 3:16 Mission in any way. If neither of those are stated, then I don't care if you use my name. Thanks

Sent from my iPad



james davison <jdavison001@gmail.com>

Jan  
17

to Lee

Understood. I did not use either "Tulsa" or "John 3:16" in connection with your quotations. It was my purpose in the study to examine what individual rescue workers thought on the issues, not what specific missions represented. The closest I came to that was tallying results by AGRM regions and districts, but not by specific missions.

In light of all that, I accept your permission under those terms to use your name with your comments.

Jim Davison  
[jdavison001@gmail.com](mailto:jdavison001@gmail.com)

@@

Howard Blomberg <HBlomberg@olivergm.com>

Jan  
17

to me

Jim,

You are welcome to use my name for what it is worth: doctoral dissertations generally don't get too wide of an audience!

My son was working with ADF (which has since changed its name from Alliance Defense Fund to what it is now [which I forget]) at the time. With their work on religious liberties and their willingness to assist churches/para-churches, they were a good fit for assistance.

Thanks!

Howard Blomberg  
Director of Operations and Expansion  
Oliver Gospel Mission  
1100 Taylor Street  
Columbia, SC 29201  
[\(803\) 254-6470 ext 1011](tel:8032546470)  
[\(803\) 254-0590 \(Fax\)](tel:8032540590)

[www.olivergospelmission.org](http://www.olivergospelmission.org)

@@

Kris Sharrar <KSharrar@helpingup.org>

Jan  
17

to me

Hi James,

Thanks for your note. You have my permission to use the second and third comments. The first comment is no longer valid.

You may use my formal name Kristopher Sharrar, and organization if appropriate.

Let me know if you have any questions.

Thanks,

*Kris Sharrar*

Development Director  
Helping Up Mission  
[410-675-7500 x130](tel:410-675-7500)  
[www.helpingupmission.org](http://www.helpingupmission.org)

[Visit Us On Facebook](#)

@@

**From:** james davison [mailto:[jdavison001@gmail.com](mailto:jdavison001@gmail.com)]  
**Sent:** Wednesday, January 16, 2013 11:29 PM  
**To:** Kris Sharrar  
**Subject:** permission for the project



james davison <[jdavison001@gmail.com](mailto:jdavison001@gmail.com)>

Jan  
17

to Kris

Thank you Kris, and thank you for clarifying the first comment. I will delete it from the study and not use it. I appreciate your input.

Jim Davison  
[jdavison001@gmail.com](mailto:jdavison001@gmail.com)

@@

[name withheld]

Jan  
17

to me

Please do not use my name nor the name of the Mission since I am not in a position to be a spokesperson for the Mission.

You are welcome to use my comments as they are or paraphrased, but please do not associate them with me or the Mission. As I said, the reason is that I do not have the



Steven Jessen <SJessen@memphisunionmission.org>

Jan  
17

to me

Permission granted!

**STEVEN JESSEN**  
**Pastor, Awareness Program**  
**Memphis Union Mission**  
**P.O. Box 330**  
**Memphis, TN 38101**

@@

Cassey St. Rose <cassey@fairbanksrescuemission.org>

Jan  
17

to me

Yes you may use my full name.

@@

Trish Rumph <trish@fairbanksrescuemission.org>

Jan  
17

to me

Wow! What an honor for my words to be included in your work! Yes, please use my full name, Trish Rumph. Thank you for the opportunity to share how God is working in our community. I know that you are and will continue to be a blessing to those you the Lord brings your way.

Yours in Christ,

Trish Rumph

@@

[name withheld]

Jan  
17

to me

**Jim,**

I spoke with Ron. He actually prefers the answer to Q 12, "word of mouth" but you can stay with my initial answer . also ,regarding the comments, for our chapel classes, we use guest laypeople, such as deacons; it is for our afternoon Pastor's class we use guest pastors and ministers. I wanted to give you that correction, as well.

I would prefer to remain anonymous for your project, Jim. Thank you for taking the time to sort through this with me. I hope for much success for you and your project.

[name withheld]

Cordially,  
[name withheld]

[name withheld]  
Volunteer Program Coordinator  
Springfield Rescue Mission  
19 Bliss St. Springfield, MA 01102  
[413-732-0808](tel:413-732-0808) Ext. 102  
Fax: [413-732-5512](tel:413-732-5512)  
[address withheld]  
[www.hope4springfield.org](http://www.hope4springfield.org)

*"For nothing will be impossible with God." Luke 1:37*

---

**From:** james davison [mailto:[jdavison001@gmail.com](mailto:jdavison001@gmail.com)]  
**Sent:** Thursday, January 17, 2013 11:42 AM  
**To:** [name withheld]  
**Subject:** Re: p.s.

---

james davison <[jdavison001@gmail.com](mailto:jdavison001@gmail.com)> Jan  
17

to Lenore

No problem [name withheld], thank you for your input.

Jim Davison  
[jdavison001@gmail.com](mailto:jdavison001@gmail.com)

@@

Logan Hoffman <[lhoffman@denrescue.org](mailto:lhoffman@denrescue.org)> Jan  
17

to me

Hi James,

I am glad your project is coming along nicely. I would be more than happy for you to use my name and the comments listed below in your work.

Let me know if you need anything else,

Logan

**:: Logan Hoffman :: Denver Rescue Mission ::  
Manager of Direct Mail and Donor Database**

-----  
:: [p] [303.313.2445](tel:303.313.2445)  
:: [e] [lhoffman@denrescue.org](mailto:lhoffman@denrescue.org)

:: Stay Connected:

-----  
*"Make a great day for yourself!"*

@@

Mark S. Criss <Mark@bearescuer.com>

Jan  
17

to me

Hello James,

You are welcome to utilize my name and information in whatever way will help your Doctor of Ministry project.

To God be the Glory,  
[Mark Criss](#)

@@

Hugh Burns <HBurns@denrescue.org>

Jan  
17

to me

I have no objection to you using my full name. thanks for asking. Best wishes for the project. Hugh

@@

John Saltee <JSaltee@erescuemission.org>

Jan  
17

to me

Dear Jim,  
I am glad to hear from you, and of course you can use my full name, John E. Saltee, if you wish you can also use my title; Director of the Ventura County Rescue Mission and Lighthouse for Women and Children.

Thank you for correcting my spelling or grammar. The second paragraph...should say, once a week, instead of one a week.  
Take care and God bless your work,

**John E. Saltee,**  
Director, *Ventura County Rescue Mission*  
and *Lighthouse for Women and Children*

@@

Bill Miller <billm@pdxmission.org>

Jan  
16

to me

I'm fine with you using my complete name and organization, James. However, I'd add that many new friends (including foundations) have stepped up to fill the gap left by those that choose not to fund our Mission because of our Christian principles. Foundation funding has shown steady gains despite of loss of some generous friends.

Thanks.

**Bill Miller** - Director of Development Ministry  
Portland Rescue Mission  
1507 NE 122nd Ave., Portland, Ore. 97230  
P: [503-906-7605](tel:503-906-7605) (direct); [503-477-1773](tel:503-477-1773) (cell)  
F: [503-227-1126](tel:503-227-1126)

[Bill.Miller@PDXMission.org](mailto:Bill.Miller@PDXMission.org)  
[www.PortlandRescueMission.org](http://www.PortlandRescueMission.org)

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More than a meal... More than a bed... **GIVE HOPE.**

FACEBOOK: [www.Facebook.com/PortlandRescueMission](http://www.Facebook.com/PortlandRescueMission)  
TWITTER: [www.Twitter.com/pdxmission](http://www.Twitter.com/pdxmission)  
BLOG: [www.PortlandRescueMission.org/blog](http://www.PortlandRescueMission.org/blog)

---

**From:** james davison [[jdavison001@gmail.com](mailto:jdavison001@gmail.com)]  
**Sent:** Wednesday, January 16, 2013 6:38 PM  
**To:** Bill Miller  
**Subject:** permission for the project

---

james davison <[jdavison001@gmail.com](mailto:jdavison001@gmail.com)>

Jan  
17

to Bill

Thanks for the update Bill. I may use the additional information to expand on your comment in my text. Appreciate the input.

Jim Davison  
[jdavison001@gmail.com](mailto:jdavison001@gmail.com)

@@

Kevin Campbell <[kevinc@ugmportland.org](mailto:kevinc@ugmportland.org)>

Jan  
17

to me

To be honest i cant remember the specifics of the interview. You can use my name...I think I meant to write the quote as follows;

"We are growing rapidly in faith without a proven plan to fund the growth."

Kevin Campbell

Sent from my iPhone



---

james davison <[jdavison001@gmail.com](mailto:jdavison001@gmail.com)>

Jan  
17

to Kevin

You know, Kevin, it's amazing. When I read your quote, I read it as "plan", several times in fact. But I went back and checked and it said "play" in the chapter I wrote. I copied and pasted all quotes to get them right, then adjusted them for spelling, grammar, etc. But somehow I

missed that easy fix. I'm glad you pointed it out, and I have corrected it in my document. Thanks!

Jim Davison  
[jdavison001@gmail.com](mailto:jdavison001@gmail.com)

@@

Tim Langan <tim@ougmn.org> Jan  
18

to me

James,

You can use my first name only, please. That would personalize the response. You could also use position title if you would like. I'm the Chaplain and the Street Ministries Operations Manager.

@@

Charles Cameron <chuck.cameron@gmail.com> Jan  
18

to me

Feel free to use my full name and mission.

*Chuck Cameron, C.S.P.G.*

**Executive Board Director  
HOPE of the VALLEY  
Rescue Mission**

8165 N. San Fernando Rd.  
Sun Valley, CA 91352

[www.hopeofthevalley.org](http://www.hopeofthevalley.org)  
Cell (661) 607-3302  
[Chuck.Cameron@hopeofthevalley.org](mailto:Chuck.Cameron@hopeofthevalley.org)

***"To the extent that you did it unto one of these, even the least of them, you have done it unto me." Jesus***

@@

Juliet Wallin <juliet.wallin@rescue-mission.org> Jan  
18

to me

Images are not displayed. [Display images below](#) - Always display images from [juliet.wallin@rescue-mission.org](mailto:juliet.wallin@rescue-mission.org)

Hi James,

Jann is actually out of town until February 4th, but I checked with her & she said you can use Jann S. for the quote/comments.

Thanks!

**Juliet Wallin**  
*Donor & Community Relations*

702 Pacific Ave • Tacoma WA, 98402  
P [253.383.4493](tel:253.383.4493) • C [253.592.6845](tel:253.592.6845)  
[Rescue-Mission.org](http://Rescue-Mission.org)

@@

Jim brackman <[jimb5068@gmail.com](mailto:jimb5068@gmail.com)>

Jan  
18

to me

You can used my full name on your project and I hope you do very well! I will be praying for you as you work to pull it all together!  
God bless you!

---

@@

Gary Rowell <[gary@ugmgraysharbor.org](mailto:gary@ugmgraysharbor.org)>

Jan  
21

to me

Good Morning Jim!  
You are welcome to use anything I said, I don't think I made any statement that can get me into to much trouble.  
Gary

@@

Jay Thompson <[JThompson@erescuemission.org](mailto:JThompson@erescuemission.org)>

Jan  
21

to me

Jim,

You may use my name. Btw, I grew up in Perrysburg & Toledo, with parents still in the area. Maybe some day we can connect.

Blessings,

Jay Thompson

Lead Chaplain

--

San Fernando Valley Rescue Mission

13422 Saticoy St.

N. Hollywood, CA 91605

[818-861-4287](tel:818-861-4287)

[sfvrescuemission.org](http://sfvrescuemission.org)

@@

Dean Gartland <DGartland@citymission.org>

Jan  
21

to me

You can use my name!

Dean Gartland

@@

David Howard <DHoward@missiondc.org>

Jan  
21

to Deborah, me

Yes you may use my name and title in your paper!  
I am sorry; I had responded before, but we have had trouble with our email!

Rev. David R. Howard  
Director of Spiritual Transformation Program  
Sent on the Sprint® Now Network from my BlackBerry®





[name withheld]

Jan  
22

to me

You can use the quote but please only quote me as an anonymous source. Thank you.

**From:** james davison [mailto:[jdavison001@gmail.com](mailto:jdavison001@gmail.com)]

**Sent:** Monday, January 21, 2013 8:45 PM

**To:** [address withheld]

**Subject:** D Min Project Permission

No virus found in this message.

Checked by AVG - [www.avg.com](http://www.avg.com)

Version: 2012.0.2221 / Virus Database: 2639/5549 - Release Date: 01/21/13



james davison <[jdavison001@gmail.com](mailto:jdavison001@gmail.com)>

Jan  
22

to [name withheld]

Thank you [name withheld] for your response. I will use your quote, but will NOT include your name, as per your request. Much appreciated!

Jim Davison

[jdavison001@gmail.com](mailto:jdavison001@gmail.com)

@@

Dewey Harris <[deweyharris@findlaymission.org](mailto:deweyharris@findlaymission.org)>

Jan  
23

to me

Jim attached is your paper. I don't mind you using my quote.

Thanks,

Dewey

@@

Lester Mesenbrink <[lester@kelownagospelmission.ca](mailto:lester@kelownagospelmission.ca)>

Jan

23

to me

Did not here if Randy got back to you. I, was told they were okay to use the way you were going to footnote them.

He asked me what I meant by the first quote and I told him that the history that had been told me was that there was a time when a lot of energy was going toward keeping the mission alive; not that we abandoned the gospel or watered it down, just that until some other things lined up and changed that it was not just the main emphasis. Congrats on getting your "Dr"8"

*Pastor Lester Mesenbrink*

*Chaplain, Kelowna's Gospel Mission*  
phone: [250-763-3737 ext 406](tel:250-763-3737)  
fax [250-763-4018](tel:250-763-4018)  
email: [lester@kelownagospelmission.ca](mailto:lester@kelownagospelmission.ca)  
[www.kelownagospelmission.ca](http://www.kelownagospelmission.ca)

@@

Roger Page <revp95@yahoo.com>

Jan  
23

to me

James,  
Thank you your patience. I certainly have no problem with you using my full name. I strongly believe Boise Rescue Mission was greatly influenced by the court cases Intermountain Fair Housing Authority v. Boise Rescue Mission and Community House Inc v. City of Boise. BRM was once very fundamental in doctrine and practice but now are very ecumenical in practice although the stated doctrine remains the same. I hope this information helps. If you have any questions you may call [208 697 0484](tel:2086970484).  
Roger

@@

Barb Martell <BarbM@eugenemission.org>

Jan  
25

to me

Hi Jim,  
Barb says it is okay to use her comments w/o her name. Sorry it has taken so long to respond.  
Hope you have a lovely weekend and that your project receives great reviews.

Gwen

*Barb Putman Martell*

Accounting  
Eugene Mission  
1542 W 1st Ave  
PO Box 1149  
Eugene, OR 97440  
[541-344-3251 ext 107](tel:541-344-3251)  
[541-344-7533](tel:541-344-7533) fax

@@

Terry Seeberger <tseeberger@stark-knoll.com>

Jan  
28

to me

Jim – you can quote. Best of luck. Terry

**Terry Seeberger | Attorney**

Litigation & Employment Group  
Direct Dial: [\(330\) 572-1319](tel:330-572-1319) | Direct Fax: [\(330\) 572-1269](tel:330-572-1269)

@@

Ken Kelly <kkelly@miraclehill.org>

Mar  
14

to james

Jim,

I am at a conference today and tomorrow. I could talk with you on Monday morning between 9:00 and 10:00am. If that works just let me know. You will be able to reach me on my cell phone. The number is [\(864\) 380-5637](tel:864-380-5637). I'll look forward to speaking with you.

Ken

Sent from my iPad



james davison <jamesdavison@findlaymission.org>

Mar  
14

to Ken

Thanks Ken, I will try to call you at 9 on Monday morning. I do not have to be at work until 10, so we will have a few minutes, anyway. Thanks for the cell number. Forgive me if it's a couple of minutes late. I'm listing my phone number in case you get this call and forget who is calling you. (It's always good to know in advance, right?)

Jim Davison  
[419-348-1217](tel:419-348-1217)

@@

John Zimmermann <JohnZ@lbrm.org>

Mar  
22

to james

Permission granted.

John

@@

james davison <jamesdavison@findlaymission.org>

Mar  
21

to Jay

Great comments, Jay. I would once again ask your permission to quote you with any of these answers. And I greatly appreciate the help you have been in this project.

Jim Davison  
[jamesdavison@findlaymission.org](mailto:jamesdavison@findlaymission.org)



Jay Thompson <JThompson@erescuemission.org>

Mar  
22

to james

Yes, you may quote it as you like. Hopefully something in there is usable for your project...

Peace,

Jay T

@@

cathy <cbyrd@pcrmission.org>

Jan  
16

to me

Whatever suits the work best is fine with me. I would be interested in reading your finished survey work to see how others in ministry responded, too! God bless you in your pursuit of your degree. Cathy Byrd

james davison <jamesdavison@findlaymission.org>

Mar  
25

to Cathy

Greetings! This is Jim Davison again, the guy with the Doctor of Ministry project, the one to which you have contributed. Again, thank you for your help.

I am attaching a copy of the fifth chapter in the project, the one that reports the results of the on-line survey. You are one of six people who responded to the survey and who specifically asked to see the final results.

I am glad to share these with you, but I have two requests, which I will presume you will accept upon receipt of this chapter (attached).

(1) That the attached writing represents the work of James Davison, and he reserves all rights of publication and such in relation to the product. You may refer to this at this point as “unpublished material”, but at some point in the future I do hope to publish, certainly at the Doctoral level, and perhaps more than that, if the Lord wills.

(2) That in receiving this chapter you would be willing to help me with the next step, which is to review the information, to summarize, to look for specific findings, perhaps trends or other points, to draw conclusions, and make recommendations. This is of course my job in the project, but

I would welcome your input in this process, because it has become much greater than I anticipated.

The attached chapter is in fact about 130 pages long. It is, though, full of charts and statistical results, hopefully a little more readable than the first draft I turned in to my writing team!

I do appreciate any help you can offer me in finishing this project, and thank you again for what you have already done.

Jim Davison

Men's Director

City Mission of Findlay, Ohio

[jamesdavison@findlaymission.org](mailto:jamesdavison@findlaymission.org)

---

cathy cbyrd@pcrmission.org via gateway04.websitewelcome.com

Mar  
27

to james

Thank you, Jim, for the opportunity to read the results. It was encouraging in some respects.....God bless your continued work.

@@

james davison <jamesdavison@findlaymission.org>

Mar  
29

to Chris

Thank you Chris for your comments. As usual, I would like to ask permission, if I should include your statements in the last chapter of the project. I may use the comments in part or in total, depending on how I fit it in.

Thanks again for your help.

Jim Davison

[jamesdavison@findlaymission.org](mailto:jamesdavison@findlaymission.org)

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[www.olivergospelmission.org](http://www.olivergospelmission.org)







james davison <jdavison001@gmail.com>

Jan  
28

to jboles

Hello Justin, my apologies if I have sent this to the wrong person at AGRM. I looked on the website trying to figure out to whom I should address this request. Let me preface this request with a brief explanation.

My name is Jim Davison. I have been a director with the City Mission of Findlay, Ohio, for the past nineteen years. I am also a student in a Doctor of Ministry program at a local seminary in Findlay, and my dissertation deals with the counter-cultural nature of rescue ministry (among other things).

As I am writing my dissertation, my external reader thought as I wrote the most recent chapter, that a map that outlined where the regions and districts of the AGRM are found in North America would be helpful. Such a map does exist on your website, of course, and I would like to "borrow" the map for my doctoral dissertation. In order to do this, of course, it will take written permission to use the map. I am using it as a visual tool to help my potential readers to see the scope of the AGRM.

I did not know exactly who is in charge of such things at the AGRM and with your website, but I am asking for written permission to use the map in my dissertation. If you are not the individual who makes that decision, would you be kind enough to please pass this request along to the proper person? I would be glad to answer any question in regards to this request, if needed. Doctoral dissertations do not have much of a circulation, of course, but at least I believe it would be a natural addition and improvement to my project.

Thank you for listening, and for your consideration of my request.

Jim Davison  
[jdavison001@gmail.com](mailto:jdavison001@gmail.com) or  
[jamesdavison@findlaymission.org](mailto:jamesdavison@findlaymission.org)

Justin Boles <jboles@agrm.org>

Jan  
30

to me

Hello Jim,

We're happy for you to use the map. Attached is a permission letter.

All the best to you in your doctoral work!

Blessings,

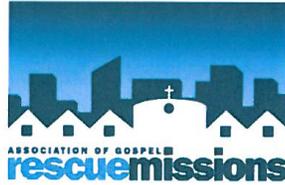
Justin



Justin Boles, Director of Member Services  
o: 719.266.8300 x104 | m: 903.714.6735 | [www.agrm.org](http://www.agrm.org)

---

North America's oldest and largest network of independent  
faith-based crisis shelters and rehabilitation centers  
offering radical hospitality in Jesus' name



January 30, 2013

Dear Mr. Davison,

With this letter, the Association of Gospel Rescue Missions (AGRM) grants you, James Davison, permission to utilize images depicting our map, which shows the locations of member rescue missions in North America. The map is hosted on our website at [www.agrm.org](http://www.agrm.org).

We give these permissions with the understanding that the images will be used to support your doctoral dissertation and that AGRM will be credited similar to:

©2013, Association of Gospel Rescue Missions. Used with permission.

AGRM wishes you all the best in your doctoral work.

Sincerely,

Justin Boles  
Director of Member Services  
Association of Gospel Rescue Missions

APPENDIX C:  
PROJECT PROCESS

## APPENDIX C: PROJECT PROCESS

### THE PROCESS OF CREATING/IMPLEMENTING AN ON-LINE SURVEY

#### **Final Preparations and Precautions for the Survey**

In the process of updating the information available to this writer about the AGRM member missions, each member mission's website was examined. Several pages of each website were viewed, looking to compare the data that was found in the 2007 directory with what the website reported. It was of course considered that all of these websites might not be kept fully up to date, a reality that the writer had faced before, even in inspecting his own mission's website for comparison purposes. Several staff members had been replaced with newer people, for example, and some of the monthly statistics were more than a month old. Websites are only as reliable or as current as their webmasters keep them.

#### Searching for E-mail Addresses

There was also the growing realization, during the process of examining AGRM mission websites, that not all of these missions in fact even had active websites. The final goal and purpose of the search, though, was not to find website information. It was to find E-mail addresses of mission staff, who could be invited to participate in this study. Who was the development officer at this mission, and how did she have an E-mail

address where she could be reached? Who was the president, chief executive officer, or executive director of that mission, and what was his E-mail address?

This information was frequently buried in mission websites. It might have been on the page that described or introduced the staff. It might also have been in the area where readers were invited to contact the mission or those who worked there, and the appropriate contact information was given. Sometimes it was a phone number, and sometimes it was an E-mail address.

The position of trustee or board member was a challenging one to locate, for the simple reason that while mission websites frequently identify ways to contact staff members, they tend to exclude such contact information for members of their board. This writer made a concerted effort early on in the investigation of E-mail addresses to try to find ways to contact board presidents or chairpersons at least. Such leaders for mission boards are generally also leaders in their community, and this writer was able to locate several of them by doing quick Internet searches. On a few occasions he was successful and found not only the company for which the person worked, but their professional E-mails as well. This procedure, though, proved to offer few results with very limited success, and was abandoned about halfway through the research, due mostly to the amount of time it was consuming.

For the most part, this search was quite successful. This writer kept a log of all the useful E-mail addresses he could find. The total number climbed to almost fifteen hundred. Some websites yielded twenty or more E-mail addresses, from the executive director down to the janitorial assistants. Others required more of a thorough search. On some occasions this writer had to find the site map for the website to track down where

such a list might be kept, if anywhere. For some missions, there were only one or two E-mails that could be found, when in fact this writer knew that the mission employed hundreds of workers in several capacities.

The results of the overall search were quite uneven, and frequently surprising. For some of the more well-known or well-respected missions in the writer's personal experience, he was quite astonished to find virtually no usable contact info, other than the ever-present "info@whatever-the-name-of-the-mission-was.org," or something similar. Even though this writer did use these E-mail addresses in his survey, the results of these types of contact E-mails were generally disappointing. If such contacts were monitored by an active webmaster, there would have been a chance that either she might have tried to take the survey herself or pass it along to someone who would have been the best likely person to provide the requested information. If the E-mails were not monitored on a regular basis, or if the person who found it did not pass it along, the invitation to participate in the survey might well have been lost in that mission's cyberspace.

### The Spamming Challenge

Another very real possibility, one that had been anticipated by this writer, was that many of the E-mails that went out to other rescue ministers at other missions might have been intercepted by E-mail or Internet filters, away from the sight of the intended audience, the rescue ministers. They may have been interpreted by these filters as "spam".

Because of the volume of materials that go out by mail or E-mail, it is assumed by those who control these avenues of communication, that a certain segment of this traffic is not personal in nature. It is sent by a business or organization for the purpose of

securing information, making a sale, or somehow trying to influence a previously unknown recipient to act in such a way that might benefit the sender.

People deal with these communications in their own way: they might hang up on telephone salespersons, pitch unwanted “bulk rate” parcels into the trash, and delete solicitous E-mails. Sometimes the decision is made for them by their E-mail or Internet providers’ filters, which can be programmed or pre-programmed to watch for certain key words and catch any suspicious E-mail that happens to use one or more of these words.

This writer has stated before in this study that it was a real fear that many of the E-mails that he sent out would be intercepted as spam and thrown into a bin that would eventually be emptied and recycled without any action on the recipient’s part. As the survey progressed, he was in fact contacted by more than one rescue worker, who indicated that she had found his E-mail in her spam filter, and was contacting him to determine the genuineness of the study. If the inquirer was satisfied, she tended to fill out the survey and submit it for the study. There was even an inquiry from a cautious director from one mission, who was suspicious because the E-mail address from which the invitation was sent did not match up with the E-mail address given on the survey’s introductory page. The conversation that ensued once the discrepancy was explained was helpful.

This type of response continued for several weeks, with the occasional E-mail from a mission somewhere that declared that they had just discovered this E-mail in their spam folders, and was the invitation to participate in the survey still valid? The writer always expressed appreciation for the responses, but he also had to wonder what percentage of the total number of invitations he had sent out were *never* found by the

intended audience? They were casualties of the electronic communication system that he had chosen to use.

The idea that this writer's E-mails might end up being intercepted by Internet filters laid a challenge before him, one that literally took months to solve. The process of researching how to do survey research led him to give very careful attention to the very words chosen in the description of his survey. For one thing, he did not use the word "survey" in the description, the subject line of his E-mails. He instead chose to use the phrase "rescue ministry study" in each subject line. His cover letter, which is also an extremely important part of the invitation, was also important. Any writer has only a few lines of text before the reader either becomes disinterested and leaves the page or has her curiosity and interest piqued to the point that she wants to consider whether to actually invest the time to continue and take the survey.

#### The Search for Those Who Were Moved to Participate

It was also at this point that an important consideration was satisfied. This writer decided early on, partly from the time frame of the project, but mostly from the desire to have a study that truly represented the passion of AGRM rescue ministers, that he wanted the responses of those participants who *truly* felt moved to participate. He did not send out any second invitations to participate to those who did not respond to the first invitation. If the first one was caught in a filter, was it not possible or even very likely that a second invitation would meet a similar fate? He did not beg anyone to participate. He wanted to hear from those who really cared about the same things that drove him to create the study in the first place.

### **The Beginning of the Survey**

All of these considerations led to a trial run of the survey, which he performed on his fellow rescue workers at the mission where he served in Findlay, Ohio. In mid-July of 2012, close to the time of another gathering of his cohort group in the Doctor of Ministry study at Winebrenner, he sent invitations to nine (9) co-workers and members of the board of trustees at the mission where he worked. The E-mail invitations offered people a link to a website (<http://florenceky.blogdns.net>) where the survey was located. After respondents would take the survey, the website automatically sent notification of the response to this writer, along with the actual answers and comments that they had made.

From the nine invitations, four responses came within a day. Two more came in over the next week or so, after an error in entering the precise website where the survey could be found was corrected. Three did not respond at all.

This writer then took some time to consider the implications of this response. He had been careful not to send the survey to those who were beneath him in the chain of command at the mission, lest they comply out of a sense of obligation at the request of a superior. He was deliberate in choosing other directors and trustees, who would respond only because they chose to do so, or as this writer hoped, because they really wanted to do so.

This writer also had to consider, though, why less than half of those who knew him the best responded right away. Was there a real aversion to being asked to fill out a survey of any kind? Was the survey too difficult? Did they intend to do it when they received it, but became busy with other more urgent tasks, and later forgot? This writer learned that in two of the three cases where his co-workers did not respond, it was

because they did not do so right away, and eventually forgot all about it. He knew this because they revealed this to him on their own initiative during later conversations about the project. As for the other person, this writer will never know, because he has never pursued the matter with that person. True interest or passion cannot be artificially created; it must be real.

To be perfectly honest, the fact that he initially had less than a fifty per cent response from those who knew him best was a little disheartening. It was, however, an important message for the rest of the survey. He must be very careful with the wording of his invitations. He must eliminate language that might alert any Internet filters, if such a thing could indeed be done. Most importantly, he must prepare for the reality that the percentage of response could be surprisingly low.

For the next few months, he spent a lot of time in consideration, in trying different possible wordings for his cover letter, and in much prayer. He thought long and hard about the way the invitation might be received, what people might say. He thought about the error in typing that almost kept twenty-two percent of his initial sample from taking part in the survey. He could not afford such errors. He had to be as sure as possible about his efforts on the project. The website had been created; all that remained was to steer people toward it.

### Making the Invitation Personal

In order to maximize the chances of response and make this project as personal as possible, this writer sent out his invitations one person at a time. Each E-mail went to one and only one person, instead of a “mass” mailing with several E-mail addresses at once. The likelihood of a person responding to what was quite genuinely a *personal* E-mail was

deemed much more likely than being one of two dozen or a hundred who were receiving the same solicitation from an unknown source. This procedure took longer, of course, but this writer believed that it was much more effective in eliciting more communications.

Each E-mail that went directly to an executive director had a small alteration to the wording of the cover letter. It informed the executive director that he or she was the first to receive this invitation, and that other workers at that same mission would also receive invitations to participate later in that week. It was hoped that interest by the leader might encourage or inspire others to take part as well.

#### The Evolution of a Larger Sample

At the end of the first week, as this writer began the preparation for sending out invitations to the Midwest District, the other targeted sample along with Mideast District, something began to occur to him. The Midwest District was not even in the same region as the Mideast. There was another district in the East Region, which was the Northeast District. This writer had chosen the Mideast and Midwest Districts for reasons of proximity, in case he might have needed to travel within them, for example. He began to feel, though, that this would probably not give him the types of results he really desired for the project. Should the thoughts and preferences of the whole AGRM be established by a sample that consisted of only twenty-two percent of the total?

The thought did not stop there. The East Region was not complete without the Northeast District. The Central Region had three districts, of which the Midwest District was only one. The Southern Region had but one district. If all of these were to be included, there was no justification for excluding the West Region with its three districts.

The project was growing, right before his eyes. He had given some thought to this earlier, as to whether it was right to only study a sample of less than one quarter of the total AGRM. If it could be done, would it not make better sense to have a potentially more complete sample?

Once it was determined how smoothly the process of sending out the invitations was accomplished, the decision was made to carry it to the whole AGRM. Time was growing short for this writer, but he came to the conclusion it ultimately would be for the best for his project.

#### Beginning to Analyze the Numbers

With all the results in, it was possible to finalize the statistics. The responses were adequate for the task, and they came from a myriad of regions and persons. They were not all complete, however. It is always the case that people who respond to surveys do so for their own reasons, and that motivation or interest may suddenly wane halfway or less through the process. A full twenty-five (25) respondents filled out the background information more or less, but never answered one of the twelve questions in the survey. Several others stopped after one or two questions. Most of those who started the survey, though, filled it out to the very end, and over half of those (62.7 percent, to be exact) made extra comments in addition to their answers.

There were even two responses in which the answers came back with *nothing* filled out at all, not even background or biographical data. The response just came in completely blank. In talking with the webmaster, he indicated it was probably some type of computer *bot*, an automated program searching the Internet for things to fill in, but had

nothing to answer because it required a human response. On his advice, those two responses were discarded. The total number of responses was complete with 283.

### Open-ended Survey Questions?

In the process of creating and administering this survey, one of the key considerations was how the survey questions would be worded. If the original four project questions were used, they were worded as open-ended questions, allowing for free discussion and answers. On the other hand, if questions were created that called for multiple-choice answers, these closed-ended questions might to some degree stifle creative responses, but they would be simpler and quicker for the respondents. In the end, it was decided to go with twelve multiple-choice questions that coordinated with the four project questions. That way the material would be covered in the questions, more people might respond due to the simplicity of the format, and there would still be an opportunity for further comments added into the survey. Even though a handful of respondents voiced that they felt their response did not actually match up with the choices given, they were able to voice their exact thoughts, if they so chose.

Another indicator that this was probably the choice that elicited the larger response was a follow-up event to the survey. In looking over the responses, this writer felt that he saw several individuals who seemed to have a real grasp of the situation without being extreme. In finalizing his research, he sent invitations to eleven of these individuals with the original four project questions to ask if they might provide open responses to them. Since these individuals had responded previously with thoughtful and insightful answers, he anticipated that this would make a great follow-up to the survey. He estimated of the eleven that he might receive seven or eight responses back, given that

people might be busy or feel that they had already given me adequate information or some other such consideration. He in fact received only four open responses out of the eleven, two of which came along a week or more after the first two. That might have meant that even though the quality of the response to the open-ended questions was high, the percentage of response was no greater than the response to the closed-ended multiple choice questions. It may have even been less, given that the familiarity of the sample.

APPENDIX D:  
PROFESSIONAL PERSEVERANCE

## APPENDIX D: PROFESSIONAL PERSEVERANCE

There is a constant challenge in dealing with the Christian life and service. It is true whether one speaks of the *rescue* minister or any other type of Christian minister. How do Christian ministers find the strength to continue on in their ministries? There are surely times and occasions in which ministers wonder whether it is worth it to keep on keeping on.

As a veteran now of thirty-seven years of ministry, both in pastoral and rescue ministry, this writer would like to share his observations through the years on the challenge of perseverance in service. What are the keys to holding on to ministry over time? Can it also be done effectively, so that one does not just “burn out” while continuing to fill a position?

This author offers seven basic propositions as his contribution to the field of professional, Christian perseverance in ministry:

***(1) Ministers must remember that the Christian race is always a marathon, and never a wind sprint.*** Christianity is not a passing fad. It is not a hobby that one picks up for a while and then discards when it is no longer satisfying. Christianity and the Christian service that accompanies it are life-long endeavors. It is a race that believers “run with perseverance” (Heb. 12:1 [NIV]). Since Christians run it all their lives, it is a long distance run, like a marathon. It is not over soon. There will be plenty of time for

different kinds of opportunities to happen. While there are expectations and deadlines, Christians have the luxury of also pacing themselves and taking their time.

It is a sad waste of resources to witness the frenetic activity of those Christians, whether new or old in their faith, who act like they only have a short time to accomplish everything in their spiritual journey. Such cases tend to *burn out* all too quickly in ministry. They spend their energies in a short period of time, trying to win the favor of God or others, but use up their reserves and their resolve far too soon.

There is time; there is plenty of time. As the oft-quoted proverb reads, “Rome was not built in a day.” The Christian life and all its accomplishments are also not built overnight. Christian ministers are in ministry mode for life. They may not continue in the same capacity for the rest of their days, but they will always be God’s ministers to serve others, regardless of what they choose to do. It is a life-long calling, and, as many ministers are aware, the calling and gifts of God are irrevocable (cf. Rom. 11:29). If ministers do not develop that endurance that it takes for the long haul, they will be prone to end up gasping for breath, like the sprinter who uses up all his energy and resources in one short race.

***(2) Ministers must develop a long-term perspective about their work and a determination to outlast the enemy, no matter how he manifests himself.*** The “long-term perspective” is one of this writer’s favorite phrases when it comes to the challenges, distresses, and discouragements of the present. When hardship comes, when disappointments abound and plans fail, ministers take courage in the knowledge that God always sees past the momentary troubles to the glories of the times yet to come (cf. 2 Cor. 4:16-18).

Does the present circumstance feel unbearable? Does it seem like there is no way to deal with a superior who is constantly oppressive? How does the minister deal with the urge sometimes to give up and just quit?

Perhaps it helps to think back to a time before the present, when these problems did not exist. If the minister can remember a time when things were better, the good news is that God can bring about necessary change just as surely in the future as he did in the past.

Ministers just need the long-term perspective. It is the same perspective that God has. Unless they believe that God stresses out while dealing with the hardships of the present, they can believe that God has an answer for what is going on right now. He is not only willing; he is able to answer the prayers that he hears.

In addition, the long-term approach allows the minister to believe that God will be there long after the adversary has been handled. Experienced ministers know how to recognize the varied disguises and approaches of the evil one (cf. 2 Cor. 2:11), and they do not go into spiritual battle unarmed or uncovered with prayer (cf. Eph 6:10-18). In the end of the Bible, after Satan is gone, there is only God and those who have trusted him.

***(3) Ministers must not take on other people's fears and problems, whether they are clients or supervisors.*** There is probably little that causes more troubles for ministers than the inability to maintain a professional and emotional distance from those whom they serve. It is not only good practice to not take on the fears and problems of other people; it is absolutely *essential* in successful ministry to do so.

Rescue ministers probably know this better than other types of ministers. By nature, rescue ministry consists largely of emergency situations, and those who come

seeking help frequently try to transfer their problems to the mission staff. If they are successful, they think, they also transfer the responsibility to their problems with it. This is patently false, and ministers will do well to allow people to take responsibility for their own issues.

In some occasions this also happens with mission staff. How wonderful would it be to affirm that all rescue ministers are emotionally, socially, and spiritually healthy, that they know how to establish and maintain healthy boundaries in their relationships. The truth, however, is that rescue ministers are human like everyone else, and there are those who are personally challenged to deal with their own issues, without passing them on to those who serve under them. This is a challenging situation; it requires much concern, much love, and much prayer for fellow workers.

***(4) Ministers must develop a mature attitude that does not overreact to critics and gainsayers in regards to their ministry.*** While it is important to maintain a healthy, balanced approach to criticism of the ministry, there also needs to be a faith in God's protection and preservation of the ministry, a faith that dispels fear. God forbid that rescue missions should face intense opposition from anywhere, but ministers need to learn to always put the unknown future into the hands of the only one who knows that future. The God who holds the whole world in his hands is certainly capable of quieting a few gainsayers.

***(5) Ministers must not overexpect from their clients, so that they set up both themselves and those with which they work for failure.*** Another phrase that has become common in this writer's office, especially when discussing the homeless, is that *there is a reason that they are homeless*. A former director used to argue that of course the

homeless cheat, lie, and fail in their lives, that they were sinners, and that is what sinners do.

That may seem a bit fatalistic, but it may not be that far from the truth. When rescue ministers insist on high standards for the homeless, they are frequently setting themselves up for disappointment and perhaps for failure. The reason that many homeless come to rescue missions is for this very reason: they have not been able to do it on their own. To expect them to suddenly develop the drive and the capacity for self-motivation and achievement is not realistic. Whether or not they may actually *ask* for help, they are truly in need of help.

A healthy balance on the part of the rescue minister of both respecting the dignity of the homeless and also standing ready to help at the slightest inclination of the person will make it possible to meet the need, if it should ever be voiced. On the other hand, it may also create an opportunity to touch the heart of the homeless that might not exist otherwise.

***(6) Ministers must not get caught up in using human standards to measure their own success.*** How do rescue ministers gauge the success of their work? Chances are that somewhere in the midst of the standards that they use are some reasons that do not come from the scriptures. There are plenty of criteria that come from positive thinking, well intended sources. If indeed the work of rescue ministry is not recognized as a work of God, and subject to the judgment of God, it may well become subject to a whole different set of standards.

The Pastoral Epistles of Timothy and Titus have excellent counsel for those who wish to find real standards for ministry success. The faithfulness and perseverance to

which the Apostle Paul challenged his young charges are just as true today as they were almost two thousand years ago. There are many such passages, but one classic text is 2 Timothy 2:15: “*Do your best to present yourself to God as one approved, a workman who does not need to be ashamed and who correctly handles the word of truth*” [NIV].

**(7) Ministers must never forget whose work they are doing.** This is the big picture. When rescue ministers are about the daily tasks of menial chores, endless staff meetings, times spent with challenging residents, or any of a number of other repetitive situations, it helps to remember the big picture. Why do rescue ministers do the work of *rescue*? To forget the true nature of the work that is done, and for whose glory it is done, is to lose sight of what gives meaning to ministry. As Paul stated to the church in Corinth, if Christians do the right things with wrong heart motives, their ministry becomes meaningless (cf. 1 Cor. 13:1-3).

May God grant to rescue ministers everywhere the resolve that comes from his own heart to do the work of rescue. May he give wisdom to their hearts, strength to their spirits, and success to their endeavors.

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