

LETTING GOD SHINE IN THE EVERYDAY

By Joyce Hunsaker

Besides assisting my husband, Will, senior pastor of First Church of the Open Bible in Clear Lake, Iowa, I am a teacher's aide for the Clear Lake school system. I also work part-time for a temp service at the Kraft pudding plant. This factory job allows me to meet a variety of people, like Richard, a gentleman who lives alone on his parents' farm and drives an hour to work. Over a year ago Richard confided in me that he was going in for prostate surgery. When I told him I would visit him in the hospital, he looked a little skeptical. He was so surprised to see me when I dropped by his room a couple of days after the surgery. His sister was also there. Conversation flowed easily. We talked about gardening and flowers, and I took the opportunity to pray with them before I left.

Six weeks later Richard was back at work. We renewed our friendship, talking about geraniums, gladiolas, and irises. As winter closed in, I told Richard that if there was ever a time when he couldn't make the drive home because of the weather, he was welcome to stay at our house. During a bad storm that January, Richard phoned me; he was in a ditch outside of Clear Lake. We told him to have the tow truck bring him to our house. The storm was so intense he ended up staying at our house three days.

That Sunday Richard went to church with us. He enjoyed the service and said he would like to come again, but it was too far to drive. We have a spare bedroom upstairs so we invited him to stay with us on Saturday nights after his shift ended at midnight and then attend church with us on Sunday. He could spend the afternoon with us and then leave from our house to go to Kraft again that evening. We kept up this schedule for several weeks. Richard was enjoying it and so were we.

One night while Richard and I were both working, he asked me if Will was going to call people forward for prayer at the end of the church service.

I replied, "Yes, he usually does."

Richard said, "Good, because I want to do that. I want to ask Christ into my heart." I was floored and so excited.

A few minutes later he told me he might not make it that Sunday because he was behind in his mowing on the farm. Worried that something might happen to him before the next Sunday, I told him he didn't have to wait till Sunday to ask Christ into his heart.

He could pray right then. He laughed and said he would be in church that Sunday.

And he was. Following the message, he also came forward and prayed the sinner's prayer with Will. We gave him a brochure about how to grow in Christ and suggested he read the book of John. He did both.

A few weeks later we told Richard he needed to be baptized. He said "yes" right away but wanted his family to

be there. We scheduled the baptism for June 21, which happened to be Father's Day. His brother and sister and their spouses all came. Wanting to make the day extra special, Will and I invited them to our house for dinner following the baptism. It was truly a blessed time. Richard's siblings bought him a leather Bible with his name engraved on it. They had written some personal notes in the front telling him how proud they were of him and gave it to him after lunch.

Richard continues to come to our house on Saturdays. It is a joy to share our lives. He helps me with my flowers and I call him my "personal gardener."

Richard taught me how easy it is to share the love of Christ in everyday life. Our motto at church is "Love God...Love People...Go Serve." All I did was visit with a co-worker, talk about something we had in common, and let the love of God flow out of my life. We never shoved God down Richard's throat. We were just real with him. Look around. See what great opportunities there are to lead people to Christ by sharing your everyday life.



Will baptizes Richard on Father's Day.



Will and Joyce have served as pastors of First Church of the Open Bible in Clear Lake, Iowa, for 21 years. They have two children, Travis (now married to Heather) and Lynelle (now in heaven).

