

# Computer Ministries

James Curtis

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# Introduction

**A**t this moment the church and Christians around the world are standing at the gateway of an incredible but untapped resource for reaching their goals. Churches and families have become confident with, and dependent upon, the computer for academic and office support purposes. But God has gifted us with computers for a much higher calling. He gave mankind technology to aid in carrying out His Great Commission “Go ye and teach all nations...”

What has been lacking is a guide that bridges the gap between “press this key to move the cursor left...” and “Go ye and teach all nations...” This needed guide must teach all ages to use our computers in efficient God-honoring ways. To the surprise of everyone, there exists a guide that

is perfect for leading us and has certainly stood the test of time.

The purpose of **Computer Ministries** is to make it clear and plain that God's Infallible Word is the Great Commission tool we have needed in our computing. The Bible teaches us computing principles applicable in every computing sector for every generation. It even says that it does, as we will see later.

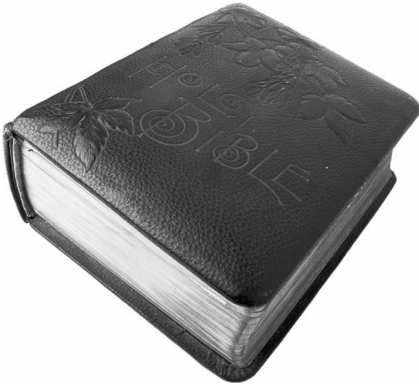
But there are some giant issues that must be addressed before we can use our computers in evangelism efforts. In Numbers 13 we will see many giant issues that had to be dealt with in the spy mission chain of events. These issues are also ones you and I have to deal with in making our computer a God-honoring tool.

**Computer Ministries** will look at several of these giant fears and deceptions. And then present several giant-sized fruits of computing that honors the Giver of gifts. In the middle portion of the pages you now hold are basic concepts for buying, learning, and using your Great Commission technology tool. What follows are a series of stories that teach you to use your keyboarding in progressively more challenging ministries.

Last, but **most important** are three ways of presenting the Good News that Jesus Christ is our only way of Salvation.

In the pages to follow, watch for details of:

- Computer Grace,
- Talent Tithing,
- the Keyboard Bible,
- Computer Evangelism Flavors,
- and Computer Parables.



# Chapter 1

## *The Giants in your Life*

*This giant's bed is 13 feet long!  
We are grasshoppers compared to him!  
His spear is big enough for two men to carry.  
He has 24 fingers and toes!*

**D**o you honestly know what giants look like? I know what giants look like. And I know they are not all the same. As a matter of fact my life even contains some. Before you read very far you will probably admit there are giants in your life too. They sometimes seem even bigger than the Bible descriptions above. Quite troublesome is that my giants want me to believe I will always have to battle them. I will never be rid of them.

Giants can have different effects on each of us. Now as I think of dealing with just one giant, Goliath of Gath comes to mind. We see the fear he imposed on all of King Saul's army in I Samuel 17. But this historical event is also a favorite among children. They see how the giant caused David the shepherd boy to stand tall and firm against the giant. And he did it with little more than the determination to stand for what was right, and do it in God's power.

But let us step-up our study of giants in our lives. We should go beyond looking at just one giant in our life (like David's). I believe we should have a look at another Biblical event that will teach us about MANY GIANTS, not just one. Further, we will be looking at giants that are not all flesh and blood people, but giant THINGS.

To do this we are going on an actual spy mission detailed for us in Numbers 13. I want us to identify crucial guidelines in the event that we MUST apply throughout our lives. Back then God's people had to deal with two types of giants before they could take possession of their promised land "flowing with milk and honey". We will look at these two types of giants in chapter three.

Lastly, it will be important to see that some giants come in extremely small packages. So let us follow the spy mission and thereby train for the giant encounters in our lives of computers and technology.

### *Accountable for our actions*

Leaders on every level find that assigning a specific person to a specific task is the only way things will get done. Pastors who ask, "Will someone please...?" will quite likely find the task never gets done. But accountability goes deeper than that. For those places where accurate records are kept, we can identify a specific individual's character and performance. This tells us if their work can be depended upon.

As others speak your name, is it done with confidence and admiration? The apostle Paul started his letters to the churches with his name. Would you always wish to have your name associated with each of your actions? We can garner great hope as we trust in God and learn about Him as we see the meanings of His names. As we begin to read the marching orders please notice the inclusion of specific names.

*“And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying, Send thou men, that they may search the land of Canaan, which I give unto the children of Israel: of every tribe of their fathers shall ye send a man, every one a ruler among them.”*

Their instructions in Numbers 13:1,2 were very specific. There was to be a man selected from each of the twelve tribes. More than that, each man was to be the ruler in his perspective tribe. God’s inspired scripture carefully lists each spy by name, and also gives his father’s name. Even today, the names of each and every spy can be read; and from this listing, it is easy to figure out which of the spies gave the faithless evil reports.

All down through the centuries Bible students can see those who distrusted God. This is accountability with shameful and fatal results. We must be always on our guard to follow instructions as unto the Lord. And our descendents will be able to see whether our actions honor God and our leaders.

## *Orders Without Options*

The Lord's quiet pronouncement (vs. 2) was, "...which I give unto the children of Israel." God had already chosen the property for Israel, and there was no Plan B. There would be no backing out, and no excuses for not following through on the explicit directions given by Moses to the people, beginning in verse 17:

*"And Moses sent them to spy out the land of Canaan, and said unto them, Get you up this way southward, and go up into the mountain: And see the land, what it is; and the people that dwelleth therein, whether they be strong or weak, few or many; And what the land is that they dwell in, whether it be good or bad; and what cities they be that they dwell in, whether in tents, or in strong holds; And what the land is, whether it be fat or lean, whether there be wood therein, or not. And be ye of good courage, and bring of the fruit of the land."*

Look at the last two instructions Moses gave the spies:

*"And be ye of good courage, and bring of the fruit of the land"* God knows the process needed in our daily lives; it includes both enjoyable things, and difficult situations that force us to grow in dependence on God and His leading. The spies were soon to learn that almighty God always provides in giant proportions for the giant challenges He chooses for our lives. If we watch carefully, we will see God's hand in the provisions designed expressly to carry us over each hurdle, and through each day. This is true whether we are scouting out new land or stepping into new technology territory.

## *My Orders and Yours*

There are many examples in scripture, both good and bad, that prepare us for every conquest. We must know our weapon inside and out. We must learn God's Word, trust

Its truths, and apply them to ourselves and to the new situation. God will do the rest.

We do well to remind ourselves of the origin of things in and around us, and then be realistic about Who has control of them. Are there giants in front of you that scramble your good reasoning, and that seem to threaten your goals and your loved ones?

There is only one book, an autobiography, that describes One bigger than any giant. That One was born in a manger in Bethlehem, and wants to live in us, and rule in our hearts. Does He live in yours? Will you let Him have complete control?

We need to establish goals and lay out plans to reach them if we are going to take possession of Computerland or anything else. We often hear the admonition, “Know where you want to land”. That is good advice for the final goal, and for those all-important intermediate ones, as well. The evidence all around us shows that we lack specific goals and guidelines when it comes to the computer.

We used to think that the telephone, radio, and then television, were the greatest of giants in the land of communications. In reality, they were just a training ground, preparing us for computers and the Internet.

### *My Actions and My Loved Ones*

Each one of us will enter unknown territory many times during the course of life. This unknown territory can be out in front of us, or it may be found inside us. Moving into this arena:

- Shows us, and others, what we’re made of.
- It provides a survival motive to define why we’re doing what we’re doing. We are all faced with the

necessity of refining our techniques for dealing with obstacles lying in our paths.

- Most importantly, we are drawn toward God and His provisions, His peace, and His promises.

At this point, none of the spies realized the monumental importance of returning with righteous responses to what they would encounter in this unknown territory. They did not know the outcome of that failure to faithfully move ahead and conquer the land. The result was a 40-year detour that would be fatal to every person 20-years-old, and older. The key word in this sentence is “faithfully”.

Every day we are faced with the action choice – do-don’t do, go-don’t go, speak- don’t speak, speak for – speak against. Numbers 13 provides many important action lessons for us. Elsewhere in this book we will take a deeper look at the preparation side of the many tasks involving computers.

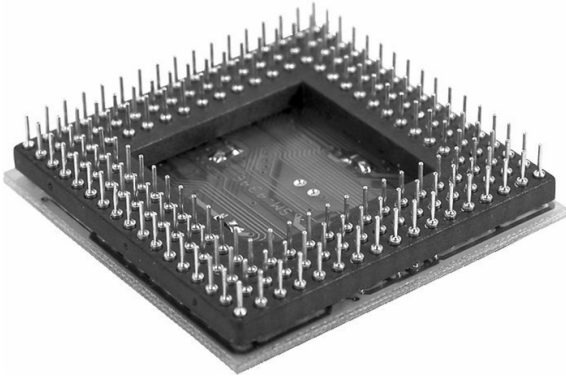
Faithful action choices become more critical as we strive to measure the potential of the outcome of our computing efforts, with regard to us. But the responsible Christian will **also** sense the reflections of our work **on those around us**. The Bible has many examples of the actions of one bringing horrible judgment onto those in the same house, same village, and the same nation. Do you think the results of your computing will affect those in your same family, your house, your church, or your Christian neighborhood?

This chapter answers the questions,

- “Should we not prayerfully consider our decisions and opinions about the future, as though the very lives of our loved ones were at stake?
- Should we order our footsteps as though we are a teacher, or a leader like here in Numbers, or an ambassador for Christ?”

Every battle, both inside and out, requires a weapon and the skill to use it. In the next chapter we will see the ultimate weapon that makes the soldier invincible, i.e., more than a victor in every battle.

## Computer Ministries



## Chapter 2

*The Unmatched Weapon for Every Battle.*

Remote-controlled tanks?

Supersonic jet fighters?

Global nuclear missiles?

Laser-armed satellites?

Which weapon or weapons should I take with me to invade an unknown territory reportedly inhabited by giants? This chapter describes the one weapon that can be used by an 8-year-old, and yet terrifies Satan and the very pits of hell.

## *The Weapons of Man are Inferior*

Like the four weapons listed above, all of man's defenses suffer from many severe shortcomings. For starters, the weapons designed by man:

- Must have ongoing repair and calibration.
- Require replacement parts.
- Need ammunition, fuel, and other consumable materials.
- Can be stolen and used by the enemy.
- Must be continually upgraded.
- Have designs limiting them to a particular range, type of foe, and geographical terrain.

This requires that military leaders be highly trained, and skilled in determining the most effective weapons for the current battle. These men must not only determine the strengths and weaknesses of the enemy, but **which** weapons to use, and how many of them will be necessary.

Battles would be more easily won if we just had one *ultimate* weapon of a "one-size-fits-all" type. Then every soldier could become an expert in using the same one-and-only weapon. What a concept! This is too good to be true! We would want a weapon that is easy to use. And one that has already been proven on a battlefield. Now if that weapon just happened to be one that God Himself approved, that would be superb!

## *The Matchless Weapon*

God repeatedly tells us very clearly what that matchless, better-than-best weapon is.

As simple as fire is, it can destroy every weapon of man. But see what Jeremiah reminds us of, as he refers to God's ultimate weapon in Jeremiah 23:29:

*"Is not my word like as a fire? saith the LORD;"*

Jeremiah further details God's Word for us in dealing with the tough physical stuff in our lives, as he adds:

*"... and like a hammer that breaketh the rock in pieces?"*

Our ultimate weapon in all battles, both intellectual and physical, is none other than God's matchless and holy Word. This weapon is far more powerful than any that destroy lives and fortresses.

Historical accounts of God preserving the accuracy and availability of His precious Word (our ultimate weapon) have filled volumes. These events excite us to the bone. I always enjoy telling others of the noted French scholar, Voltaire (1694-1778). He scorned the Bible with a vengeance. After he died, the printing press he had used to attack the scriptures was used to **PRINT BIBLES!** Even his house where he had lived became the world headquarters for the Geneva Bible Society!

Perhaps you have heard of the Pueblo Bible.

The communist North Koreans captured the American electronics intelligence gathering ship, Pueblo. The eighty-plus American sailors were put in a dismal prison and repeatedly subjected to mind-bending sessions that included confession sheets. In secret, the sailors all contributed Bible verses and lists of its books the best they could remember. They wrote the verses and lists on scrap paper. The only papers they could find were leftover ***confession sheets***. How like God... though the enemy tries his best, still God's Word more than triumphs!

What do you suppose it is, that moves men to rehearse and share scripture in times of great battle? The answer can only be, that it works, it inspires, and it comforts.

## *Simple, Sure, and Penetrating*

We have God's weapon before us in all its simplicity-- God's indestructible Word. Remember the Creator's promise about His Word?

*"For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled."* Matthew 5:18

We will quickly see that our own goals for possessing the land of technology are right in line with the claim and purpose of God's Word. A soldier in basic training learns to depend upon his rifle as his protector. He learns what every part feels like in the dark. He is taught how to take apart and put his gun back together with his eyes closed. From his training manual the soldier learns all about his rifle's basic capabilities and why it was designed the way it was. Now look at the specifications of our ultimate weapon in Hebrews 4:12:

*"For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart."*

A careful study of the "twoedged sword" uncovers some of the incredible design of that unfailing weapon with which we fight in the world of computing.

But the pinnacle of power in our weapon's description is this specification:

*"...and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart."*

Try to imagine a man-made weapon that can rip open thoughts, feelings, morals, and the actual character of each enemy soldier. Is there a bullet, chemical, laser, or rocket

anywhere that can do such a thing? Of course not, and it is preposterous to even try to imagine such a weapon. And yet, this incredible specification is only one part of the description that God's Word gives of our ultimate weapon.

The armor of man's weaponry is always on the outside, like steel plating on a tank or ship, or bulletproof vests. But God teaches us that the ultimate protection against the enemy is to wear our armor on the inside. This is what all of God's computing soldiers need for morally safe, Christ-honoring computer usage, regardless of age.

### *Technology and the Bible*

The Apostle Paul tells us in II Timothy 3:16:

*"All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness:"*

The result of a computer's proper use is stated in the next verse,

*"That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works." (v. 17)*

"All" is a very powerful word. By using it, everything related to it is included. There are no required judgments for knowing what is included or excluded. "All the bananas" means that black ones and green ones are included, along with the yellow ones. A young child can understand the meaning of the word "all" as easily as a brain surgeon. The two verses make powerful use of this word. Verse 16 tells us how much of scripture is valuable for the growing Christian. And what more fitting place to include the powerful "all" word than in the concluding phrase of this remarkable sentence!

But the reality is that most folks today believe the words actually read, “...unto all good works – except for high-tech buttons.” At least, this is what their actions say.

### *Weapon Training Required*

Picture in your mind a soldier with his rifle loaded, polished, cocked and ready for use in an instant. When he sees the enemy, he summons all his strength and courage, and then **throws** the rifle at the opposing forces. Silly, isn't it? But that is what we often do with God's Word. Any weapon that remains in its box does not provide its owner with protection or battle victories. The ultimate weapon, though provided by God, too must be unpacked, taken apart, put back together. Its user must have personal knowledge of every part.

On the rifle range the soldier is taught to have a good stable stance with the weapon solidly in hand. The next thing is to take a deep breath, and then let part of it out. Do not jerk the trigger. You are to s..q..u..e..e..z..e the trigger, never for a moment, relaxing your aim from the target.

David had unquestioned defensive skills. He fought a lion and a bear barehanded. He went on to fight a giant so awesome it terrified the king's army. What's more, he wrote songs of praise for His God Who is ours also. In all of his confrontations, look at the theme of his longest song, or Psalm 119. What a revelation in that the focus of almost every verse of Psalm 119 is God's Word. What more could a warrior want to focus on than God's promises, plans, and provision for the battle ahead.

Can you hear this stalwart fighter of the enemies of God saying with a forceful voice?

*“The Lord is on my side; I will not fear: what can man do to me?”*

*“The Lord is my strength and song, and is become my salvation.”*

*“It is better to trust in the Lord than to put confidence in man.”*

(Ps. 118:6, 8, and 14)

This incredible chapter of scripture teaches us that David did more than **study** God’s Word. You can study the operating manual of a VCR, computer, or some sports equipment. We refer to this as “head knowledge”. David uses Psalm 119 and others to get it into our heads that we are to **feed** on the word. We are to **meditate** all the day long on it’s incredible promises and provisions. We are to **trust** it in every situation. This only happens when we see our need of it to be the same as we do of food and water.

Actually, some battles, inside or out, cause the soldier to fast. That is, to forgo food and water. Instead, his total focus is on his ultimate weapon – God’s Inspired Word.

Here are some goals we may adopt in preparing to possess Computerland:

- Fully trust God’s Word for safe and productive keyboarding, regardless of user age.
- Seek God’s moment-by-moment blessing on our actions.
- We continually search for and share scripture-based computing guidelines.
- Keyboard time and tasks must be managed in keeping with scriptural tithing and Great Commission teachings.
- God’s omnipotence over all the giants of computer technology is to be continually acknowledged.



### *The Keyboard Bible*

A keyboard Bible is critical equipment in invading computerland. Even though your computer may have installed an electronic Bible with all of its search features, a keyboard Bible is still required for security and research.

This keyboard Bible is just like your favorite Bible. It is always open and always within inches of your computer keyboard. Its purpose is crucial each and every time you sit down in front of the monitor.

1. It is a reminder to begin each keyboarding session with computer grace (details to follow).
2. The nearby Bible is a reminder that God's Word is chock full of principles for efficient computing. It stimulates creative thinking and planning in ways only its Author can.
3. It is a sentinel or supervisor to guard against computing sessions that are wasteful, lustful, or dishonoring to God in several other ways. Note: Remember the builders of the walls in Nehemiah 4? They worked with their sword by their side. You should too. Yours is the sword of God's Word.
4. It is a reminder at the end of your project to ask the Creator of computing to use and bless your efforts. And certainly to remind us to give Him the glory in your computing.

## *Computer Grace*

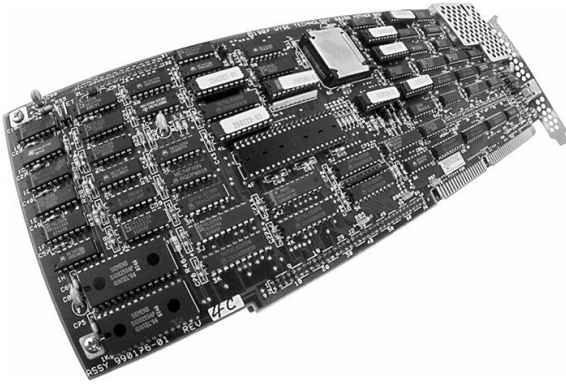
The absence of practicing computer grace is simple perfect evidence of our neglect of God when it comes to computing at church, school, home, and work. And at the same time we see the asking of God's blessing at the supper table, congressional sessions, soldiers going into battle, and even many sports events. Computer grace is all the more needed because of the incredible productivity of the computer for good or bad. The steps of marching soldiers must be synchronized from the very start. For the same reasons our minds, hearts, and fingers must be tuned to God's will for our moments at the keyboard.

"Dear Lord. I thank you for technology and the many gifts you have showered upon man. I thank you for being the all-powerful all-knowing God that you are. Help me to use this computer in a way that will honor you and achieve the goals for which I am doing this. I know you can lead me in being creative and at the same time guarding me against Satan's efforts. Thank you especially for your shed blood that bought my salvation, your word I have here beside my computer, and your Holy Spirit that will guide my fingers. Amen."

This **chapter** has described the ultimate weapon God has provided for us.

This **book** will teach you how to recognize the enemy giants. It will also teach you how to use the ultimate weapon against Satan and all his forces in Computerland.

## Computer Ministries



## Chapter 3

### *More than Win Your Battle*

Do you remember the day time stopped?

Have you seen water pitcher weapons?

Who put footprints on the sea floor?

“Stupendous”, “fantastic”, “mind-blowing”, and “awesome” are words that are just not humongous enough. They are not big enough. Our language just does not have words that can describe God’s way of doing things on our behalf. These three opening incidents are good for starters when it comes to seeing God’s leading in warfare.

- Our wonderful God goes to any lengths to protect and provide for His people. He even alters creation and shows us He created all that there is. Moreover, He still controls it as Joshua's army is fighting against the Amorites, starting in Joshua 10:12. At the request of Joshua, God stopped the sun and stopped the moon for a whole day until the battle was won. We need to align our daily schedule to the Creator's schedule. We should continually remind ourselves that He can change our day in ways that we cannot imagine.
- Gideon's army was too big! God wanted to show Gideon that following divine direction in sieges and skirmishes required only the simplest of tools. Can you imagine all the soldiers lining up in ranks, ready to wage war, with nothing but water pitchers, torches, and trumpets? Read the triumphant historical account in Judges 7.
- Moses was leading the nation of Israel out of Egypt with Pharaoh's army not far behind. God showed all mankind, even to this day, that His unfathomable paths are not visible to us mortals as we seek to solve our own problems. Exodus 14:13 begins the account of God's people walking on the floor of the Red Sea as dry ground. These footprints would moments later be covered up by the watery grave of the Egyptian enemy. God does far more than just rescue us from our perceived doom. He moves us up to a higher place of service for His glory.

We must remind ourselves each day of the unsurpassed power and sovereignty of God. And sometimes we need this reminder even hourly as we wage war against the efforts and lies of Satan. David the shepherd boy did this as he stood before the discouraged army of King Saul and then slew the giant, Goliath. Caleb and Joshua also did this as they spoke to the disheartened Israelite people, beginning in Numbers 13.

## *Provision Like No Other*

In Genesis 17, Abraham is identified by God to be the “father of many nations”. He will be making life and death decisions over people he will never see face to face. Abraham’s obedience and testimony will be changing people’s lives so long as scripture is being read down through the ages.

But in Genesis 22 is pictured the precious testimony of just a father and his only son. Men have written many books about this event in history. You must read it for yourself to get the meat in it. Verse seven and eight say:

*“And Isaac spake unto Abraham his father, and said, My father: and he said, Here am I, my son. And he said, Behold the fire and the wood: but where is the lamb for a burnt offering? And Abraham said, My son, God will provide himself a lamb for a burnt offering; so they went both of them together.”*

When Abraham answered his son, he used an all important name for God. He said, “Jehovah-Jireh”. It means, “God will provide.” Here God is fine-tuning the faith and obedience of a father. But where you are; what does your testimony say? Whether you are a leader of a nation, a company, a classroom, or most importantly, a growing family, will you always say, “Jehovah-Jireh, God will provide”?

Remaining true to God with a testimony to match is seldom popular. Nevertheless God expects us to glorify Him anyhow. We must step forward on faith whether others follow or not. Our faith based on His Word tells us He will fight for us and He will provide what is needed.

Like mining diamonds, a closer inspection of scripture always produces more gems of truth and provision. We see

in Numbers 14:7-9 a concept probably not offered anywhere else.

*“And they spake unto all the company of the children of Israel, saying, The land, which we passed through to search it, is an exceeding good land. If the LORD delight in us, then he will bring us into this land, and give it us; a land which floweth with milk and honey. Only rebel not ye against the LORD, neither fear ye the people of the land; for they are **bread for us**: their defense is departed from them, and the LORD is with us: fear them not.”*

The first reading would tell us that driving out the enemy would be as easy as eating bread. In the vernacular of today we say, “That’s a piece of cake”, “easy as pie”, to indicate the same easy process.

But my mind also asks if this could also refer to God’s provision. Bread is nourishment for the soldier in every generation. There are few things that encouraged him more in battle than when food was available.

Is it possible that Caleb might also be hinting that each victory is a provision for the next? Some provisions, blessings, and lessons are only learned when we raise our voices with Caleb and tell all who will listen, “...*the Lord is with us: fear them not.*” As we look at the world of computers in following chapters, we must then also tell others, “...*the Lord is with us: fear them not.*”

## *How to More Than Win*

Everyone wants to succeed. We all want to win. We stay away from people who have strong desires not to succeed. Loosing costs money, time, lives, work, and self-esteem. Because of peer pressure, young people especially want to be on top in their competition-saturated world. We see eyes light up and spirits quicken as we sing spirited hymns like Victory in Jesus.

But do not sell God short. He rarely gives us “only victory”. It has to do with the way He displaces our enemies. Reread the first portion of this chapter and be reminded of God’s provision in battle on our behalf. Your perception of God’s protection begins to upgrade from “victory in Jesus” to something more. A unique provision of God I have loved to share with others for more than forty years is dogmatically stated in Romans 8 starting in verse 35:

*“Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? As it is written, For thy sake we are killed all the day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter. Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us.”*

No other place in the entire world, whether written or thought, is this level of accomplishment mentioned. The passage clearly states “*more than conquerors*”. How do you MORE than win? How do you MORE than defeat an opponent? Is this not like climbing to the very top of the mountain **and then going higher**? Olympic athletes train all their lives to be the winner. They daily set their sights on that top step where he or she will wear the Gold Medal. But “*more than winners*” tells us there must be a step above that! But how is this possible? Where do we learn how?

As God inspired Paul to include this concept in his letter to the church in Rome, he hastened to add the all-important next words... “*through him that loved us.*”

We must teach youth trying to “find themselves”, distraught parents, discouraged church leaders and the person we work next to, the direction they must go is through Him that loved us. We must open God’s precious word with others and see all those voices from every page tell us, “we’ve been there; done that.” The voices from the

Bible past tell us in so many ways, “Ask God what He wants and then just do it!”

To really understand how to be more than a conqueror you must feast on the history of God’s provision in battle. If you think fighting a battle with water pitchers was fantastic, read in Joshua 6 how the Israelites destroyed the walled city of Jericho. They didn’t even use any weapons at all! The lesson learned that day was that victory is assured when you are quiet and follow when you are supposed to. And then stand and shout according to the directions of God. They learned how to more than win because they used NO weapons at all. Children the world over sing of this incredible (more than) victory.

To more than win means:

- You KNOW you will win even before the battle begins.
- Others benefit or are built up because of your stand and victory.
- Even if you do not get the gold medals of man, you have been obedient and will receive God’s rewards while giving Him the glory.
- Our victories “in His name” move us to polish our defenses, our testimony, and our knowledge of the enemy’s tactics.
- The enemy is mightier than the Christian soldier. Like David and Goliath.

### *Two Types of Giants Ahead*

We have taken this chapter to get our minds fixed on the real warrior in all our battles, our Savior Jesus Christ. Remember the acclamation of David before he slew the Philistine giant? He told all who would hear, “The battle is the Lord’s!” We have used these words so far to focus on one of the two types of Giants. We will need this refresher

as we move into the following chapters about computers and our minds.

We must also focus on the other giants the twelve spies found. The giant fruits so large that one cluster of grapes had to be carried by two men with a staff. The fruits of conquest in the name of Jesus Christ are colossal and amaze even the most stalwart Christian soldier. Our giant steps of faith in God's leading always yield giant fruits for His kingdom and us.

We must continually focus:

1. On Knowing His Will
2. Our trust in Him and His victory
3. Our preparation in learning the wiles of the enemy.
4. Giving Him the Glory.

This chapter has explained where victory comes from, whose it is, and when we get it.

The next six chapters identify the six giants in computerland. Five of them are enemy giants and the last one defines the giant fruits God wants us to reap for His glory.

## Computer Ministries



## Chapter 4

### *The Biggest Enemy Giant*

*An enemy country shooting nuclear missiles at us.*

*Computer Hackers wipe out all computers.*

*Stock Market manipulators destroy global economy.*

*Industrialists who completely destroy our ecology.*

**I**n the preceding chapters, preparations for battle have included identifying the **battlefield**, the **weapon**, and the expected **victory**. It is just as crucial that expected **enemies** be identified. This chapter begins that process.

**MO** Ministry opportunities.  
As we identify these giants, **Computer Ministries** also provides context relevant opportunities. Each time you see the big MO drop cap you

will also find a project, task, or process that will put feet to that portion's lesson. You can earn real points with your leaders by copying them into a list and sharing it with others.

Who or what is my biggest giant enemy? More often than I want to admit, it is the one who put my shoes on me this morning. It is I. You can easily identify with that, can't you?

The simple truth though is that I am my biggest enemy. We might say, "But if I had the spirituality of the Apostle Paul, I would not have trouble fighting against sin in myself.

The spiritual giant that the Apostle Paul was, he made no secret of the war he continually fought within himself. His letter to the Romans (chapter 7) tells us:

*"For that which I do I allow not: for what I would, that do I not; but what I hate, that do I. For the good that I would I do not: but the evil which I would not, that I do. O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?"* Vs. 15, 19, and 24.

This enemy giant in our computerland that walks in our shoes wields two fists of wastefulness and wantonness.

### *Sluggards and Time Stealers*

One of the largest of sin giants in the land of computing may also be the most subtle. It is wastefulness. At work employers are faced with work periods that are increasingly spent:

- Playing computer games,
- Writing/reading personal e-mail,
- Internet surfing of sexual content,
- and intentional poor scheduling of goals and deadlines.

There is a dramatic increase in the sales of the type of software that monitors how business computers are being used and by whom.

There are many scriptural references about time-wasters, idleness, and being a sluggard. Proverbs 6:6 is an enjoyable one to admonish ourselves and others:

*“Go to the ant, thou sluggard; consider her ways, and be wise: Which having no guide, overseer, or ruler, Provideth her meat in the summer, and gathereth her food in the harvest. How long wilt thou sleep, O sluggard? when wilt thou arise out of thy sleep? Yet a little sleep, a little slumber, a little folding of the hands to sleep:”*

At home children spend many hours each day playing addictive games that neither challenge, teach life skills, nor honor God. We need computer activities that get them to think and create. These activities also need to help us to continually examine ourselves, our spirituality, and our people-skills based on scriptural directives.

“My friend taught me about communicating in chat rooms on the computer,” a female work associate in her mid twenties, once told me. She continued, “I then connected with my friend who I had not talked with in a long time. Since our house had two telephone lines it did not pose a problem. I’m telling you the truth. That first day we talked more than **SEVEN** continuous hours.” Note: Computer chat room communication is explained more thoroughly in a later chapter of this book. Christian computing magazines tell us it is customary for student girls to spend around three hours **EACH SCHOOL DAY** in chat rooms. There are valuable directives to young ladies in I Timothy 5. But look especially at verse 13:

*“And withal they learn to be idle, wandering about from house to house; and not only idle, but tattlers also and busybodies, speaking things which they ought not.”*

Not only is this a terrible waste of time, but it also provides easy access to unsupervised, anonymous communication with anyone anywhere in the world. Of the many valuable guidelines concerning our speech Matthew 12 says:

*“But I say unto you, That every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment. For by thy words thou shalt be justified, and by thy words thou shalt be condemned.”* Verses 36 and 37.

**MO** Ministry Opportunity. Paul the apostle, in his letter to Titus (in chapter two) is telling him to teach the older women to guide the younger women. This makes me think there is a crucial ministry for senior and adult women to nurture younger women in chat room and e-mail communication. They can become an “eFriend”. They must use their leadership skills to create and moderate wholesome, God-honoring, and exciting chat rooms that gender the Titus 2 attributes.

Computers are a gift from God. Time is a gift from God. The talents we have are gifts from God. Do not waste them. Even more important, do not let Satan get his hands on them.

### *Whirlpool Wantonness*

We learn many critical-life truths from Joshua and those around him. **Computer Ministries** has begun with the spy mission in Numbers 13. This event resulted in the deaths of all the adults in the nation of Israel by having to go through the wilderness. Let us briefly look at a different spy mission. This one involved Joshua. Here we will see the results of the greed and secrecy of just one man, Achan.

In Deuteronomy 7:25 the law was understood by everyone. NONE of the possessions of the captured enemies were to be kept, for ANY reason. And it even stated the people were not to take “the cursed thing” into their house.

But we see in Joshua chapter 7 that Achan took and hid a wedge of enemy gold. That was not enough for him. He also took a Babylonish garment. Those were not enough. He thirdly took and hid in his tent two hundred shekels of silver. Greed and wantonness are like a whirlpool that continues to draw in further; never satisfied and never ending. Achan thought all that he did was secret. This is the same trap we sometimes get caught into ourselves.

Computer secrecy stirred in with lust and greed is absolute treachery. Closed doors and dim lights do not hide from God and all of heaven. Many a mother has repeated Moses’ reminder of Numbers 32:23:

*“But if ye will not do so, behold, ye have sinned against the LORD: and be sure your sin will find you out.”*

**MO** <sup>Ministry Opportunity</sup> The remedy is not all that complicated? Every pastor would love to have a responsible person who would maintain contact with his teachers. This person would learn of their ongoing needs for teaching aids for their classes. This person would then coordinate the youth and retired folks to create that poem, picture, database list, flyer, or labels for the classes.

Let the department leader or pastor know of those involved in the projects. He might have some too. But more importantly, he wants to encourage and praise those who see the great value in serving the Lord with their talents. The teaching aid coordinator might encourage the participants to disciple others in these blessed efforts.

Most of us are helpers. All of us want to be appreciated for our efforts, even if it is praying for the proper merging of technology and youthful enthusiasm.



### *Secret Sin Splatter*

This chapter is telling us of the greatest of enemy giants of computerland...self. Some folks have the false belief that when unholy thoughts and attitudes continue internally, they do not affect others. This is a terribly underestimated weapon in this enemy arsenal of personal computing. Earlier, we saw how the faithlessness of the ten spies caused numberless deaths throughout the wilderness.

Here, we will see how the disobedience and greed of just one person, who was a father and a husband, brought devastating consequences to the lives of others. In the very first verse of Joshua 7, God rushes to show us the secret sins of this one man, Achan. And the others he affected, by naming his father, grandfather, and great-grandfather.

*“ But the children of Israel committed a trespass in the accursed thing: for Achan, the son of Carmi, the son of Zabdi, the son of Zerah, of the tribe of Judah, took of the accursed thing: and the anger of the LORD was kindled against the children of Israel.”*

Look how the verse starts, *“the children of Israel committed....”* And see how the very same verse ends, *“...against the children of Israel.”*

The trespass of ONE person is charged to the entire nation of Israel. This brings to mind the sin of Adam in the Garden of Eden, with the resulting curse being placed upon the whole of mankind.

Joshua is now the heroic military leader. In Joshua verse 2 of chapter 7, he sends forth men to spy out the land around the town of Ai, in the land of Canaan.

*“And Joshua sent men from Jericho to Ai, which is beside Beth-aven, on the east side of Bethel, and spake unto them, saying, Go up and view the country. And the men went up and viewed Ai. And they returned to Joshua, and said unto him, Let not all the people go up; but let about two or three thousand men go up and smite Ai; and make not all the people to labour thither; for they are but few. So there went up thither of the people about three thousand men: and they fled before the men of Ai. And the men of Ai smote of them about thirty and six men: for they chased them from before the gate even unto Shebarim, and smote them in the going down: wherefore the hearts of the people melted, and became as water.”*

In the land of Canaan as in the land of computers, there are horrible consequences affecting others also that occur when God’s commands are disobeyed. Therefore, all of us need to be **continually** reminded that our God-honoring small or great efforts build up His people and our local church.

## *Be Prepared*

Today’s incredible technology makes it easy to bring enticement and strong temptation right through the walls of our homes, dumping out the visual sewage before our eyes. There are no software computer programs that do a great job of filtering out this sewage. One of the first steps is to clarify who or what is doing the dumping. We want to blame technology without hesitation.

Technology in any of its forms is a **tool**, not a **user**. Tools of every kind and function do only what humans program or tell them to do. In any courtroom, a prosecuting attorney would have no difficulty in getting any one of us to admit that we “could see it coming” or at least suspect that we were “in dangerous territory”. We would have no chance of pleading that we were merely “victims of circumstances”.

In such a situation, the first mistake is entering the “dangerous territory” without asking for assistance from a trusted friend or colleague. Is it an outer space concept to always request that the trusted friend from whom we get assistance and direction be the Lord Jesus Christ? We can also take a lesson from the actions of the Savior with regard to temptation. When Jesus Christ was tempted, what did He do? Let’s see in Matthew 4:3-4:

*“and when the tempter came to him, he said, If thou be the Son of God, command that these stones be made bread. But he answered and said, It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God”*

There it is again--God’s Word, our ultimate weapon. Since Jesus Christ, the Creator of the universe knew that it was necessary to use His written word against Satan, shouldn’t we also?

It might be well to show here the deceptive way that Satan misuses God’s Word. See verse 6 of Matthew 4:

*“for it is written, He shall give his angels charge concerning thee: and in their hands they shall bear thee up, lest at any time thou dash thy foot against a stone.”*

Satan was quoting from Psalm 91, and if you compare the scripture with scripture, you will see that he left out three

words. For Satan to misuse God's Word right in the face of Jesus Christ, the living Word of God, was utter stupidity. We must understand that the evil one has no reservation in misusing scripture in the face of anyone. We must know the Word, and be on our guard, always.

"The Draw Play" is that portion of God's Word that shows that we must always be on our guard in trusting our human judgment in the things we see before us. Many team sports as well as magic shows, make good use of deliberate misdirection and diverted attention. God showed Joshua how to apply the draw play by enticing the enemy out of its walled city named Ai. The historical account is found in Joshua 8.

Lusting for things that God says are unholy spells doom for us, our life goals, and especially for those people we hold dear. And not correctly judging the enemy's strength produces the same fate.

In Computerland, the same treachery exists. We are not to lust after things God says are unholy. We are not to bring such into our homes. This is like Achan hiding things in his tent. Secondly, we must always trust God's leading about the enemies before us, whether large or small (the draw play). Satan will often use small casual enticements to draw us out of God's care. He does this employing overwhelmingly powerful hidden forces that can completely destroy our testimonies, or us ourselves. We must be aware of his devices.

This chapter has helped us to understand that we ourselves are the biggest enemy giant to overcome as we seek to take possession of Computerland by God's decree.

We will now examine some of those small casual enticements that are, with the help of technology and careless parents, put into play upon our very young.

## Computer Ministries



## Chapter 5

### *The Babysitter Giant*

Are you guilty of handing your little lamb to the  
wolves? Are you sure?

**G**uarding our little lambs, our children, would seemingly be high priority in our daily responsibilities. God places such high importance on our children He even has provided a guardian angel for each of them. It is a joy to see God use children in key roles depicted in scripture by the boy's lunch feeding the five thousand in John 6:9. There also was the little maid that aided in a ruler's health (I Kings 5:2,3). A child is used as a model for our approaching God's Will. A favorite verse of

mine to show the importance and protection of a child is Matthew 18:10:

*“Take heed that ye despise not one of these little ones; for I say unto you, That in heaven their angels do always behold the face of my Father which is in heaven.”*

But in the guise of providing and pampering them we put unsupervised tools into their hands, that are incredibly dangerous, even to adults.

Babysitters are critical-path people in many families. They become even more important as society and the desire for things move both parents more deeply into the work force. Either an available family member is pressed into caring for the children, or a babysitter is hired. It is often hard to find a good babysitter inside or outside the family. The parents will often sacrifice quality and dependability in their selection.

### *Babysitter Qualifications*

Babysitter checklists, however, usually produce high quality, easy-to-locate help. Looking at just a few of these will quickly bring sobering realities to the babysitting process, and shock us into insisting on a much higher level of validation for prospective sitters. One checklist took special aim at sex offenders who pose as babysitters. It dealt with the whole issue of some of Satan’s cruelest actions toward children.

This checklist took the credibility to a higher level by considering not only the credentials of the babysitter, but also the possibility of allowing a third party into the home. Like most, this checklist dealt with the added responsibility by stating emphatically that NO ONE was allowed into the home, nor was the door to be answered, but was to be kept locked during the entire time the parents were not home.

Another babysitter checklist gave clear detail to the answering of phones during the babysitting period. The rules given were emphatic about NOT answering any questions that might divulge the fact that the babysitter was in charge and the only one at home. The rule is even more difficult to adhere to, when the caller appears to be a friend of the babysitter. The guideline was clear: Do not divulge any specific information, keep calls extremely short, and take a message, while noting the time of the call. Many homes today have an answering machine or caller ID telephone features. Some parents make the instructions easy, "Do not answer the telephone at all." This is even better.

Admittedly, it takes a rather conscientious individual to follow these very important rules designed to avoid "letting an enemy into the camp" or "divulging any military secrets". It may be even more difficult when the sitter is a family member. But the rules are critical for family safety against the forces of evil trying to attack your loved ones.

### *"Opening The Door"*

Right here would be a good place to interject an added threat. In our babysitter scenario, let us pretend that the child "answers the door" or "answers the telephone call". When the sitter's guard is let down for one moment and rules are not enforced, family safety can be seriously jeopardized. Does it then seem logical that the same rules that apply and are taught to the sitter should also be taught and rehearsed with the child?

We have been looking at the babysitter threat as being a giant with powerful, destructive potential when rules are not established and followed -- regardless. The reason for this metaphor is to show that there now exists in many of our families a serious neglect in the protection of our loved ones.



### *Babysitter is a Mouse*

Just suppose the babysitter is really technology. The babysitter is a computer with all the entertainment of games, quizzes, test practices, homework tools, or just some kind of friend you could interact with on your terms. Remember the telephone call rules? We are not to divulge any information, we are to keep the calls extremely short, and always include the time of the call when taking a message.

Store shelves bulge with computer games for children of all ages. Many of them fall into the “edutainment” category of being educational in an entertaining way. A 4-year-old can turn on his father’s computer, pop in a CD, and play a computer version of the games his dad played years ago with toy trucks in a sandbox on a sunny day. Though not for long, the biggest learning hurdle is getting used to the mouse.

Edutainment software is great stuff, especially if your charge has special needs that require great patience or repetition. But let us now involve some online software--programs that are only played on the Internet. In this mode, we now have our “babysitter” (the computer) connected with some other faceless computer.

That computer can just as easily be on the other side of the planet. This could be a land where child endangering is considered to be entertainment for twisted minds led by

Satan. Is there a parent you know who would enlist a babysitter with no credentials or references, other than “flashy” and “fun”? You will be shocked to find there are tons of them who do exactly that. The babysitter giant threat is called online computing.

The editor of a popular Christian computing magazine told about online toddler edutainment games that “test” the player (your toddler) by asking if he can spell his last name, his street address, or daddy’s e-mail address. It is not difficult to see that this is a gross violation of the telephone rule. Yet parents go about their own activities, thinking their electronic babysitter is keeping their little cherub safe and happy, and “teaching” him too.

It is not a big step for the surfing child to click on a button that will show him neat pictures of a big earth-moving truck or beautiful dolls a little girl would enjoy. And then to unknowingly have pictures of child pornography words planted into a tiny child’s mind, though he does not yet know the meanings of these.

These words are in no way intended to paint technology as a giant threat to mankind in homes or businesses. But when fire is brought into the home to cook food, warm rooms, or heat bathwater, special life-saving precautions must be taken for its use. Fire and technology provide incredible life improvement the world over, but only if they are constantly respected and restrained.

Technology used as a babysitter does have its positive side, rather than being totally taboo. Parents concerned about giving their little ones maximum opportunity for future success will be reminded often that their children will be REQUIRED to use computers in school, even at first grade level. If you are a home-schooling family, this is even more important.

## *Home is the Best School*

There is no doubt in anyone's mind that home is the most effective place to learn implementation of family, personal, and spiritual values. The home is also the most effective place to learn the proper use of computers and efficiency principles, along with God-honoring ways to implement these.

**MO** Ministry Opportunity.  
Begin by keeping an open Bible always next to the computer keyboard. As your toddler grows, plant firmly in his or her mind that the computer and God's Word go together. Along with the colorful, professional, Christian games, mix in a few simple ones of your own. You can easily create a simple verse-sync game for them in the following way.

1. In your word processor type a short portion of a Bible verse on the screen. You will want to use something like 16-point font and also use a font style that closely matches the shape of the letters printed on your keyboard keys.
2. You can then help them find each letter and type it below the ones you have already typed on the screen.
3. Print out the results and hang them on the wall.
4. Show them the same phrase in the nearby open Bible.
5. As they grow make the portions longer and time them.

If your system has a scanner and e-mail, have your young person(s) watch you scan in a picture from his/her picture Bible and e-mail it to grandma or one of their friends.

Even the very small toddlers like to share and "be teachers". These are marvelous times to apply these traits in being a discipler, even before you can read or spell

James Curtis

“mentor”. God has mightily used children to accomplish His purposes throughout scripture. They are no less leaders in your house and mine.

Later chapters of this book will detail how to use technology as a God-honoring babysitter, and how to involve even the very young in computer ministries.





## Chapter 6

### *The Giant Goes to School*

What kind of a teacher is she?

How does she discipline?

What will his tests be like?

Does he care about MY goals?

**T**he classroom door closes and my new teacher walks toward the desk at the front of the room. Like flipping a light switch, all my classmates instantly become quiet. They all give total attention to reading any visible signs from this new teacher as to what methods she might use and her manner in doing it.

Whether I am at work, at school, at home, or in church, I want to know who REALLY is in charge. And almost as important, can their word and work be trusted. You do too.

I always remember one of the Dr. James Dobson videos about child behavior. He dogmatically said that a big reason why children will disobey his or her leader is to see if the leader really is in charge or just playing the role. The bottom line is that the child, you, and I garner a measure of security by knowing our leader really is in control and means what he/she says.

We will now take a look at that leadership role in the school and see that technology critically changes the role of the teacher. Second we want to look at the accuracy of the lessons we are being taught and the way we are learning them.

### *Teachers and Test tubes*

Reflect back on teachers that stand out in your mind. See if you can identify a couple traits that made them great or ghastly. The things you learned from them; did that teacher pound them in or wet your appetite for that and more? The homework you were assigned; did the ghastly teacher make it a job? Did the great teacher make it a journey of discovery?

Not one of my many history teachers ever explained to me why I had to memorize the name of an army general or the date and name of his war. The response was always, “learn it because it will be on the test Friday!” Sometimes it seemed like my military boot camp that followed, a few years later. I would get that “Just Do It!” taste in my mouth. This mechanical “learning by rote” style of training was needed by people who were going to work for Henry Ford. You were to park the thinking part of your brain at the door and become a robot on that assembly line, making Model T’s. But that style will not work in today’s academic and business world.

On the other hand my Chemistry class was quite different. Each new process or principle was accepted not as some

parroted fact, but included several other steps of corroboration. It was not necessary to “just take the teacher’s word for it” and go on.

For instance, in my Chemistry class, this is how I would prove a chemical principle.

1. First, I read it in the textbook.
2. Second the teacher explains to me that hydrogen gas mixed properly with oxygen gas produces water. Further teaching revealed hazards involved and why this principle is important.
3. Then I would follow the time-honored directions to produce water in laboratory test tubes.

Now because of the corroborative processes, all the rest of my life, I will KNOW, without a shadow of doubt, that  $H_2O$  makes water. The textbook stated it, my teacher said it, and then my experiment proved it. I had three resources that agreed.

### *The Giant Lie Taught in Schools*

This chapter is not about water and it is not about wars. This chapter is about computers, authority, and corroboration. There is a giant, but subtle, lie being taught in schools. The lie is this: “The easier it is to find the answer, the more accurate the answer must be.” This lie is enforced when the search or calculation tool is the computer. Here are the four steps to disaster.

1. The first, easy step is to get others to agree, “Computers never make mistakes.”
2. Then assume that everything we get out of it is accurate and should never be questioned. With computers, you should be able to forget about any corroboration. With computers (and the Internet), a second opinion seems never to be needed.

3. Now you stir in sound, sizzle, and around-the-clock access and you have “the unchallenged teacher” and then the “unquestioned authority”.
4. For “budget” reasons, remove the teacher or minimize his access as the academic conscience in the classroom.

The above steps are steps to disaster.

Specifically, we have defined the unchallenged authority in the lives of students; the computer. And then we are amazed at the availability of this teacher. Computer education, “edutainment”, and online “distance education” are even more formidable than the television.

In the absence of the teacher, we must teach students to search out second (and third) opinions. Adults do this with their doctor’s advice and an automobile salesman’s pitch. So the ‘second opinion and corroboration process’ are not difficult but are terribly important.

### *Truth Trio for Corroboration*

I believe the best process for corroboration for truth is shown in my church’s constitution and yours too. Constitutions are very important in making important decisions and explaining to visitors and members the framework of that local church. These constitutions are prime examples of what I call the Truth Trio for Corroboration.

Here are the three steps:

1. Write your truth, principle, or rule in a concise manner that will be clear to those who will probably be reading it.
2. Corroborate your statement with a verse from God’s infallible Word. You would have a tough time listing all the instances in Bible history that God-

honoring people quoted scripture to justify their stand. Jesus did it!

3. And then add several other references to the first one. When additional verses are added, it offers the reader more opportunities to find an example they might better identify with.

So then using the same process:

1. Identify in words, exactly what your student is searching for.
2. Search the scriptures, the Internet, and other resources. Be careful not to let graphics glitter, fancy words, or titles distract you. Anyone can deceptively add a title to his or her name.
3. Find other websites, printed books, testimonials, or data to corroborate your findings. If it is possible, include a bibliography of your chosen references.

The computer is always a lifeless **tool** and never a **teacher**. The Internet is no more qualified to be an authoritarian than your neighbor's 7-year-old. But, at the same time, what must be understood and accepted is that operated with caution and corroboration, the Internet is more powerful in the hands of a Christian than it is in the hands of Satan.

## *Technology 101*

"Technology 101" really is not a good lesson title of such an important lesson. "Basic Zero-Zero-One" would be closer to its rightful role. Basic 001 should be the opening lesson for every course. This lesson of lessons starts us at the beginning. Where did we get technology? Is it borrowed? Are we supposed to give it back? The textbook, like no other, starts out "*In the beginning God...*"

Point #1:

*In the beginning God...* Mankind can find no better reference point. These four words give a principle; a

benchmark that is perfect for all that we say, think, or do.  
*In the beginning God.*

In the beginning of our school projects, whether large or small, make sure God is there. Our computer projects and keyboard sessions should seek His blessing and provision.

We should make Him our first and ultimate resource and guide. **Computer Ministries** provides more than ample proof of the Bible as our computer handbook. Learn in chapter 2 how Computer Grace should be in the beginning of all our keyboarding.

Point #2:

The Bible, that is, our textbook for living, starts out with, *"In the beginning, God created..."* Bible scholars tell us the word "created" used in Genesis 1:1 actually means to "build, starting with nothing". All of our projects and plans require resources. Every single one forces us to begin with ingredients of some kind.

But when God created the whole universe, He started with nothing but Himself. There is much more that could be said about God's incredible recipe for creation. We will let other books deal further with the matter. Instead we want to see where computers came from. We will continue on to point #3.

Point #3:

Technology 101, Basic 001, or whatever you want to label it, makes Point #3 it's primary point.

*"In the beginning..."* is how John's gospel starts out his presentation of Jesus Christ to all. Then in verse 3, he rushes to tell us:

*"All things were made by him..."*

This is not a tough statement to understand. Is there any part of "All" you do not understand? If you are the only

other person on this earth, besides me, who has to be told things twice, look at the second part of the verse.

*“...and without him was not any thing made that was made.”*

These words do not outline a parable or some type of vision. They clearly state a very simple fact that is crucial to pleasing Him with our daily lives. We must accept technology as a gift from God before we can see how to use it. When we learn from scripture that God made computers, we begin to learn that we have a responsibility to care for His gifts and honor Him with what we produce with them.

In about 1450, Johannes Gutenberg built a new type of printing press. You could correctly say that God showed this inventor how to create each letter of each word as a separate piece that could be rearranged for a different printing later. He could have used this gift for lots of other more selfish purposes, but he started printing Bibles with it. Gutenberg printed Bibles with his “movable type” printing press. He made it possible for nearly every home to have its own copy of God’s precious Word.

What are you going to do with the tools God has given to you? This is a worthwhile question we must continue to ask our children. For emphasis, I ask you again, “What are YOU going to do with the tools God has given to you?”

**MO** Ministry Opportunity.  
It is not probable that students will set out with their computers to create and print the Bible like Gutenberg did. However those students do have exciting ways they can dedicate portions of their computing efforts to the Lord’s service in school. The student can include eye-catching clipart to verses, to make bookmarks, flyers, and e-mail messages that remind and encourage others. Every student can become a teacher

of others by including little fun things done on the computer with scripture quizzes, poems, stories, and games.

The school systems are teaching our youth that joy, growth, and prosperity depend wholly upon technology. OOPS! Technology comes from Jesus Christ the Maker of all things. Good logic would dictate then, that joy, growth, etc. come from Him. When you've borrowed something, you are responsible to return it, with interest, as it were.

### *Gender Computing*

Another concept that should be included in our Basics 001 lesson plan has to do with gender computing. Both young and mature girls should see that technical computing is not reserved for males, and administrative efforts to girls. Young ladies will be encouraged to learn:

- The first computer program was conceived and created by Ada Byron Lovelace.
- The first computer language was created by Navy Admiral, Grace Hopper.
- Computing Ergonomics owes much to the pioneering research of Joan Winters and her human factors and software appraisal tools.
- Our telephone computerized switching equipment we can't live without was invented by Erma Schneider Hoover.
- The African-American, Evelyn Boyd Granville, developed the computer programs to analyze the trajectories of the Mercury capsule (first US manned space program) and Apollo that landed man on the moon.
- Adele Goldstine authored the manual for the world's first electronic digital computer, ENIAC, (17,480 vacuum tubes) right down to the resistors.

- The Graphical Calculator (computer) used in solving electrical power line problems was patented by Edith Clark.

As families bring a computer into their homes to stay, the first goal is to establish Who allowed them to have it, and then to rehearse often to Whom it belongs, as defined by God's Word, plus NOTHING!

If you like acrostics, see what ones you can create for COMPUTER.

C\_hrist  
O\_pens  
M\_ighty  
P\_ograms  
U\_p  
T\_hat  
E\_vangelize  
R\_eady hearts.





## Chapter 7

### *Giant in My Church*

The Quiet Giant in my Church...  
Do we fear him or disciple Him?

**S**omething *very exciting* is missing.  
See if you can spot it as we tour my church that is  
probably a lot like yours.

- The pastor's office uses a computer to prepare sermons and manage pastoral e-mail.
- The church office technology creates bulletins, flyers, transparencies, newsletters, attendance records, and mailing labels.

## Computer Ministries

- The missionary bulletin board lists e-mail addresses and eye-catching computer graphics.
- The sanctuary computer-controlled sound system boosts precious messages of hope and salvation by the shed blood of Jesus Christ. The computer chip driven organ enhances all the people-ministry segments of the service.
- The furnace room hosts the computer-controlled thermostats and security systems that automatically contact the trustees, fire, or police departments.
- The kitchen appliances have computerized timers and controls.
- Even the restrooms have computerized water controls and facilities.
- The activity room stores the computer-controlled VCR and library of evangelism training tapes.
- The lighted sign in front and the mowing equipment out back have integrated technology we trust.

Did you catch it? Have you found the quiet giant?

Read the above list again... maybe you still will not find him.

This chapter about the giant in our church declares two major truths.

1. The church needs to extend computing beyond administration. It must include individual evangelism.
2. The church must teach individual talent tithing and offer church-related projects that challenge our home keyboarding time.

## *Tears and Technology*

There is no church I have heard of that needs to be convinced that technology would quickly build up their mailings and record keeping, just for starters. The purposes for computing in the church office are quite lengthy when

you really sit down and make the list. Yet the most powerful and God-honoring purposes are still untapped.

## *A List Lesson*

The most powerful use for the computer in the church office is in creating databases or computer lists... or so we think. At the moment, let us take a little lesson on what these databases look like and what makes them so powerful.

Making lists for ourselves is as common and necessary as drinking water.

Our mind creates lists almost without conscious effort.

1. Help mom dust the living room before ball practice.
2. Study for history test on Thursday.
3. Baby-sit for little Judy this Saturday.

And then there are some special lists that we all are accustomed to.

Look at any telephone book list. The phone list has a definite **shape** to it.

Last name, then first, and address, and then phone number. Each line is like that.

This layout makes it fast and easy to look for a certain person's name we want.

A list like this is called a **database** because every line (or record) has that same syntax. Computers use up databases like children go through ice cream.

I want to show you something that thrills me to no end. Turn to Matthew chapter 16.

Jesus asks some questions of His disciples that demonstrate a perfect database with an intriguing twist. Look in Matthew 16:9.

*“Do ye yet not understand, neither remember the five loaves of the five thousand, and how many baskets took ye*

*up?” And in the next verse, “Neither the seven loaves of the four thousand, and how many baskets ye took up?”*

Now, remember the phone list? ...

Name, --address, --phone number...

name, --address, --phone number. Jesus verbalizes a database list in those two verses in Matthew.

Food used, --people served, --leftovers...

Food used, --people served, --leftovers.

Five loaves, --five thousand, --baskets left.

Seven loaves, --four thousand, --baskets left?

That’s a perfect example of how a database list is shaped.

*Wow!*. Organized computer thinking taught from God’s Word. Isn’t that right in line with the purpose of scripture?

*“That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.”*

And then the lessons we learn from God’s Word always include diamonds. Those diamonds are found when we give it a second look. The diamond in this principle is in Jesus’ questions we’ve just read...

*“how many baskets ye took up? how many baskets ye took up? How is it that ye do not understand...”*

I must explain. Whenever we relate these two catering events, we concentrate on the people and the provisions. But Jesus was trying to get His disciples to think on a higher level... LEFTOVERS.  
Can you believe it? Leftovers!

With keen interest, I would watch my mother finish cutting cookies out of the circle of dough. I put great interest in the leftover dough. To my delight, mom would often separate a portion and slide it in front of me. With that she was very frugal in the uses for the other leftover dough. You and I

already are watchful for leftover money in the budget and spare time in our busy schedules, etc.

Leftovers. When the obvious is separated from the whole, what is left over?

Why is it left out? Is there some good we can get out of it? This is resourcefulness in high gear. Employers really look for this kind of thinking.

**MO** Ministry Opportunity  
To demonstrate this principle, students can make a database on their computer, whether they have one or not. They can list ALL their neighborhood friends. They can add a column showing each one who came to the backyard picnic. And then add a column of the ones who came to the sticky Jell-O battle. Next add the last column showing the ones who participated in the “Computer That Grows Hair” skit.

Now, because the list of neighbors and their attendance is in a database format, it is very easy to see which events were the most popular. You can even add more columns like “If refreshments were served,” “Was it a weekend or weeknight event?” etc.

But what about the leftovers? Who didn’t come to any event? Why didn’t they come? Could they be timid? Do they need a friend? Do they need transportation? Could they have hearing or speaking challenges?

Has God placed them as my neighbor for me to learn some neat things from them? Shall I work harder to become their friend?

We must continually remind ourselves that a computer is really just a tool that is cold, uncaring, and calculating. But as we remind ourselves that these tools come from God, we acknowledge that He, ultimately, expects us to use them for

Him. These facts, plus prayer, will bring tears into the equation. Tears are a prime requirement for evangelism, with or without technology. Read deep into Psalms 126:6:

*“He that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him.”*



### *The Quiet Giant We Should Enlist for Evangelism*

This quiet giant is in the junior church and EVERY Sunday School room. He sits in the lap of every member and visitor of your church and mine. This “giant of quiet” MUST be put to work in the Great Commission that is given to the church as a group and each individual attendee. Our question, “How is this done?” should quickly get the reply, “The Bible tells me so...” as though the last phrase of a children’s Bible School song were being sung.

My dad’s simple logic told me, over the years, that I can cut down my problems by pitting two problems against each other, and they will somewhat cancel each other. This was his version of “two negatives equal a positive.” Ok dad, we will pick two very important problems and have them face off. The problem pair we will pick are:

- Parents are terrified of computers and online misuse by their children. They do not know how to control it, let alone how to use it for honoring God.
- Parents want to make God's Word more of a standard for living in their lives and the lives of their children. But it seems like we need "computer parables".

What a seemingly caustic match they are; Bible instruction and the Internet. But when you get right down to it, that is what God does best. He pairs up the most unlikely things and amazes us every time. He took my "filthy rags righteousness" plus His shed Blood and has gifted me a place with Him for eternity.

There is a quiet giant bridge that must be built with haste and simplicity. It is a bridge to span from the student and all his efforts on his computer at home and school, to the evangelistic goals of his church. The giant secret is that God has given us computer technology for pure evangelism. Technology used in the church for administration purposes is JUST THE TIP OF THE ICEBERG.

We can actually crowd out Satan's cesspool computing by church folks. The simple process is to show young and old churchgoers the rest of the iceberg. The discouraged Israelites walked out of Egypt and never imagined they would soon be leaving their footprints on the floor of the Red Sea. I love to quote to others and myself:

*"But as it is written, Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him."*  
I Corinthians 2:9.

**MO** Ministry Opportunity  
You can easily create an ultra simple game for your student and his friends. Pick out a simple

Bible parable and see if they can make an equivalent parable that includes computers. Note: a parable is an easy to understand, earthly picture lesson that teaches a heavenly truth.

A good starter might be one of the three parables taught in Matthew 25.

1-13 teaches the preparedness of the wise virgins.

14-30 teaches aggressive investment and being busy regarding our talents.

31-46 teaches us warnings against prejudice as we use our resources.

If you want to really crank up the excitement, divide up the students into two teams and make it a parable contest. In these kinds of contests, everyone wins. Be sure to keep the right context in creating computer parables. Remind everyone that creating computer parables does not infer that the Bible is out of date. After all, the premise of the parable is patterned after a biblical parable. The end purpose of the computer parable is to help others to get into God's Word and discover just how up-to-date it really is.

God is up to something... God is REALLY up to something. It probably will not happen that you and I will leave our footprints following Him on any sea floor. But we have communication technology by which we can learn, share, and see more of His fields that are ripe unto harvest than we ever imagined.

You could think of the God-honoring process as something like tithing. The first part of all that we make or gain is given to the Lord. I have always felt that the actual commodity is not important. We tithe from our wages, from the potato patch, from the melodies of instruments we learn to play, from the housekeeping we do, and yes, from the computing in each day.

All the other chapters of this book exhort us to use the God-given computer and the talents He blesses us with to honor Him. This finds many untapped ministries in and for the local church and the great commission.

There are folks in your church and mine who feel they do not have good enough computer equipment, or talents to use them for their church. The following story should illustrate the marvelous way God can and will use even the humblest of talents, when the heart is right.

### *Trash 'n Treasure*

No one knows when it started or, for that matter, where it'll end. Jeffery Hemp, one of our Sunday evening ushers first noticed it. Not quick to prejudge someone else's little one, he felt it was his duty to monitor the situation.

It was Denny again. Now, he's not a problem in the strictest sense of the word. But Denny isn't quite like most of the other 7-year-olds in church. And mind you, it's not that folks show up on church workday dressed just like Denny when he's got his Sunday best on, either.

Every single Sunday evening, it happens just like setting your watch. While all the other children are scooting up and down the halls full of life and laughter, Denny quietly moves down one pew and then up the next. Every Sunday he covers the whole church. And you won't discover at first glance he's gathering used bulletins, either.

Jeffery learned the only other clue to the case is that Denny takes them home and doesn't bring them back. If you asked the Fenton family, this month's custodians, they'd chuckle and mumble something about, it being a help to them. Jeffery hadn't thought much more about it for the next three months or so.

And then it happened! Any usher would remember what happened that Wednesday, March the 14th with the detail required of a defense lawyer.

Beulah Benning, the Missions Committee chairperson excused herself out of their meeting, taking a beat up lunch bag with her, heading for the Pastor's study. Beulah wiped her nose once more as she handed pastor the bag. She invited him to see the startling contents of the bag that Denny had carried his lunch in all week.

In all of his 23 years as a pastor, proclaiming the good news of Christ's Blood payment for our sins, he'd never seen this before.... Seeing them for the first time, a description doesn't come easy. A first attempt would be they were small scrapbooks... probably the size of the church bulletins. Each one was held together with discolored string, tied in a knot no boy scout ever saw. They made it a clumsy stack of nine sitting on pastor's desk.

Careful inspection indicated that each of the nine was unique in content. Denny's paste-up capability would bring a smile from any newspaper's computer typesetter. But all would agree, a lot of tedious work was evidenced by this little 7-year-old.

The nine little books said it all. Each page had ragged-edged pictures, big and small, pasted with great care; placed with great love. Beulah wiped her nose for the umpteenth time, assuring pastor all the contents must have come from church bulletins. Some pages contained a phrase or verse you know you've seen on a bulletin cover.

One page showed a clipart of a little boy with his hands folded in prayer and written with an orange crayon, the letters "ME" and an arrow linking the two. The last piece to Jeffery's case was answered when Pastor pulled a used

envelope out of the bag, with directions written with that orange crayon,

***“GIVE TO BEHT NUTON”***

...pretty clear instructions, right? It's crystal clear; the lunch bag contents are to be sent to our missionary, Beth Newton, once you've seen the three books that have Denny's testimony in them.

Some pictures cut out of the programs used during the missions conference and that orange crayon of love again, speaking across oceans of difference and indifference, appeared a letter "I", a big round heart, next to a picture of a missionary holding a bible that appeared in a Sunday school class take-home paper.

God's love is simply understood. No matter what your age is or the tools and resources you have available, God has a precious way for you to share His lessons of love and forgiveness with everyone around you.

*The Newest is not always the Greatest*

Is it possible we are too quick to discard tools that are not the latest version? Are we unknowingly discarding people who don't exactly fit our perception of church workers or computer users? Have we identified ALL those who have a real heart for local church ministries and the great commission?

It takes the involvement of everyone, whether old or young, able-bodied or challenged. I am sure that very often a computer could help discover those God-given resources and make them known where needed. I don't think you will find any church that doesn't have young people or senior citizens wanting to get involved. Often it's just a matter of adapting the need to the helper. This might be another reminder to examine our leftover resources all around us.

We've learned that word processors can easily tell if certain words are used too often, or are misplaced, or are

misspelled. In much the same way, computers can also help church leaders make some of the same kind of assessments of their people and resources.

Computers help us answer questions like:

- Do all the Sunday school teachers have backup teachers and helpers?
- Should this class be divided, or merged with another class?
- How long has Ms. Sadie been teaching the primaries?

**MO** Ministry Opportunities  
Other questions come to mind too, like:

- Two of the homebound ladies have computers and might be able to maintain regular e-mail contact with missionaries and other homebound folks. Could they also show some of the preteens how to e-mail others and share their Christian testimonies?
- Young Tommy always did like to count stuff... What would happen if we got that old computer out of the church attic and had Tommy start counting all the different light bulbs in the church and listing their sizes. I'll bet his computer light bulb list would make some real friends with the trustees.
- Do you suppose Davy Cam's dad would gather up the younger children while their parents are in choir practice? He could show them how to draw their own make-believe websites with crayons and paper. The results could then be posted on the "Christian Kids in Action" bulletin board.
- Barbara Dade is taking typing in school. If she had a copy of the church constitution, she might get some good typing practice computerizing it for the church to update.
- There are many more in chapter nine.

The bottom line is simply that God has given every one of us a talent. Even a bed-fast person has precious talents and abilities that should be used to glorify God in some way. Technology is part of the appetite of the world, and we should use it to aid us in our evangelistic efforts, especially on an individual level.

## Computer Ministries



## Chapter 8

### *Teaming Giants*

$$1 + 2 = 3.4$$

One plus two equals three point four.

**T**his may appear to be an error, but is quite correct when describing an organized team.

The Israelite masses had already been given authorization and promises from God to possess the land –the land flowing with milk and honey. They were even given tangible evidence of the giant fruits of this new land. Moses had sent out the twelve spies to face two types of almost indescribable giants. What a fascinating dichotomy! There were giant threats to their goals that could be fatal. And

there were also giant treasures of fruit to sustain them during their mission to inhabit the new land.

This could have become a stalemate of interests, but the “Giant of giants”, God Himself, had given the marching orders. In spite of all the historical evidence God had shown the nation of Israel, the people still willingly chose to believe the majority of spies and their false reports. They could only focus on the giant enemy. This same mistake is prevalent in adult opinions of technology today.

### *One Plus Two Equals Three Point Four.*

David the shepherd boy, dealt with only one giant. One opponent is easy to focus on. But on the other hand, dealing with more than one giant as the Israelites were, is another matter. More than one enemy giant makes it possible to become surrounded. My forces may have to be divided and simultaneously advance in separate directions.

Dealing with more than one enemy may also mean having to deal with more than one technique or weapon. In nature, we see some animals that hunt prey as individuals. On the other hand, God teaches us through the hunting techniques of more than one well-known species of fish. These fish work together as a team to surround their prey and then chase them up onto the beach before feeding on them.

Management trainers like Dr. Edwards Deming and Total Quality Management remind us that organization, or teaming up will likely produce a value greater than the sum of the parts. Instead of the comfortable equation  $1 + 2 = 3$ , a fitly consolidated organization will yield a value greater than the expected three.

### *Creating the Team*

The **modem** printed circuit board that is inside every computer today, allows us to plug telephone lines into the

back of the computer. If our friend plugs his phone lines into the back of his computer, just like we have, then the two computers can talk to each other, just like you and I do when we call Aunt Jane. The neat thing is that the computers can be next door to each other, the next office, or on opposite sides of the world.

The teaming of computers began in 1969, as computers began being linked to one another. One computer ‘talked’ to another, using typed out commands. In those days, the Internet was not fancy since it used only text and numbers. There were no sound, no graphics, no animation, and no colors involved in the beginning. Yuck! That sounds awful!

There was no computer mouse or buttons to double-click on. But then again, it was used almost exclusively by the military, universities, and hospitals. As medical advances grew, doctors and researchers were able to quickly get second opinions among themselves.

The design included safeguards that would provide electronic “detours” around damaged telephone lines, equipment, etc. In any neighborhood, there are streets that cross each other. Folks can get to work or school using varying travel routes each day, depending upon the traffic flow and roads closed for repairs. A spider web is a good example of this “alternate routes” type of design. It is for this reason that the Internet has become known as the “world wide web”. Most Internet addresses begin with “www...” for exactly the same reason.

### *Color and convenience*

The graphics and colors were added to computer communication around 1989. The software program that allows us to click on buttons and see graphics passed through the telephone lines is called the Internet Browser. You see, graphic computer controls made it easier for users

to tell computers what to do. That is one of the fruits of computerland. That is about the time the real stature of the giants in computerland was shown.

Soon, thereafter, it became easy for the public to learn to command the computer to do what was wanted. They could use their mouse and pointer to click on a picture of a button on the screen or choose the shape of a report by actually SEEING a representation of it. That was much better than merely reading a description about it. It even transcends language and geographical borders; what a wonderful gift from God!

The fruit that comes from the teaming of computers is mind-boggling. Not only do we benefit from those medical advances, but “distance learning” also becomes available. This is tremendously valuable to the home-schooling family, or to students who are too far away or too busy to attend regular classrooms. This is true at any learning level. Even “life-long learning” programs make it practical for seniors and the disabled to grow and contribute.

Wow! What a gift is computer communication. But wait--there is more.

### *But Satan...*

This easy communication that is available to the minds of all ages and physical challenges has also made it easier for devious minds to serve Satan’s purposes. Whereas a bank crook formerly had to use torches, tools, physical strength, and access to carry out his robbery, today, almost none of those trappings are required to rob a bank. This is because banks maintain their records electronically. Did you know that many of today’s bank crooks are barely teenagers?

## *Garbage Graphics Giants*

Here is a miscommunication issue that **MUST** be focused on. We are all familiar with the widespread Internet pornography viewed by some men. But when was the last time you heard about the teenagers who build the websites that market such garbage? It couldn't be—not teenagers! **Yes, teenagers!** A girl can be given an instant camera, a phone number, and no education. On the Internet, she can make more money, and with greater personal safety for herself, than she could selling drugs. This sordid filth is never mentioned in regard to the giant evils attending computer teaming, via the Internet.

Pastors: You must warn the parents of your congregation from behind the pulpit that there are no computer filters, or schemes that completely make any personal computer Internet-safe. The March 2001 issue of Consumers Reports gave a blistering presentation about the ineffectiveness of computer Internet filters. The unbiased testing placed the top ten smut filters as being from 85% to 10% effective. The biggest difficulty dealt within the study was defining exactly what is obscene. How can a mechanical or software filter be created that would be smart enough to block out pictures of an aborted fetus?

## *Cesspool Chat Giants*

There is a feature of the Internet world that few parents and youth leaders even know exists. It has very high potential for the permanent corruption of youth, especially girls. That evil is the Internet chat rooms. As this is discussed, notice the escalation of evil as depicted by quicksand or a whirlpool.

Let's first build an example so that chat room hazards can be understood.

Imagine a typical school building on open house night. We see bright lights and colorful displays inviting us into any

or all of the rooms. We can enter any room we wish, and stay as long as we wish. All the rooms have other visitors with whom we can talk. Some may be from other countries. But in this scenario, everyone is disguised and uses a “handle” or nickname.

There are absolutely no restrictions: anyone may enter any room, and only a few of the rooms have a moderator. The topics discussed in each room may be changed at will, even though each room has identified itself with specific concerns. The last oddity about these rooms is that all communication is written. In order to share your ideas or questions, you must write your thoughts on a chalkboard, just as everyone else is doing.

It seems rather chaotic, doesn't it? Remember the most important guidelines:

- There are *no* rules of discussion;
- There are *no* moderators;
- And most critically important of all, there are *no* true identities.

The vast amount of time two girls can spend on the telephone talking with one another now becomes something like a conference call involving many females. Because these electronic chat rooms are part of the Internet, girls anywhere in the world can talk anonymously without incurring any long distance phone charges.

With the natural bent of mankind toward evil, it is not difficult to guess the direction of the discussions. What might be thought of as fantasizing to one visitor may be considered as a challenge to another.

This lesson has deliberately used strong and ugly language to describe chat rooms. The intent is to:

- encourage would-be chat room users to carefully evaluate any chat room in which you are thinking of participating.
- Only MONITORED chat rooms should be considered, where those who abuse content and language are banished.
- As another precaution, some of the good chat rooms require a password to enter.
- Parents miss the boat by placing the family computer in the living room, then employing “over the shoulder” supervision. That won’t do it. Such “supervision” is not supported in scripture.

A giant hoax perpetrated today says that the teaming of the computer in ugly ways, via the Internet, is out of God’s control. Nothing could be farther from the truth. This is based on the scriptural facts in regard to His being ALL-POWERFUL and ALL- KNOWING. But do you know what? God’s creation has **never** been out of His control, neither in time nor certainly not in technology. We must seek God’s solution.

God’s solution to the threats of the giants of the Internet is simple and sure. This solution is the same time-proven one for all the temptations we see before us. Jesus Christ must be recognized as the divine Son of God, and His position seen as the only way of salvation. Our flawed perspective is corrected when His sacrifice of shedding His own blood on the cross to pay for our sins is accepted. When invited into a heart to stay, Jesus then becomes Savior and Lord of that life.

Having done this, one can wholly trust the promises and truths of His inspired Word, the Bible. One of the clear scriptural directives regarding all the pitfalls of the Internet and its enticements is found in Psalm 119:9,11:

*“Wherewithal shall a young man cleanse his way? by taking heed thereto according to thy word. Thy word have I hid in mine heart, that I might not sin against thee.”*

The protection for not being dragged down by the wiles of the Internet is to fill oneself with God’s Word and God’s truths BEFORE using it.

*“Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand. Stand therefore, having your loins girt about with truth, and having on the breastplate of righteousness; And your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace; Above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked. And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God: Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints;”* Ephesians 6:11-18.

There is the further need to create and cultivate a personal team of Christian friends who will help us watch one another as we go about from day to day. The best place to find and assemble such a team is through the local Bible-believing church and its ministries.

James Curtis



## Chapter 9

### *Giant Fruits in Computerland*

How and where do computers help me  
evangelize?

### *Closet Computing*

“Computing is most heavily dependent on hardware and the software programs to run it,” is certainly not a great revelation. And upgrading a computer system is still complicated enough that most people are willing to ‘trash the old and buy all new’.

On an ongoing basis, computers make a generation leap in power about every 18 months. But a close investigation

into the advancements will show almost without exception that the new features are not all that major. The new features are of use only to ‘power users’ and will likely not even be noticed by you and me. These new ‘gotta have’ features may be portrayed with lots of flash and glitter, but after a very short time, they get ‘shoved into the closet of misuse.’

**MO** Ministry Opportunity  
So then every two to three years we see a major addition to that closet. That closet becomes home to a computer capable of running a business, because it did. It still runs as well as it did the day it was taken out of the box. Its only fault is that it is not the flashiest; such a waste... such a waste. **OR IS IT?** The old adage, “one man’s trash is another man’s treasure” meets epic proportions when burdened Christians roll up their sleeves and get busy. The following short story should fire the imagination.

### *Computer Explosion*

**A computer exploded all over the walls!** At least that is what it looked like.

The Computer Junk Jockies Club met in a vacant store in a part of town people had no use for.

When Ben first thought of the idea, it didn’t even make any sense to him either. The very idea of teaching a computer class in a condemned building that has no electricity was screwy... it was definitely uncool. ‘Course they didn’t need any locks on the doors because Tom was their self-elected watchman. That was reasonable because he didn’t have any home or bedroom to sleep in otherwise.

But the more Ben thought and prayed about it, the more exciting the challenge sounded. There are some determined people who climb mountains. Ben’s mountain was six boys, who loved learning new things, just couldn’t make it

in school, and had absolutely no hope of ever learning about computers any other way.

So Ben decided that with the Lord's help, no money, no electricity, but a deep desire to teach others fun stuff, he was going to build a mountain called Hope, fueled with old computers. No problem... or was it?

The absence of electricity was really no setback at all. They had bazillions of things to investigate without it. Even though the club had its very own watchman (Tom), they still needed a computer. Well, Mark turned up the next day with a computer he found in someone's trashcan. His younger brother tagged along behind, DRAGGING the keyboard, like a small child pulling a wagon. Some people have no respect for fine equipment (grin).

Lots of people would be discouraged at not having a monitor, not having electricity, or with being frequently visited by interested cockroaches. All Ben could see though, was some boys excited by taking something apart and learning what made each part work.

Dean was a natural note taker. No paper needed... just pick a wall. Dean didn't exactly understand the tickled feeling he got writing on the walls but thought the rest of the boys ought to envy him and his job as "scribe".

Ben taught the boys how to carefully take the computer apart, piece by piece and try to understand the why and how of it. When the power supply came out, the boys had Dean write two columns on the wall. One column listed the things they understood about the power supply. The other column listed questions they needed to answer about the power supply.

Then they drove a nail above the two columns and hung the power supply on the nail.

Next was the floppy disk drive. It was dismantled with all the attention and care a live time bomb would be given. Dean was again put to work with the two-column process.

Now Ben's school didn't have test papers, and pencils. Old rag blindfolds worked just as well. Tests were given one blindfolded student at a time. He was handed a computer part off the wall and then required to recite everything in its two columns. Pete flunked his test the other day and had to sit two hours with a live cockroach in his shirt. I think that was the last time anyone missed his test.

Mark's little brother felt important having provided the keyboard, as Ben took some serious time in teaching the boys how important this junk computer has been to the club. He made it very clear that God puts great value on boys with or without bedrooms. God wants them to use all they have to discover His great love for them by what He did on the cross. (End)

### *The Babysitter Fruit*

Computing has incredible flexibility to teaching and challenging all ages. I visited a family with several preteen children not long ago. I finished taking several pictures of the older children for my curriculum and decided to take the remaining two pictures of their 3-year-old sister. The fact that her hand was not big enough to reach around the mouse did not slow her up at all. In fact, we could not get her away from the keyboard to have an older brother demonstrate a program to me.

The graphics capability of present day computers gets terribly misused by game players and Internet surfers. On the other hand, it is the very thing that makes computing possible to the very young, to seniors, the disabled, and many other segments of society. Not only is it easier to use by more segments of society, but it also can be made to bear much fruit for the Master in a multitude of ministries.

Whereas children of many ages throughout the world congregate to play games and challenge each other, the computer should be involved in that great commission.

As children grow all along the way, the intrigue of computing should be used to share the gospel of salvation through the only begotten Son of God. In the same way parents honor God by tithing money, talents, time, and possessions, children should learn to tithe some of their keyboard time and things they learn in computing.

**MO** Ministry Opportunity  
As detailed elsewhere in this book, always keep an open Bible next to the keyboard. It establishes itself as the ultimate ready reference and also becomes a constant reminder to honor God with our keyboarding. For very small children, have the Bible to be a children's Bible that contains a large portion of pictures.

If you purchase inexpensive computer clipart, you can place a few of them on the screen and have your very young student match the images etc. But the all-important lesson to teach is that we please Jesus by having a friend sit next to us. Both of us can discover truths about God using technology.

I place a caution here. Computer games that are Bible-based or otherwise should be used with great moderation.

Further, do not make "time on the computer" as being an award for any other daily tasks. "Johnny, if you read your Bible today, you can spend thirty minutes on the computer." This sends the wrong signals. The better approach is to say, "Johnny, if you spend thirty minutes practicing your computer typing, I'll show you an important computing principle listed in God's Word."

- The crucial principle to train your young student is that God has blessed us with His inspired infallible

Word. It cannot be compared to games, research tools, or edutainment on any level.

- As children grow, it is more beneficial to help them develop creative and detective skills.

## *The School Fruit*

[Editor's note: This section makes strong points to also be considered as you read chapter 10.]

The fruits of technology in all types of schools fall along two unchangeable rules.

- With or without technology, God's Word is our first and final authority for right and wrong, up and down, inside us and out. Never is it superceded by man's cunning curriculum of half-truths and false assumptions.
- The purpose of technology as a gift from Him, is to bring honor to Him and advancement to missions.

The learning centers and those technology-based fruits we will cover here are:

backyard, home-school,  
public school, distance learning,  
eZines and lifelong learning.

In each of these learning centers we must comply with both of the above rules.

**MO** Ministry Opportunities  
**Backyard school** -- is the unstructured peer-to-peer mentoring that is little more than playing

games with a purpose. In my curriculum, I have created quite a few “Fun with Friends” pages that have computer-generated puzzles and games that preteen children can share with a friend. A simple game that gets children into the Bible is finding words found in scripture that are also used in the computer world. They can then add their testimony or an invitation to church. Just to start with, use verses: Is 22:22; 66:17; Acts 14:12; Is 22:18; Gen 6:16; 1:4; Ex 39:3; Prov 25:11; II John 1:12; Is 41:16; Ex 23:30; and Rom 1:31.

**MO** Ministry Opportunities  
Ladies can discuss computer cautions or tips around cups of coffee. Learning the benefits of computers and computing principles seldom require the equipment to be present. The Jackson family might invite their new neighbors over for a meal, demonstrate some new computer program, help get it running and understanding the rules. And then top off the evening with seeing in God’s Word other exciting gifts God has bestowed upon men, with heavy emphasis on personal salvation.

### *Home School*

Because class size is so small and distractions are fewer, precious truths from God’s Word can be linked with computing. The home-school computer is a wonderful tool to drive home again and again the need for missions and how computer technology can help that cause. Learning to use a computer wisely is much like learning to play the piano. This is a skill greatly used in church to benefit God’s Message and show the offering of our talents to the One Who offered His life for our sins. Curriculum and helps are often shared with other families in making the teaching more fun and effective.

## *Public School*

The greatest challenge here is to continually reinforce both rules stated above. The classrooms today are very slowly moving away from the learning by rote; i.e. training the parrot to spit out facts and figures within the time limit that often has little effect on the student's needs. The very slow changes in today's classroom are cultivating each student's imagination and creativity in a team-effort approach. This makes great opportunity for the God-honoring student to teach his peers the wonderful computing principles the Bible contains. As an example, see the approach Christ teaches in organizing tasks in Mark 6.

Jesus was about to perform the miracle of the small lunch providing for so many. He could have snapped his fingers and a box lunch would have appeared in front of every individual there on the grass. But look at the interesting thing He did. He had everyone sit down in a very special way. Verses 39 and 40 say He had them all sit down "*by companies upon the green grass. And they sat down in ranks, by hundreds, and by fifties.*"

He was teaching them a basic principle while feeding them, i.e., to break up a large project into smaller, more manageable projects or goals. This is a powerfully simple process that needs to be developed even today. But even more than that, He is showing us how to put groups WITHIN groups. Tasks within tasks. This would be like:

1. Decide what your science fair project will be.
2. What registration and prerequisites are needed?
3. Determine the time schedule to get things done.
4. List what materials are needed.

Then within each topic listed above, add the specific task or individuals needed. We'd probably write them down something like an outline, subtopics within topics. This is a principle you would use to write a computer program to

launch the space shuttle, tasks within tasks. This same principle is used in creating a computer picture for junior church.

Let's say little Judy wants to create a picture for her teacher. The picture will have a house, a tree and her dog. Judy first draws the house. When she finishes the house, then she does the tree. When she finishes the tree, it's on to the dog. A little 7-year-old girl divides the whole picture project into smaller tasks. Now Judy's older sister might follow the same process on her computer with one small difference. When she creates the house, she saves that as a separate computer picture. Then she creates the tree and saves it separately. Next is the same process with the dog. Then later they can all be merged into one picture or just a few of them to create different pictures.

### *Distance Learning*

Learning through correspondence courses, television, or the Internet present critical issues of credibility. Whether the learning is a complete college course or just learning the meaning of certain health symptoms, we must consider the source. Almost daily, it is becoming easier to "become an authority", "get published", or appear to be the last word. Do you remember our rules?

- With or without technology, God's Word is our first and final authority for right and wrong, up and down, inside us and out. Never is it preempted by man's cunning curriculum of half-truths and false assumptions.
- The purpose of technology, as a gift from Him, is to bring honor to Him and advancement to missions.

Adults have firm in their minds to get that second opinion, whether buying a product or diagnosing a symptom of little Freddie. This is far more crucial when researching online

resources. Notorious examples of this are the scams and virus hoaxes broadcasted by thoughtless e-mail messages. We have faster news responses to world and aerospace events than dreamed of a few years ago. Because of the graphics and flair of its delivery, we internalize it as truth. Refer to Truth Trio of Corroboration in chapter six.

## *eZines*

Pronounced “ee’-zeens,” these are electronic magazines delivered via e-mail. E-mail has become so fast and sophisticated that graphics can be sent as mail. It is almost too easy for the casual user to cut and paste graphics into an e-mail message for many obvious reasons. On the other hand, to put graphics etc. on a web page it takes special software, considerable time to create/update, and skills not really held by the general computer user.

Just like magazines, eZines can be subscribed to. Some of them offer paid advertising. More importantly, they have specialty readers who know they’ll be getting the latest information on just the subject of their interest. I can think of no better use of ezines than missionary newsletters. In this technology age, newsletters just don’t carry the appeal to be really internalized, because many of the mission issues require color graphics to hook the reader. The time and cost to compose, print, and mail a newsletter makes the traditional newsletter not a profitable effort.

Further, missionary supporters expect more than a “Hi – I’m OK!” communication. Church leaders need pictures, maps, diagrams etc. that can be used as teaching aids in the local church. These aids build enthusiasm and burdens for involvement. We all get a real boost from the slide presentations that missionaries bring to our churches. EZines make that graphic presentation a subtle, but continual, process.

### *Life-long Learning*

Whether it is called continuing education or some other name, the process of education going beyond high school and extending into maturity helps reinforce the incredible resources of the seniors of our church and community. Life-long learning also refers to occupational training that helps us to keep our jobs or advance to better jobs.

Important jobs I have enjoyed included “wellness” as part of their occupational training. This deals with the attitudes and spirit before and after work. What a perfect place to learn the real source for the lasting joyful spirit that comes in trusting Jesus Christ as one’s Savior and making Him Lord of your life.

### *Fruit for Church*

Computers in church are pretty much commonplace... that is, in the church office -- but nowhere else. Technology has become part of the critical path in church functions by creating mailing labels, bulletins, newsletters, flyers, annual reports, minutes, and basic attendance tasks. But these are only just the tip of the iceberg of how God wants us to use His technology gift. Refer to chapter 2 also.

**MO** Ministry Opportunities  
A youth leader who is really on the ball might even use some computer programs in having youth develop their personal testimony or the church’s testimony by creating Internet web pages. The missions committee might even ask those youth to get involved in creating web pages or e-mail church updates for the missionaries.

But the “fruit bigger than a man” key word is management more so than advertising. I learned a truth I shall never

forget from the missions conference speaker Dr. Floyd Elmore. He said that the church has all the resources it needs to carry out the Great Commission God gave it. The issue is to be good managers of those resources. You can refer to chapter 7 to learn more about databases and discovering diamonds in your church.

The greater value of technology is using it to “listen to” all the church attendees. They’re speaking loud and clear about church activities, training sessions, and special missions. Wherever a person or people have a free choice before them, a very wise person will keep track of the choice(s) made and all the demographics about the decisions. These choices are actually an unwritten survey about likes, dislikes, qualifications, and all sorts of things. This page could be filled up with all the places you and I complete on one of these “unwritten” surveys. If you walked throughout your church, you too could find many opportunities that your church folk make choices on. Some might be:

- where to sit in the auditorium,
- which hymns are chosen by the singers,
- who volunteers for what projects or tasks,
- what books are checked out of the library,
- what activities are best attended,
- what night of the week works the best for choir practice,
- what spaces in the parking lot get filled up first,
- what nursery toys get used and should be kept?

These questions all have great importance to trustees and your church planners. And for that matter, if you don’t find very many choices for folks, it would be very productive to create some choices and have your folks take that all important “unwritten survey”. The feedback information these surveys provide are best analyzed by using one of those database lists described earlier.

## *Resident Technology Expert*

There is a principle taught in the 12 spies event that could be an important lesson for our churches and the giants in computer land. Careful inspection of the Numbers 13 account makes it clear that a ruler of EVERY tribe was to be chosen for this reconnaissance team. This special selection process is even underscored by giving the names of each of the other spies' fathers. Scripture even goes further to mention the parent of each spy.

**MO** Ministry Opportunity.  
This tells me it is good practice to choose a person in each of our churches who has leader qualities that can spy out the land of computers and be the "authority" to the rest of your church.

## *The fruit in tomorrow's church business.*

Christian administrators should use productivity software to better organize their resources and plans. They should use spare time to hone communication skills. This could be done using local church goals.

Church business success today must deal with the trio of

1. Resource management,
  2. Church attendee satisfaction,
  3. Church employees who want to upscale 1 and 2.
- The business recruiter looking at a resume can determine what initiative the prospect has by what he has done to upgrade his skills between jobs.
  - The shop leader makes strong mental notes when he sees one of his charges going online during break to learn more about the safety procedures or company wellness recommendations.

- Businesses today have an electronic suggestion box that expedites worker suggestions right to managers who are hungry for big and small recommendations from those on the front lines.
- The Christian in the office first sees that computers spit out labels and all sorts of reports. But then asks, “Lord, is this particular report really used effectively? If I understand how others use this report, maybe I can format it in a more effective way.”
- E-mail is an incredible communication tool we use to schedule meetings, distribute facts, and identify problems to fix. The Christian would also see e-mail as a method to encourage a struggling worker, or the power to commend a worker’s extra effort.
- The Internet has vast examples of successful business strategies that might be applicable to your business needs. You must remember always, the Bible is always a better resource than the Internet.
- A large part of managing resources is being creative. All throughout history, “new inventions” have been no more than the combining of two other things that had never been paired before. The mechanics of brainstorming sessions includes the random pairing of existing resources and “inventing” something new. You will want to remember that creativity began with God. He created the Universe, and He has created a plan for you and your talents. Include Him in all your meetings.

### *Lest Ye Die!*

In God’s creation, He has put fruit all around us. It takes only a burdened Christian to search for it and use it in the proper way. Do not forget that the first sin recorded in scripture involved fruit that God clearly declared not to eat of. Did you notice that Eve told Satan that they were not to eat of it [NEITHER SHALL YE TOUCH IT]? That clearly was not the truth, and as soon as Satan heard that, he had it made. Gen 2:17; 3:3.

Whether the fruit is on a tree in the Garden of Eden or before us in our present universe, in the form of technology, we must seek God's opinion if it. We must, each day, ask if this fruit or task is what He wants us to pursue for Him.

James Curtis



## Chapter 10

### *Basic Training of Your Computer (and you) for Evangelism*

You mean I can actually get free Bibles?  
What kind of computer is best for evangelism?  
How do I train my computer (and me)?  
What are the four flavors of computer  
evangelism?

## *Free New Bibles*

**M**any countries and many people have no Bible they can call their own. The reason is that none exists. Bible translating organizations just have not been able to get to them yet. But, for the major languages of the world, we can open before us God's Word and have a feast. Production costs are so reasonable we can have at least one of our own to add notes and special blessings. God has blessed us with His printed word, wonderfully.

Technology has further benefited the availability of God's truths with Bibles that are "online". They are stored on computer networks and on our own computers. Even greater are computer programs that help us do scripture research. Now if that was not enough, a great deal of this software is free. That's right, God's Word was 'written in blood', but is free to us.

These programs make it very easy to copy portions of scripture into a word processor to create e-mail messages of encouragement, powerful book reports, Sunday School lessons, or remembrance cards of compassion to missionaries and others. There are several Internet sites that allow us to download into our computer all the copies of God's Word and these additional programs, without cost or obligation. The one I prefer is:

**[www.onlinebible.com](http://www.onlinebible.com)**

It is, therefore, even more imperative that we saturate our reading time, research, and results in every form with God's truths and guidelines.

## *Don't purchase a computer!*

Don't purchase a computer of any size or fantastic price unless you are:

## Computer Ministries

- Willing to seek God's choice in which one, where, and when to buy
- Submerge its use in nourishing meals of scriptural computing principals
- Dedicate its output to God's Glory

... And realize:

- Most computer programs and your projects only use about one-half of the horsepower the computer actually possesses.
- Hardly one-third of the add-on gadgets, like scanners, video cameras, and joysticks, have any lasting use. Their technology will soon be outdated anyhow.
- There are two perfectly credible schools of thought about computer purchases: (1) select a computer that can be upgraded later with faster and newer parts, or (2) select an inexpensive computer that has very few ways to have its internal parts upgraded, and plan on buying a brand new one every three years and put the original computer in some secondary use. I call these computers "hand-me-downs".
- If you are thinking of a laptop, you should think twice. A laptop will cost \$500 to \$800 more than a desktop computer, with the same amount of horsepower. Contrary to commercials, laptop displays are not comfortable even in moderate sunlight. The biggest drawback is that battery use is limited to three hours at best. Laptop theft is a big issue that makes them uncomfortable to use in public places, unattended. Do not get a laptop unless you need a laptop.

## *Shopping for the machine*

Actually, it is what I call the car-dealer complex. You will get nowhere telling a car dealer any more of your expectations, than "I want to buy a car." Absolutely nothing will happen until the salesman drags out more expectations from you. He wants to know the size of your family, what you expect to do with the vehicle, what price range, maybe cosmetics, etc.

You see, you may be thinking of purchasing a used, inexpensive little car. He may be thinking you want a big, flashy, red whizzer with the same engine in it the space shuttle uses. A computer salesman may be thinking you need a computer that fills a whole desk with several speakers, scanners, integrated telephone, 23-inch monitor, ergonomic keyboard, and turn signals. But to the contrary, you visualize a tiny laptop computer with a full size fold-up keyboard and a cosmic mouse.

If you purchase a new computer or upgrade the one you have, you **MUST** keep the right perspective about the selection. Most cars (and computers) will get you where you want to go, regardless of their color or price tag. The difference in the price of your computer affects the quality of installed software, response to repair service, guarantees, and frills.

## *It's Impossible to Learn Computers!!*

You knew that all along, didn't you!

More times than I can count, I have had someone ask me to teach him or her computers. But you see, whether it's purchasing a car or learning computers, you do not get anywhere until you decide what you want the car or computer to do, or where you want to go with them. We will see in this chapter some simple tips that will help us to **learn how to learn**. Adults take exception to this process,

thinking their years in school demonstrate they know how to learn. Most often that is not the true case.

Young people learn in a completely different way than do adults. Let me explain.

Young people learn something new by being shown what each lever and button does. Then just get back out of their way, and by trial and error, they learn on their own how to use the controls and features in a seemingly haphazard discovery mode.

In contrast, adults want to be taught only the controls and steps to complete a definite project. An appropriate request from an adult is, "Please give me a list of steps to send an e-mail message to a missionary in Haiti."

Let us thwart Satan's simple techniques to discourage us adults from using our computer for God's mission efforts by considering the following tips.

### *Learning Resources*

[Editor's note: Refer to chapter nine School Fruit for additional resources.]

### *God's Word*

First and foremost. **Computer Ministries** shows you where.

### *Library*

Get a head start on the class by checking out a video from the local library and learn some of the terms and screens. The library I frequent most often has 11 computers available to the public at no cost. It would be wise to call ahead and reserve a machine. All of them have a popular word processor and laser printer installed. Seven of the

computers are Internet accessible. Courteous library staffers are a wave-of-the-hand away, to help when the computer does something stupid.

## *Home*

In the same library's visual aids dept are videos on specific computer programs and computer operation in general. Take a video home and learn computing with the blinds pulled. Replay that one part that just doesn't make sense.

## *Computer Store*

The local computer store usually knows of computer user groups in the area that assemble regularly to discuss and resolve relevant issues.

## *Grocery Stores*

All grocery stores contain computer magazines with short, moderately easy articles that all work together to help us along. Read the articles with the idea you won't understand everything, but terms and techniques will start fitting together. You'll begin to understand hardware parts and pieces by comparing ads, descriptions, and prices.

## *Grandchildren*

You'll need to work at not fretting over your 8-yr-old grandchild knowing the answers to your computer questions. God has given them more than one-way to make us grownups feel inferior. Just look at the ceiling and tell them you were testing them.

- Remember your computer grace.... much prayer while training your computer.
- Seek God's peace and direction as the keyboard is being used. My computer always works best if my open Bible is next to the keyboard. It gives me direction for where to go, and where not to go. It inspires me, and

gives me peace as I work. When you hit a hurdle in your computing, get up and stretch your body, then read rich promises from your “computer manual” like:

*“Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you...”* (John 14:27)

Even for computers, Psalm 119:105 is still true:

*“Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path.”*

*“Let all things be done decently and in order.”* We’re reminded from I Corinthians 14.

*“I will instruct thee and teach thee in the way which thou shalt go: I will guide thee with mine eye.”* Reading in Psalm 32.

### *Class-Learning Melt-down*

Now that you have reviewed some of the library training videos, and have some idea of the terms and a general idea of the screens, you may want to sign up for a computer class.

- Before committing to the class, ask if the class is formatted for adult or youth learning.
- Take a recorder, if allowed, rather than trying to catch up on all the notes.
- I get saturated with just three hours of classroom training. Consider that most of the classes are six hours long. Imagine the frustration when an adult signs up for two classes in the same week.
- Do not sign up for class two until you can teach someone at least 25% of what you learned in class one. (Curtis' two-bit rule.)

- Class “two” NEVER makes class “one” content more understandable.
- It is exciting to see how your computer learning will pick up speed as you sandwich it with generous amounts of learning episodes in the scriptures and how teaching was done by the Master Teacher.
- Realize there are at least four ways to do most anything in computerin'. Pick one way and forget about the others. This technique often requires you choose only one resource as your mentor. A mentor is a trusted one-on-one teacher.

### *The four flavors of Computer Evangelism*

A program I use quite heavily has a companion book of operations. The book has 1293 pages and doesn't begin to cover all the bells and whistles. The book itself is mind-boggling. It has a table of contents that is eight pages long. You do not even know where to start. Those giant-sized books are for reference only. Today's programs do a portion of everything. Keep Satan off your doorstep by concentrating on a specific **process** and not learning the whole ball of wax.

Don't let the screen and keyboard intimidate you. They have a wealth of self protection built into them. You won't crash them, although spilling pop into the keyboard does present some sticky problems. Never forget the Lord is just as good at computing as He is at turning water into wine. He's anxious for you to employ His talents and promises.

Any modest computer you purchase today is incredibly more powerful than the mainframe, room-sized computers of years ago. That doesn't translate into just raw horsepower, but into helps, tutorials, wizards, etc. Wizards

are programs that do little tasks for you, by asking you questions about the task at hand.

In computing, there are only four basic flavors. Some programs do a little of each, but remember, we're focusing on how a program (or part of it) will help us with a **process**, not the other way around.

**Text, data, graphics, and communication.** You need to pick ***one*** flavor and concentrate on that direction.

**(1) TEXT** flavor is usually the first one newbies choose. Word processors are designed for text that makes pages like the one you're reading, reports, forms, overhead transparencies, and labels. Most of them have their own built-in dictionaries, a 'pick-another-word' thesaurus, and even grammar checkers.

You need not bother about margins or when to capitalize or changing the numbering on a list you've made. Page numbers, headers, footers, footnotes, columns, and pictures are all very easy to handle. Some word processors include wizards to design and print your own business cards.

Any office supply store has perforated paper card stock to finish the process. Present that staffer with his/her own business cards as a perk for good performance. If your printer doesn't have color capability, purchase some preprinted sheets that make very good-looking certificates, after you've added personal information.

Probably one of the greatest helps that computer gives us is forcing us to work hard at locating and organizing data, even before we start entering it in the computer. Once it is in, we quickly see what data is missing or obviously incorrect.

**(2) Data** flavor of computer evangelism is a real workhorse in the office. Most often, they shape your data into lists like

phone books.... Columns and rows. Columns always have the same kind of data in them. Each row is called a record. The records can be sorted and calculated. They can be filtered too. If the reports are formatted or shaped well, they become critical path tools to making organizational decisions. A clear explanation with examples is in chapter 7 – “A List Lesson”.

Spreadsheet data processing is slightly different than database lists, even though they both use columns and rows. In a spreadsheet, each 'compartment' is referred to as a cell and can have text, numbers, formulas, or pictures in them. They are incredibly powerful in doing math analysis like budgets, data group summaries, and real geekie stuff that result in charts, reports, and headaches.

**(3) The Graphics** flavor of computing is expanding at a faster rate than the other two combined, thanks to the Internet and more powerful computers. “Graphics” used to encompass only pictures, charts, and primitive animation. This flavor now, is more properly referred to as **multi-media**, since it includes images, animation, sound, speech recognition, video and any combinations.

Teachers and leaders make great presentations by using colorful and animated graphics. Our reports give better understanding with color-integrated data. Then the chalk and blackboards of the past have given way to digitized marker boards of today. The instructor can use dry erase markers for the presentation. At a click of the button the freehand sketches on the board are saved into the computer. Another button click will print the sketches on paper to be taken home or e-mailed across the globe.

**(4) The Communication** flavor is for more than sharing information. It is the ‘real time’ sharing of resources and

needs. The exchange of information is no longer delayed by the speed of the mailman or the enthusiasm of the librarian. Elsewhere in this book I have expanded on e-mail and the Internet. But with computers we have established practical communication with quadriplegics who are paralyzed from the neck down. These people use a computer head mouse explained elsewhere in this book.

All of this results in more and more individuals being able to be encouraged and be an encourager with the praises and promises of our God via technology.

Next I want us to see the many technology “giants of destruction” that come in extremely small packages. They spread faster and farther than an explosion.





# Chapter 11

## *Computer Worms and Cloaking*

“Killer” Worms Are Real!

Does your computer have them?

I heard they’re worse than viruses.

Treacherous Computer Cloaking.

## *Size Is Not Everything*

Ten of the 12 spies whom Moses sent to spy out the land and its enemies failed terribly. We know this because of their descriptions of what they found:

*“The land, through which we have gone to search it, is a land that eateth up the inhabitants thereof; and all the people that we saw in it are men of a great stature. And there we saw the giants, the sons of Anak, which come of the giants: and we were in our own sight as grasshoppers, and so we were in their sight.” (Numbers 13:33)*

With the exception of Joshua and Caleb, the testimonies of the spies spoke of little else than the gigantic physical size of the enemy. They did not even tell about the giant fruit of the land. Their assessment of the situation incited mutiny toward Moses, and could have triggered a mob assassination of the two spies who didn't agree with them.

We so often are intimidated first by the SIZE of the obstacle before us. A second wrong decision is minimizing our own ability in relation to these obstacles. And thirdly, and most important, we all seem to be very good at squelching the promises and leading of God in our minds and heart. When we yield to the flesh, as the Bible calls it, we have actually made three wrong decisions. This tells me we have clearly taken the wrong path (with three wrong decisions) that makes it clear even to us the evil thing we have done.

Many of our enemies in the land of computing are gigantic, fearsome, and easy to identify. Previous chapters have detailed this for us. Thus, we immediately perceive our own abilities in this land to be grasshopper-sized in comparison. The battle is forfeited because of the enemy's size and appearance, even before the first contact is made.

Satan uses fiery darts of every size and description to destroy the efforts of Christians and their testimonies. He does this almost before we realize that the attack has begun. We Christians need to be on our guard for Satan's grasshopper-sized tricks that cause giant consequences.

## *What Evil They Do*

Satan distracts us and has us fear the wrong things. Most people believe the worst that a computer worm or virus can do is wipe out all our files, or at least crucial ones, on our hard drive. The truth though, is there is harm far worse than that. The worst thing a virus can do is change data, change numbers, or changes letters AND not make any notice about it. When we do not suspect any tampering, we continue using the corrupted data. On the other hand, when our hard drive is wiped out, at least we know to reinstall programs from our backup disks.

## *Where They Come From*

Evil-minded people continually create new versions of very small computer programs that hide themselves inside the larger computer programs we often use and share with others. The purpose of these mini-programs is two-fold: (1) They are designed to destroy and corrupt our data information, and (2) They are especially designed to spread themselves throughout other computer programs. This destruction is then passed from one computer to another in a variety of ways that will be seen later.

These destructive programs are called computer viruses, Trojan horses, back doors, and worms. But all of these programs are slightly different from one another in how they spread and what “turns them on”. They proliferate themselves worldwide in giant strides, much like the evil news about the giants in Canaan that we read about earlier. The sad thing is that their spread is almost completely preventable by using a very simple means. Most of the hysteria about computer viruses can be stopped or prevented by:

- Knowing ahead of time **where** we can learn what tricks the enemy does and does not use;

- We must also know the true **description** of his weapons;
- We must be certain that we are in the battle by God's direction; if so, we **will be victorious -- by His power**, and not by our own.

David the shepherd boy, stood face to face with a fierce giant in battle dress. He told the giant and all that heard:

*“And all this assembly shall know that the LORD saveth not with sword and spear: for the battle is the LORD’S, and he will give you into our hands.” 1 Samuel 17:47.*

Because so many people are willingly ignorant of the truths about computer viruses, hoaxes are quickly spread, to the delight of pranksters. This results from not knowing WHERE to find what are hoaxes, and what are not. It is very important that knowledge regarding the “hoax list” be updated monthly. New viruses are introduced quite often, and must be identified.

### *What Do They Look Like?*

The other step for combating these computer data destroyers is to know their “symptom” or DESCRIPTION. Every computer virus, Trojan horse, back door, or worm program has its own “symptom” by which it can be diagnosed. When virus definition files are updated, we are adding to our computers’ lists of symptoms, which will aid in identifying any evil programs in our computers. Current virus definition lists and virus hoax lists are easily found on the Internet by simple searches. A favorite of mine is:

*[www.symantec.com/securitycheck](http://www.symantec.com/securitycheck)*

From them you will learn just a bit about virus types and how they are different.

A **Trojan horse** is a program that neither duplicates nor copies itself, but damages or compromises the security of

the computer. Typically, it relies on someone e-mailing such a program to you. It does not e-mail itself, and it may arrive in the form of a joke program or software of some sort.

A **virus** is a program or code that duplicates or infects another program by inserting itself into that file. Most viruses just duplicate, but many also do much damage. People distribute them.

A **worm** is a program that makes copies of itself; for example, copying from one disk drive to another, or by copying itself using e-mail or some other transport mechanism. It may do damage and compromise the security of the computer. It often arrives in the form of a joke program or software of some sort. They distribute themselves to other computers and throughout your computer all by themselves.

One of the things a worm does best is to replicate. It hides in your computer and creates copies of itself repeatedly. If it has a payload, all the segments and copies of the worm may deliver the payload. The result, that is – the payload, can be a simple display in a text message warning you of the intrusion; or, in the worst cases, all the files on your hard drive will be renamed and overwritten.

Many worms will warn you of their arrival, once they have scattered in your machine. You may get a message, picture, or music from the worm program, which reveals its presence. More subtle indications of worms are the noticeable changes in file sizes or reports of less RAM than you actually have in your computer. But too many times, the worm infection will not be noticed until its countless replications have clogged the system resources, and slowed your computer to a halt.

Some advanced worms even create “back doors” into your computer programs, allowing unauthorized access. Extremely invasive worms can use instant messaging programs to send password and file information to the worm's creator. Another nasty ability of worms was evidenced by the "ILOVEYOU" worm, which spreads by

sending itself to all e-mail contacts in the user's Microsoft Outlook address book, doing so repeatedly and at scheduled intervals. This massive consumption of network resources completely disabled some companies until a fix was developed.

But even as we read these words, we must remind ourselves that God is always in control, and this certainly includes our computers and their software. The giant-slayer David reminds us:

*“Why do the heathen rage, and the people imagine a vain thing? The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together, against the LORD, and against his anointed, saying, Let us break their bands asunder, and cast away their cords from us. He that sitteth in the heavens shall laugh: the Lord shall have them in derision.”* Psalm 2:1.

*“The wicked plotteth against the just, and gnasheth upon him with his teeth. The Lord shall laugh at him: for he seeth that his day is coming.”* Psalm 37:12.

### *So Our Defense Is:*

- To, first of all, know beyond question, that God is always in control.
- The next step is to know where to look for clear identification of truths and hoaxes.
- The third step is to always have ready the updated definitions of the weapons and methods the enemy will use. This would be the definitions of the viruses, etc.
- **Update virus definitions frequently.** Keep your virus definitions current by updating your anti-virus software at least every two weeks.
- **Screen your e-mail.** Do not open e-mail from an unknown source.

- **Only open expected attachments.** Ideally, you should only open expected attachments from a trusted source, and even before doing that; you should scan the attachment with an anti-virus program. If you receive an unsolicited attachment, ask yourself if the file seems unusual, or if it is from someone you don't know. Remember that the "ILOVEYOU" worm used people's address books to send the worm to their friends. If you do receive a strange attachment from someone you do trust, call him or her to confirm whether or not the file was sent intentionally.
- **Don't automatically open attachments.** Be sure your e-mail program doesn't automatically open attachments. This will ensure that you can personally examine and scan attachments before they run.
- **Don't download programs from web sites.** Unless you know and have absolute confidence in the source, do not download programs or software from the Internet. If you must do so, download the file into a separate folder on your hard drive and scan it with anti-virus software before running it.

God's Word makes very strong use of definitions in scripture. Here are two great ones that describe the actions that Satan delights in.

*"But evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving, and being deceived.*

*But continue thou in the things which thou hast learned and hast been assured of, knowing of whom thou hast learned them;" II Tim 3:13.*

*"And likewise also the men, leaving the natural use of the woman, burned in their lust one toward another; men with men working that which is unseemly, and receiving in*

*themselves that recompence of their error which was meet. And even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a reprobate mind, to do those things which are not convenient; Being filled with all unrighteousness, fornication, wickedness, covetousness, maliciousness; full of envy, murder, debate, deceit, malignity; whisperers, Backbiters, haters of God, despiteful, proud, boasters, inventors of evil things, disobedient to parents, without understanding, covenantbreakers, without natural affection, implacable, unmerciful: Who knowing the judgment of God, that they which commit such things are worthy of death, not only do the same, but have pleasure in them that do them.” Rom 1:27-32.*

### *Treacherous Computer Cloaking*

You will need to read about the event in Genesis 27. The event involved repeated lying but was successful because of the disguise... the cloaking of Jacob with hairy skins on his hands to be passed off as his older hairy brother, Esau. We, today, would say, “Don’t judge a book by its cover.”, among other clichés.

The event of deception does remind us in several ways of the ease in deceiving others. And more specifically, the physical or visual senses work to deceive us rather than just words alone. More than once, Jacob lied by saying he was Esau. But the feel and smell of the skins Rebekah glued to his hands catalyzed the deception. It was so easily done too. Notice that sometimes deception will include references to God and His purposes. How would you like to have your good name associated with devious and illegal acts? I am sure God does not either.

The Internet with all its web pages is an incredible arena for sensual deception to fleece goods and the confidence of others. Computer design programs are becoming even easier to use to create sensational images and web pages to

defraud and deceive. A small company can portray itself to be a large one. A student can display graphics with text that would pass himself off as a competent lawyer or doctor.

Even financial statistics can easily be corrupted to entice the investor into worthless spending. In chapter five of this book, we saw examples of defrauding small children with flashy visual effects. What are we to do in light of such evil? Again, God's Word makes this clear to us:

*"But let all those that put their trust in thee rejoice: let them ever shout for joy, because thou defendest them: let them also that love thy name be joyful in thee. For thou, LORD, wilt bless the righteous; with favour wilt thou compass him as with a shield."* Psalm 5:11-12.

In the next chapter we will see how powerful and God-honoring the Internet and e-mail is, in the hands of Christians led by God.





## Chapter 12

*www.eMissionary.YOU*

Does my church need a website?

Do websites actually work?

Is eZine a computer medicine?

What are websites without computers?

**G**iants and grasshoppers soon became clear metaphors in this book. The contrast between them in size and power is the reason they were mentioned. Many references in this book deal with Satan's use of the Internet and computer communication of various sorts. Having said all this, there is absolutely no doubt in

my mind that computing in all its forms can be used to far greater purposes in the hands of God's people. But we must be wise in our goals and in our efforts. Here we want to deal with the God-honoring use of the Internet and e-mail. The answers to the test questions above are:

1. Yes, but not for the reasons you might think.
2. No better than a big yellow church bus.
3. No, they are website appetizers.
4. The all-important planning stage of computer projects does not use computers.

This chapter will identify the real purpose of a website, general format guidelines, and how to make it effective. Websites and yellow church buses require far more work in a variety of ways than most people first imagine. Even the goals for both must be prayed over and continually re-evaluated. These commitments are doable when the processes and harvest are understood.

### *Website Worth*

Website presence on the Internet is seen (and heard) by almost every country on the earth, aboard ships, and in space. There are large numbers of individuals who have no computer or Internet at home, but use the one at their library, business, or school. Quadriplegics surf the net using "head mice" that sense the movement of the person's head and sends the signals to the computer. The totally blind use screen readers that convert screen text into audible speech and is sent to the user's earphone. (Refer to "Step 9" in this book.)

The information available on the Internet seems to know no bounds. It is accessible almost for free at any time. There are even features that allow you to have all the new developments of your interest automatically forwarded to you. The technology available has advanced so much that

we can even get music and movies delivered with our web pages.

But the worth and purpose of all our projects must be judged in light of scripture and the mission God has given to us. We are to evangelize and empower for the Master's plan. We must be careful that our efforts do not just entertain or amaze. Whether our website is for our own testimony or for that of our church, the rules are much the same.

Every God-honoring website must include content from each of the three main categories. Those categories are Billboarding, School, and Evangelism. Next, we will look at the characteristics and priority of each one in detail.

### *Website Billboarding*

The **minor** content of a website should be what I call "billboarding". This would include details about the church's salvation message, schedule of services, staff, structure, and certainly a map of location. This makes it easier for visitors to know a bit about you even before they pull into the parking lot. These details will remain much the same from month to month. Sad to say, most church websites stop here, when this is just scratching the surface.

No matter what your content is, the website must be tested on several different machines to periodically make sure that all is working well. All too often though, very poor first impressions of a church are made by the disrepair of websites. There are some rather straightforward similarities between a website and a healthy church.

- The scriptures must be the backbone of the website content and format.
- The website must edify the role of, and be answerable to, the local church.

- Church websites must have a church-approved leader called a Webmaster.
- Church websites have a strong ministry by and for all ages.
- Church websites seek to understand the needs of its users.
- Church websites train to those needs with simplicity.
- Church websites Evangelize according to the great commission without compromise.

## *Website School*

*“For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ: Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ: That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive; But speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ:”* so says Ephesians 4:12-15

One of the major uses of a website must be to train other churches, missionaries, and remote people.

We must provide lessons and learning tools that can be used to educate and build up others. A website is a perfect place to provide truths in small modules that might include diagrams, pictures, maps, etc. A good place to start is to make small lessons from your church’s statement of faith.

One big responsibility of the church website is to teach children and parents the pitfalls and provision of computing. Computer Ministries contains lots of guidelines for this. The website school should provide Bible principles and truths to be used by others who have no Bible. This might include games that teach Bible principles.

A local church's Internet librarian can search out wholesome sites and post them in the church library or that section of the church website. It can feature the different missionaries and their newsletters of that church. My bone-deep joy, though, is teaching others how to use their computer to serve the Lord, His local church, and magnify His Precious Word.

### *Website Evangelism*

God has given computer technology to us as a powerful tool to help carry out the Great Commission. We can use the strong natural attraction of computers to provide exciting ways to learn and share the Gospel of Salvation. We can tailor the presentation in a variety of ways. Even children can be encouraged to share their testimony with other children on the Internet.

### *Website Talent Tithers*

A church website is an inexpensive place to apply talents and burden for the lost. God has richly blessed every church and individual with talent(s) to be developed and used for the Master. I call this ***talent tithing***, whether it pertains to playing the piano, creating a database of light bulbs for the trustees, or detailing the plans for a Jell-O battle or a super sixties project.

One of the virtues that have disappeared in our youth is to be creative. Their games on the court, stadium, or computer screen push them to be competitive, but not creative. Little do they realize this is just the opposite of what their future employers will look for in them. Their games should deal more with problem solving. We must teach them that "New" or "Invention" is simply the association of two or more objects or ideas that have never been done before.

Did you know that crayons and websites are a terribly powerful match? Teach young people and adults how to

create web pages with crayons or magic markers on paper. The big lesson to learn is how important that planning and preparation are, before you even touch the computer.

Find folks in the church who can write a poem and include the gospel. I wrote this one to show that even mowing the church lawn blesses my heart and others I might not know about.

### *Green Revivals*

*Rows of green the stories they hold  
That mend the spirit of young and old.*

*Some use "Music" while others take a pill  
But calm comes best on a new-mown hill.*

*Those ruts and thorns they temper your steel.  
Set a straight course; hold steady the wheel.*

*Mow beyond boundaries; a friend you might gain  
Minister with mowin' mid blossoms or pain.*

*Freckles of gold how determined they be  
Get right up again - that's a lesson to me.*

*A "thank you" it says, that well kept grass  
To church folks attending a service or class.*

*To build up a brother what tools would you need?  
What class should you take, what book could you read?*

*Mow to and fro, sweet Joy-tears are shed  
Listing His gifts, sure the most precious red.*

*His Blood on some grass, twas put there for me.  
The course of my sin, He has set me free.*

*Mowing's no chore, not a work or some other  
Disciple a friend, spouse, sibling, or brother.*

*Minister with mowing, no pulpit is needed  
Deeds of the heart will be graciously heeded.*

*James Curtis*

Or write a story that inspires or explains:

### *Smiling Fingers*

With so many watching, little Didi was ever so careful to hold the hymnal pages in place but was captivated with the other pair of hands that moved so gracefully over the keys. Little Didi also had for her month of hymn-helping, the "responsibility" to count all the "blood" and "Bible" words, as they'd appear in the hymns that were played. But those captivating fingers....

Didi decided an appropriate name for them would be Smiling Fingers. Yes, it had to be Smiling Fingers because every time they played, and Didi looked up, the worshippers in the little country church wore big smiles. They seemed to forget their troubles for a time, joining in praises to the Lord. Little Didi felt kind of important in doing her part because the pastor would start his message with all the people smiling.

Before service one Sunday, Mrs. "Smiling Fingers" used some phrases from an old favorite, gospel hymn to help explain to her little helper that Jesus loves little hands too, especially ones who have trusted Him as their Savior. The word counting responsibility was just a bit of reinforcement of foundational pieces of the Gospel message.

Didi's desire, more than anything, was to acquire her own smiling fingers and be able to use them at home. How smiles were lacking at home. Daddy just splits wood all day long in the back yard with stooped shoulders and a "what's-the-use" long face. That started just after the coal mine he worked at closed down. The ribbon in mama's hair disappeared about the same time the smiles did.

The next month's hymn-helper was Shauna...

A Camcorder was definitely needed a few weeks after Shauna began her month tour with Mrs. "Smiling Fingers." At an after-service "Linger-Longer" (down-home name for a pot luck

dinner), it was easy to hear someone playing the piano. But it was played in a way only small children trying to imitate an adult can do.

The scene should have been saved on a Camcorder. But one could not be located. It was Shauna holding a hymnal open with one little hand and pretending she had smiling fingers with the other hand. "Benny! You get up here this instant! Start counting the bloods and Bible's like you're supposed to," she chided. Now her little brother, Benny, still in 3-cornered pants having just mastered crawling, figured he'd concentrate on the pedals for now. Why not? No bloods and Bibles to count down here!

Pastor Jeff was taken back a bit, seeing the Shauna-Benny duet. His lessons on 'discipleship in all things' was manifested by a brother and sister not even knowing the meaning of discipleship... plus... some dedicated Smiling Fingers.

Does your church have any Smiling Fingers? Do they hold the Bible you read?

## *eZines*

These are not medicines for your computer and not some mysterious computer program. The name is a contraction of "electronic magazine". An eZine is simply an e-mail newsletter with pictures that is subscribed to in the same way a magazine is subscribed to. So why does this website discussion include eZine comments?

An important lesson to learn about websites is that they can never work by themselves. You cannot put a fantastic site out there and expect people to automatically be drawn to it like a magnet. People need to know that it is there, how to find it, and that it has just been updated. There are several methods for doing this. In this text we will look at the most effective one and leave the others for your extended research.

Be reminded there are tons of e-mail users out there who do

not have Internet access. EZine provide the critical link between a website and those who would be interested in it. It is a way to say, “Hey! We’ve got some new updated stuff on our website you’ll want to know about.” The key feature of eZine is the subscriber. Your newsletter (eZine) is in a format that can be comfortably printed out and shared or filed. Websites and web pages are designed to be visual and do not often convey enough data to be printed out.

There is merit to thinking the first step toward an online presence of your church, organization, or you is an eZine. An eZine does not take dedicated software or special training to create. However, website development requires both. So the lesson is: if your church wants to have a bus route, start with station wagons and vans. Then graduate to the big yellow church bus that takes special parts, training, tools, and maintenance. In the same way, begin with a printed newsletter, and then move on to an eZine. While maintaining the eZine, create a website. No short cuts.

The exciting thing about creating eZines and websites is that there are almost no restrictions. The prime requirements are a burden to win the lost, encourage the saints, empower leaders, and do it using your technology talents unto the Lord. God wants us to use our talents for Him to listen, learn, lift up, love, and put to work our computer ministries.





## Chapter 13

### *Precept Upon Precept*

The sequence of stories in this section show how to train your computer and you for evangelism in progressive steps. Share the appropriate story with your computer friends and discuss the possibilities.

Ask in prayer how your keyboards might serve Him.

## *Step 1 – The Hymn Cake*

[Theme: The first step is to see that the simplicity of computers in missions provides for even small children to become involved in the Great Commission. The critical ingredient is compassion.]

Little Judy could hardly keep up with the small group of other children from the church nearby. The determination in their step reminded you of a group of soldiers on a mission. The children had come on their mercy mission to the nursing home several times before and the residents loved each and every visit. Most of the children brought small trinkets that could easily be held by some of the residents.

But today was just a bit different in the gifts they had brought. Judy's older brother Ben had printed out the words to several very old hymns he knew the nursing home residents loved and loved to sing. Ben had used his computer program to print the words extra large so those even with poor vision could read the words.

Tina came up with a wonderful idea when she had Ben print an extra copy of each of the hymns. She immediately took her copies of the hymns to the kitchen and got a mixing bowl out of the cupboard. Little Judy was always interested in learning new things that are done in the kitchen. But in all her seven years, she'd never seen a recipe that used hymns. She had to witness this for herself. Since Tina has a wonderful talent for recruiting anyone, anywhere, Judy was given an apron and a big wooden spoon to go with the mixing bowl. Tina carefully got a cup of flour from the flour bin and poured it in the bowl. Judy became more confused than ever.

Some water was added to the flour and directions were given to mix the water and flour until all the lumps were gone. While the 7-year-old stirred dutifully, she would glance at the stack of hymn sheets and ask herself, "Am I making a hymn cake?"

All her questions were answered when Judy's mixture became the paste that glued the hymn sheets to thin cardboard like that

found on the back of paper tablets. Tina recruited her brother Ben to cut the “hymn boards” into various shaped pieces and the result became hymn puzzles for the nursing home residents. So now you understand the reason for the great pride in little Judy’s step, and she followed the other kids into the nursing home.

After all the gifts and puzzles were distributed Judy walked over to old Mrs. Beemer. Without saying anything, Judy pulled out one of the computer hymn sheets Ben had discarded at home. Mrs. Beemer saw the misspelled words and the reasons Ben had trashed the page. But then she noticed at the bottom of the page a row of X’s and O’s, ending with a heart surely drawn by a little girl. Old Mrs. Beemer pointed at the X’s and O’s and then pointed at little Judy. Judy countered with pointing at her own chest and shaking her head yes.

Across the room the rest of the kids couldn’t figure out why a discarded sheet of computer paper would cause a 83-year-old lady and a 7-year-old lady to hug real big. What a mission field is found in small ones in front of the computer. (end)

## *Step 2 – Brandi’s Grandma and The Missions Fair*

[Theme: We must recognize the invaluable resource in seniors and their experiences to fit into computing missions.]

Brandi was drawing a bead on the first place prize at her church’s annual Missions Fair as she planned with “both barrels” as her grandpa would say. I mean, last year’s first place winner won’t even come close to her entry. OK, so it was pretty neat seeing the ultra-light airplane land right on church property.... and the pilot gave his Christian testimony and called for young people interested in mechanics, electronics, and aviation to dedicate their learning and achievement to the Lord. But Brandi had to come up with a winning entry for this year that the church would never stop talking about.

Brandi’s Pastor, Bart Ganton, loved nothing more than to preach and teach the Gospel Story of Redemption from Sin, through the

Shed Blood of Jesus Christ in all its majesty and simplicity. Beyond that, you'd think of him as a talent scout. I mean, he searched out hidden talent in his church with grandpa's "both barrels". A perfect method of finding hidden talent was the Missions Fair. The Missions Fair was much like the science fairs the young people participate in, at school.

The next Saturday, Brandi's grandparents paid a visit with all the usual close family exchange of news, food, and fun. As all the excitement quieted down, grandma found Brandi at her computer keyboard, just finishing up an e-mail note to her older sister at college. Grandma surprised Brandi with all the questions about sending messages on the computer and all that stuff.

Well, Brandi's grandma certainly didn't fit the grandma stereotype of shawl, rocking chair, and "Remember when...?" Brandi finally got around to explaining the Missions Fair and the fact that she still hadn't settled on a 'knock-your-socks-off' entry.

That's when the conversation took a spin-around...

"Brandi, a lot of years ago, I did pretty well typing.... back when my fingers were nimble and quick. Scoot over and let me type a little, just to see if I still can." Brandi obeyed.

A church bulletin near Brandi's keyboard became the text and grandma began, though she wasn't comfortable looking at the results of her typing on the monitor. She did enjoy being able to correct her errors with just the backspace key instead of the ink eraser she used so many times on paper.

Brandi leaned back to get sort-of the big picture as she saw talent coming from a truly unexpected source. Further, she saw a retired person typing church news into a computer and that's what **TRIGGERED BOTH BARRELS!!** See, Brandi's computer was still in the e-mail program and that clinched it as the Missions Fair to set everyone talking.

In case you're wondering, Brandi didn't win first place...

Brandi's grandma did!! .... showing the new fangled way for seniors to maintain close church ties with missionaries needing encouragement and news from home.

Brandi won more than first place in the hearts of her Pastor, the 'forgotten generation' of her church, and I'm sure, her Lord.  
(End)

### *Step 3 – Missions Fun*

[Theme: Missions with or without computers begins in a home.]

**"I can't stand it anymore!"** I hear the voice say in the phone receiver. I say, "Hi Nancy, it's nice you called. What can't you stand anymore?"

**"Barb, the suspense is killing me.** Tuesday when I was leaving your house, I happened to glance in the direction of your laundry room and, honest injun, I wasn't being nosey, but through the open door, I saw the weirdest thing I ever expect to see....

#### **A TRACT RACK IN YOUR LAUNDRY ROOM!!!**

Honestly Barb, how many people do you have go through your laundry room anyhow?" "Nancy.... now Nancy, If you'll listen for a minute I can explain. You see, Timmy was showing me how he could use his computer's word processor to easily print brochures and things. He set it up and I added the words to our very own tract.

If you could have seen the look on his face the first time he opened his closet and realized I had put our custom-made tract in each shirt, he figured I had really flipped. He might think to leave it in the restroom at school, or he could fold it up and slip it through one of those air vent holes in the student lockers going down the hallway. Well I'll tell you Nancy, I really think when Tim sticks his hand in that shirt pocket several times a day, he's just got to be reminded of his responsibility to witness. And maybe he might even share with fellow computer owners how he did it.

I've also been packing Leo's dinner pail with a memory verse card right on top of his sandwich. I used store-bought business card paper to print them on. Occasionally, I would put one of our salvation tracts in his dinner pail. One night at our supper sharing

time, Leo told us how he dropped one of the gospel tracts in another guy's open dinner bucket during their lunch hour, and then watched from across the room, praying that the guy would read it. HE DID! The guy also left the tract in his lunch box so, no doubt, his wife will read it when she repacks his lunch.

Nancy, I can still hear Pastor Robins saying Sunday that every saved person ought to be using their computers and resources for missions. But I didn't hear him say, 'Barb Reynolds, since you're in and around the house all day long, you're excused.... you don't have to do anything.'

"Barb, I was just thinking while you were talking, that my Trina always has so much homework. I'll bet I could slip a few in her books and she might use them as bookmarks, or for writing assignments or notes to her pals. She could even stick some in the library books she takes back. I'm telling you Barb; I'd like to have a memory verse card for Christian drivers about speeding. I'd tape it to Jerry's rearview mirror." "Nancy, can't you just imagine the look on Pastor's face if we told him we have to refill our tract racks more often than he does the ones in the church foyer?"

You can see these two families are in the first steps of the computer missions, because no verbal contact is involved. Pastor Robins, I am sure, has taught his flock that good "tracters" should not be sloppy. Fold up that tract and slide it in that taco box. Don't lay it on the shelf. At the clothing store, put them in pants pockets or socks, not out where they are easily seen. The idea is to get the tract into the home. Ironical isn't it, that's where they start out -- in the home--in the homes of Christians who really believe in an Eternal Lake of Fire for those who have not trusted in the work of Calvary where God's Son gave His all for each of us.

If you don't find a printed tract that says just what you want to say, use a computer to put your own testimony or burden on paper. Maybe your tract could have the name of your own city, company or school on it. Wow! God is so good to us to give us every tool imaginable to witness for him.

The next step will show how to use your computer boldly for missions. (end)

### *Step 4 – Tippy Toe E-mail*

[Theme: The incredible ease and access of e-mail requires responsible use, as does any powerful tool.]

The two families had a tasty meal that left almost every one too full. The children of both families offered to clear the table and wash the dishes. That alone, was enough to make the Gilton parents and the Thompson parents a little skittish about the rest of the evening. As the kitchen duties drew to a close, the children joined their parents in the living room.

Tim, the older of the Gilton children asked both moms to take their shoes off. He then instructed the two dads to take their shoes and socks off. This would make the job of the referees (the children) a little easier. One at a time each adult was instructed to stand on the board in the middle of the living room floor. With a stopwatch in hand, Tim handed the adult an e-mail message and was instructed to begin counting every character and punctuation mark when he said, “Go.”

The rough part was that they could only do their counting while they were on their tiptoes. All four adults figured this was another one of Tim’s goofy ideas and decided to go along with the test anyhow. After all, the e-mail message probably has three sentences in it and they’ll be done in no time. Tim had made an identical copy of the e-mail message for each of the parents. When it was their turn, they would finish their count and confidentially write their count and the time elapsed on their piece of paper.

It was Leo’s turn first and he let out a big groan when he saw what the message looked like. He surprised everyone by saying the message had only two sentences in it, but it still took him almost ten minutes, up and down on his tip toes to finish. This really mystified the untested adults, but they remained quiet and puzzled. Much of the following time that evening was filled with muffled snickers from the children, as the parents would periodically moan, “Oh My corns are killing me.” Or “I knew I

should not have had that second helping of potatoes and gravy.”  
Or “Hey referee. Can I call for reinforcements?”

- - - - -  
inal-Rocixiont: RFC822; nooso@wsxrag.cam  
Actian: dolayod  
Status: 4.4.3  
Last-Attomxt-Dato: Thu, 16 Aug 2111 21:51:11 -1411 (ODT)  
Will-Rotry-Until: Tuo, 21 Aug 2111 17:16:42 -1411 (ODT)  
Roturn-Xath: <warksxaco@vayagor.cim>  
Rocoivod: fram aomcamxutor (d73.as1.jr.cim [216.127.26.73])  
by mail5.mx.vayagor.cim (8.11.1/8.11.2)X id f7GLGco75511  
far <nooso@wsxrag.cam>; Thu, 16 Aug 2111 17:16:42 -11  
(ODT)  
Mossago-Id:  
<4.2.2.21111816171829.11a21111@xax.vayagor.cim>  
X-Sodor: warksxaco@xax.vayagor.cim (Unvorifiod)  
X-Mlor: QUALCamm Windows Oudara Xra Vorsian 4.2.2  
Dato: Thu, 16 Aug 2111 17:11:11 -1411  
Ta: nooso@wsxrag.cam  
Fram: Jemos Cuts <warksxaco@vayagor.cim>  
Subject: AK?  
Mimo-Vorsian: 1.1  
-----

What had been a surprise to everyone was that the e-mail message was a short two sentence one, but had all that computer code stuff on top (like that above), that seemed to be duplicated because the little message had been forwarded from someone else.

Leo listened with pride as Tim, his teenage son, explained to both families that missionaries, in a sense, are standing on their tiptoes to make each dollar of their field support count. Some missionaries have to pay for their e-mail based on character count of the entire message. And yet people send them wasteful messages that have been forwarded from someone else or contain twenty or thirty other names the message was also addressed to. Tim acted very grown up as he explained to the parents and the other children that e-mail is a terribly important and cherished communication link to missionaries who are able to receive them. “But you have to send the type of message that

you would not mind paying for, if you were that missionary,” he said.

He further gave each parent a list of other dos and don'ts about e-mail he had gotten from his 'Boys in Missions' youth group.  
(end)

### *Step 5 – Tee Shirt Missions*

[Theme: computers make fun ways to begin our testimony before others.]

***“My twelve-year-old brother ironing?!”*** Now I've seen everything!”

Jeanie's eyes about popped out as she came bounding through the living room and saw her brother standing at the ironing board, and ***actually ironing***. Her first impulse was to ask if he would mind ironing a blouse she needed for Bible club Wednesday, then decided that would be pushing it.

Jeanie made a closer inspection of Duke's ironing process and discovered he was ironing a tee shirt. “Duke, have you flipped?! You NEVER iron a tee shirt. And why are you ironing? You don't even pick up your socks most of the time!” She had not gotten the first laugh out of her mouth when she noticed that her brother was ironing waxed paper onto the shirt. More times than you could count, Jeanie found reasons to call her brother Duke, “Mr. Weird.” Was this another?

Duke stood the iron upright out of the way and checked the alignment once more. It was only then that his sister learned something of what he was up to. He was ironing on some kind of decal or picture onto the clean white tee shirt. The lettering was just wild enough to give any parent a headache but it read, “Puterin' Boys in Missions”.

Jeanie watched Duke carefully peel the waxed paper backing off the picture and decided her brother was just a bit on the “cool” side... at least this time anyhow. He explained that the image was created on his computer and printed on any inkjet printer

onto this transfer paper. He said the directions say if it is done right, it will stay on even in the washing machine.

She began thinking of how she could barter with her “cool” brother to create some small-personalized iron-on decals for each of her “Miss Missionaries” club members. They would really look sharp in next month’s Missions Fair Choral with their blouses all monogrammed. “Hmmm. Maybe brothers aren’t always weird after all.”

Jeanie’s mom suggested Duke create a decal to put on a tee shirt. She would have fun presenting it to Mr. Hopkins the scripture memory class-leader. The words Duke put on the shirt were from I Corinthians 2:9:

*“But as it is written, Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him.”*  
(end)

## *Step 6 – Have a Computer Missions S.W.A.T. Plan*

[Theme: God has a plan for our Salvation and His creation. We need to make plans and do *“all things decently and in order.”*]

Timmy Reynolds saw the beginning steps of the mission taking shape. The clear and simple objective is to get the two captives to safety in an efficient and orderly manner. The best part, thought Tim, was the planning and preparation that went together first. He hurriedly jotted down the ingredients as the story he was watching unfolded:

1. **Commitment** - The S.W.A.T. Commander shakes his fist in front of him and tells the team, "We're going in there and getting those two agents out, no matter what!! Much of the mission will be under cover, but guys -- when we get in the open, we'll show those captors we know our job and how to do it!!"

2. **Tactics** - Everyone was briefed as to the plan and the part he and the others played in it. The tactics had been used with success in other missions. Slight alterations were planned and practiced in the event that changes were needed for mission completion.

3. **Tools** - Tim found it interesting that with only one exception, all the tools and weapons were old stand-bys. This choice of tools and the fact that the tactics had been time-proven procedures seemed to give the S.W.A.T. Team a great deal more courage.

In the story, one of the team members became surprised when the Team Commander started putting on his combat equipment. "Begging your pardon sir, but aren't you going to be back at headquarters?" "Lieutenant, when you're sticking your neck out, in the third phase of this mission, and you hear someone close by say, "LET'S GET 'EM!~, that'll be me right there beside you."

Tim quickly jotted down:

4. **Leadership** - Leader did not ask his men to do something he wouldn't do, and he was there to guide his men. Each team member had expressed his complete faith in the leadership, which was the main reason why this group of men really worked well together.

So, Tim continued on with the story and didn't notice his dad, Leo Reynolds, walk into the den where his wife was finishing typing the minutes to last week's Woman's Missionary Meeting. "Barbara, our son has been taking some notes about a story that has some striking parallels."

"TIM COME IN HERE AND BRING YOUR NOTES FOR THAT STORY!" When Tim came into the den, his dad was excitedly filling his wife in on the story. He continued with a lot of hand motions. "Suppose you changed the story to where the captives were the unsaved of this world. Our mission would then be to reach them with the Gospel of Salvation. And that Jesus Christ, because of His power, could save them." While tapping on the monitor screen, Barb said, "I'll bet there's a way we could use this as one of our weapons." Leo gave her one of his "great

idea" expressions.

"Dad, the first one is COMMITMENT."

"OK.. Now Barb, if we are going to be effective and grow in computer missions, we are going to have to be committed to the work to be done. Do I honestly believe that the unsaved guy I work next to is destined to everlasting torment unless he trusts Christ as his Savior? Who am I kidding if I say, 'If I don't witness to him someone else will!'"

Barb was only half listening to Leo describe this "diamond" he had found. Barb's mind was already fitting together the next day's visit with her best friend, Nancy Gilton. Barb thought, "I can show Nancy that getting out in the open and being seen passing out our home-made tracts will not be scary, because we will be using techniques we've practiced, and that have worked well for others. We'll use a wholesome appearance, fresh breath, a smile and some well-chosen tracts, whose messages could even be personalized in some way. Nothing mystical about these tools..."

"Barb... Barbara, are you listening to me?" Leo asked, tapping her on the shoulder. "The best part of the whole thing is there are no surprises with God! He has control of every situation. If a person asks me a hard question about the Bible, I can say, 'I like that question, what do you think about it? Then ask him if I can visit his home on Thursday and give him a good Bible answer.'" "Leo, do you realize that God has placed the computer ministry into our hands, a task the angels aren't able to do?"

Tim moved over in front of the window and looked out. Only if you had been standing right next to him could you have heard, "Lord, I'm going to ask Darlene tomorrow to read this tract, especially for her, because it says some important things I can't say easily, especially around her. Lord, I know You think she is special too, because You shed Your precious blood for her also."

Lord, I want to be on Your S.W.A.T. Team

S. Saints  
W. Watching (for His soon return)  
A. And  
T. Tech Tracking

## *Step 7 – Questions for Computer Ministries*

[Theme: Satan's lie says we must "have all the answers" before launching out. But the Bible reminds us over and over that FAITH and preparedness bring the harvest of souls.]

"Answer the next question wrong and I'm dead!! I can't believe it, so much hangs on how I respond..."

Trina Gilton was sitting on the ground, straight backed, with her eyes squinting, all primed to meet the final question head-on. Trina's dad, Jerry, came walking out the back door and spied his 14-year-old daughter with her best friend. Both girls were sitting Indian fashion facing each other. "What's up girls?" "OH! Hi dad! Judy and I are practicing for our office word-processing test coming up Friday. We made up a question game on the computer to help us, and I think I'm dead." The I-don't-understand look on Jerry's face, prompted Judy to explain. "Mr. Gilton, I get to ask Trina one more computer question and if she's wrong, I get to hose her down for five whole minutes... and I can hardly wait!!" A short time later....

"Supper's ready! Come set the table!" "My wife should have been an umpire with a voice like that," thought Jerry rounding the corner. With his first step into the kitchen, he saw wet hair... "Why, Trina, did it start raining outside?" "Dad, I don't need any more questions, and you can wipe that silly grin off your face." "Yessss mam!" Jerry said, as he saluted and got the syrup out of the refrigerator.

As the last waffle disappeared, Trina said, "Actually, I don't mind when Judy asks a question I can't answer. It tells me what I need to go back and brush up on." Mrs. Gilton could have gotten a gold star when she popped in with, "Pastor told us in Teacher Training it's good to have sincere questions from your students -- it shows they are paying attention and indicates what areas you need to explain further. Oh, and he also said, 'a good teacher can sort-of put on the mind of the student and anticipate some of the questions and prepare for them in case they're asked.'"

Deep down, Jerry appreciated the topic of discussion, because he had wanted to witness to a buddy whom he car-pooled with, but thought that he would drop dead if the guy asked a Bible question that he couldn't answer. "You know," Jerry thought, "saying I don't know to a question really isn't all that bad, if I follow it with, 'I'll dig out the answer tonight and let you know tomorrow'.... By the way Jake, I have a couple of things jotted down here that I want to show you, and these I do know for sure."

Jerry's finger covered up the bottom of the note that said:

"The Roman Road --- Handle with prayer...."

[Editor note: The Roman Road appears at the end of this book.](end)

### *Step 8 – People-Saver Computer Project*

[Theme: Technology is not a substitute for our personal witness. But adds to it.]

Leo had made arrangements for today's meeting with Fred Armstrong over lunch. Mr. Armstrong is the company's computer expert and a friendly guy to talk over ideas with. Leo asked Fred how he could use his computer at work to say some neat things while he was not using it; sort of like a screen saver, or something. Leo smiled at Fred and said, "This is my 'People-saver Project' not just a screen saver."

As computer experts usually do, Fred got rather detailed in his explanations. They included the original reasons for screen savers and how there are bazillions of programs around for doing this. Leo strained to follow all that Fred was saying. Even looking him straight in the eyes, Leo's mind kept saying, "Fred you're so knowledgeable about this computer stuff. Ohhh Fred, I want to tell you about the Creator of computers and the universe to put them in."

Fred took a piece of paper and listed the steps for Leo to easily change the Windows screen settings to rotate the words, "People Saver".

But Leo kept repeating the words in his heart, “Lord I’m not sure Fred is saved. I’m not sure he knows that trusting in Your shed blood on Calvary is his only way of salvation.” The two men glanced at the clock and saw the lunch period was almost over. Each man got back to his work as Leo was mumbling “these computers... will I ever see the light of understanding them?”

The next morning Leo started his workday by booting up his computer and checking his phone messages. The third phone message almost brought tears to his eyes. The message was, “Leo. This is Fredrick Armstrong. I have an idea. If you’ll teach me what a People Saver is, I’ll teach you how to easily make a whole picture story continuously run on your computer.”

Leo gave himself a double thumbs-up gesture and grinning big, “That’ll work!” He made a mental note not to forget to take along one of those great custom designed tracts that he could place next to his “missions” computer. (end)

## *Step 9 – The Blind Truth about Computer Ministries*

[Theme: Computing is to be a mission field itself, not just an office tool for missions.]

### **Mom! A blind man is walking up our sidewalk! I sure hope he leaves before Mr. Hanes gets here!**

Just seconds earlier, Sam had heard a car stop in front of their house. His natural twelve-year-old curiosity said he must check this out. The taxi had been told to wait a few moments for Sam and the two travelers. His motive had already peaked because he was expecting Pete Hanes and Mr. Puggs to pick him up any moment for their trip to Pete’s place of work. On the face of it, the reason was to show Sam some unusual ways that computers were used in Pete’s work.

The deeper reason for the field trip, however, was Pete’s heartfelt desire to be a real friend to Sam. Sam’s father had died last June. From personal experience, Pete knew what a struggle it is to cope with the loss of important people and things that are an integral part of life. As the doorbell rang, Sam’s mom asked him

to answer the door. She already knew the startling news that Sam was about to learn.

The door was opened, and Sam saw the blind visitor's captivating smile. "Hi, I'm Pete Hanes and this is Mr. Puggs," he said, pointing to his guide dog. "If the taxi driver did his job right, I should find Sam Wainwright at this house," he continued. Invited in, the two guests greeted Mrs. Wainwright, and then the trio quickly headed back out to the waiting taxi.

During the ride to Pete's work place, Mr. Puggs lay quietly, but with his ears and eyes alerted for any possible threat to his master's safety. Sam learned that Pete was a customer service representative for a large credit card company. It surprised the twelve-year-old to learn that this completely blind employee did all of his work in front of a computer. At Pete's computer workstation, Mr. Puggs took his dutiful position under the desk. The twelve-year-old drank in every process that Pete patiently explained to him.

Sam's interest really perked up when he realized that Pete wore two different earphones. The right one was plugged into a telephone, and received the message from a credit card customer. The other earphone was connected to an audible screen reader that told Pete the words and numbers that were close to his mouse cursor on the monitor.

During the taxi ride back to the Wainwright house, Pete silently prayed for Sam as he shared with him the special opportunities a blind person experiences. He further explained how Jesus Christ had made Himself visible in Pete's watch care everywhere he went. Sensing the interest from Sam, the blind computer operator gave his testimony of salvation, along with a clear description of the gospel. Mr. Puggs had noticed that shortly after Pete had begun his conversation, the taxi driver had turned his radio off. He probably wanted to hear the words of peace and encouragement from this blind computer operator.

The taxi driver was instructed to wait until Sam walked into the Wainwright house before driving away. Pete's heart raced with excitement at being able to make good use of what most would think of as a handicap. And more so, to use this with computers

in order to share the vision of a life led by God. He gave us eyes, computers, and a burden that others around us would come to know the Savior.

Of course, it doesn't matter what you're talents are. God uses truck drivers, beauticians, insurance salesmen, hard working housewives, and pianists. We all have talents that can be used to share the good news that Jesus shed His precious blood to buy our salvation, once and for all. The question is: What do I enjoy doing and what talent can I use to show someone how special he is in God's eyes?? (end)

### *Step 10 – What Does Missions Look Like?*

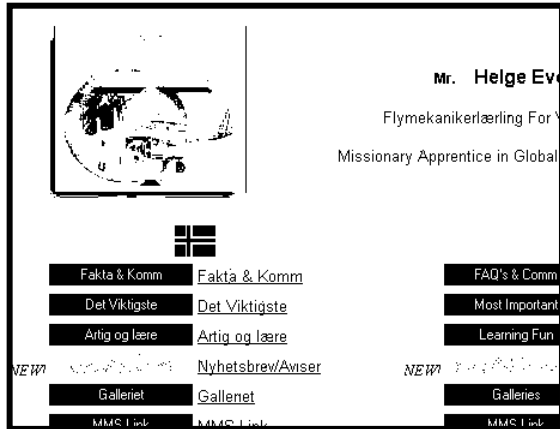
[Theme: Missions needs the whole range of tools and technology God has given us.]

**“Da det tiligere i år ble snakk om mulig team tur til Tanzania for”**

Even though my spellchecker goes crazy trying to recognize the words in the sentence above, it is truly spelled correctly. Any Norwegian would agree with me right away.

I learned that the alphabet of Norway has a few more letters in it than does our English alphabet. But we have more words that they do. I probably should have been warned about this when I offered to create a web site on the Internet for this missionary.

Because the language is so different from our own, I created a bilingual website. You see here a portion of the first page with Norwegian on the left and English on the right.



What was so intriguing about this missionary is that he is what I call a “sparkplug missionary”. He trained for two and a half years on how to repair and maintain many different kinds of airplanes. These planes are used by missionaries to fly medicine and the gospel message to remote peoples. I created the website for him to aid his deputation program. But I also want to remind grown-ups and youth that God expects us to use our talents and skills He has given us, no matter what they are.

It is well within His Great Commission plan for those of us who have computers, tape recorders, camcorders, and other technology to use it to praise and serve Him.

(end)

## *Step 11 – You Can Do What Computers Cannot!*

[Theme: The Missions computer has none of the important ingredients for missions.]

A robot sat at a table reading the Bible. Its binocular vision scanned each page and instantly committed every word and period to its memory bank, without error. Every five seconds or so, high-pitched motors would start up and the robot would turn the page. The flashes of yellow rays from the eyes were scanning two pages in less than the five seconds. The process repeated itself over and over.

What a masterpiece of machinery and intelligence. Anyone would like to have this robot to help him or her with studying their homework or reading the newspaper. Occasionally the mechanical thing gave what Ben thought was a mechanical hic-up. He held his breath to see what would happen next. Each time it continued on again. Whew.

Ben picked up the infrared remote control and pressed pause... the robot stopped dead. He then took a few minutes pressing many program buttons on the remote to complete the fix. As a troubleshooting technique, Ben had programmed the computerized robot to stop the next time it did its “hic-up” so he could see what was causing the problem. Ben could never have guessed what was causing the problem. It was tears. Tears were causing the robotic scanning problems.

The way Ben figured it out was that the program told him where the scanning process had stopped at. On the page of his grandfather’s old Bible, Ben saw there was a TEAR STAIN on the page.

Just then Tommy paused in writing his “Ben and Robot” story you’ve just been reading. He stopped to contemplate the contrast of the tearstain and this piece of technology that looked like a person. He really hadn’t thought the whole story through before he started typing it. But the more he thought about it, the more it intrigued him. People today are so impressed with technology

and all it can do here and in space. But his mind kept going back to that tearstain. No matter how good the vision of a computer is, there are never any tears involved. And the thought of his grandfather's tears in his Bible really grabbed at his heart.

Ben added a few more paragraphs to his Ben and Robot story and left the story for a few days. The sermon Tommy heard the next Sunday really drove the tear stains deep when his pastor's message included the missions verse,

*"They that sow in tears shall reap in joy. He that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him." Psalms 126: 5,6.*

Only a human sitting at the keyboard can possess the burden, compassion, love and imagination God wants to employ in His Great Commission; never any technology in any form can know and savor the joy of God's wonderful grace demonstrated on Calvary. (end)



## Chapter 14 ~

### *The Gospel of Salvation*

Included here are three methods of telling the same wonderful message of salvation.

The most well known is the “Romans Road”.

*For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God.*  
Romans 3:23

*For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.* Romans 6:23

*But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.* Romans 5:8

James Curtis

*That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation. Romans 10:9-10*

*For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved. Romans 10:13*

The precious, simple salvation that is a free gift to us can often be taught to children using an acrostic that they can teach to their friends.

## **G**od loves you...

No matter who you are, what you look like, where you live, what you've done, or how old you are

## **O**nly way of salvation

Is through God's Only Son. Jesus Christ is the only way to salvation... learning of His wonderful Gift in the Bible.

## **S**in

Doing things we know God doesn't like.

I'm a sinner... you are a sinner, we are all born sinners, but God gave the Perfect Sacrifice.

## **P**recious Blood of Jesus Christ

He shed His Blood willingly on the Cross to pay for the sins we do.

## **E**verlasting Life

Becoming a child of His begins when we invite Him into our heart and He stays forever.

## **L**et Him in.

## *Leading a Student to Christ*

Tell students that this is the most important thing they will do in their whole lives.

Ask if they have ever done anything wrong. (Romans 3:23)

Ask what kinds of punishment are used at their house when they do something wrong. Ask them if they know what God's punishment is for sin. (Romans 6:23a)

Tell them that God loves them so much that He didn't want them to have to take the punishment themselves. Jesus came and died so they wouldn't have to. (John 3:16)

Tell them that Jesus' sacrifice—His death, burial and resurrection--are a gift that they have to take to make it their own. (Romans 6:23b)

Ask them if they want to ask that Jesus' sacrifice be for them. Tell them this is something they need to do.

Tell them that this only has to be done once. Once they ask Jesus to be their Savior, the Holy Spirit instantly comes to live inside them forever.

Follow-up with the child to teach him subsequent fundamentals.

Take the opportunity to explain to the parent what the student has done. You may also have the opportunity to share the gospel with the student's parent(s).



James Curtis

## My Keyboard Feet

*My feet are in the starting blocks  
My eyes are on the goal.  
My ears know the starting sound  
My muscles know their role.*

*My focus is on the finish line  
My path it must be true.  
My coach expects my very best  
My testimony is to you.*

*My starting blocks are mouse clicks  
My race is on the keys.  
My focus is more the critical, 'cause  
My mind stores all it sees.*

*My computing may be just for fun  
My focus has no goal.  
My wasted work and loss of time  
My witness won't be whole.*

*My Savior gives His best to me  
My needs He always fills.  
My will must be to strive my best  
My computing as He wills.*

*My passion is to program Truth  
My computer is no toy.  
My keyboard shall be my pulpit  
HIS wishes to employ.*

**James Curtis**  
**03.11.02**