

Jericho Walls



#2

Kid Missions On The Move

An Eduventure

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Jericho Walls

Introduction

It was brutally clear that something had to be done and very soon. The church's youth attendance was continuing to shrink and no good answers were found at any of the Pastor, Youth, or Missions Conferences. It seemed the youth had begun speaking a new language, almost created a 'technology' neighborhood of fun and challenge that the church, and especially the silver-haired generation didn't know how to enter.

Is it just possible the youth's burden for friends to be saved, have found a way to make the churches across the land become their mission; teaching them the language of tech trash evangelism?

'Hard-Case Hannah' Simms and her bone-deep burden for the souls of the youth found new vitality applying her warship-building skills to build for Jesus, the much needed bridge between several generations.

The church was to see new ways to reach lost and discouraged souls with the old fashioned Gospel of Salvation for hearts that become as little children...

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#6 – Tech Trash Tuesday – God’s Provisions

Tech Trash Tuesday’ was how everyone referred to it. It was also one of the events the newspaper reporters never found out who authorized it. But that Tuesday morning Mr. Jenkins, the church’s groundskeeper noticed a pile of junk near one of the larger doors of Jericho; Junior Jericho, that is. He walked over to take a closer look and found it was exclusively computer and cell phone junk – no garbage, bumpers, pop cans, newspapers and such. He returned to his chores not thinking any more about it.

About an hour after the school bus went by on its afternoon deliveries, Jenkins saw a boy pulling a wagon along the side of the road toward Jericho. In the wagon were his little sister and a couple pieces of computer junk. A computer mouse was shamelessly being dragged behind the wagon by its tail. The old groundskeeper bagged the trimmings from the bush he had just given a haircut to. He wasn’t a nosy sort at all but something inside him yanked his gaze toward the little wagon delivery and what it all might mean.

As Jenkins began the next bush he saw the duo and the delivery wagon come toward him watching for careless cars as they crossed the paved church parking lot. Mr. Jenkins laid down his trimmers as the two walked up to him.

The brother said, “Mr. Jenkins, my sister Dede wanted to say something to you.” Trying to sound grown up, the little 5 year old said, “Mister mower man, I sure like you making my church look pretty. Can I give you my best hug?” Inside that mower man every cell in his body screamed, “YOU SURE CAN!” It was almost like he got a little taste of heaven’s ‘well done thou good and faithful servant.’ (Matthew 25).

After his insides calmed down from his sugar-hug, he asked the boy, “What’s all the junk for?” The almost matter

of fact reply was, “Oh we’re gonna have a Junk Computer Missions Fair. We’re meanin’ to tell every kid in town that Jesus loves them so much He died on the Cross for them.” The mower man said, “That’s wonderful! I’d love to help, but I’m dumber’n a stump when it comes to computers.” “No problem with that, Mr. Jenkins. Jesus has got something for everyone to do!” The groundskeeper thought to himself, Now that’s a preacher boy if I’ve ever heard one.”

The delivery wagon duo headed for home as bushes were again being trimmed. Mr. Jenkins smiled to himself, “those young people are going to reach others for Christ with junk computer stuff, but with no committees, fancy presentations, planning sessions, or budgets; just a burden for the lost, and love for the Lord.” He could hardly wait to tell his pool-shootin’ buddies at the Over Sixty’s Senior Center on Friday.

Even before dark, Gerdy, (that’s Granny Simms’ old Hudson) pulled up to the pile of computer junk and the doors immediately came open. Granny was the first one out and unlocked the door to the old Junior Jericho building. Out came Drake, Orange hair Bennett, and nose chain Avery. She wasn’t wearing the sponge neck brace today. God must have smiled as two more boys climbed out and pitched right in, moving the computer trash pile inside the building.

The computer trash was lined up along the walls of the front meeting room like a stack of firewood. When the job was done, Drake took two of the boys outside, got the tennis balls out of the milk can storage and showed them how to play wall-ball.

Calvary – One size fits all

When Hard-Case Hannah (that’s Granny) returned to the meeting room from inspecting the rest of the dilapidated

building, she saw Bennett and Avery stacking some computer parts in the center of the room. Their stacking was a little toward the front near the large showroom windows that once displayed farm tractors and seed planters.

Granny pretended not to notice but was terribly curious. Computer cables were used to bind the various parts together. In about an hour the sculpture of trash began to take some shape. It was a cross! It was Calvary's Cross made with stuff that others saw no value in. There were about three computer boxes with two heavy monitors that formed the base to hold the 5 foot high creation upright. Granny thought, "maybe orange hair doesn't always mean 'I spell trouble.'" Maybe it means, I just want someone to love me just as I am."

When everyone got back in Gerdy for the trip back home, Granny noticed Avery wasn't wearing her nose chain. Her thoughts were forced to the busy traffic and the conversations in the back seat. It wasn't until the pictures of the sculpture appeared in the newspaper that Granny saw a small chain hanging down from one of the arms of the Cross. It was Avery's gift of love saying, "thanks for showing me I'm special in Your eyes. I don't need this anymore."

Only weeks later would Hard-Case Hannah notice that down in the Cross sculpture was a slightly used pair of brass knuckles. Were those brass knuckles some kind of seeds planted with a request, "God show me how much you'll fight for me'?"

Ribbons Aren't Just For Girls – Getting the word out.

Gramps and Mr. Jenkins both brought in their tin snips in for the very first COMMUNICATION WORKSHOP in Jr Jericho. It was Monday after school that 4 student boys and two silver haired men met in one of the side rooms and began to gather up all the ribbon cables among the piles of trash

computers. One of the students told the other 5 that these ribbon cables sent information from one part of the computer to another; most often to be remembered by disk drives etc.

The half dozen workers began cutting the ribbon cables into lengths about 4 inches long. These pieces were stacked in front of the next person in the processing line. Mr. Jenkins said, "I don't have a clue what a dish drive, or whatever you said, is. But I seem to recall the Bible talking about a very important Remembrance Ribbon. It's a little different than the 'Remember Our Troops' ribbons we see on cars etc. The blue ribbons were sewn along the bottom fringes of the priestly robes those that ministered in the Bible tabernacle." One of the boys said, "Gee Mr. Jenkins, the Bible must talk about all sorts of neat stuff." Gramps smiled at Jenkins and gently shook his head in agreement.

Bob Timmons took one of the cut pieces of ribbon cable from the stack in front of him. Laying it flat on his work area, he took a permanent magic marker and printed on the cable "JUNIOR JERICHO, SATURDAYS 2PM FREE." Another student split the ends of the ribbon wires just a bit. The next student would hold the marked ribbon in his hands, closed his eyes and silently prayed. He asked God to bless this 'cable communicator' by bringing some soul to Jericho and learn of God's wonderful love. Every so often everyone would rotate to the next position giving everyone the feel of spreading the word with tin snips. The last person in the process neatly put the pieces in a bag to be kept clean until used.

Marti and her husband Max handed Granny two city maps. Marti said, "Granny, I'm thinkin' the boys and girls can hang one map up on the wall, and cut up the other one into 'zones of responsibility'. You know, sort of like Nehemiah dividing up areas of the Jerusalem wall to be rebuilt." They both grinned.

Sharing the Knee-slappin' Fun

It wasn't long after Marti and Max told their dear friends at Jacob's Nursing Home that junk fun was planned and told in the newspaper. The newspaper said, "COME SEE THE 'PARADE OF PARTS' SPONSORED BY THE ROCKING CHAIR ROCKETS." The place would be at the local nursing home next Saturday. The time was stated. And then the article went on to describe some of the many ways the facility worked hard to enhance dignity and hospitality toward its residents.

Saturday brought a really great turnout of visitors. Most of them had visited some of the residents before, but came out of curiosity to see what 'parts' would be displayed by the Rocking Chair Rockets. In the center of the activity room were two tables.

At one table sat 7-year-old Dorothy and silver-haired Beulah. Each had a spoon in their hand. First the little girl would use her spoon to pop a key cap off the junk computer keyboard positioned between them. Then her friend Beulah would do the same. There were little cupcake papers to put the keycaps in.

More than once, a keycap would pop off and go into the air. Before Dorothy would run after it, she'd see her friend slap her leg and laugh big. After a few times the 7-year-old would do the same leg slapping and laughing. The little one never did figure out why you're supposed to slap your leg, but it was great fun and that was why she loved being with her silver haired friend.

At the other table Jimmy and Pete were taking the screws out of the big box portion of another junk computer. When the news team arrived a little after lunch, Pete was showing little Jimmy that some screws need a screwdriver

that looks like a plus sign (+) and others use a minus sign (-) screwdriver.

With a grin Pete said some troublemaker named, “Allen” invented a screwdriver that really looked goofy – kind of like a snowflake. Jimmy was taught by the old gentleman to put each kind of screw in its own cupcake wrapper with the caution, “It’s a good idea to save stuff for later use, but only if you keep them in order.”

The cameraman turned his bright light on and began photographing the two table displays in the center of the room. Slowly the camera panned around to record each exhibit along the two walls. One display showed all the different cables and wires found in computers. There was no detailed naming or description of the twisted pair power cables, the data ribbon cable, or any of the other stuff. But each was lined up with great care. It was like the cable display was to say different things to different people.

The next exhibit had two fans, one big and one small. In jerky lettering and also like a small child uses, the words were written, “To keep cool, dogs pant, computers have fans, and elephants wave their ears. But as always, God has saved the best method for mankind that He loves so dearly.”

Another display had in big letters, **ELECTRIC BUGS**. The display showed several of the little square black parts with tiny wires coming out of them. To a child, they probably looked a little like centipedes. Continuing on, the camera recorded displays using about every type of part found in a computer. It was actually kind of fun to see so much activity and enjoyment from computers without electricity and without confusing words and terms.

Trudy and her silver haired friend, Martha had a problem. They wanted to be a part of the Parade of Parts but everyone else had used all of the computer parts. So Martha and Trudy thought of an exhibit that would be the frosting on

the cake; the exhibit that would capitalize on every other display. A cardboard poster stood behind an open Bible. A soft pink ribbon touched the Bible reference, John 1:3, ended on the poster near the words, “God made computers. Use them for Him and with Him.”

The camera light was switched off and the equipment lowered to a restful position. The cameraman’s eyes scanned the whole room and quickly walked up to the news person making notes on her little tablet. “Heidi! Heidi! These parts are not the story! We’ve been recording these exhibits of junk computer parts, but they’re not the story. The news duo viewed each display again, but took renewed interest of a photograph in each and every display.

Every photograph showed two people. One person with silver hair or no hair at all. That person’s eyes told you of their joy in being able to now use all those left over hugs from the ‘left over’ generation. The other person was always a young person. The expression on the youth showed a boatload of questions with no one else having the time to listen, let alone answer.

The next day’s newspaper carried a front-page lead-in to an article of some detail that basically said, “At the nursing home, far better than a Parade of Parts, was a Parade of Partners. Visit them to see how the very old and the very young are bonded, by junk – computer junk.”

A couple days later Cranky Carson, who’d never give anyone a kind word, if you paid him, was sitting at the table with little Lulu. Lulu didn’t seem to belong to anyone but had wandered into the nursing home, probably just looking for a left-over hug, in spite of her ragamuffin appearance. Now you really won’t believe it without witnessing it for yourself, but Cranky was using his softest tones helping Lulu line up some of the keycaps that had letters on them.

One of the nurse's aids said they started out lining up the alphabet but then spelled words like love and hug and God. Cranky Carson felt some brand new pride in being able to use some computer stuff but didn't have the foggiest idea how to even turn a real one on.

Hospital mice

This Friday was just like a couple of the Friday afternoons before. Someone told the hospital nurses the parade in Pediatrics was just about to start. It looked like every staffer on break wanted to watch this contagious parade among the children. Anyone who didn't bring a camera was sorely disappointed.

The first float going between the excited children was 9-yr-old Marty pulling his wagon. It bumped every foot or so, because of the home-made wooden wheel replacement. In his wagon was an old beat up computer keyboard with some of its keys missing. Also in his wagon was a cardboard box cut out so you could see a junk piece of computer and a couple signs inside. It really looked like a load on its way to the landfill.

Marty was even getting more excited, himself. He'd see the hurting boys and girls sitting up in their beds to take in this contagious parade. The favorite wagon in today's parade though, was his little sister, Dede. She was a sight to never forget. Marty put a Mickey Mouse hat on her and painted a few whiskers on her rosy little cheeks. As she pulled her little wagon behind Marty, her waddle walk evidenced diapers were still part of her daily dress code.

In her small wagon was a computer mouse in about the same shape her brother's computer keyboard. Right in front of Dede's mouse was a piece of cheese. On the sides of her

small wagon were two signs that said, “JerryKo Computer Mouse.”

What a parade it was to see. But that’s just how it started out. And you didn’t see any adults that were managing the parade, either. It was just a brother and little sister spreading simple smiles in the midst of suffering and loneliness.

In the middle of the beds of watchful children the parade stopped. Dede sat in the middle of the floor and patted her head to make sure the big black ears were still there. Just like a professional, Marty picked up his cardboard display and walked up to each child and showed them some of the wee tiny parts so important to make a computer work.

Of course, he didn’t know the names of the parts. He didn’t need to. His visit to the next bed taught the freckle-faced patient that each and every part in a computer is important. They each have to do their job. Who cares if no one knows their name? Just do what you’re supposed to do best. No slackers in a computer machine.

No one told her to, but Dede picked up her computer mouse and took it over to share with a little girl not having a good day. The bandages on her ear were just not what a wanna-be beauty queen ought to have to contend with. As Dede held the broken mouse up as high as she could, the little beauty queen reached down to take it. The mouse was a sad sight. One of the buttons was missing and it looked like it had been run over with a truck.

As she held the broken mouse the other children were watching to see what would happen next. Small fingers with beauty queen nail polish caressed the ugly mouse, as though it had pains of its own. All the children were watching as though she were on stage. The mouse was pulled open, like a little compact to powder a shiny nose. Inside were all colors

of wires all dressed neat and tidy. There were strange markings that gave meaning to the people putting it together.

The beauty queen looked down at the toddler standing by her bed, “It’s beautiful on the inside. Your computer mouse may be ugly on the outside, but it’s beautiful on the inside, where it counts.” Dede nodded her head in agreement with a big-eyed smile that would melt the heart of any football player.

The computer mouse was returned to its parade wagon and the parade continued around the corner to another group of children. The break period was over so the many staffers headed back to their tasks.

Later that day, the details were learned about the parade commotion. It seems that when the parade started going through a couple wards for older youth, the parade now included two wheel chairs. The problem was that Marty only had one computer keyboard. Well, see, everyone in the parade wanted to carry a computer part, you know, sort of like they were part of this machine that made sick people smile.

As the parade headed toward the elevator, the first wheelchair carried the keyboard. The second wheel chair pulled the computer mouse float (wagon). Dede giggled as she rode on the lap of her tow truck (chair).

That evening, one of the nurses recalled all her training and the tough tests that had to be passed. But never had she been taught, until today, that many times the strongest medicine is oh so simple. But how could she ever have envisioned freckles and beauty queen healing with junk... Jericho computer junk? (end)

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#7 – The Bus at Jacob’s Well

Pastor James worked part time at Bartlett’s Butcher Shop to provide for he and his dear wife. The church met in a member’s living room in Hooverton, about 11 miles from Junior Jericho. Twice each workday ‘Pastor J’ drove past Jr. Jericho and the large church next door. He had a burden to plant a church in Hooverton as surely as Mt. Everest is a foot tall. Each time he’d glance at the big church and Mr. Jenkins out trimming the bushes with fancy tools. He just felt like he was standing at the bottom of a mountain whose top was so high it was hidden in the wispy forbidden clouds.

Pastor J’s curiosity could be contained no longer. One day he stopped to get a better look at the insides of Junior Jericho and all the young people’s activity inside. “What is a Junior Jericho,” he asked himself so many times. He quietly walked past Granny Simms and into the discussion group room where Youth Pastor Dean was teaching the boys and girls. They were learning about the Apostle Paul and the heaven-high joy of planting seeds, starting churches on his missionary travels.

The lesson was close to being finished when one of the girls let out a frightening yell. Pastor Dean hadn’t said anything that would have caused that, nor were any other unusual sounds heard. Babs with the yell also pointed at Pastor James quietly sitting in the last row. What had frightened Babs was all the blood on Pastor J’s shirt. Before anyone had a chance to call 911, James realized the confusion. He held up his hands chest high in an ‘ok – calm down – nothing to worry about’ gesture.

The youth pastor introduced himself and welcomed the bloody visitor. With a bloody shirt from his butcher shop labors, Pastor J introduced himself. He spoke to Pastor Dean

and the boys and girls. “I’m the new pastor at Hooverton about 11 miles down highway 624. I wanted to learn what a Junior Jericho was. The first thing I saw coming in the building was the cross sculpture. I really like it. As yet, I don’t really know what you’re doing with all the computer junk, other than building crosses out of it, but I kind-of need your help. I mean your junk help.”

The visiting pastor with the bloody shirt continued, “The mission at Hooverton needs something that will fire up the four boys and girls we have. We have services in the living room next to Jacob’s well. Most people know right where that well is, because some years ago a child fell down it, but was recovered ok. On the 17th through the 21st of next month, I want to have a little vacation bible school with the very little bit of resources we have. My wife Trudy and I have been praying desperately that God would help us somehow, as He has promised in His precious word.”

“Is there a way that you could bring some of your young people and show us how to show God’s love and provision with some of your computer junk lessons?”

From the back of the room, Mr. Jenkins the groundskeeper slapped his leg and then stomped his big old clod-hoppers a couple times. “HOT DAWG! Now I know why God had our church hold onto ol’ Bus #39!” Jenkins stood up and said, “She don’t have a heater that works, and the headlights aren’t much better, but, if you give me a week, I’ll have her runnin’. I can put some plywood over a couple seats and you can put some of the computer parts and displays on them. We’ll drive your missions bus right up to Jacob’s Well and bring the mountain to Jacob, so to speak. We’ll need some sign painters to put something like ‘Jericho Missions On The Move’.”

Mr. Jenkins’ adrenalin was pumping so hard he could’ve pushed ol’ 39 all the way to Jacob’s Well at

Hoovertown by himself. At that moment Pastor Dean and Pastor J shook hands, smiled big at each other, and saw some seeds planted among the young people. Seeds that are sure to grow at the base of a mountain God wants everyone to strive for.

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#8 – The Next Chapter

This chapter is to be written by you.

- Do you have a listening ear and some apple seeds to plant?
- Do you have a warship-building burden like Hard-Case Hannah Simms for youth and their eternal future?
- Maybe you only have a tennis ball to share with stressed youth that may have orange hair and nose chains.
- It doesn't take much more to show young ladies their computer heritage and God-given potential as a life saving queen, astronaut, or a sewing machine student.

Far more fun than any circus ride is the fellowship young people can have with the forgotten silver-haired generation with so much love still to give.

If we are to plant churches we must first be faithful in planting seeds...seeds of hope and love promised by the Savior Jesus Christ. If you feel the task is higher than a mountain, consider the Redeemer seen by a boy with a coat of many colors looking up from the bottom of a well. Whether you're in a Jacob's Well or other, look up to see the only Deliverer mankind could ever need.

Was Paul correct when he penned these inspired words?

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. 1 Corinthians 2:9

Get some computer junk and plant some seeds for yourself... careful, seed planting can get into your blood...

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