



THE DAY THE “HOOKER” SERVED COMMUNION

Wendy (not her real name) was no ordinary woman. She was a “lady of the evening,” a “street-walker,” a “hooker” (the legal term is “prostitute”). She was definitely not a church-goer. But one thing she was: she was desperately hungry for something. Wendy didn’t know what it was, but she simply knew that she needed it in a bad way. She had to do something ASAP.

One day, Wendy worked up the nerve to call a church to ask to see the pastor. Two pastors (who believed that there’s safety in numbers) met with her and listened to her story of despair and unquenchable thirst for something unknown to her. She listened as the pastor shared with her the story of the Samaritan woman who met Jesus at Jacob’s well. Wendy’s heart came alive as she heard about how Jesus offered the woman “living water.” She knew at that moment that she wanted to drink that living water. This was what she was thirsting for all along!

So, the pastors led Wendy in a prayer of confession, repentance and surrender. They invited her to come to church on Sunday, assuring her that she didn’t have to worry about fitting in right away. She was free to sit anywhere, come late or leave early. Wendy looked puzzled and said, “Why would I do that? I’ve been waiting for this all my life.”

That Sunday, Wendy was the first to arrive. She sat at the front and loudly agreed with everything the pastor said. And she was the last person to leave. The next Sunday, Wendy came early again, except she brought a friend, another woman in her old line of work. That morning, the pastor preached on servanthood, emphasizing that if you have tasted the love of Jesus, you’ll want to serve. That morning, they were having communion after the message. So, the pastor called for the church elders to serve by asking the “servant-leaders” to come forward and serve. That day, there were only two elders present and they were not so quick to respond.

Wendy, who heard only the word “servant,” had been

watching the two elders. She thought about what the pastor had said: “If you have tasted the love of Jesus, you’ll want to serve.” “That’s for me,” she thought. So, she got up to serve communion with the other two “servants.”

What would you do if you were the pastor? A “hooker” serving communion in your service! What would his congregation think? Instantly, the pastor thought about another “woman of the night” who washed the feet of Jesus with expensive perfume, with much consternation on the part of His disciples and the Pharisees. An “ex-hooker” served “communion” to Jesus – the Person who embodies and is symbolized by communion. Christ was pleased to accept the service of this woman who was “forgiven much ” and therefore, who “loved much.”

The pastor immediately got up and gently told Wendy, “Since this is your first time to serve, do you mind if I help you?” So, that Sunday, the pastor and Wendy serve communion together. The best part of the story, according to the pastor, was not that Wendy was blessed personally; it was the way the church members lovingly accepted her ministry to them. By doing so, his church family affirmed God’s call to them to become a loving community.

Every time we gather together for worship, teaching or fellowship, we have countless opportunities to serve one another and to release God’s blessings to each other. But there will also be people who will be hungering for love and acceptance from God’s people. God will bring them here to Miracle Hill because we have made a covenant with Him to be His surrogate lovers in this community. These desperate and thirsty people will not only need to be served by us, but they will also need to serve us. By receiving their ministry, no matter how uninformed they are about what they are doing, we show that we value them and their commitment to our Lord.

This story is not just a modern-day parable or an allegory in a contemporary setting; it really happened. And it could also happen here at Gospel Life. Be ready, because it will. Our vision statement says so!