

**Chapter 48: Here Am I, Send Me!**

**Life Application Verses:**

**Isaiah 6:8:** (NASB) [Isaiah's Commission] "Then I heard the voice of the Lord, saying, "Whom shall I send, and who will go for Us?" Then I said, "Here am I. Send me!"

**H**ave you ever been to a meeting at your local church or served on a committee or just been in a situation in which help is needed with a project or some other function, and the leader of the group asks for volunteers? And all you hear are the crickets as they sing quietly in the middle of the night in the quietness of the darkness? Yet, it is prime-time daytime, business hours. You get that uneasy feeling way down in the pit of your "gut" and you feel it rising slowly, then it gains more momentum, and you throw up...sorry, I meant to say...you throw out your name to volunteer for the work that needs to be done! Then you chastise yourself, wondering why you can't keep your mouth shut! You then realize that you volunteered for two other things just last week, and you begin to wonder how you will keep these commitments because you are a 'Gifted Habitual Volunteer'? Well, take heart in the Life Application Verse and consider the following parables, quotes, and sayings, to help with your Gift from God: (BTW...this Heavenly Gift is a Blessing, but it may seem overwhelming at times.)

An elephant saw a hummingbird lying on its back with its tiny feet up in the air. "What are you doing?" asked the elephant. The hummingbird replied, "I heard that the sky might fall today, and so I am ready to help hold it up, should it fall." The elephant laughed cruelly. "Do you really think," he said, "that those tiny feet could help hold up the sky?" The hummingbird kept his feet up in the air, intent on his purpose, as he replied, "Not alone. But each must do what he can. And this is what I can do." --Chinese Parable

"I am only one, but still I am one. I cannot do everything, but still I can do something; and because I cannot do everything, I will not refuse to do something that I can do." -- Helen Keller

Take time to be thankful for everything that you have. You can always have more, but you could also have less. Less time to volunteer to help others, less time to serve and Honor God in service to others, and less time to make a difference in this world where God has placed you in His Service. Remember: Take time to be thankful for everything that you have. You can always have more, but you could also have less.

According to the National Service Website (retrieved 17 November 2016)<sup>1</sup>, a compiled list of the activities for the US is provided. It states: “This site is home to the most comprehensive look at volunteering and civic life in the 50 states and 51 cities across the country. Data includes volunteer rates and rankings, civic engagement trends, and analysis.” A summary of the data processed at the site is as follows:

- There were an estimated 62.6 million volunteers;
- The 62.6 million volunteers contributed an estimated 7.8 billion hours of voluntary service;
- The 7.8 billion voluntary hours equated to an estimated \$184 billion dollars in value.
- In Alabama (2015 stats), where my family and I live, work, play, and volunteer: 23.4% of residents volunteer; 833,897 people are volunteers; 25.9% volunteer hours per capita; 113.7% million hours of service; \$2.3 billion of service contributed; and, 44.7% of residents donate \$25 or more to charity.

A woman was walking along a beach filled with starfish. As she walked, she would stoop down, pick one up at random, and throw it back into the ocean. A man came upon her and asked why she was bothering with throwing some back when there were so many - how could it possibly make a difference? She picked up another starfish, threw it back into the ocean, and said, "It made a difference to that one."

As you can see, being a volunteer is important as “it makes a difference to that one.” This topic is about giving of self to help others. It’s about being Heavenly Minded as we consider what happened to Isaiah when God asked the question, “Whom shall I send, and who will go for Us?” In the same sentence, Isaiah replied, “Here am I. Send me!” When no one else steps up to the plate, do we? It takes balance, but being a volunteer is a very rewarding event in our lives. I’ve spoken to this topic in another chapter and also several times throughout this book. So, before we go further, let’s ‘paint a picture’ of what a volunteer looks like. A good place to start is with the Peace Corps. Here is how they define a volunteer<sup>2</sup>:

#### What makes a successful volunteer?

- 1) **Adaptability:** Having the ability to adjust to the many new and different situations you encounter as a Peace Corps Volunteer allows you to be responsive to the people you will live with and serve;
- 2) **Patience:** This is not a job for people seeking quick fixes or instant gratification. Instead, you will need to work creatively to develop relationships with community members, and to build trust and motivate the various stakeholders. This all takes time;

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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.nationalservice.gov/vcla> [Site content subject to change]

<sup>2</sup> <http://www.peacecorps.gov/volunteer/learn/howvol/lookingfor/> [Site content subject to change]

- 3) **Skill:** Being selected as a Peace Corps Volunteer means you have the technical experience and education needed by a host country. The Peace Corps will additionally prepare you by providing language, cross-cultural, and project-specific training;
- 4) **Self-Reliance:** Although you may feel like you are never alone as a Volunteer, you may also feel very “on your own.” You are likely to be the only Peace Corps Volunteer in your community. You will face language barriers and the challenge of finding your way around a new neighborhood;
- 5) **Positive Attitude:** The structure of your job assignment and the work itself will probably be less defined than what you have experienced in the U.S. There may be times when the work flow feels chaotic or times when it is slow. A positive attitude can ease the transition;
- 6) **Flexibility:** As a Peace Corps Volunteer, you will likely be placed in an environment very different than anything you’ve experienced in the United States. Letting go of expectations and being flexible will assist you in handling whatever comes your way;
- 7) **Resourcefulness:** As people adjust to new environments and cultures, they go through certain predictable emotional states: loneliness and isolation, insecurity and uncertainty, homesickness, and doubts about their commitment to serve. By being resourceful, working with what you have, and keeping an open mind, you will be able to overcome these challenges and thrive;
- 8) **Responsibility:** As a Peace Corps Volunteer, you are a vital part of a larger team assigned to your country of service. Not only are you responsible for quality work, but you will be required to adhere to a structure designed to keep you safe and healthy;
- 9) **Sense of Humor:** Having the ability to laugh at yourself and at life’s little surprises goes a long way. Your service will be a continual learning process. Keeping a light view will help you learn from your mistakes without judging yourself harshly. Besides, laughter is universal.
- 10) It takes accepting that **you don’t always have all the answers**. You have to be willing and open to having your own assumptions, sensations, and world view challenged and questioned almost daily.

**Helen Perry** (*Volunteer in Morocco*)

As you can see, to be a volunteer in the Peace Corps, it requires several attributes of a person’s character. Is this not true of life in general, and in particular, service to our Lord Jesus Christ? What about our Faithfulness to God? Let me expand on what it takes to be a volunteer that is Heavenly Minded, Earthly Good. My wife and I were at—of all places—Wal-Mart several weeks ago. A shopper dropped something. I volunteered to simply bend down, pick up the paper item—which was not very heavy—and give it to this person. She thanked me, and we continued on our journey to find whatever it was we were shopping for. Now, look at the list of Peace Corp attributes. Did I—or do you, when you or I do something as simple as this example—fulfill these attributes? Let’s take them one at a time, and consider them in light of

the Life Application Verse and in terms of Heavenly Minded, Earthly Good to serve God in Christ as a volunteer—whenever and wherever we may find ourselves.

- 1) **Adaptability:** This is having the ability to adjust, or as we say in the vernacular: ad hoc it! I was happy as a clam with our trolley (as they say in Great Britton), pushing, weaving, and bobbing in shopper traffic—until this other shopper needed help. So, I had ability and I adapted and just did what I thought any normal person would do. My response and my wife’s response was: “Here am I. Send me!” Or in our case, “Here are we. Send us!” [God of All Creation Reference: [Philippians 4: 11-13](#): “Not that I speak from want, for I have learned to be content in whatever circumstances I am. I know how to get along with humble means, and I also know how to live in prosperity; in any and every circumstance I have learned the secret of being filled and going hungry, both of having abundance and suffering need. I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me.”]
- 2) **Patience:** This is making time to develop trust and a team-spirit approach: to wait upon the Lord to answer prayer and needs. When the shopper dropped the paper, I was patient because it was better to help her than rush by and leave it on the floor. In my ‘haste’, I could have just said, “Hm, I ain’t got time!” My response and my wife’s response was: “Here am I. Send me!” Or in our case, “Here are we. Send us!” [God of All Creation Reference: [2 Peter 3: 9](#): “The Lord is not slow in keeping his promise, as some understand slowness. Instead he is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance.”]
- 3) **Skill:** Did I have the technical experience and education needed to help this person? I mean this: had I practiced picking things up for others, and had I studied to show myself approved before God in Christ to demonstrate a skill at helping others? When this woman dropped her shopping list or whatever that item was, I didn’t stop to ‘work-out’ or think it over: I was a skilled ‘picker-upper’ as I had done hundreds, maybe even thousands of times; and yes, I knew what God expected because I had studied His Word on this and many other topics—all to help me be a better volunteer. My response and my wife’s response was: “Here am I. Send me!” Or in our case, “Here are we. Send us!” [God of All Creation Reference: [Exodus 35: 31-33](#): “And he has filled him with the Spirit of God, with wisdom, with understanding, with knowledge and with all kinds of skills—to make artistic designs for work in gold, silver and bronze, to cut and set stones, to work in wood and to engage in all kinds of artistic crafts.”]
- 4) **Self-Reliance:** This particular attribute is the innate ability to rely on yourself to be reliable to others and know that this Strength-Of-Self-Reliance is from God in Christ Jesus. Boastful, self-reliance apart from God is temporal—of this world only! When this lady dropped her paper, I didn’t form a committee, wait for an announcement over the Public Announcement System, or worry that I was not self-aware-in-Christ enough to do this thing. I just stopped, bent down, picked it up, gave it to her, and smiled at my wife. My response and my wife’s response was: “Here am I. Send me!” Or in our case, “Here are we. Send us!” [God of All Creation Reference: [2 Corinthians 3: 5](#): “Not that we are sufficient in ourselves to claim anything as coming from us, but our sufficiency is from God.”]
- 5) **Positive Attitude:** A positive attitude is admirable, and encouraged by God Himself. I cannot imagine that Jesus and His disciples and others never smiled, laughed, or found joy in their friendships. To maintain a positive attitude, you have to find a source of Joy. Where do we find such joy? In knowing that even as sinners, God loved us, and gave His Son to die on a cross for our sins. IN other words, because of the Gift of Jesus, our joy is made full in the knowledge that we are Saved for Eternal Life

because of the Love of God. Picking up the paper for this woman was a joyous event. Why? Because it helped her in her life and it gave my wife and I joy to help someone in even such a 'small' need. My response and my wife's response was: "Here am I. Send me!" Or in our case, "Here are we. Send us!" [God of All Creation Reference: [Proverbs 17: 22](#): "A joyful heart is good medicine, but a crushed spirit dries up the bones."]

- 6) **Flexibility:** Being flexible for God's Service is going to make some or most of us uncomfortable at times. As you can see in Mark 1: 16-18 below, Simon and Andrew were accustomed to getting up every day, going to the boat, casting the nets, and fishing. This was their comfort-zone routine. Then, Jesus called to them and simply said that instead of just fishing for what is temporary, be flexible to His Service and go with Him to fish for the Souls of Men—men, women, Republican, Democrat, rich, poor, young people, our neighbors—IN other words, volunteer to go with Jesus in service to others as He sees the need and sends us on His journey. If we can't volunteer for one activity, are we flexible enough to volunteer for another? My wife and I were flexible on postponing the need to get our shopping done on time by stopping to help this woman who had dropped her paper. BTW---she was very elderly and her expression was: "Oh no, I dropped my paper and that is a long way down there!" My response and my wife's response was: "Here am I. Send me!" Or in our case, "Here are we. Send us!" [God of All Creation Reference: [Mark 1: 16-18](#): "As He was going along by the Sea of Galilee, He saw Simon and Andrew, the brother of Simon, casting a net in the sea; for they were fishermen. And Jesus said to them, 'Follow Me, and I will make you become fishers of men.' Immediately they left their nets and followed Him."]
- 7) **Resourcefulness:** Webster defines resourcefulness as: "The quality of being able to cope with difficult situations...the ability to deal resourcefully with unusual problems." Another way to say this is that we are capable of dealing with Life because of what God in Christ has done in our lives. Being self-sufficient to deal with problems is one thing; being God-sufficient is quite another! It didn't take much resource to pick up this woman's piece of paper; but it did take a Heavenly Minded, Earthly Good resourcefulness to desire to pick up her paper! Let the reader understand! My response and my wife's response was: "Here am I. Send me!" Or in our case, "Here are we. Send us!" [God of All Creation Reference: [Ephesians 2: 10](#): "For we are his workmanship, having been created in Christ Jesus for good works that God prepared beforehand so we may do them."]
- 8) **Responsibility:** The Bible speaks a great deal to our responsibility. For example, render unto Caesar that which is Caesar's and unto God that which is God's. My wife and I could have said, 'That woman dropped her piece of paper. It is not our responsibility to pick it up for her.' But, that is not what God says to us in Romans 12: 6-8. He tells us this: if He has given us a particular gift, we must be responsible for using that Gift to His Glory. Very simple premise: very simple outcome. Or as Nike used to say, "Just do it." My response and my wife's response was: "Here am I. Send me!" Or in our case, "Here are we. Send us!" [God of All Creation Reference: [Romans 12: 6-8](#): "We have different gifts, according to the grace given to each of us. If your gift is prophesying, then prophesy in accordance with your faith; if it is serving, then serve; if it is teaching, then teach; if it is to encourage, then give encouragement; if it is giving, then give generously; if it is to lead, do it diligently; if it is to show mercy, do it cheerfully."]
- 9) **Sense of Humor:** This item is related to positive attitude, but is more lightheartedness. For example, how many of us can laugh at ourselves? I do this quite a bit, and I can be silly at times. Just ask my

wife or my granddaughter or grandson. Just the other day, I did something goofy and she, being 7, said, “TaterPop, you are so weird.” But she laughed. A sense of humor makes life bearable, even as our God said: we may weep, but in Christ we shall laugh! When the elderly woman at Wal-Mart dropped her piece of paper, I didn’t think it was funny, and I cared not that someone made fun of me for helping this lady. In my way of thinking: let them laugh, let them scoff, and let them know that God in Christ will have the last laugh—every single time! This applies to Life in its fullness! My response and my wife’s response was: “Here am I. Send me!” Or in our case, “Here are we. Send us!” [God of All Creation Reference: [Luke 6: 21](#): “Blessed *are* you who hunger now, for you shall be satisfied. Blessed *are* you who weep now, for you shall laugh.”]

**10) [We don’t always have the answer](#):** This is as true as the air we breathe! When we don’t know, just ask Jesus. He knows! I had no idea of what the woman thought about my picking up her paper, but Jesus knew. Don’t let your inability to answer a question stop your Heavenly Minded, Earthly Good desire to volunteer to do good and help others. Just ask Jesus for an answer—and it shall be! My response and my wife’s response was: “Here am I. Send me!” Or in our case, “Here are we. Send us!” [God of All Creation Reference: [The Holy Bible](#): Genesis to Revelation.]

### A Question of Curiosity:

Now, take all of these attributes and multiply them times the known and unknown needs of people, families, the lost, the boastful, the mundane, the rub-me-the-wrong-way-folks, ... and apply the God of All Creation References to these known and unknown needs, and you see the Wisdom of God. Okay, maybe that was not of sufficient clarity! Look, God made EVERYTHING, Right?!!! He made Earth, all its resources, and He made us. Within the sphere of His influence, He also made and gave us the attributes we just discussed, did He not? It is up to us to use these resources to improve ALL that He gave us, for His Glory, for the Glory of our Savior, Christ Jesus. IN other words, being a volunteer from the heart is right before God because He gave us the Heart to be a volunteer—to make a Heavenly Minded, Earthly Good difference in whatever and wherever we may be involved: family, self, others, and this list is perpetual across time and space and life and Eternity! And you say?

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### VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES FOR ADULTS (BILLY GRAHAM LIBRARY)

From welcoming guests and helping them through the galleries, to praying with those who want to make a decision for Jesus Christ, Library volunteers ensure a friendly and spiritually enriching time for all Library guests. If you want to minister to people from around the world, enjoy working with others, and can stand on your feet for four hours (with breaks), would you prayerfully consider becoming a Library volunteer? We ask that you commit to serve for a minimum of 12 hours a month (or eight hours if you have a full-time job) for at least six months. We need men and women 16 years or older who live in the greater Charlotte area and are passionate about sharing the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Volunteers receive in-depth training, and they also have the joy of seeing lives changed through the power of the Holy Spirit.

The Story of a Volunteer

Source: <http://ceis.org.au/volunteer/the-story-of-a-volunteer/>

[Content of Site Subject to Change]

I've always loved children, and I love the idea of being able to share my faith, and tell children about God's love for them. Now that I have a little time on my hands I have decided to volunteer to help with Christian Education sessions in my local school. I have followed all the steps, and I am trusting God to help me.

I was a "Reading Mum" when my kids were in Primary School, so I'm not going in totally unprepared.

I've filled in all the forms, and my Minister was happy to recommend me for this task. I've been through the training session, and I think I'm ready to do this. The resources have all been prepared, and I have been shown how to use them. I'll be going in with a team, and just being an observer the first couple of times, so it's not too daunting.

There's not too much to do early in each term, but when the end of term comes there's a really busy week or two. I can organise my other work around that because I will know the dates well in advance.

The activities and the script have been thought out very carefully by teachers, and I can see God's hand in all that preparation. I'm just a bit apprehensive about the children asking me questions – what if I don't know the answer, or if I say the wrong thing? Answering questions is an area I know I'll have to work on.

I'm ready now to take the first steps, and I'm looking forward to one day being confident and able to lead a team. I'm excited to think I will be sowing seeds for God's Kingdom, and it doesn't worry me that I won't see any results. God will build on these first steps.

**Colossians 3:12-17** ESV

Put on then, as God's chosen ones, holy and beloved, compassionate hearts, kindness, humility, meekness, and patience, bearing with one another and, if one has a complaint against another, forgiving each other; as the Lord has forgiven you, so you also must forgive. And above all these put on love, which binds everything together in perfect harmony. And let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to which indeed you were called in one body. And be thankful. Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly, teaching and admonishing one another in all wisdom, singing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, with thankfulness in your hearts to God. ...

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**My Prayer For You:**

Heavenly Father, as I offer this Prayer, I challenge myself to become a better volunteer to help others in their need. Whether that need is as simple as working with them to become a better writer or to reach out to them in their need to know the Salvation in Jesus Christ. I Pray that those who may read these words might take the attributes You have given me to write and think on them in Service to You in and through the Gifts You have given to each one of us. I offer these words again to inspire us to listen to Your Word and apply them to our lives, wherever we may live and whatever we do: Romans 12: 6-8: “We have different gifts, according to the grace given to each of us. If your gift is prophesying, then prophesy in accordance with your faith; if it is serving, then serve; if it is teaching, then teach; if it is to encourage, then give encouragement; if it is giving, then give generously; if it is to lead, do it diligently; if it is to show mercy, do it cheerfully.” Whatever Gift we have been given, move us, O God, to use our gift as You have need. Move us to volunteer so that our world might be a better place for all people. Shake the foundations upon which we stand to hear Your words and apply them in our lives. Teach us to have the Heart of a Volunteer to make our world a better place because it is the right thing to do, not because it makes us look good in the eyes of our friends or family. Give us a Heart of Joy when we do for others what they cannot do for themselves when we volunteer to Serve You through service to others. In Christ I offer this prayer, Amen.

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**The Heart of a Volunteer  
(1 Corinthians 13)**

