

**Chapter: Prologue**

**Life Application Verses:**

**The Holy Bible: Genesis 1: 1 – Revelation 22:21. Author: The One True God.**

**W**hen you think of all the things you might do in life, writing a book may not elicit much interest because it takes a lot of work or you assume that writing is not your forte. Sort of like the idea of riding a 10-speed bicycle cross-country as we mature into middle age and become grandparents or Blessed great-grandparents. But books are very important. The argument today is that with our Social Media hype, we tend to think that a book made of paper with printed words on the pages is antiquated and outdated and just simply does not stimulate much interest, particularly for Millennials and Smart Phone aficionados. How many of you have any of the following items: computers of any types, iPads, iPhones, “celery” or smart-phones, or any number of other Internet/computing devices? Looks unanimous to me with all the hands raised! Some of you are even ‘red-faced’ at all the gadgets!

I have.....*get ready for this*: a desktop with a large display; a laptop that has a lot of gadgets and a large display; an iPad; a flip-celery phone (maybe one day I’ll upgrade to a smart phone); 4 computers that I use at work as part of my teaching practice; a web site that occupies much of my spare time (anybody know what spare time is?), an original Kindle Fire; my daughter received my first fully-armed laptop with a screen so big it barely fits in her SUV; and, as recently as August 2016, my family went to a beach house in the Panhandle of Florida that had NO INTERNET CONNECTION! Really? Yep. I experienced ‘offline-tremors’ from being disconnected. Even the cell phones had difficulty in finding a signal from one of the towers in the area. Between the shock of no Internet and then the absence of reliable cell phone access made me think of the late Yogi Berra’s famous quote, among many: “It’s like déjà vu all over again!” Ever see a grown man cry?! My family thought I was in some sort of physical pain!

I did take the laptop and do a little writing (offline) on this book in between visits to the beach, building sandcastles, and enjoying the time with family, granddaughter and baby grandson. At this writing, my granddaughter is seven, my grandson is approaching 20 months; yet, I think that at 7 she has matured into a Little Professional Beach Goer. She simply loves the sand, water, and playing. While we grown-ups were enjoying our time at the shore, that angel

was like a sponge soaking up the fun-and-carefree-time she was having. We big people were thinking about returning to our job or jobs, the work we had waiting on us, life's demands, our aches-and-pains. Oh that we could have the cares of a 7-year old when our time of relaxation is upon us! Including—writing a book! —which brings me to the point of this Prologue...

As an educator for 32 years in the community college and 12 years in the university and in a technical profession since 1973—between the U.S. Navy, college, and employment—I've been reading or writing something all these years. Sometimes it might be the critique of a technical paper; other times I write articles or user guides of various forms/types/lengths for students; and sometimes, I write just to release tension. I might even write an opinion article for the local newspaper; as a conservative Christian, the reactions to the articles are a mix of 'I agree' to 'you blathering idiotic conservative!' This text is written because I have felt the Call of God to do just what I am doing at this very moment. Will it be a best-seller? Might it stimulate you to consider God in a different or more involved light? Am I thinking at this very moment about awards or financial gain? No. If God decides to use this book in any capacity outside of enabling a Christian or lost soul to be more involved in Christian living or find salvation in Jesus Christ, respectfully, then that is totally within the Purview of God and I will be as happy as my granddaughter and grandson playing in the sand at the beach. I do the work, God gives the increase. This writing is to Honor God in Christ Jesus! Let me repeat: **To Honor God!**

*Heavenly Minded, Earthly Good: Ordinary Christians Living Ordinary [Extraordinary] Lives*, was an idea that was placed on my heart by God when I was studying the book, *Moses: A Man of Selfless Dedication*, by Dr. Charles Swindoll. The baseline from which *Heavenly Minded, Earthly Good* is based is found in Colossians 3: 2: "Set your mind on the things above, not on the things that are on earth." Take this one step further: If we set our minds on the things above—that is, A Holy God and our Savior, Christ Jesus—then we must be doing Earthly Good if we 'set our minds on the things above, not on the things that are on earth' for the sake of not loving 'earth and its un-Holy outcomes' but to be about the Will of God in our lives as we serve Him in Love and Service to others while we still live on this Earth. (Crazy sentence structure, but needed to express the fullness of the idea in this book.) Or, follow God in a crazy world

This book is about ordinary/extraordinary lives. For example, how many of us are the President of the organization where we work? How many of you are pastors in a church? How many parents are there in the audience? How many pet owners? How many leaders might willingly and knowingly identify themselves in this text? How many bus drivers, teachers, law enforcement people, home owners, licensed drivers, retail clerks, doctors, lawyers, trash collectors, street sweepers, maintenance workers, train engineers, professional sports figures, business leaders, business employees, and et al.—if I continue, I will be on page 3,499 before I finish listing all the ‘jobs or titles’ we may possess. No matter what job, title, position, or status you may ‘own’, I am speaking to you as the every-day Christian who gets up, goes to work, takes care of your immediate and extended family, pays your bills, and gets on your knees before God in Prayer and Bible Study. From that Holy time with God, you then go out and live in the hard and cruel world outside the doors of your mansions, homes, apartments, mobile homes, tents, or whatever you consider home. For Christians, there should not be a ‘gray-area-confusion’, such as one-foot in the World and one-foot in Heaven. We should be those who desire above all else (Heavenly Minded) to serve God first so that we can serve others and remain Faithful to our God in Christ Jesus (Earthly Good). Did you catch that little word—**FAITHFUL! Yet, we do struggle to remain Faithful; and I Pray this book will help in that Walk!**

We may not be the chosen philosophers, theoreticians, or mathematical elite of our society, although you surely may be in one or more of these categories. We are the ordinary thinkers, movers and shakers, and doers of our world—because we believe in a Holy, Gracious, and Forgiving God. **We live what we believe**—whether we are the philosophers, theoreticians, or mathematical elite—or just the ordinary teachers, brick layers, policemen, postal delivery person, or all those other titles that exist in our communities, towns, cities, states, and nations. We are driven and motivated to be *Heavenly Minded, Earthly Good* because that is what God expects of His Children. We are concerned about our nation, world, hunger, poverty, political system, laws of the land, and every aspect of life, because we KNOW that God is concerned about these things as He watches the events that we as a human race do every day. ***What?!*** Do we not know that God sees our prejudices, anger, hatred, killings, thefts, bitterness, vile profanities, drug usage, slander, lack of care for our neighbors, abuse towards our spouses and

children—and GOD HELP US—all that we do that is so corrupt, harmful, and shameful! God forgive us as a nation self-deprived of Your Love! It should cause every Christian to shed tears!

This book is to give you ‘practical talk’ about who and what we are as Christians. Maybe it will inspire you to volunteer for some community service after you have read a topic and God moves in your life. Maybe it will cause you to love your husband or wife more deeply than you have in recent years. Maybe this book will lead you to a saving knowledge in Christ Jesus if you have never made that commitment—which is the most important life decision that anyone will ever make—whether they live to be 10, 50, or 100. Maybe a chapter will inspire you to talk to a family member that you have not spoken to in years because of some hurt you have experienced. As a book for the ordinary person, read it to heart—in other words, read it to understand what God says, not what I had to say. I claim nothing of self—but to the Glory of God, I give all the credit. I am just a lump of clay in His Hands. Strive daily to become extra-ordinary for God and he will transform you from an ordinary Christian to an extra-ordinary Christian! As the saying goes, ‘Nothing ventured, nothing gained!’ Think Heavenly Minded...

Some years ago, my daughter and I attended a series of pottery classes at Auburn University Montgomery, as part of their community continuing education classes. From the moment we had that blob of clay in our hands, we shaped it as we desired. Sometimes we made a shape that you recognized, sometimes we shaped items for which you had to originate a new name. Not so with God. In His Hands, He shapes us to His desire—***if we let Him***. We are on that Spinning Wheel of Life and His hands are molding us, shaping us, adjusting an edge here or there, adding a line of character just where He knows it needs to go—***if we let Him***. If a ‘bubble’ forms in our character, He gently works that clay (us) to remove that Heavenly Minded blemish so that our Earthly Good is Christ focused to strengthen our relationship with Him—***if we let Him***. This book, *Heavenly Minded, Earthly Good*, is a clay tablet in God’s Hands. Read it to consider or reconsider how God is working in your life, shaping you as clay for His purpose, to mold you to Himself...to make you an extraordinary vessel conformed to His Will. God, in Christ Jesus, is not intent on crushing you as unworthy clay; His desire is that we *allow* ourselves to be molded into the likeness of Jesus Christ so that *we* might desire to live

extraordinary lives here on Earth (Earthly Good), looking forward to Eternal Life (Heavenly Minded).

Remember too, that as my daughter and I finished shaping our pots, we let them dry a bit and then applied a glaze to the soft clay for placing them in the oven: it reached some 1,750 degrees to fire the clay to useful pottery. So it is with our ordinary lives. We are shaped by God, and often times, we have to be placed in the oven of life to be ‘fired for usefulness.’ This book speaks to these times, events, and challenges. God, ‘mold’ us into vessels for extraordinary Christian living! If we as born-again believers have lost sight of The King of Kings, I Hope and Pray that God will spin us up, trim the rough edges, and return us to His Service for Christ!

In each chapter, you will be challenged by A Question of Curiosity, quotes, a Prayer, stories, poems, and other materials to elicit causal outcomes. This book is a bit of devotional, study guide, weekly reader, textbook, historical reference book, a book of poetry, and other stuff. I’m not even sure what to call the thing—except that it is founded on the Word of God and its intent is to reach out to you, the reader, at the precise time that you need the words in this text—remember, this is not my text—this is a book born from Prayer and seeking the Face of God in the words on each page. If there are any errors, they are mine; if there is any Glory, it belongs to God. If this book helps you with issues in your life, please let me know. If you think it only confused you, I’d like to know that as well. Like I said, this book is for us ordinary people who live each day “as Unto our God.” We don’t think more highly of ourselves than we ought to before our God, but we know who we are in this crazy world—and that is—we are the Children of God. By Grace, Mercy, Love, and Forgiveness we have been ‘born again’; we are not ashamed of our God or Jesus Christ. *We have ‘opted-in’ to live extraordinary lives for God!*

If our friends or co-workers or neighbors think us looney-birds because we have chosen to accept the Gift of Salvation, then bring on the straight-jackets because we are CRAZY ABOUT OUR GOD and CHRIST JESUS! We know where we are going when our lives are over in this world. And if Heaven is our Home, call me crazy all you want! I haven’t found any scripture describing Heaven as a place of “wailing and gnashing of teeth.” I read that it is a place of no more tears. And that is “just alright with me.” Like the song of the 60’s, “Jesus is just alright” by the Doobie Brothers. With all the Facebook, YouTube, and social media technologies, I

would invite you to visit the YouTube video of the Doobie Brothers song as the sound track for what Jesus is to us ordinary believers. To say that Jesus is just alright is an Eternal understatement; but the idea is that Jesus is ‘Holy Alright’ with me because He is my Risen Savior, The Son of God, the one who took my place on the cross. Jesus is MIGHTY ALRIGHT WITH ME! (You should be able to find this video by searching, “Jesus is just alright lyrics YouTube Doobie Brothers.”) [I am not advocating any movement, experimentations, or any other thing whatsoever here but the message in the song, as I grew up in the 60’s & 70’s on...]

Let me encourage you to share your ideas with me as you desire. You can reach me at: [skinner777@knology.net](mailto:skinner777@knology.net). As I stated, if this book helps you, please let me know how it changed or enabled you to walk closer to your God in Christ Jesus. If you think I am Full of Something Else, well, it’s a free country—at least for now—so fire away! I’m a big boy and my thick skin has been rawhided in years of teaching, presenting, and learning. I’m just like the ordinary people I speak to in the words on the pages of this book; I have no claim to fame. I make mistakes; sometimes my tongue is faster than my brain and it speaks something that is unworthy of a Believer in Christ. Do I read my Bible every day? No, I miss some days. Do I have a special 1-800 number to Heaven? Yes, so do you if you are a Follower of Christ. Do I get mad as heck sometimes? Yes, and so do you! Am I prone sometimes to challenge God as to ***why*** something has to happen to me? Yes, and if you say you never think this way, then please send me an email and tell me how that is possible. For you see, extraordinary is not an exemption; neither is high-minded. We all go through the trials of life, but we MUST be diligent towards our relationship with God. The Christian life is not trail-and-error, it is Faith Lived—again and again and again... Pray, Repent, Let Go, and Let God take it from there. God uses ordinary people to take His Word to the lost. Consider people like Enoch or Moses or King David...YES, they were ordinary people who had titles, jobs, and lived as we read in the Bible. But, what made them so different is that they were shaped and molded by God to become extraordinary in service. And so can you be molded and shaped and live an extraordinary life for God in Christ Jesus. Pray to become an extraordinary servant for God and He will use you mightily!

Think Heavenly Minded so that you might be—and do—Earthly Good. Let God be your guide and make a difference from this moment to the day when God calls out to His Children:

“Ken, it’s time to come in! I need you to come on Home.” Be extraordinary for God; be kind to all and God will make your ordinary kindness a Glory unto Himself; stand up and be counted for Him in Christ Jesus, for in so doing you will be numbered among the Saints when the Book of Life is opened. Where do I get all this stuff? ***Did you happen to notice the Life Application Verses at the very beginning of this Prologue?***

**A Question of Curiosity:**

Do you need to be the center of attention before you feel that God can use you? All it takes for Him to find meaningful and useful work for you in this life is for you to be Heavenly Minded so that He might direct your Earthly Good work to manifest itself before the world—His world. After all, He made it! He made you and me. He needs extra-ordinary people to live Christ before the world. And you say...

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*“Prayer in action is love, and love in action is service. Try to give unconditionally whatever a person needs in the moment. The point is to do something, however small, and show you care through your actions by giving your time ... We are all God’s children so it is important to share His gifts. Do not worry about why problems exist in the world – just respond to people’s needs ... We feel what we are doing is just a drop in the ocean, but that ocean would be less without that drop.” ~ Mother Teresa ~*

*Have you ever realized that you can give things to God that are of value to Him? Or are you just sitting around daydreaming about the greatness of His redemption, while neglecting all the things you could be doing for Him? I’m not referring to works which could be regarded as divine and miraculous, but ordinary, simple human things – things which would be evidence to God that you are totally surrendered to Him. ~ Oswald Chambers ~ [Totally surrendered to God = extraordinary]*

**HE > i (Do you understand this equation?)**

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### **My Prayer For You:**

Heavenly Father, This book is a journey which is uncertain at the outset, but certain in its Author; for it is not a book that I have written for my Glory, but to Glorify You in all of its content. I Pray, O God, that someone will read it, improve their outlook on Serving You, be a better father, mother, brother, sister, cousin, aunt, uncle, or employee, and take a renewed stand for You in all things, as a remembrance for the Salvation You have provided in Christ Jesus. Take these words and use them as You desire, as You see the need, and as only You can use them to bring Glory to Your Name as The One True God—the Maker of All Things. If it reaches but one troubled soul who knows not Christ, let these words be used to lead that person to You in the Saving Knowledge of Jesus Christ, The Son of God; if it reaches out to Christian Brothers and Sisters in the Faith of Christ Jesus, may it be used to promote an increase in Faith and Service to family, friends, and neighbors. In the times in which we live, Our God, time is truly of the essence. I believe that You will not tarry for decades yet to come, but that our Time of Decision is At Hand. Decisions to stand and be counted for You in our nation is At Hand. The time for we Christians to stand before Caesar and say enough is At Hand. The time for our Witness is At Hand. Heavenly God, I pray for all who call upon Your Holy Name as the God of the Ages, the Father of our Lord and Savior Christ Jesus, that they may be found in Your Sight as “well done, good and Faithful servants.” May we move from ordinary lives to extraordinary lives for You. In the Saving name of Christ Jesus, Amen.

### ***What is living an extraordinary life for Christ all about? Have you ever heard of Billy Graham?***

If there has ever been an individual that personifies what it means to live Heavenly Minded, Earthly Good: Ordinary Christians Living Ordinary [Extraordinary] Lives, it is Dr. Billy Graham. In the book, *Billy Graham & Me: 101 Inspiring Personal Stories from Presidents, Pastors, Performers, and Other People Who Know Him Well* (Posner & Newmark, 2013), the stories that are related about Dr. Graham are vast, deep, and represent a man of God who truly was ordinary in his own perspective, but extraordinary to the Calling of God across this globe.

One story about his humbleness came when he was about to give a remote interview with Katie Couric on the *Today* show. The local producer asked if Dr. Graham would autograph her copy of, *Just As I Am*. Here is an excerpt from that event in the book (Foreword, A. Larry Ross, p.8):

*Despite symptoms of Parkinson’s that made writing difficult, he was happy to oblige, which so touched the young woman that she asked Mr. Graham if she could pray for him. That moved*



*me deeply, as it was the first time in my quarter century of traveling with him that someone took such as initiative, rather than asking him to offer a prayer on his or her behalf.*

*After the producer left the room, Mr. Graham turned to me and said genuinely, "I have never understood why in the world anyone would want my autograph." At first I thought he was joking, but then realized his puzzled sincerity was reflective of his self-identification as "a country boy called to preach," who could not fathom why the Lord chose him to be blessed with such spiritual responsibility and global opportunity.*

In another section of the Forward, Ross describes the ordinary man, with the extraordinary service for God, that Mr. Graham has lived his entire life. How many of us Christians live like Billy Graham, knowing that Heavenly Minded, Earthly Good is what Faith in Christ is all about? Will we, as Mr. Graham stated, "lay any awards and rewards received in this life at the feet of Jesus?" That is extraordinary service for The King of Kings. Read the passage below (pg. 10-11):

*During my most recent visit to Mr. Graham's home, despite physical limitations of his own, I found him once again filled with passion and purpose. As he sat in his favorite chair in the den, he told me how he felt called to deliver one more sermon about the need for renewal in the Church and revival across America.*

*In was obvious that, though his body might be physically weakened, the heart of the evangelist continued to beat. He had already selected his text, Galatians 6:14, which he had posted in big letters on the wall beside him and recited to me, "'May I never boast, except in the Cross of our Lord Jesus Christ...'" In his characteristic authenticity and transparency, he then stressed that when he gets to heaven he is going to lay any awards and rewards received in this life at the feet of Jesus.*

**Oh that we might follow Billy Graham's example because he is extraordinary for The King of Kings. He is just a country boy (ordinary) in the selfless (extraordinary) service of Christ.**

*Author's Notes (A few words...)*

Dear Reader,

The words that you will read in this text covers a period of some seven years. During these years of its writing, editing, and re-writing of sections, I have made mention of the illness that my mom has lived through for several years. Please note that on 16 January 2015, my mom left this world for her Home in Heaven—which she longed for as her sickness began to take a suffering-toll on her body and in her life. Yet, she never lost sight of her Faith in Jesus. When you read portions that were written when she was alive, those were written in real-time as she was with us and updated in this final revision. I have dedicated a Tribute to her in the last chapter of this book. And for anyone who has lost a mother, father, brother, sister, son, daughter, or grandchildren, I ask that God give you a Peace that passes all of our limited understanding. When you suffer loss, turn to Him and seek His Love, Mercy and Grace; if you know not God's Son, seek His Forgiveness in Christ Jesus and be Born-again! My mom loved Jesus like few people that I have ever known and it was evident in her daily living as she achieved an extraordinary life for God, in and through the Salvation of Christ Jesus. Christian, turn to God for His Mercy, Grace, Love, Comfort, and Forgiveness, as His Love will be manifested in your relationship with Him through Christ Jesus – The King of Kings.

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As I am currently in the “last-redux” editing of this manuscript, our family was Blessed to experience the arrival of our granddaughter Dakota's baby brother, Carlos Santiago Hernandez-Scott, born April 30, 2015. I'll make mention of him in a few areas of the text, but his arrival is all the more Glorious because I know that my mother would have loved him so dearly with that tenderness that she exhibited throughout her life. God, as I write this, I know that mom is looking down from Heaven and giving You and Our Lord Jesus Praises and Song. We miss you mom and Santiago is a fine-looking little boy. As with lovely Dakota, I Claim him (and Dakota) out from this world for God, in the name of our Beautiful and Holy Savior, Christ Jesus. And I give You the Most High Praise, Father God, for these precious little Souls from Heaven. *How can I or this family Glorify You enough to warrant such Blessings?* It's called Love.

Ken Scott  
January 2017