

ORDINARY PEOPLE, EXTRAORDINARY LIVES

Newsletter Article 1

Where are you?

Christian, where are you?

The storms in central Florida re-routed my flight from my Gulf Coast destination to an airport on the Atlantic Coast. I had to sort out where I was. Would I ever reach my destination? How would I get there? What sort of delay would I face? You undoubtedly have found yourself, on occasion, in an unfamiliar place. It is an inevitable part of one's life journey. The ancient Israelites found themselves in a dry and dusty desert headed toward the promised land, miles from anywhere they had ever been before. Yet, even in that abandoned wasteland, God was always with them, providing them with the essentials they needed to survive. And God entrusted them with the task of caring for those essentials, so that both they and others might be blessed.

In a story from the book of Genesis, God called out to the first humans, "Where are you?" They had disobeyed God's command and eaten from the forbidden tree. They were hiding, having found themselves in a situation they had never previously experienced. Yet even in this situation of embarrassment and shame at their own failings, God did not leave them alone. Despite their punishment, God still provided for their needs and commended to them the task of caring for God's creation.

Christian, where are you?

Wherever you may be, whether in a new or familiar situation, you are always in the presence of God. And wherever you may be, God blesses you and enables you to be a blessing to others. The great excitement of our faith is that God takes ordinary people, like us, and transforms us through his presence into something extraordinary. Our extraordinary lives are manifest in mission behaviors: Accompanying Jesus, Introducing Jesus, Following Jesus, and Serving Jesus.

Our Stewardship Initiative, Ordinary People, Extraordinary Lives, call for an examination of our life and for amendment into the extraordinary. There is not extraordinary life on ordinary terms. God's terms of faithfulness, generosity, and joy give the orientation needed to live in the presence of our God. Live the extraordinary life, embrace new mission behaviors, express generosity in all areas of your life this fall.