

## **Do You Need Prayer?**

This book is a collection of posts I did while going out to the Oceanside strand.

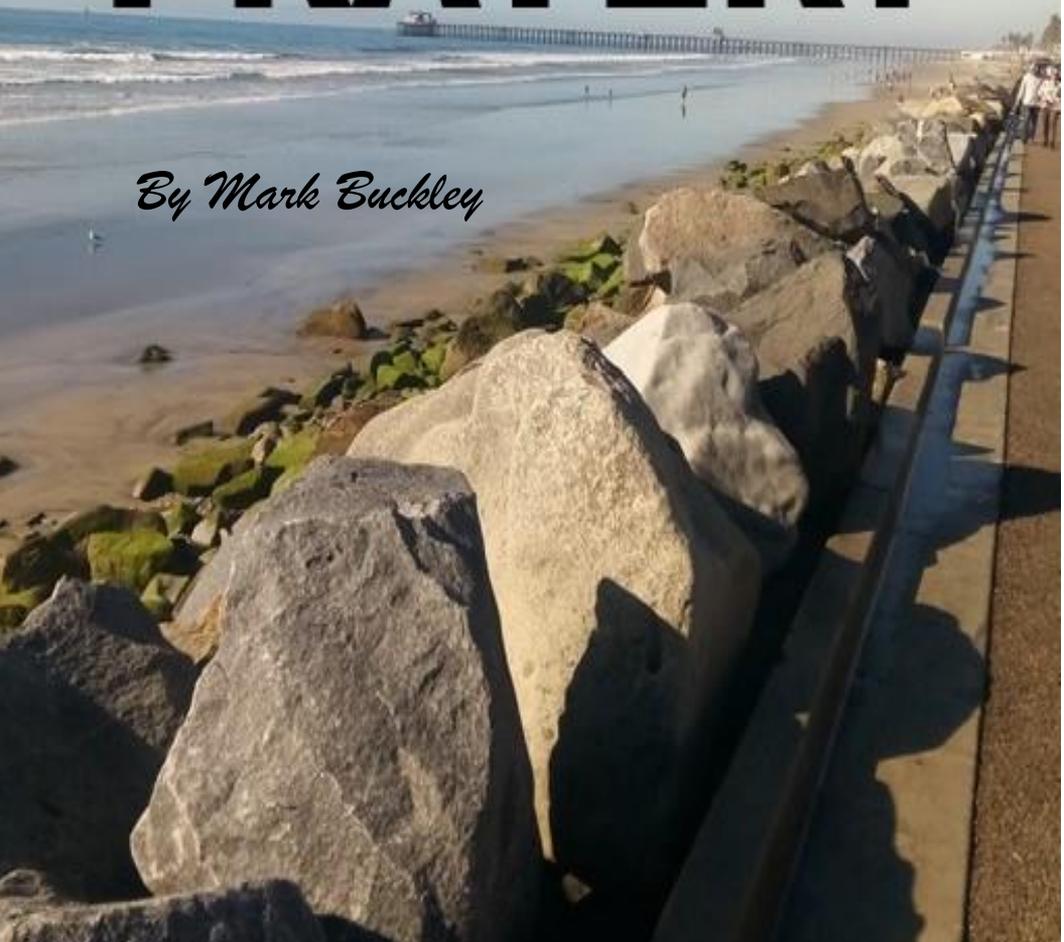
I was initially furloughed from my job because of COVID and as time went on, I was officially laid off and out of work. My plan was to work a couple more years until I was seventy, but God had another job for me. Most of my life I suffered from depression and my normal response to my predicament would be WHY ME? However, this time I stopped and prayed God You gave me this time what do You desire of me. That night I had a dream about having a shirt made, on the front it said, “Do You Need Prayer?” and on the back, “I’ll Pray With You.” I remember the “t” in with was in red to look like a cross. I remember telling Teri, my wife, about the dream and she said that it sounds like God. I wish I could tell you that the next day I went out to get the shirts made, but I didn’t. I continued to think that it was strange and how strange it would be to walk around with this shirt on and I continued to put it off. Almost every night I had the dream and finally after two weeks of ignoring God’s prompting, I went and had the shirts made. This is when COVID was at its height and any place I could think of going I would have to wear a mask, but God put it on my heart to walk at the strand in Oceanside where I wouldn’t have to wear one. I live about four miles from the strand but never went there to walk. My first day was July 4<sup>th</sup>, 2020 and the following is a collection of my experiences at my new job.

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# DO YOU NEED PRAYER?

*By Mark Buckley*



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## Introduction

When I was young, I was raised catholic so the only prayers I remember is the Our Father and Hail Mary. As I got older and didn't have to go to church, I didn't pray at all. I suffered from depression most of my life and tried to take my life six different times and the last time was in April 1998. I had enough pills to kill me three times over as I sat on a beach in La Jolla. This was the first time I remember praying. I was sitting on a rock looking over the beautiful ocean. I didn't feel nervous, and in a way was glad that I would never have to worry about anything again. As I sat there, I listened to the sounds the waves made crashing over the rocks. I took my container of pills out of my pocket and opened it. This was the first time in my life I decided to talk to God. I said, "God I understand that I don't deserve to be in heaven for what I'm about to do and the man I am, but I don't believe I belong in hell either. I've been a good person, there isn't anyone that could say I did anything terrible to them. I never was unfaithful to my wife and I treated my parents with respect. I loved my children the best I could and have tried to take care of their needs. I know I haven't gone to church and I understand that I don't deserve to go to heaven. I could understand why you wouldn't want me there. How about we just end it here? Let me just go to sleep and never wake up and it will be as if I was never here. It would have been better if I wasn't anyway. What do you say? I waited a moment almost expecting a response. Do you believe that the first time I decided to talk to God I told him He messed up? I was saying, you made a mistake, you made me. You did okay with the earth, ocean, mountains and the universe in general, but when you made me you messed up." God answered my prayer, and the answer was no. Even as kids we hate to hear the word no and it doesn't get any better as we get older, but as good parents we tell our children no, more than yes because we want to protect them. I was taken to the hospital where my family was called in and told they were not sure if I was going to make it. If I did survive, I might have severe liver problems and they were not sure how much brain damage was caused. I was in a coma for several days and awoke with no side effects. When I awoke my mind wasn't clear, and I was confused on what had happened. Then it came to me and I couldn't believe I was still alive. If there was a God why would He do this to me?

After a week I was released from the hospital and when I got home, I had no idea what to do. I already lost my job and since I thought I would be dead by now and I didn't have a contingency plan. The next day I was home alone when my daughter's boyfriend, Justin, who took her to the hospital to see me came over and handed me a book entitled Prison to Praise. This was one of the first times I met him and yet he had the courage to approach this obviously troubled man and offer help. He told me that maybe this book would be able to help me sort things out. I thanked him for the book and placed the book on the end table.

The next morning, I picked up the book, "Prison to Praise," and sat down and read the entire book. The book described how thanking God changed his life. The book talked about Christianity, something I knew nothing about and how he became a chaplain in the army helping people. The main principle I received from the book was to thank God each day for everything you have in your life. The fact we are breathing and had the opportunity to improve our life each day was a miracle. It spoke of putting the focus on God, not yourself and to trust in Him. All these ideas were new to me. After I was finished reading, I knelt in front of the couch, put my hands together and started thinking of things to thank God for. I started by thanking Him for my wife, my daughter, my son, and sister. I then went on to thank God for my mother, father, brother, and friends. The more I thanked God, the more there was to be thankful for. After several minutes of thanking God, I got up and sat on the couch. I felt different, in fact I felt pretty good. Even with all the problems I had, at that moment I felt better than I remember feeling in a long time. So, my second prayer was to thank God and how He loves to hear the gratitude of His children.

That Sunday Justin invited us to his church. I figured since I've been talking to God each day it was time to visit Him at home. The only church I had ever attended before was Catholic Church when I was young. Today however, I was about to attend a Christian church. I had no idea what to expect, but I knew I was searching for something that was missing in my life and this seemed as good a place as any to look. From before I was born God knew I was going to be sitting in this church on that chair on that day. I went there a few Sundays before God finished turning my old heart of stone into a heart of flesh. I remember when the pastor asked if anyone wanted a personal relationship with Jesus to raise their hand. It wasn't only my hand that went up, but my heart opened that day along with my eyes. My new life and journey were about to begin.

I've talked to many Christians about the change in their lives that happened when they received Jesus as Lord and Savior and each one had something different that changed within them. I remember two things that changed almost immediately was the way I looked at people. I rarely even noticed or cared about them at all. I was so wrapped up in my own life, but now things were different. The homeless were no longer bums to me but unfortunate people that need my help, the elderly no longer were just someone I needed to pass on the road, but someone who had lived most of their lives and would like to share their story with someone who would listen, and children were not a bother, but a blessing. The other thing that changed was I had to do something to help others, I had to serve.

That week I called the pastor at the church and told them I was just saved, and I wanted to serve in some way. I was asked about my background and I told them I've been in the food service industry all my life, including food service design. The pastor told me that was unbelievable because they had a company designing a large food service for the school and church. They were about to ask the board for approval, but no one knew anything about food service and asked if I could look over the plans and make any suggestions. I stopped and was given a copy of the plans and was told the cost was going to be over \$400,000. After looking through the plans I made page after page of recommendations basically that the plans were not practical and to operate would be difficult. The pastor asked if I could meet with the board of elders and go over my suggestions. I was excited to help. On the evening I arrived to find out there was about twenty people there, so I was a little nervous. They opened the meeting with prayer from one of the elders. The gentleman reminded me of Morgan Freeman and had the voice to go with it. The prayer was beautiful, and I think included every scripture in the bible. The louder he spoke the smaller I felt as if I didn't deserve to be in the same room. When he was finished, I think God and all the angels gave him a standing ovation. Then the spotlight was on me and I was in my arena. I went through my notes about the pitfalls of the plans along with my idea of having a food service in a different location that would save the church about \$300,000. Everyone seemed very impressed and asked if I would stay on the committee to oversee the project. I was flying high, then it happened. The lead pastor asked if I would close in prayer. My first instinct was to simply say, no and run out of the building, but how would that look. With heads bowed I

started. I must have sounded like Porky Pig on speed. It was terrible, I don't even remember what I said. When I was done, I looked up and I can still see the frightening stare on everyone's face and thinking how the angels must be booing. They probably thought I was speaking in tongues. I couldn't get out of there quick enough. By the time I got to my car I was crying out loud, I was so embarrassed and worst of all I felt I let Jesus down. As I started home and apologizing to God for that horrible prayer, I felt Him next to me laughing. I felt as if He said that is not what prayer is all about, it's about talking to your Dad. I'm now one of His children and think of the time in prayer as spending quality time with him and you know how much He loves to hear His children tell Him how much they love Him.

I continued to volunteer with any outreach that involved food, which there were plenty of opportunities. Along with cooking I have the gift of organizing different kinds of catered functions since most of my experience was in food service management and went on to organize the events as well. God was giving me more opportunities to serve and growing me spiritually as He gave me more responsibilities. One of the things I loved about serving was that I was doing it with my church family and seeing the joy that it brought them to serve. I was learning the power of prayer and before we would start any event we began in prayer. I wanted to do more outreaches so I started a group called the CIA Christians in Action with the idea if someone had an outreach that was on their heart, we would come together to do it.

Along with serving I was asked to share my testimony on depression during Sunday service. I was so nervous, and I had to share it for three services and the sanctuary sat over one thousand people. This took some serious prayer and preparation. Once I got up to speak, I felt as if it wasn't me speaking, but that I was in the audience listening as if I never heard it before. After service I was asked to stand at the door and greet people as they left. So many people went out of their way to thank me and share their story about depression. I felt this is what I was created to do. After that I felt called to write a book about my experience with depression and how God worked it for His glory.

I started a daily routine of walking and praying first thing in the morning, reading the bible so I read through the it each year, and kept a journal.

God didn't heal me of my depression like He did the blind, paralytic, and the other healings, but like so many other doctors in my past He gave me a prescription. Something I could take any time I needed, was always available and hopefully addictive. The medicine was prayer and I learned when I started getting depressed or have angry thoughts, I took them before my Father and asked that He would calm my spirit. It took time and dedication, but it was the best medicine and kept me close to my Dad.

I finished my book, but couldn't afford to have it professionally published, but when my pastor read it, he had the church make copies of it so that it was available to them to anyone who wanted it. Since the book was helping others combat their own depression, I felt lead to do a class called Getting Over Depression at the church. After talking it over with the pastor he encouraged me and gave me a classroom to use. Each class I felt the Holy Spirit leading me and I always opened in prayer. I began to think that my testimony on depression was one of the greatest gifts God had given me.

Teri and I went on a mission trip to help an orphanage in Mexico. I was asked to do the nightly devotional on one of the nights but didn't know what to speak on. We stayed three days and slept in tents. It was very cold at night and there was nowhere to shower. I loved serving but was getting homesick after only one night. Then it was put on my heart to do a devotional about heaven and that we should live our life homesick for our true home. When we got back from Mexico heaven was heavy on my heart and I shared it with a sister at church. She asked if I ever read the book, "Heaven," by Randy Alcorn and loaned me her copy to read. I was so excited about what I read that I followed up to find there was a study on the book along with teaching DVD's. I asked my pastor again about teaching a class this time on Heaven. I told them one of the reason people are depressed is that they see no hope of things getting better and that heaven was that answer. Again, he helped me get the notes printed and gave me a classroom with everything I needed. The class went so well that my pastor invited me to do the eight-week class in the sanctuary on Wednesday night. I continued to feel more and more comfortable speaking in front of others.

My pastor whom I loved had been sick for a long time and was suffering. God called him home and I lost my mentor and friend. My church didn't seem the same as I left to find another church to fit in.

Then COVID hit and all the churches were closed, and I was furloughed from my job. A couple of months later I was officially laid off at the age of sixty-eight. My plan was to work until I was seventy save up some money and buy a trailer and do some traveling. There is a saying, “If you want to make God laugh tell Him your plans.” When the reality came that my plans were not to come to pass instead of going back to my old self and ask God why poor me, I said Lord You gave me this time what would You like me to do? The answer came that night in a dream as I saw a T-Shirt that said in the front, “Do You Need prayer” and the back, “I’ll Pray With You” with the letter “t” highlighted in red. The next day I told Teri my dream and she told me it sounds like God wants you to do something. I wish I could tell you that I went out the next day and had those shirts made, but I didn’t. I continued to think how strange this was and where would I wear a shirt like this any way. Then that night I had the dream again and I was wearing the shirt as I was walking along the strand in Oceanside. I live only four miles from this beautiful place, but never went there to walk along the beach. I was getting a little more nervous because what would people think of this weird old guy walking down the strand with this strange T-shirt? Finally, one night it was so clear, I pictured me and my dog, Brando walking down on a strand that I never saw before. The next day I went to have these shirts made. My first day was July 4<sup>th</sup>, 2020 and this book is a collection of posts I wrote on my journey. I look back and realize the strand was the only place this ministry could have worked, I was still able to see people’s faces, since most didn’t wear masks on the beach, at a time where so many were desperate for prayer and the beach was one of the last sanctuaries available.

The last year and a half have been the best time of my life and God’s plan are so much better than mine.

The Christian walk is much like starting a new job as a matter of fact the word rewards in the bible is translated from the Greek word misthos, which means wages. Like any new job you start at the bottom and work your way up. You use the things that you know and have experienced while learning new talents. God first used me to be a servant and to put on my heart there is much more in life than serving yourself, He used the talents that I already acquired, then He used my testimony that I already knew, to use me as a speaker, then a writer writing what I already experienced and had the Holy Spirit fill in the blanks, a teacher on depression I subject I knew well, a teacher of a subject that inspired me

and drew even closer to my Lord, and a prayer warrior. I'm not sure what might be next, but I look forward to each day with anticipation on what God is going to do in my life.

## First Day Praying

7/4/20

It's been about three weeks since I felt called to have shirts made that say Do You Need prayer? and on the back, I will Pray with You and then go out to the strand to pray. I got up this morning not feeling very well and doubting if I could do this. I got in my car thinking of all the negative things that could happen and then I turned to my Lord in prayer. I realized this is something that Satan didn't want me to do and was going to try to stop me. Once I found a parking space and got out of my car, I was feeling better. I took Brando, my dog, out and put his leash on. As I walked, I was praying that what I was doing honored God and that He would take charge and guide me today. There were a lot of people at the strand, but still not a normal 4<sup>th</sup> of July because of COVID. As I passed people some would read the shirt and look down so I wouldn't bother them, but those who made eye contact I would smile and say good morning. It wasn't long until two women saw my shirt and one said she really needed prayer. They were vacationing at one the rentals on the strand and it was something a group of them with their families did every 4<sup>th</sup> of July. I introduced myself and something strange happened I wasn't nervous at all but felt this peace about me as if I've been doing this all along. I asked what she needed prayer for, and she told me that her brother fell off a ladder and was in intensive care and they weren't sure if he was going to make it. Her other request was for her marriage. They were not doing well, and he decided not to even come, but stayed at home. I was thinking on how I should pray, and I felt the Holy Spirit guide me and move me aside and He I got this. All nervousness left me, and she put out her hands and I held them as I started. I remember thanking God for this opportunity and how He loves it when His children come before Him. The rest was as if I was standing outside listening to this love filled and encouraging prayer. At the end we were both crying, and she gave me a hug and thanked me. I said my goodbyes and continued my walk. As I continued my walk, I felt this chill running up and down my body and wondered what just happened. My smile got even bigger as I greeted all that passed by with a good morning. I prayed with a couple of other people mostly that God would watch over them and their families as they enjoyed a wonderful day. Another couple asked for prayer for our country. Several people stopped and wanted to pet Brando and say how handsome he was. When I got back to my car, I thanked God for an awesome day and that He would allow me to do something so special. Driving home I thought this is

what I was created to do and already looked forward to tomorrow's adventure.

### **My Younger Brother in Christ**

7/6/20

I just got back from the beach and couldn't wait to write about what happened today. One thing that I have noticed that since the issue of racism has been in the spotlight people don't interact, the way they used to. People seem to be uncertain on what to do or say. Unlike me, super Christian, where I treat everyone equally or so I thought. I was walking along the strand saying good morning to anyone that made eye contact with me. Then up ahead I saw a young man a few shades darker than me with no shirt, several tattoos, sweaty and a lot of energy. He saw me coming and yelled come we need to pray. I thought Lord if this is the way I'm going to die so be it, just don't have the coroner list it as COVID. I stopped and asked what would you like to pray for? He grabbed my hand and he started to pray. He first thanked God for breath, health, the ocean and the people he was surrounded with. Then he asked for a blessing for everyone at the beach today that they would be safe and enjoy the time they have. When he was done, I was already choked up and just looked at him and told him how much he blessed me, and he said the same and we shook hands and I asked if it was okay to give him a hug. He said he was sweaty but if I didn't mind that. I hugged him and then we fist bumped and I told him that I loved him, and he said he loved me to and to take care. I must have cried and thanked God halfway down the strand until He put someone else in my path. It's amazing we ask God to bless our day and when He does, we're surprised. Our Father sure knows how to give good gifts. How can you not love a Father like that?

### **A Great Day at the Harbor**

7/10/20

Wow what a wonderful day so far. I went out as I have been the last few days with my "Do You Need Prayer" shirt. However today instead of going down to the Oceanside Pier I felt led to go to the harbor. I walked pass the shops to the beach and there weren't many people and I started thinking this wasn't a good idea. I then passed a lady, and she was starting a new ministry called His Love Restores and asked for prayer for it. We talked for a few minutes about how good our God is then I continued my walk feeling the love of the Holy Spirit. On my way back

I met a dear brother in Christ that I hadn't seen for a while. He was going through some physical challenges and after we caught up I prayed for him with several people looking on. Just as I left him a woman asked for prayer she was going through a divorce. After praying for her she asked for prayer for her husband which blessed me, and we prayed for him. There was a young man with 2 dogs, and I made eye contact and he smiled and gave me a thumbs up. I went to my car and the young man followed me and asked if I would pray with him. Of course, I said and asked if he wanted me to stay six feet away and he asked if I would hold his hands as we prayed. I asked what he needed prayer for, and he told me he has been blessed and was hoping for guidance. The Holy Spirit took over right then and spoke to this young man. We looked at each other and with tears in our eyes he hugged me and neither one of us wanted to let go. He thanked me again and left. I sat in my car crying and praising God. He still uses the foolish things of this world.

### **Praying on the Beach**

7/14/20

God is good all the time and all of the time God is good. I woke up this morning not feeling well I have problems with my intestine at times. I was debating whether to go down to the pier, but felt I made a commitment to God to honor Him by this small gesture. I made it down there and parked my car and wasn't sure if I could do this today. I started walking and was feeling better. By the time I made it down to the strand I was doing okay and started my regiment of saying good morning to anyone that looked up. I didn't go very far when a young lady stopped on her bike and with tears in her eyes she asked for prayer because they just put her dog to sleep the day before. I always ask if they wanted me to step back a little, but most people want to be touched. She grabbed my hand and I prayed when I was done, I looked up and she said God must of put you here for me today and continued to thank me and rode away. Not too much further I young lady with a baby in a stroller asked for prayer. Her husband is in prison and she is alone with their first child. As always, the Holy Spirit took over and said I got this. It was a prayer of hope and comfort that brought us both to tears. She hugged me and said she wasn't sure how she was going to make it through the day and God knew she needed some help. I gave her my getting over depression website that has my email. On the way back 5 ladies stopped, and one said we all need prayer. So, I asked what can I pray for and they pointed to one of the ladies and told me she has been

having a hard time sleeping. I thought what a blessing that all of these ladies new this about their friend. We all held hands and prayed not only for their friend but that each one would be blessed. Just before I was going to go up another woman stopped me, and she asked for prayer for her children. She was afraid of the influence of others on them, and she wants to make sure that they knew Jesus. I got a lot of “we all need prayer, or our country needs prayer.” As I was going up the ramp a man that I see each day yelled out, “there’s the guy that prays”. I thought what an awesome title. Well he said the old guy that prays. God knows He must keep me humble. Thank you, Lord, for another awesome day.

### **Praying on Time**

7/25/21

I didn’t want to start this post about how great a day I had at the beach, if you’ve read some of them, I’m sure you got the jest by now. So instead of saying I had a great day, I had an awesome day. God has put so many wonderful people in my life. When I first arrived a couple of ladies saw me and told me I was late. I apologized telling them I was trying to go down different times to meet more people. They laughed and forgave me. As I walked, I said good morning to whoever looked up and a brother and sister approached me they appeared to be in their early twenties. He had a shirt and pants that were covered with scriptures. I asked what they would like prayer for and they both wanted a closer walk with the Lord and that their family would grow closer to God. It’s amazing when I pray how the Holy Spirit takes over and that I’m only there for decoration. I know for those who know me are thinking that’s not much of a decoration. After I prayed the girl asked if I was a pastor and I just told her no, only a sinner God wanted to use. A little way down a man came to me asking for prayer for his son that was in juvenile hall. He said he was hoping that his son wouldn’t make the same mistakes he did and again the perfect prayer as we hugged afterwards. On my way back I met these two lovely ladies. The one was so glad that I came back today because she was going to ask for prayer for her friend. Her friend was there today and found out she has colon cancer. As we prayed two other ladies walked by and when I lifted my head up, they also asked for prayer. I asked them to join us, and I explained that the one lady has cancer. The other lady asked for prayer and guidance so the five of us were standing on the strand praying to our loving Father. When they left, I kneeled on a rock next to the road and thanked God for such an awesome opportunity. I wonder

what people think when they see others praying. I hope that it might give some comfort to think there is a way, a truth, and a life. I might be getting called back to work soon, which is great, but I'm sure going to miss these mornings.

### **My Brother Mark**

7/26/20

Just got back from walking on the beach. If anyone tells you God doesn't listen or care for His children, don't believe them for a second. I was walking today when two ladies came up and asked if I would pray with them. I asked what they would like prayer for and the one told me that her brother just passed away the other day and he was a believer, and she was looking for comfort. I introduced myself as I always do, and the lady started to cry. Her brother's name was Mark and said how much God must love her to reassure her of where her brother is now. We held hands and prayed and when I was done, she took over and prayed for me and my ministry. I continued walking and I always notice when I say good morning that less than half of the people say good morning back. I'm here at the most beautiful place at the beach and people are still troubled. The enemy continues to try to divide us whether racism or the masked and the unmasked. Satan knows if he can keep God's children divided, we will have a harder time fulfilling our purpose. Just before I got into my car a man saw my shirt and asked if I would pray for his son who was in prison. This was the third person I prayed with that had a son in prison. You look around and can only imagine how hard it must be to be young in this generation. Please pray for them, they need God so desperately.

### **My Prayer Partner Brando**

7/27/20

Today my prayer partner, Brando and I went to the strand and the harbor. Brando is my yellow Labrador prayer warrior. I haven't watched the news in over a year and limit my time on facebook because of all the regurgitated news stories. When I'm there focused on God there is no racism, I've prayed with everyone, you get to see faces and children playing, so for that time there is no COVID or government restrictions. For me God used COVID to direct me in a job that He wanted me to do.. It seems like I pray for more people each day and they are praying for me. Just saying good morning brightens a person's day. Today somebody even flagged me down to let me know that someone was injured and needed prayer. That's great I thought that God

had made me a prayer medic. God has turned my mourning into dancing. Before Christ I was the worst person I knew. Suffering from depression made me so self-focused I didn't have time for anyone else, including my family. Being born again is truly that, God took my old heart of stone and in return He blessed me with a heart of flesh. I'm still a sinner and without Christ's love and the Holy Spirit I could have easily slipped back into the horrible person. Ever feel as if you are hanging on by a thread? Don't worry God is holding onto the other end.

### **Iron Sharpens Iron at the Strand**

7/28/20

Many of you have read my days at the beach posts, they all seem to start what a great day. So, from now on just assume I had a great day unless otherwise specified. Today was my Proverbs 27:17 As iron sharpens iron, so a man sharpens the countenance of his friend. First person that stopped me was a street preacher who wanted prayer for guidance after I prayed, he prayed for me, it was a wonderful time together. Just a little further down I met a gentleman I prayed for a couple of days ago. He thanked me again for my prayer and asked to pray for me. It was a beautiful prayer and we hugged. A gentleman I passed almost every day I finally got his name yesterday passed by and I yelled out his name and he yelled back mine and said God bless you. The last person on my journey was going in for chemotherapy for a condition that has been going on for a while. He told me how much he loved God and trusted Him. More people than normal waved commented on how much they liked my shirt or said we all need prayer. You think sometimes that you're going out to bless God and others, but He knows sometimes the spiritual gas tank is running low and you need a fill-up. Thank you, Lord, for topping me off and please continue to help me fulfill the purpose you have created me for. I wish I could understand this amazing love you have for us; may we just receive it and share with others.

### **Vet in Need of Prayer**

7/31/20

Just got back from church. Before I made it to the strand, in the parking lot, a young man asked if I would pray for him and his friends. I went over to his car and two of his friends were there. The four of us standing there, different colors in God's pallet. One thing God has shown me you need all kinds of colors to paint a masterpiece. I asked what they would like prayer for and they all just wanted a closer walk with God. I could

only imagine how pleased God was with their request. After the Holy Spirit was finished with His prayer, we all hugged and thanked God for His goodness. God must have a hedge of protection around me, I don't wear a mask, I'm 68 years old, diabetic, obese and I feel healthier now than I have for a long time. My next request came from a young girl around 12 and she wanted prayer for her brother who was about to have surgery. I wanted to make sure I stood far enough away and not to touch, because of what people might think. I'm afraid I was more concerned about the proper appearance than the prayer, but what a blessing to see this young girl seek God for her little brother. The last person was a true miracle. I was getting into my car when the person behind me said I need prayer. I can tell that he was sitting there in desperation. He was a marine vet recently discharged and had been sitting in his car for a while. He started to pray while he was crying. He told God that he knew he messed up his life and didn't know what to do. He continued saying I asked You for a sign and you brought me this man with a shirt that asked me if I need prayer. The man was suffering from depression had a wife and 3 children and has been having a difficult time adjusting to civilian life. Since I knew a thing or two about depression, I was able to relate to his feelings. When I prayed it was like God was just speaking to Him on how He had a plan and a purpose for Him and that he was no mistake, because God doesn't make mistakes. He had a job for him to do and he is perfectly equipped to do that job. I spoke with him for at least 15 minutes and gave him my getting over depression card with my phone number. Imagine God used me to answer his prayer. He sure does use the foolish things of this world.

### **Jesus Threw Me a Party**

8/5/20

It's been five weeks now that I have been going to the beach and harbor with my "Do You Need Prayer?" shirt and for some reason Jesus decided to throw me a party today. I'm normally down there about an hour and a half, but today I didn't want to leave, and I was there over 3 hours. It started with a young couple who needed prayer for their uncle who just had surgery. A little farther down I met a brother and sister in Christ whom I love Jack and Virginia. We just talked about our love for Jesus and what He was doing in our lives and then we prayed for each other. It was wonderful being with them. A walked a few feet and there was a man I see almost every day and I finally introduced myself. He talked about a Bible study he does, and we encouraged each other and gave God the glory. As I was praying with him another gentleman said I

need prayer I'll catch up with you in a moment. I caught up with him and he told me how he used to do the food for the homeless in San Diego and how he lives in Oceanside now and wanted prayer for God's guidance. We talked about our love for the Lord and we prayed. Just then a red truck stopped, and it was Pastor Adam from a church I attended. It was so great seeing him, but he was blocking traffic and had to go after a short conversation. On my way back I met up with him again and this time we had time to talk and to share. He asked for prayer for him and the church in general and we prayed and lifted up our Lord. Just down the road someone asked if I needed prayer and I said always. After he prayed, he shared his testimony that he was in the Christian Bikers for Christ and an accident he was in. It was an amazing testimony, and I shared a little about my Getting Over Depression ministry. I was flying with joy and just smiled as I walked along saying good morning and thanking God for such a magnificent day, and today I noticed more people smiling back. I dragged my poor dog along with me and we went to the harbor. There I met a pastor's wife from Imperial Valley. She was an awesome lady and we talked about her ministry and how they served the Lord in Brazil. She shared some of the heartaches they were currently experiencing because of the virus, but she still knew God was in control. Over three hours later I made it back to the car and the party was over, and I stopped to thank my host for a wonderful time. When my children were little, I would surprise them sometimes with a gift, no reason except the fact that they were my children and I wanted to show them that I loved them. Today I was on the receiving end of a gift there was no reason for me to receive this spectacular gift only that I'm a child of my heavenly Father and He just wanted to show me how much He loves me. Thank you Abba.

### **Making New Friends**

8/14/20

This makes six weeks that my prayer partner, Brando and I have been going down to the strand and harbor. I continue to pray for others, just yesterday a young man early twenties asked for prayer. He just got out of prison and was hoping his girlfriend was going to wait for him, but he couldn't locate her. His prayer however was to be a better man to have a closer walk with God and to have Him guide him. The day before was another young man about the same age. He asked for prayer because he came to live in California with his girlfriend and the day before she went to his work with all of his stuff and told him not to come back. Instead of seeking revenge his prayer was for travel mercies as he was taking a

bus to go home and to have a closer walk with Jesus. After I prayed, he let out a loud shout and said he is Native American and that's how they end their prayer.

When I started out on this adventure hardly anyone looked up when I said good morning, not knowing who this crazy old man was. As time as gone by, I see a lot of the same people and they started looking up and saying good morning. When they did that, I would say I've seen you before and thought it would be nice to call you by name, my name is Mark. Maybe not the smartest thing to do since my memory is not the best. Now it's become more than just a good morning, we stop and talk to each other. We share stories of our lives, things that are happening, how good God is and avoid talking about the evil that is happening in the world. I have a new fellowship and we glad to see each other. This time that I thought I was giving to God has been a special time of peace that God has given to me. There are still plenty of people that see me coming and turn away, pretend to talk on their phone, put an angry expression on their face or start talking to the person they are walking with and that's okay. I just see them now as future friends. No matter how bad things become it will never surpass the good that is in God.

### **Amazing Day and Dragonfly**

8/16/20

I had an amazing day today at the beach. I was finding myself rehearsing prayers and what I may say to someone. I was starting to lose the reason God wanted me doing this in the first place, that He would speak to them through the Holy Spirit and not me. So today I prayed that God would move me out of the way and that I would stand by and listen to His words to His children. My prayer was answered. I was walking and a man from a way off yelling, "I need a prayer." I walked to him and he wanted a closer relationship with God and that his marriage was failing, and he wanted to be more of a man that would honor God. It was a wonderful prayer and when it was over, we both had tears rolling down our cheeks. We both hugged and I continued on my way. A young man called out "can I have a prayer?" I felt like a hot dog vendor at a baseball game. He shared that his mother was all alone and she was getting depressed and needed guidance on what to do. Again, I stepped aside and let the Holy Spirit speak to this young man. The words touched his heart and he thanked me, even though I was just there to be inspired myself. Yesterday this beautiful young woman was walking with her boyfriend and they stopped so my Brando and I walked past them. After a few steps I felt a touch on my shoulder and this

young lady said, “Sir I would like you to have this, it belongs to you.” It was this painted rock with a dragonfly painted on it. I thanked her and said have a blessed day. When I got home, I took the rock from my pocket and wondered why she thought it belonged to me and then I turned it around and the words Love, Faith and Hope are written on the back. God has put me on an amazing path these last six weeks a time I wouldn’t trade for anything. I thought the journey was to tell others how much God loves them, and it turned out to be a journey to tell me how much He loves me.

### **Praying to Cure Cancer**

8/21/20

The last couple of days have been extraordinary. It’s as if God is promoting me to bigger prayers. I’ve prayed for addiction, for a teenage boy who wanted to forgive someone that abused him and guidance of a woman’s marriage. One thing I love is the way God plans my schedule making sure I meet the people He wants me to pray with. When I walk the strand, I pray to see if God wants me to also go to the harbor. Yesterday He did and put someone, that was dealing with addiction, in my path. God has taught me to step aside and let the Holy Spirit do His job. Today however I was just to walk the strand where a lady called to me from across the road and yelled “I need prayer”. She wanted a stronger marriage and knew she needed God to make it happen. It was amazing how the Holy Spirit spoke to her and when I looked up the tears were rolling down her cheek. She said thank you several times, and I said God gets the glory. More and more people recognize me since it’s been seven weeks now and are saying good morning back when I say it. I have a couple of regulars I’ve prayed for and yesterday we all prayed together. A gentleman stopped on his bike and said, “your Mark”. I looked at him and had no idea who he was. He told me we never met, but he heard other people call out my name and he introduced himself. When I got to my car a man motioned me from across the street. He asked questions about my prayer ministry and we talked for a little while. On my way home I had to stop to fill up my water bottles. When I got there a Hispanic woman was just finishing filling hers. I greeted her and started to fill mine when I heard a voice coming from a car. It was the woman and she asked if I would pray with her for her dad who has cancer. Her dad, mom and daughter were in the car, I asked if I could touch his shoulder when I prayed. As I was saying the prayer, she was repeating it in Spanish to her dad. I could feel the tingling in the hand that was touching her dad. When I looked up everyone in the car

was crying, including myself. They thanked me and I pointed upward. I finished filling my bottles and suddenly, I burst into tears and cried out why do you love me this much. You're trusting me with your children, you bless me every day and I know I'm not worthy of this honor. You arrange my schedule to meet with your children. This has been the most miraculous journey I've been on and God has put me in a few. I might be getting back to work soon, but I'm sure going to miss these moments.

### **A Hug from Jesus**

8/26/20

There are fewer people at the beach these days, but God is still working. I have a great praise report. Last week I prayed with this lovely lady and she wanted to strengthen her marriage and have a closer walk with Jesus. Lately in my prayers the Holy Spirit has me pray that today in a special moment of silence that the person would feel Jesus arms around them and that they will know how much He loves them. She told me that night she felt Him like never before and it calmed her so much she said it was as if she fell asleep in His arms. She thanked me again and I told her it has nothing to do with me it's all about Jesus and His love for us. On my way back there was a lady waiting for me. She asked if I would please pray for her. I asked her what she needed prayer for, and she said everything as she started to cry. I told my prayer partner, Brando, to sit a little bit away since she had a small dog with her. When we were finished, she looked down at her dog and said this is a miracle, because her dog always barks, but this time he just sat there. I wanted to hug her, but she was wearing a mask and I wanted to be respectful, but she seemed better, and I think she was even smiling.

When I got to my car, I checked my phone since I don't bring it with me and there was a message from my boss at Chefs Toys. I thought what great timing he's bringing me back and just in time. When I called him back, he said I have bad news. My job was eliminated, and they are taking me off furlough. Suddenly, I panicked and thought what am I going to do? It was as if Jesus was standing there laughing at me. It was as if He said, "the last 2 months you have been telling people how much I love them and that they need to put their trust in me. It took you less than 5 minutes to fall into fear. If you are going to be obedient and do this, you need to learn to walk the talk. Have I ever let you down my friend?" I guess I just needed a hug from my friend. Yesterday is history, tomorrow a mystery, today a gift that is why they call it the present. One day at a time Lord one day at a time.

## **Be Joyful in the Lord**

8/27/20

I had fun at the beach today. I believe when you do God's will, you should do it joyfully. Most of the people that know me, know that I'm very shy and serious most of the time, but for my Lord I decided to be a little more jovial. I feel one of the nicest gifts you can give someone is a reason to laugh. More and more people are beginning to know me and say good morning back or the most popular one is, "how are you?" I got tired of saying fine so now I say, "I'm old and ugly, but with God's help I'm dealing with it." That doesn't only make the person I'm talking to laugh but anyone in earshot. I would get several people complementing me on how handsome Brando, my dog is. So today when someone said that I said, "he really isn't that good looking it's just that when he's standing next to me, it makes him look better." Two young gentlemen were sitting on a rock. You ever notice the older you are the younger everyone else seems. Anyone older than me is either running for president or some other political office. The young men said hello and the one asked if prayer works. I said without a doubt prayer works. I told them before I started praying for my dog, he was a Jehovah Witness, now look at him he is my prayer partner. Then I told said, "seriously I've seen so many miracles and people's life changed especially mine. God not only answers prayers, He enjoys the time you spend with Him."

I went all the way up and down the strand and I didn't pray for anyone but felt good that God could use this old fool. Just before I got to my car a young couple looked my way and the woman said we can use prayer. "I would love to. What do you need prayer for?" They looked at each other and she said I guess clarity in what we should be doing. We held hands as the Holy Spirit had His way. It was beautiful as always and personal to the people I'm praying with. When I looked up tears were streaming from her face and she gave me the biggest hug and she didn't want to let go. They both kept saying thank you and I said "no, thank you. You have no idea what a privilege it is to be able to pray with wonderful people like you and to be able to honor God by doing it." She looked at me and said thank you for wearing that shirt then and I told her if I wasn't wearing it would be gross. She hugged me one more time and said thank you for making us laugh.

## **Hugging Thursday**

9/10/20

I must have missed the memo that it was hugging Thursday today. It was a wonderful day. I stopped and talked to people that I've said good morning to in the past, but today they wanted to spend some time and talk about Dad. One lady was jogging and as she passed, she yelled, "God told me to pray for you and that's what I'm doing." A young man was passing me in his truck and yelled, "thank you, you made my day." Other people that I've prayed for are introducing me to other people. There were so many good mornings, love your shirt and have a blessed day I lost count. Brando had his average day of people saying how wonderful and beautiful he was as he gave high fives, kisses and smelled the occasional dog butt. I'm sure glad us humans didn't pick up that trait. I felt led to go to the harbor today and as I said good morning, most would smile and return the greeting. I then prayed for a couple that wanted their friendship blessed. I always ask where they would like me to stand, and I stood a couple feet away. After God got finished talking to them the woman was crying and said I can't help it and gave me a hug and straightened out my back. Have you ever been hugged by a stranger and it was as if Jesus was hugging you himself? That was today. I got in my car feeling so loved I just wanted to thank Him.

I know I need to find work as the unemployment is running out, but I would never have given up this experience God has blessed me with. It's going to be an unbelievable family reunion when I get home.

## **God's Timing and Love**

9/13/20

God's timing and love is always perfect. I've seen it more and more as I walk the strand in Oceanside. Today seemed as if God wasn't going to have me pray with anyone as I walked up and down the strand. I talked to a few people and we shared our faith in Christ. I was walking to my car when this young couple walking their dog came up to me. They said this was the third time they passed me today and worked up the courage to ask me to pray for them. I asked what they needed prayer for? It was general request for health and for our country, but nothing specific. We prayed for their marriage and comfort. I'm not sure how it came up, but I brought up my struggle with depression and how I tried to end my life 22 years ago. The young lady stuttered a little and said if you wouldn't mind could you tell me what was happening when I decided to commit suicide. She told me she was asking because she was suffering from depression and the strain it was taking on both of their lives. I shared

my testimony and what I went through and how God freed me from depression and what I've been doing to stay focused on Him. I believe testimonies is our greatest gift to give to others

*2 Corinthians 1:3-4 Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies and God of all comfort, <sup>4</sup> who comforts us in all our tribulation, that we may be able to comfort those who are in any trouble, with the comfort with which we ourselves are comforted by God.*

After we talked for a while, I gave her my Getting Over Depression card and was close enough to my car to give her a book. She was amazed that God would put on their heart to ask for pray after passing me three times. I said that's God's love He never gives up on us and He knows exactly where we are and what we need. I gave them my number and email and told them I would be there if they needed me. When I suffered from depression it was the worst time of my life, six suicide attempts, institutionalized seven times, more pills than I can remember, and electroshock therapy. However, God has used this terrible time in my life to help comfort others and I would gladly go through it again to make the difference God has allowed me to make. Can't wait to hear some of the stories when I get home to Dad.

### **TK Baptism**

9/15/20

What a terrific day I had at the strand today. I'm starting to run out of adjectives to describe my day. I walked down the strand saying good morning as I always do. Not much was happening until I got to the other end and there were four ladies who wanted prayer. Two came from out of town and the Holy Spirit showed up and blessed us all. As they left, I stayed a moment and a lady stopped me and asked why I prayed, and I simply said because God asked me to. I don't need to prepare, only show up and God takes care of the rest. I told her I spent most of my life without recognizing God in my life and now that I have Him, I can't get enough. I shared a little about my life before when I was suffering from depression and she tried to hold back the tears and said her daughter is in rehab suffering from depression. We talked for a little while and gave her my card to check out my website. As I continued to walk, I saw a brother I made while doing the prayer ministry and he was looking out to the ocean. I asked what was happening and he told me someone is doing baptisms in the ocean. I told him we need to go down and congratulate them. Here it was TK, a pastor from Calvary Chapel and a great brother in Christ. I was so happy to see him, and we just hugged.

There are people that God puts into our lives that are very special and TK is one of them. I had my prayer partner, Brando on the beach and a lifeguard jeep came to remind me that dogs were not allowed on the beach. We hugged one last time before I left. I prayed for a few more people before getting into my car.

God continues to put people in my path that are suffering from depression and I feel He wants me to do something about it. Before I had Pastor Mike Reed, who went home to the Lord supporting me and having me give classes, share my testimony, and calling other pastors for me to share my testimony at their churches. I really miss Pastor Mike and look forward to seeing him again. We only get a day at a time and I'll see what God has instore. If anyone who reads this feels called to pray for me, pray that God opens a door for me to use the testimony He has blessed me with.

### **Ruler of this World**

9/22/20

A couple of weeks ago I was praying with a young man and I asked God to put a hedge of protection around him to protect him from Satan, the ruler of this world. After I prayed the young man took offense that I called Satan the ruler of this world. I tried to explain that Jesus himself called him that, but I didn't have the scripture to support what I said. I apologized for getting him upset and he left abruptly. Just a couple of days ago I ran into the same young man and he yelled are you still worshipping Satan? I tried to defend myself, but again I didn't have my sword, the Word of God. He continued to yell that Satan being the ruler of this world was not in his bible. All I could do is apologize again and walk away as he yelled. First thing I did when I got home was to find scripture that backed up the claim that Satan was the ruler of this world: *John 14:29 – 14:31* “*And now I have told you before it comes, that when it does come to pass, you may believe.*”<sup>30</sup> *I will no longer talk much with you, for the ruler of this world is coming, and he has nothing in Me.*”<sup>31</sup> *But that the world may know that I love the Father, and as the Father gave Me commandment, so I do. Arise, let us go from here.*

*John 12:31* *Now is the judgment of this world; now the ruler of this world will be cast out.*

*1 John 5:18-19* *We know that whoever is born of God does not sin; but he who has been born of God keeps himself, and the wicked one does not touch him.*

<sup>19</sup> *We know that we are of God, and the whole world lies under the sway of the wicked one.*

I printed these out along with a commentary that was done on the subject and put it in my wallet for the next time we might meet. It's important to know that Satan is the ruler of this world for now and that God allowed it. In the commentary it states that God gave Adam this world and Adam turned around and gave it to Satan by sinning. If God wanted to rule this world it would be perfect, it would be Heaven. I was thinking however this country is in the worst condition that I've ever seen. Is it because there is more evil or is it because there is less righteousness? I believe the only reason that this country isn't totally taken over by evil is that God's children are still praying, and that God is listening to our prayers. This country has become a dark place, but we are called to be light and shine God's glory. Let's brighten things up a bit.

### **I Was Told Prayers Don't Work**

10/6/20

Today was an interesting day at the strand. As soon as I got out of my car there was a gentleman there. I said good morning. He said that he saw me yesterday and I told him that I've been here every day for the last four months. I asked if he needed prayer and he said do you think prayer works? I said I'm a living testimony that it works. He said I was looking at the man of unanswered prayer and broken dreams. I wasn't sure what to say and asked if there was anything I could do. He just shook his head and walked away. I felt so useless as I continued. God put on my heart the reason there are so many broken dreams that those dreams don't include Him. We want everything here and now when we really don't know what is best for us. Our dream should be that we fulfill the purpose God has created us for and we will be rewarded beyond our dreams when we get home. As I was walking someone stopped their car and yelled get a mask. I thought so far, I'm not doing very well. Then God put this couple in my path, and they wanted prayer. I asked what they would like prayer for, and they said it wasn't really prayer but to thank God. God answered a prayer they had just the other day and they were so full of gratitude they asked if I would pray with them. So, with thanksgiving and love we prayed to our Father. I left feeling so grateful myself. I continued my walk to the harbor and back while talking to others and saying good morning. It felt so good today to see the smiling faces of so many, that when I got back to my

car, I took a moment to thank my Lord for all that He has blessed me with. Sometimes dreams unanswered is a sign to change your dream.

### **Arizona Visitors**

8/2/20

I've been wondering if I'm doing what God is calling me to do or if it is just something, I think He would like. Yesterday as soon as I got out of my car a young man asked if I would pray for him. He must go in for surgery and needed prayer that everything would go alright. The rest of my day I walked and said good morning but no one else needed prayer. I got to the beach this morning feeling a little unsure of myself and what I was doing. I prayed all the time I was walking for guidance and direction and that He would open my eyes if there was something else, He would like me to do. As I was heading back down the strand, I met a homeless man that was very drunk. I said good morning and he asked me something that I couldn't hear and walked back. He wanted to know if I had an extra pair of socks since he went into the ocean with all his clothes on. I stood there for a while listening to him, thinking he just needed someone to talk to since most people avoid him. When he ran out of things to say I asked if he wanted me to pray for him and he did. When I was done, he was crying, and I comforted him before I left. I thanked God for the opportunity, but still wasn't sure if what I was doing pleased Him. Further on down the road there was a family from Arizona loading up their van to head home. The man stopped me and asked if I would pray with them. There was the man and wife along with 6 kids. The best part of praying is to hear the Holy Spirit speak through you. When I was finished the man said we saw you and just loved your smile. I told him that it came from God, how else could I look at this ugly mug in the morning and still be able to smile. He held my hand and looked at me and said you're a good man. I took a couple of steps from the van and started to cry, and I had to stop before I continued my walk to the car. Have you ever had a time when you desperately needed to hear God's voice and He spoke to you through someone else? That was my moment when He wrapped His arms around me and held me for a moment. I'm home now writing this post, but still feel the comfort of His touch. It looks like I'll be back on the beach in the morning.

### **Brando my Prayer Partner**

8/8/20

Every day when I go out, I go with my prayer partner, Brando, my yellow Labrador retriever. People that won't make eye contact with me

always seem to be drawn to Brando. The other day we were at the harbor and a man and woman were pushing his mother in a wheelchair, she looked to be in her nineties. When she saw Brando, her eyes lit up and like a little child she was excited and wanted to pet him. Without asking permission Brando went to this lovely lady and rested his head on her lap so she could pet him. She talked baby talk to him and told him how wonderful he was. The scripture that came to my heart was Matthew 18:3 and said, "Assuredly, I say to you, unless you are converted and become as little children, you will by no means enter the kingdom of heaven. I looked at the face of her son and his wife and he said how wonderful it was to see her like this. I said God is good. They thanked me and left, but not before Brando gave the lady a kiss goodbye. I walked a little and looked down at Brando and said you're a better witness than me. I'm waiting to see if he'll lay paws on somebody to heal them.

*Romans 1:20 For since the creation of the world His invisible attributes are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even His eternal power and Godhead, so that they are without excuse, I believe dogs are one of those invisible attributes, how can you explain the love we have for these animals and the bond we can create with them. I've done a Heaven study and one of the questions is will my dog go to heaven and as much I would like to say yes that is not what the Bible teaches. However, God created dogs for us here on earth because he loves to give good gifts to His children and Heaven is going to be the perfect place so I can see our loving Father creating our precious pets again and since it is heaven maybe they won't poop or shed.*

### **Very Interesting Day**

8/17/20

I had a very interesting day at the beach today. It started when I first arrived. I had to go to the restroom right away. As I was standing at the urinal someone said there's the prayer man. It's not recommended that you turn around when at a urinal. The man went into the stall and began to thank me. He said my prayer was being answered and he felt so much better and asked if I would continue to pray for him. I had no idea who it was but told him I would keep praying. As I was walking down the strand there was a man yelling peace to the cars as they passed him. As I went by him, I said good morning. He looked up and said you're the prayer man. If you read my earlier post God has put on my heart 2 *Chronicles 7:14 if My people who are called by My name will humble themselves, and pray and seek My face, and turn from their wicked*

*ways, then I will hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin and heal their land.* He told me that God said that he can't hear the prayers of the people in California because of the evil that is here. He told me if we don't lift this country in prayer it would be the end of America as we know it. After talking to him for a while I got goosebumps and asked if he would like to pray now. The prayer put on my heart from the Holy Spirit was amazing and powerful. As I was walking more people than normal were saying good morning back to me or that we all need prayer and saying how much they liked my shirt. As I walked, I prayed for God to give me direction on what He desired of me. Just before I got to my car, I heard a voice saying, "we do need prayer." I looked around and it came from the car I was standing by. It was this wonderful lady, Gwendolyn who just arrived the night before from Washington. Guess what she told me we need prayer for? Yes, our country. We talked for at least twenty minutes; she was great. She has no problem telling others how much she loves Jesus and how much we need Him. She believes President Trump was going to be re-elected, but he needs our prayers. There was a lot more she told me that helped confirm what God was putting on my heart. Again, I challenge you to start your day repeating 2 Chronicles 7:14 then humble yourself, pray and seek God's face and search if there are any wicked ways in you repent and see what He does. By the way both people God used today were a few shades darker than me, reminding me that racism is not a cultural thing but a heart problem. He loves us so much stop to tell Him how much you love Him.

### **A Beautiful Day at the Beach**

8/29/20

Yesterday was the only day someone said anything negative. A young man jogging by me yelled, "No one needs that." I thought how rude, and I thought I know how to get him, so I prayed for him as I walked down the beach and asked God to open his eyes to Him. There are so many other people that when I say good morning, they turn their head and don't respond. So, I just ignored them and went my way, but God is putting on my heart they are the ones who need prayer and His love. Now as soon as I pass them, I say a prayer and ask God to touch their heart.

Today however was a beautiful day. The beach was crowded, and people were walking up and down the strand. As I was walking there were four women and they said they need prayer. They were wonderful and I took their prayer requests. Just before I started to pray a gentleman came to the group. My prayer today was powerful and loud and I'm

sure several people could hear it. It was something I never experienced before the longer I prayed the more in love with my Lord I became. When I stopped my body was shaking and I felt drained. The gentleman introduced himself as a pastor in a church in Fontana. His mother just passed away a few days ago and he sat there and told me what a wonderful Godly woman she was. We talked for several minutes and he shared his testimony about being in a gang. There is nothing better than sitting with your brothers and sisters in Christ and saying how wonderful your Father is. I walked and prayed with a couple of other people and a couple stopped me to thank me. They told me it means a lot to them to see me smiling and saying good morning and that they knew it encourages others.

It's been twenty-two years since my last suicide attempt. It was my first time I decided to speak to God just in case He really existed. I told Him I didn't feel like I belonged in Hell since I didn't do anything that terrible, but I understood I didn't belong in heaven and I didn't blame Him for not wanting me there. So, I just asked if He could just end my life and make it as if I was never here, it would be better for everyone if I wasn't. I basically told God he made a mistake in creating me. God has spent the last twenty-two years proving to me that He doesn't make mistakes.

Thank you, Lord, for a prayer not answered.

### **Brando Is Praying Too**

9/3/20

Lately I've been praying for more people. Some wonderful things happened, and I met some great people today, but I just wanted to share this one story. As I was walking a man yelled out from the other side of the road, I need prayer. Sometimes when I ask what do you need prayer for it's a couple of words and other times it's a story. Today was a story. My prayer partner Brando, my dog, was by my side and he's great he'll just sit or lay down when I start praying depending on the length of the prayer. After I prayed the man looked down and there was Brando with his paw on his foot and his head down. The man was excited that Brando also prayed with us and he felt confident his prayer was answered. I couldn't find a scripture to support that unless it was when two or more and a dog are gathered there I am in the midst. Looking forward to this weekend and to see what God has in plan for the two of us.

## **America at the Strand**

9/6/20

Went down to the beach a little early today, because of the crowds. When I got there at 9:00 it was hard to find a parking space but found one. I was wearing “Will You Pray With Me for America”, shirt. I only walked a few steps and there was a father with his teenage son, and he said, “we sure do need prayer.” I asked them if they would like to pray with me now and they both said yes. After praying and thanking them it really hit my heart to have a father and son spending time together and praying with some strange old man. I thought that is what America is about family, freedoms, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty, and the Pursuit of Happiness. Except for some people still wearing masks you can see what America is supposed to be as I walk the strand. I can see smiling faces as I pass and say good morning, children are laughing as they play on the beach, families and friends setting up their tents and grills as they spend time together, you see no racial division, but God’s children getting along with each other. I’m blessed to say that I’ve prayed with everyone no matter what race, ethnicity, gender, and age, each one seeking their Father. You can look at the news and think America is lost or you can take a walk along the beach and find it again.

I love America because it’s God’s blessing to each American citizen. Let’s do what we can to keep it that way. Pray as if America depends on it because it does.

## **The Con Woman**

9/16/20

One downside of walking along the strand with Do You Need Prayer? T-shirt is that you become a target for the innovative conman. I learned that the first couple of days when I went out and then stopped taking my wallet. I thought maybe that wasn’t a good idea so I just took all the money out so if someone asked me, I could honestly say I didn’t have any money. Today I forgot and I had 2 five-dollar bills in my wallet. Coming back from the strand a lady stopped me, let’s just say she was the opposite of petite. She told me she needed prayer and gave me this whole story that she needed money right away to get something to eat, but I could help her with that after we prayed. I knew I was being set up and that it was going to cost me. After we prayed, I gave her one of my 5-dollar bills. She asked if I had any more since a burrito was \$7.95 and she wanted to get a drink. I told her all I had was ten dollars and she

said can I have that? I told her no that I wasn't working and that was all I had. She said okay and left going down the strand for more prayer, I guess. As I continued walking, I felt little aggravated and I felt Jesus's arm around my shoulder, not comforting me but laughing. He said, "trials, I told you that you will have them, but don't let that take your joy away. I chuckled as I thought about it and thanked Him that He gave me that opportunity. Before I got to the end of the strand an older woman was walking with her walker and her daughter besides her. Her daughter said my mom could sure use prayer. She just got out of the hospital and for forty years she had a ministry in Mexico helping orphans. They wanted prayer for healing and to help subdue the pain. It was a wonderful prayer, just requests from children to their Dad. As I looked up there was Pastor Adam from ,At The Cross Church, passing by in his truck giving me a thumbs up. There will be trials and tribulation, but the rewards of serving a loving God surpasses them all.

### **Church at the Strand**

9/20/20

Church at the strand was rockin today. A beautiful day at a beautiful place. All it needed was a worship band. The strand was busy as I continued my good morning show. Today more people shared their smile and greeting as I made my way down to the other end. First stop was with this great couple. We took time to tell our Father how much we appreciate and love Him. We shared testimonies and scriptures. I can't remember a message I heard that was better than what I experienced today. As I walked a brother stopped me to tell me about a baptism that was going to take place and asked if I knew what a blessing it is to see me praying for others. I told him it's only through the grace of God. I prayed for a couple of others and met another wonderful couple by the amphitheater having coffee. We talked for a while sharing testimonies and our love for God and they too said do you know how many people you bless walking and praying. Again, I said all for the glory to God. I can't count how many people either yelled love your shirt or we all need prayer. Brando and I continued our walk and a young lady that was sitting on the beach with her mom asked if she could take a picture and that she loved my shirt and my dog. I waited a moment to see if I was going to be included in her praise, but no. Just before leaving to go home another gentleman stopped and introduced himself and told me he was a street evangelist and had seen me before. We took time to pray for each other and share our love for Jesus. As I walked back to my car I thought if someone told me a few years ago I

would be helping people with depression and walking and praying for them I would have thought they were crazy. When great things happen to us, it's not because we deserve it, but to show others we serve a great and loving God. Thank you Dad I had a great time with my brothers and sisters, you do give the best gifts.

### **What a Fun Day**

9/26/20

What a fun day I had with Brando today in fellowship at the strand. Today I was wearing my, Will You Pray for America with Me shirt. I just started our journey, and I heard a voice yell, "Mark." I said if that's You God I'm ready, but it wasn't. A couple of ladies from Calvary Chapel were taking a bike ride. We talked about some of the outreaches we did in the past and I prayed for them to get home safely. Not much farther I heard a voice yelling, Mark. Now Lord? No, it was 2 other ladies I met before and we talked about how wonderful our Dad is and prayed. More people than normal were saying good morning back, how they loved my shirt and of course how wonderful Brando is. Brando is good for my ego, because for just a moment when a lovely young woman says, you're so handsome, I intentionally pretend he's not there, but then she says can I pet him, and the moment is gone. Little further down I heard it again, Mark. I didn't fall for it this time. It was a young lady I prayed with a couple of weeks prior for her dog. She came up to me and thanked me for the prayers and that her dog was doing great. We stopped and thanked God for answered prayer. The whole day was like that fellowshiping with newfound friends and friends I've met along the way. I passed by these condos and a gentleman that always says hi from the second floor said thank you for my ministry. I thanked him for his encouragement. As I turned around there was Jack, a gentleman I see almost every day who loves the Lord. As we were talking a young couple came up and said we would like to pray with you. So, the four of us and Brando prayed that God would lead and heal our land. I felt the Holy Spirit so strongly today and felt Him walking along side me as we made our way. I think we talked to every child we passed saying hello as they wanted Brando and not me. I'm not sure how many people I talked to, shook hands with, shared smiles and laughs with and hugged today, but it was more than I could ever deserve. On my way to the car, I couldn't stop thanking God for such a beautiful day of fellowship and I think He enjoyed Himself to.

## **Bible Study at the Beach**

9/28/20

I wasn't feeling well this morning, but I haven't missed a day now going on three months. I prayed for strength then Brando and I headed to the strand. When I got out of the car, I saw the gentlemen that accused me of worshipping Satan because I told him that Jesus called Satan the ruler of this world. This time I was ready I had the scriptures in my wallet, but when he saw me, he said that he was sorry. He was with two other gentlemen and they were having a bible study on the bench. I joined in and it was one of the best bible studies I ever attended. I prayed at the end and I could feel the Holy Spirit as I looked at my arms there were goosebumps. I headed down the strand and surprisingly there were quite a few people. If you are ever feeling a little down and the craziness of this time is getting too much, come down to the beach take your mask off and see smiling faces again and say hello. As I walked over to the harbor someone, I see often was riding his bike and stopped. He asked if we could pray because a someone on the beach was run over by one of the bulldozers moving the drenching pipes and died. My first thing I said was that I pray that he was a child of God's and it was their time to go home. I think of it often that there are so many people that haven't received Jesus as their Lord and savior and if today was their last day, they would suffer and be separated from God forever. I talked with several people today, but on my way back there was a gentleman that calls himself a prophet of God and he preaches fire and brimstone. He was standing there yelling as the people walked by. I stopped and asked him how he was doing, and he just explained this is how God wants to use him. Just then three teenagers rode up on their bikes and it appeared that they talk to him frequently, but not seriously. They asked if jet skies were in the bible? I told them I needed to go, and the prophet asked me to pray for him and the boys. It was a prayer of love, acceptance, and purpose. Just before going up to my car there was my bible study group sitting at a table with a new member. They were going on about COVID 19, election and other things going on in the world. They asked if I would pray with them before I left. The prayer was just God focused and that we should only be concerned over things that honor God. That God is all knowing, and this is only a temporary place and that we would be focused on building our own rewards in Heaven. After my first encounter with my new bible study group, I felt wonderful and forgot I was even sick at all. It's amazing what we can do when our focus is on Jesus and we allow Him to have his way in our lives.

## **Praying for Fish**

10/15/20

Another wonderful day at church at the strand. It's surprising how many people are still on the beach in the middle of October. I'm talking to more people than ever it seems, whether prayer or talking about something that is happening in their life and they needed someone to share with. It's so great to see people smiling and I think that is one of the biggest problems today. We need to be able to see others and to interact with them. Today as I was walking at the harbor by the fishing boat tour someone said we need prayer to catch some fish. Even though he was saying it jokingly I offered to pray with him and his son. He accepted and another man joined us. What was great was when we were finished there was about thirty people watching us as they were waiting. I smiled and said good morning to everyone as I continued my prayer for them. I prayed that the three of them would catch more fish than anyone else on the trip and that everyone would remember they were the ones that prayed. As Brando and I were getting closer to coming home I stopped and talked to this gentleman for a while. Right after leaving him I started to tear up and realized how blessed I am. Before Christ when I was suffering from depression I couldn't care less about people and that unfortunately included my family. I was totally self-centered, but God has been working on me, He replaced that heart of stone I had. He has given me a gift to talk to strangers, be a vessel for the Holy Spirit to touch others and to be able to follow Jesus's example. It's not just Brando and I, I feel Jesus walking along side us and I think He is enjoying this time as much as I am.

## **Hunter Looking for a Therapy Dog**

10/16/20

The last four months have been life changing for me on the strand. Teri got Brando a scarf with his name on it and a cross, so it seems everyone is yelling out Brando. So far, I've only missed one day of church at the strand. Today was one of my best days. I was passing one of the apartments right on the beach where there were 2 great couples having breakfast. We talked for a while about our Heavenly Dad, and I shared some of my testimony. The one gentleman asked if he could pray for me and I said please I need it. It was an awesome prayer, and I could feel the Holy Spirit and looked forward to the rest of my walk. I can't count how many times I said good morning and all the smiles that were shared. A lovely lady using a walker and stopped me for prayer. The holy spirit took over and blessed us both. When I was done, she told me

she felt the spirit. A little further down was a father and son, and the son was in his early twenties and walking with walking sticks. They stopped me because the young man liked Brando and they were looking for a therapy dog for him. First thing he told me was that he had brain damage. The father told me how the young man was in a terrible accident and was in a coma for 3 months and ICU for another 2 months. The doctors first told them he wasn't going to make it, but now he was talking, and walking and the father was so proud of his son. I told him he looked great, and he said I could use a prayer. Trying not to cry I stepped aside and let the Holy Spirit talk to him. The father stayed off to the side while we prayed. Brando and I said goodbye, but God put on my heart I should have said something to the father. I was truly moved that this loving father stayed by his son's side and walks with him each day. I can't imagine what it must have been like seeing your son lay there and helpless to do anything. I should have told him how honored I was to meet him and tell his son how blessed he was to have such a wonderful dad. It appears that both of us have the same story about a wonderful father that walks with us each day. Hopefully I'll see them again tomorrow and tell him then. As I continued to walk up the hill going to the harbor, they were working on the condos there. I heard a voice yelling I need a prayer. I looked around and on the roof was a construction worker. I asked what he needed prayer for, and he said his marriage and family. I asked if it was okay if we prayed here and he said yes. So, me on the ground and him a couple of stories up we prayed. Not sure what the people thought that passed by, but that really didn't matter. Other things happened to me today, but the post is already too long.

Thank you, Dad, for walking with me again today I really love your company.

### **Praying at Costco**

10/17/20

The beach was full today, it looked like 4<sup>th</sup> of July. Several large groups and plenty of families enjoying the beautiful weather. Not sure how many times I said good morning and most of my greetings were returned with a smile. I made it part way down the strand where an older lady, about my age, yelled out she needed prayer and just about them here son came up and told her I saw him too. Her one son died in September and they were having a paddle out for him. They asked if I could pray for them and I was honored. The Holy Spirit came and comforted all of us with beautiful words and the knowledge we'll all see him again. I

hugged them both and cried a little. It was a great day and two other people prayed for me as I prayed for others. When I got home it was time to go to Costco. I didn't bother changing my shirt and my wife and I went. Just before we were going in someone tugged on my shirt and asked if I would pray for her. Her prayer was genuine as she told me she has a hard time not drinking. She told me she is a Christian, but a poor one and needs God's help desperately if she was going to make it. I was so moved for her and I told her I would love to pray with her. In front of the entrance of Costco the two of us prayed to our Lord for His strength to keep her on the path He wanted her on. Jesus wasn't kidding when He said when two or more are gathered there He is. When we were done, she was crying but asked if I needed any prayer. I said yes and explained what I do each day and that Jesus would keep guiding me. I've grown so close to my Lord these last few months and I want to keep getting closer. She prayed for me with the heart of a saint. One of the greatest things about what God is allowing me to do is to be able to feel His joy in this. I know my smile doesn't compare to His when the day is done.

### **Best Four Months Ever**

10/21/20

What a blessed day I had at the strand and harbor. The last four months have been some of the best times of my life. I was nervous when I was laid off but instead of worrying about it, I asked God what He wanted me to do. He gave me the wording for my shirt the front, "Do You Need prayer" and the back "I'll pray with You." Then I was led to go to the strand and just walk. Out of the last four months I missed only one day, and each day was special. I was able to see smiling faces, something that has been missing in so many lives, prayed, shook hands, hugged, and laughed with so many others. I've developed some great friendships and I enjoy just talking and being with them for a while. I've been a part of some of their lives as we pray and see God's work in those prayers. Teri got Brando a scarf that has a cross and his name on it. You can hear people yell Brando as we walk, and that poor dog doesn't know what way to turn. I get up each morning and walk and pray while walking my dog, then come home to read the word and a Max Lucado book, to an entry in Getting over Depression web site and then do a journal entry. Then Brando and I are off to church. I've never been closer to Jesus than I am now, and I never want to drift away. I'm not sure what God has planned for me next, but I've learned to listen to His call.

## **God Heals a Boy in a Coma**

10/27/20

I'm so blessed God allows me to pray for others at the beach each day. A couple of days ago there was a young girl pushing a stroller. I said good morning and I kept seeing her and she would always smile. Finally, she was on the other side of the street and yelled I love your shirt and walked across the street. She told me it gave her hope. She explained the situation she was in and asked if I would pray for her. We stood on the sidewalk and the Holy Spirit gave her a special word. Halfway through I could feel her shaking and crying. When I stopped, we were both in tears and she thanked me for the encouragement. I told her it had nothing to do with me and she gave me a hug and walked away. About a week ago I was walking toward the harbor and a white pick-up passed me and turned into the driveway ahead of me. It was a young man with several tattoos on his face. He asked if I would pray with him. His brother was in the hospital in a coma and the doctor told him it didn't look good. He knew only God could save his brother. I leaned into his truck and we both prayed for a miracle. Today as I was going up the road the same young man came up to me and told me his brother was out of the coma and doing so much better and that he and the doctors couldn't believe it. I told him I'm blessed to see that a lot on my journey. It takes longer to do my walk. It used to be an hour or so and now over 3 to 4 hours because of all the people I met. Thank you, Lord, for the blessing of this time.

## **Reaching Out to Shane**

11/5/20

There are still a lot of people at the beach. The other day I was going down the stairs to the strand and a young man was sitting against the wall. He didn't appear to be the typical homeless person his backpack looked new, and he was well groomed. I said good morning like I always do, and he looked up in surprise. We talked for a while and he was from Texas attending the funeral of his father. He told me that someone stole his wallet, and he wasn't sure what to do. I've heard many stories in the last four months and not sure what to believe, but God put on my heart that he needed help. I opened my wallet and he said no, I don't want your money. He told me that he was so happy that someone would stop by to talk to him and explained how others would go out of their way to walk around him. I insisted that he take it to get something to eat and he asked for prayer. I looked in my wallet and I had 2 five-dollar bills and gave him one. I continued to walk but the

young man was on my heart. When I made it to the harbor a lovely couple stopped to talk to me and told me that they were just in the area for the day. I explained my ministries and all the wonderful things God was doing. I told them I lost my jobs a few months ago, but I would never have given up the time God has blessed me with to do this. The lady went into her pocket and gave me sixty dollars. I told them no I was doing fine, and God has blessed me, but they insisted. I told them about the young man I met earlier and made sure it was okay to take the money. On the way back I prayed that he would still be there to bless him with the gift. When I got back, he was still there sitting by a table. I called out his name and gave him the money. I told him how God put these wonderful people in my path, and He wanted you to have this. He started to cry and couldn't thank me enough even though I insisted it had nothing to do with me. I prayed for him on last time before going home. Was this a scam, who cares? I did what God wanted me to do and that's all that matters. I've learned I have no control of anything except the decision to go where God calls me to go and the rest is up to Him.

### **No Is an Answered Prayer**

11/9/20

Yesterday at the strand a gentleman that I see often stopped me and said our prayers weren't answered, regarding the outcome of the election. I hear that a lot about unanswered prayer, but what they really are is no-answered prayers. We don't like to be told no. When I was a child, I remember I received many more nos than yeses to my requests and because of that I'm still alive and have all my body parts. God can answer a prayer request with a yes, no, or not now. He is our Heavenly Father and knows best. Regarding this election we need to trust God and ask what He desires of us.

### **Proverbs 3:5,6**

11/12/20

What a beautiful day at the strand today. I couldn't go yesterday because of a meeting so I was really looking forward to today. There were more people than normal, and they were shooting a movie at the pier. As I was walking toward the pier someone stopped their car and asked for a prayer and a little way down another person stopped their car for prayer. There were more people not wearing mask today, so I was blessed to see a lot of smiling faces. I prayed for several other people as I made my way down to the harbor and the Holy Spirit kept putting *Proverbs 3:5,6* on my heart for each person. *Trust in the Lord with all*

*of your heart and lean not on your own understanding, in all your ways acknowledge Him and He shall make your paths straight.* The scripture gave comfort to so many today and especially me. It's not whose sitting in the Whitehouse that matters as much has who is sitting on the throne

### **No Accidents**

11/16/20

Today was one of the best days at the strand and harbor. I've experienced so many things the last couple of days that if you don't believe that God is on the throne or that He isn't interested in your life you're not spending enough time with Him. I can't even write down all that has happened these last two days it would take too long. One thing that happened as I was walking to the harbor, I met two sisters in Christ who I've prayed with before. As I was talking two ladies and a gentleman passed by and the lady said wow prayer warriors. I asked if they needed prayer and as they were walking by, they came back and said yes. The younger lady just lost her husband and brother in a fatal car accident a week ago. The six of us got together as I prayed for the family. The Holy Spirit said the prayer that gave peace to this young lady. He made sure I was where He could use me to help comfort her. She hugged me and thanked me for saying what she needed to hear and they went on their way. My two sisters wiped away tears and they kept going. I walked down to the harbor and there was a lady sitting on a bench. I said good morning and she said I heard you. She told me she was walking past when I was praying for the family. She wasn't sure what else to say but that it was a beautiful thing to do. I talked about God and how blessed I was that He allows me to do this every day. A lot of people see me as I walk with my shirt on and my prayer partner Brando at my side. Several have approached me to talk, and others still avoid me. Someone asked me today how can I be happy all the time, because every time he sees me, I'm smiling. I told him it's not that I'm happy, happiness lasts only for a short time and depends on the circumstances you're going through. My smile is joy, joy I get only from God and since He never changes neither does my joy.

### **Meeting Ruth**

11/17/20

Yesterday as I was walking back from the harbor by Joe's Crab Shack there was a young lady in her early twenties. She had a couple of backpacks and a suitcase. As I came up to her, I said good morning and you can tell she was crying. She read my shirt and in a low voice said I

need prayer. She went on to tell me she moved down here with her boyfriend. He didn't want her around any longer and went to her work and dropped off all her belongings and yelled that he never wanted to see her again. Her forearms were black and blue and the first thing she said was she wasn't doing drugs just that he was very abusive. I noticed she cut herself around the wrists and she didn't want to go back to her parents because they didn't like the guy in the first place, and she didn't want to deal with the I told you so. I started to pray as the Holy Spirit took over and told her how much she is loved and how special she is and that she was created for a purpose and that she needed to trust in God and not what others say about her. It was a long prayer as she continued to cry. After praying I took out my wallet and I only had sixteen dollars and gave it to her as the Holy Spirit directed me. At first, she didn't want to take it and she asked for my phone number so she could pay me back on Thursday when she gets her check, but I told her not to worry about it. Then she hugged me for the longest time while she cried. I gave her my Getting Over Depression card and told her if she needed me to call or email. She walked away thanking me as she left. I took a few steps and on the bench was a young man about the same age. I said good morning and his eyes were tearing up. He told me he comes there every Monday and he must have seen me about ten times, but never understood what I was doing. Today he said he got his answer. We talked for a while and he told me how wonderful it was to see what I did for the girl. He said he believes in God but doesn't go to church. I explained anything he saw and heard was God. I'm just blessed to be used by Him as he makes His rounds around here. I gave him my card also and just received an email from him. My prayer is that he wants to know more about my Boss.

### **Is My Love Limited?**

11/20/21

The last two days have been awesome as always, but yesterday something really hit my heart. As I was walking down the strand, I was praying to myself as I often do. I was thanking God for all of the wonderful blessings He has given me. I was thanking Him that I could still walk this far, my family is safe and healthy, the smell of the ocean breeze, that He takes care of all my needs, for Brando and especially for my amazing wife. As I was coming back from the harbor and almost to the end of the strand there was a young man. He was terribly deformed in his arms, hands, back legs and feet, but he was walking on his own and had a wonderful spirit about him. He came up to me and asked if I

would pray for him. Before I could say yes, he said just a moment. He stopped this old VW bus and asked if he could take a picture with it. The owner was happy to grant his request and the girl that was walking with him was about to take the picture and I said look sexy. At that he posed against the bus. When he got back to me, I asked what he wanted me to pray for and he said just life in general. I had no idea what the Holy Spirit had in mind. When Jesus said when two or more are gathered there I am in the midst and He was. The prayer didn't address any type of healing, but the fact that we are created different with different gifts and abilities and that we are called to use them until it's time to go home. Then the Holy Spirit told him how much he loved him, and we asked for courage and wisdom to finish the race well. After praying he went to shake my hand, but he couldn't open his hands and I shook his closed fist and hugged him. Then he and the girl went on their way and I thought would I be able to love God that much if I had to go through that type of trial? I just got finished telling Him how thankful I was for the many blessings He has given me, but is my love limited? I need to love God not for what He does for me but for who He is, my creator, my master and my Father.

### **Praying for Pearl**

11/22/20

Yesterday was such a beautiful day at the strand. Sunny skies seventy degrees and so many people taking advantage of this wonderful day. It's hard to understand how a person can look at this amazing site and not see God's hand in it. *Romans 1:20 For since the creation of the world His invisible attributes are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even His eternal power and Godhead, so that they are without excuse.* As I walked down the strand there is a three-story beach resort that faces the ocean. As I was passing, I heard someone yell we need prayer. I looked up and on the balcony of the third floor was a pregnant woman with her husband. I yelled up what do you need prayer for, and she told me that the doctor told them that their baby has a heart problem and they wanted prayer for a healing. I asked what the baby's name was and she told me Pearl. I said well let's pray now as they bowed their heads, I prayed loud enough for them and anyone within a hundred feet to hear. The Holy Spirit was amazing as always showing His love and comfort. They thanked me as I continued down the strand knowing apart from God, I could do nothing. I prayed with a family and a few other yesterday and on my way back I saw this young lady who has special needs. She can't talk and was with her mother. I wrote

about her in the past and she would hand me a joke that she passes out to other people. She loves the lifeguards and the firefighters, and they love her. She pointed to the orange cones on the beach by the pier and tried to tell me her new job. Her mother stepped in to say at the end of the day she picks up the cones and puts them away. The young lady was so excited and tried to tell me, then acted out what she does. To her it was an important job because she was serving the people she loved. Dear Lord give me the heart of that young lady that I will serve you with the same excitement as she has.

### **Not a Coincident**

11/23/20

Yesterday at the strand was special because Teri and Dina (the puppy Teri is training for Canine Companions) joined Brando and me on our walk. It was another beautiful day as we walked and was able to introduce Teri to some of the people I see regularly. As we walked, we met an evangelist and his wife. We must have talked to them for an hour it was wonderful. As we were walking back from the harbor towards the strand there was a couple with their two little girls standing in the driveway in front of their condo complex. As I said good morning the lady looked surprised and said they could really use prayer. The Holy Spirit knew what they needed, and the prayer was custom made for them. She was suffering from depression and was dealing with unforgiveness and pain from the things her mother did to her. After she stopped and was crying, I told her unforgiveness is like taking poison and expecting the other person to die. I talked for a little while saying all the things the Holy Spirit put on my heart. Since Teri was with me, she looked after the two little girls, so we had time to talk. The lady was amazed the girls were being so well behaved, but thanks to Teri and the two dogs they kept them occupied. The couple told me they weren't planning on being there, but that their plans were to go to Colorado, but were so thankful for the time we had together. Let's see the couple plans were to be in Colorado, they just happened to go for a walk the moment Teri and I walked by, she was suffering from the one thing I know something about, and Teri was with me to watch over the children. A coincident? The definition of coincident is a miracle God didn't get the credit for. I think God deserves the credit.

## **Jeremiah 29:11**

12/1/20

I'm about to get ready to go to my church gathering at the strand. It's almost 5 months that I make this walk each day and each day I look forward to seeing what God's plans are for me. I'll walk down the stairs and gaze down the strand at the beautiful ocean with the pier in the background and listen as the waves crash against the rocks, my worship music. Today is forecasted as being another perfect day the high in the seventies and perfectly clear skies. So many people know me now and say good morning before I get a chance to. Almost everyday someone will stop in their car and ask for a prayer before they start their day. I stop just to talk to these wonderful people God has put in my life about whatever is happening in theirs. God has allowed me to pray with over a hundred people for so many things and I have witnessed many miracles. This is without a doubt the best time in my life. Every day I see smiling faces and He uses me to talk to His children. When I got laid off of my job several months ago, I wasn't sure what I was going to do, but instead of panicking, which is what I would normally do I asked God what He desired of me. He put on my heart to have the shirts made that say Do You Need Prayer. I wish I could say I was obedient right away, but it took a couple of weeks before I had them made. All my life I would make my own plans some worked out, but most didn't. This time I asked God what His plan was for my life and the strand was the plan. Jeremiah 29:11 For the plans I have for you declare the Lord plans to prosper you and not to harm you plans to give you a hope and a future.

## **A Journey to Learn From**

12/3/20

It was another special day at the strand. As soon as I walked down the road to begin my journey I stopped in the restroom. When I got out to wash my hands a lady tapped me on the shoulder and said we need to pray. She was standing with her adult daughter and I said what should we pray for? They said our country. After praying we talked about how hard pressed, we are because we don't see others faces and how touching others is forbidden. They both asked if they could hug me before they left, and I said of course. There is something special about a hug, it's comforting and peaceful. When Jesus said when two or more are gathered there I am in the midst, so it was a group hug with my Lord's arms around us. I believe touch is important to God when Jesus healed, He didn't stand six feet away, even though He could. He touched the leper, a person no one would touch, the blind first felt His

loving touch before being healed and the paralytic that people would ignore was touched by their healer before being cured. As I continued on my journey, I noticed one of the most beautiful sites, a person's smile. It doesn't matter what you look like but when someone smiles at you, you can't help but smile back. I've been blessed to see hundreds of smiles as I walk. As I was going to the harbor there was a young man have difficulty trying to carry his surfboard and suitcase. He was in front of the restaurants, and you could see people looking at him. As I was coming up to him, he saw me and my shirt and said that's what I need prayer. He asked if I would pray with him and I said I would love to. He started the prayer and he asked God for direction and how he might be used. The Holy Spirit took over and told him how much He is loved and to keep close to God. He looked up and said I made his day and thanked me. I thought what a gift to give someone to make their day. When you think about it doesn't take a lot of effort just some of our time and love. With all that God has given us we could at least do that for His children. I prayed and talked to other people on my walk, including a pastor and his wife. On the way back there are condos that face the ocean. As I was walking past there were about seven people sitting on the patio and when they saw me, they waved. I noticed there was happy Birthday banner on the wall. I stopped and asked whose birthday and the gentleman pointed to a lovely lady that turned ninety. She was wearing a little crown and they called her the countess. I bowed before her and said may her majesty have a very happy birthday in a British accent. Everyone laughed and thanked me. Laughter what a wonderful gift from God. When you're laughing any stress, you might be feeling is gone and replaced with a moment of joy. Every day I feel Jesus's presence as if He is walking with me. I don't know why He likes my company; I'm just so blessed that He does. Don't let the world take away the gifts that God has given you.

### **God Loves His Children**

12/6/20

One thing that always amazes me on my walks on the strand is how God cares for His children. He knows where we are and what we need, and He loves using all His children to help each other. The definition I like for coincidence is a miracle God didn't get the credit for. Yesterday Teri joined me, and we left a little later. We walked down the strand taking time to talk to people and made it to the harbor. On the way back from the harbor we were passing a restaurant, the Oceanside Broiler. People were coming the other way, so I got close to the patio area and a lady

was sitting by herself and said I need prayer. As she said it tears came from her eyes and I asked what do you need prayer for. She looked at me and said depression. At first, I was stunned, but thought only God would hook this up. As she sat at here table facing the harbor I stood on the grass and the Holy Spirit came to comfort her. After praying I told her that depression is real as any other physical condition and shared a little of my testimony. She started to cry and said people keep telling her to basically suck it up and get over it. I gave her my card with my web site and contact information, and she was very grateful. As I was walking away, I thought what are the chances of me passing by at that time and that she would see my shirt and ask for prayer? The chances are one out of one. When God is involved there is no long shots but planned to perfection. I've been praying now more than five months and one prayer that will always be answered is, "God use me today."

### **Created to Bless God**

12/8/20

I really enjoyed church at the strand today. As I was first walking down the strand to the pier, I had three cars stop me for prayer. I stopped and had fellowship with several of my brothers and sisters I have met on my walks. I prayed for a couple of other people and on my way back I met a young man that stopped me and told me he really needed prayer. He just got out of prison and has been clean for four months and he wanted to be used by God. As the Holy Spirit led, I said God thank you that we can talk to the creator of all things. That stuck with me as I continued to walk that we are talking to the creator of everything, and we were created for Him. We are created to love God, please and bless Him with our lives. How often do we come to our Father with a shopping list of things we want and not just take some time and be with Him? He is our Father and has things He wants to teach and show us. We can spend time telling God what we want, but there are also somethings that He desires. Our Father wants our love, even though we will never be able to love Him the way He loves us, He wants our obedience and what good father wouldn't, he enjoys when we get together as His children and talk and fellowship with Him. As a parent wouldn't you be blown away if your child came to you and asked what they could do for you today? He is God the creator of everything and can have anything He wants, but He left the choice to us what are we willing to give Him. He deserves everything from us, let's start there.

## **Funny Lines for the Strand**

**12/9/20**

I've been walking the strand and harbor for 5 months now and meet some of the same people so I thought I would switch up some of my greetings:

Person: How are you doing?

Me: I'm old, fat, and ugly but with God's help I've learned to deal with it.

Me: I'm doing great I just look like this

Me: I'm doing so great I could be you

Person: Oh, what a good dog

Me: He better be he's on parole

Me: Please don't call him a dog I haven't had the heart yet to tell him he's adopted

Person: As they look down at Brando Oh how handsome

Me: For a moment I felt like Tom Cruise, but I'm back now to Larry the Cable Guy

Person: I like your dog and your shirt

Me: What about me. I could use a little love here.

The only thing better than seeing someone smile is making them laugh. You can ask my wife, Teri, she laughs all the time. On second thought don't ask her.

## **I've Learned so much at the Strand**

**12/14/20**

It was a cold walk at the strand the other day and I was more of a spectacle than normal since everyone else was wearing jackets and gloves and there I was wearing my T-shirt. I've learned a lot about myself and my relationship with God and what He has called me to do over the last few months. One thing I've learned is never judge a person or situation, that's not my job, but my purpose is to pray for them. On my way back on the strand there were four teenagers, two boys and two girls. The one girl yelled out I need prayer. I stopped and asked do you want to pray now, and she looked at her colleagues and said yes. I knew she wasn't sincere, but I left it to the Holy Spirit to decide what to do. I asked what do you need prayer for? As she thought she said her fish died and she wanted prayer for that. I said okay and with heads bowed and people passing by the Holy Spirit took over. The prayer was about how we each have a purpose, about God's love, gifts that are given to us, that no one will love them as much as God does and that God would help the girl through the mourning of her late fish. When I was done the

girl still being the leader said I can feel my fish getting better and then I looked down and the other three still had their heads bowed down. Two of them eventually looked up, but the one boy's head was still down, and it appeared as if he was crying. I said good-bye and that it was a pleasure to meet them. I'll most likely never know what happened to that young man while I'm here but will keep him in prayer. I'm sure when I get to heaven, I'm going to hear a lot of great stories about the people I met on the strand.

### **What Happened to Mark and Teri?**

12/15/20

I've been thinking and studying more about the rapture of the saints. I believe that it can happen at any moment since all the prophecies predicted before the tribulation have been fulfilled and we can see the prophecies that are to happen such as the mark of the beast, which is to happen in the middle of the seven-year tribulation. One thing I've always wondered how could the ones that are left on the earth not believe God since His children were taken up? In 2 Thessalonians it talks about the lie that will be told. For instance, the media could say that aliens took the people. I know that sounds farfetched but look at the lies over the last year that have been spread and how the media has been used to spread those lies. I talked with someone the other day on my walk, and I've talked to him before, and he seems like a regular guy. I was talking to him about the rapture, and he told me that he heard the monoliths they found are supposed to be from aliens and they are waiting to help us, but not until we come together as one people. I thought okay, how absurd, but what would a non-believer think? Maybe aliens make more sense to them than God.

I'm going to make a letter and set it where anyone can see in our house. "If you can't find us that is because God has taken us home. It's not too late for you. Repent and ask God for forgiveness *Romans 10:9 that if you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved.* Teri and I look forward to seeing you when you get home.

### **I Might be Contagious**

12/17/20

What a perfect day at church on the strand yesterday. It was seventy degrees; beautiful blue skies and the crashing of the waves were so powerful you could only stand in awe. There are still many people at the beach and harbor and a day doesn't go by that I don't meet someone

new. A young couple stopped as they were driving and asked for prayer. I had them pull off to the shoulder. They were a young couple, and she was suffering from postpartum depression. The poor thing looked so wiped out. I leaned on the window of the car and prayed for both of them and the baby then gave them my card for Getting Over Depression in hopes it might help. The young man was very grateful as the girl was trying not to cry. I thank God every day that He allows me to make this walk and it appears I might be contagious. As I was walking to the harbor, I met this wonderful sister in Christ. We talked for a while and she wanted to be more effective for Jesus. She feels God is wanting to use her more and asked for prayer for that. The prayer as always was from the Holy Spirit and we asked that God would open the door for her to be used. We parted company and I went on my way to the harbor and as I was coming back on the strand, she was now holding the dog she was walking when we first met. Her face was beaming, and she said she was so happy to see me. She told me how she met this young girl under the pier who was wearing the same slippers she had. That started the conversation, and the young girl was in distress and after talking with her for a while she said I'll pray for you and then she stopped no let's pray right now. She said she would never have done that before but talking to me encouraged her. Nothing to do with me, just answered prayer. As I walked back, I thought if prayer was as contagious as COVID what an awesome place this would be.

### **I Should Have Said Merry Christmas**

12/25/20

It was a wonderful day at the strand yesterday. It was great saying Merry Christmas to so many people and them saying it back to me. At the end of my walk as I was going to go up to my car, there was a lady sitting on the curb. She had two backpacks, which must have been all her belongings. People would walk around her and look away as she sat there with her head down. I wanted to say Merry Christmas, but I thought to myself how could that be possible in her situation, so I simply said hello. She looked up and smiled as I went on my way. She has been on my heart ever since and I should have said Merry Christmas, maybe by saying it might have helped her have one or I should have asked if she needed anything. There was a chance I could have been her Merry in Merry Christmas, but all I did was say Hi. Now all I can do is pray that God would take care of her instead of helping her reach out to God. I missed the opportunity to give Jesus a Birthday present of love.

*Matthew 25:40 And the King will answer and say to them, 'Assuredly, I say to you, inasmuch as you did it to one of the least of these My brethren, you did it to Me.'*

## **2020 My Best Year**

12/30/20

2020 has been an interesting year I was furloughed from my job in April and then in June I was officially laid off. I received a notice from the IRS it seems Social Security is taxable, and we owe a few thousand dollars. That aside 2020 has been one of my best years if not the best. When I was notified that I was laid off from my job I did something I won't normally do. I asked God what He wanted me to do with this time He blessed me with. He answered my prayer and put on my heart the shirt I wear each day that says Do You Need Prayer in the front and I'll pray with you on the back, then sent me off to the strand and harbor. It's been amazing I've prayed for well over a hundred people and talked to so many more. I developed friendships and even small bible study groups on my walk. When I started it was hard to get people to make eye contact so I could say good morning, but now people are saying my name and asking how I'm doing. I've had some strange requests for prayer and some very serious and desperate ones. Every time the Holy Spirit meets us there with words of comfort and guidance. One of my greatest blessings is that I've grown so much closer to my Lord. When I'm not talking to anyone else, I'm talking with Him. The last six months I feel I spent it doing what I was created to do, and my life has new meaning. This coming from a guy who tried to end his life six different times. So, each day I see smiling faces, shake hands and enjoy the occasional hug. Before my walks on the strand, I was concerned about the verse in *Matthew 7:23* where Jesus said *I never knew you, depart from me*, but I walk with Him each day and at night when I pray, I thank Him for his company. Thank you, Lord, for using the foolish things of this world, instead of discarding them.

## **A Joyful New Year**

1/1/21

What an awesome way to start off the new year at the strand. It almost looked like 4<sup>th</sup> of July at the beach today there were so many people. People from all over the country enjoying a beautiful day in Oceanside. I prayed with more people than I normally do and talked with people about God's blessings. I started the day saying Happy New Year to all that made eye contact instead of good morning. As the day went on, I

prayed with this young woman whose sister died of a drug overdose about four years ago and today would have been her birthday. I've seen this young lady plenty of other times and she waved and smiled from her bicycle. She's been wanting to stop and talk to me on her rides and finally today was the day as she said. She shared how much she had been struggling with her sister's death and that she used to live the same type of lifestyle. God showed up in a big way as we prayed. God told her we have a choice to suffer with our trials or use them for His glory. I shared my testimony on depression and how God has used that to help others and that I know God wants the same thing for her. We talked for a little while and she asked if she could hug me, and she did. That was my fourth hug I received today along with several handshakes. I thought how blessed I am and how God has filled my life with joy. After that I changed my greeting from Happy New Year to Joyful New Year because happiness is constantly fleeing, but joy comes from the Lord and He never changes. So, from Teri and I have a Joyful New Year.

### **We're God's Messengers**

1/3/21

Church at the strand was great as always. Most days Satan tries to stop me going with sickness or pain in my body, but once I get out of the car and moving, I feel fine. The last two days my back has really been hurting making it difficult to walk. I walked to the end of the strand today and wasn't sure if I could go to the harbor. I stopped and prayed and felt led to go on. Pain started to subside a little and I went the distance. As I was coming back a gentleman said I don't need prayer, what I need is a dog. I stopped with Brando and the man came over and petted him. He told me that he had to put his dog down in October and he was really struggling with it. He said you probably wouldn't pray for me to die, would you? I said if God thought the best thing for you was for you to die, we wouldn't be talking right now. I shared some of my testimony with him and told him people that commit suicide don't really want to die they just can't imagine living another day. I told him that Satan's greatness weapon is suicide and that he is a great con man. What he does is have you focus on your pain and when you're not watching he steals your joy. I reminded him that God has given him gifts and talents that still need to be used. He thought for a minute and told me he was a teacher and about an unruly four-year-old boy and how his mother swears at him and he swears back. I said it was interesting as he was talking about the pain, he was feeling that he thought of this

young boy. He broke down and cried. I simply said God's not done with you. Don't you think your life would be worth living if you could help that boy? He spoke and I just listened. Sometimes the best thing you can give someone is to simply be there for them. I gave him my Getting Over Depression card with my contact information. He thanked me and went down to his boat. God loves us so much and knows where we are and what we need. He sent me today to remind His child of that. Twenty-two years ago, that was me as I tried to end my life, but Dad wasn't finished with me quite yet. Thank you, Lord, and continue to use me as your messenger until it's time to come home.

### **Lord Crank Up That Rapture**

1/13/21

I see more and more posts about the rapture and I believe it won't be long, but only God the Father knows the time. I had someone say to me today, "God Bless America", but how can He. It would be like saying God Bless Sin and that's one thing He can't do. I told him if God can bless America, He would have to apologize to Sodom and Gomorrah. Whether the rapture is coming soon or not we should be living our life as if this might be the last day. We need to repent and live holy lives and earn whatever rewards God has in store for us. We should be more vocal and caring to our loved ones that might not make it if the rapture comes today. Letting them know the truth if one day they can't find us where we hope to be and what they will have to do to meet us later. If we were half as busy doing our father's business as we are in the news and politics, we could have helped bring the light to so many. Everything that we worry about and all that we have accumulated will be gone in the twinkling of an eye. It won't be the end, but it's the beginning of life and you will be able to enjoy heavens' 401K  
*Matthew 6:19-20 "Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy and where thieves break in and steal; <sup>20</sup> but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys and where thieves do not break in and steal.*

### **Sunbathing in January**

1/15/21

It's been a little more than six months now and church at the strand was unbelievable today. The temperature was 80 degrees, the sky perfectly clear, and the waves were amazing. There were so many people there as I walked and plenty of sunbathers, yes sunbathers in the middle of January. More and more people now stop and say good morning or stop

and talk. I have had so much encouragement from others as I walk. Just yesterday a young woman yelled from her car thank you, please keep it up we need prayer. I prayed with a woman today whose daughter I prayed with a couple of weeks ago. A gentleman stopped for prayer for a friend who was fighting cancer and others who wanted to pray for our country. I make sure I don't get involved in any political discussions and make sure anything that I say is biblical. I thank God each day that He allows me to pray with His children and gives me the strength. I love the way He encourages me as I walk, people will say we all need prayer. A while ago I prayed with this young woman who was in a desperate situation and a young man heard the prayer, so when I passed by him, he said that was amazing. We talked for a while and he told me it looks like my shirts are getting a little worn. Yesterday he told me he was having some new shirts made for me. God will provide. I won't know what impact me walking the strand and harbor made, but I do know it blesses God and that is what our lives are supposed to be about.

### **God Said No**

1/19/21

I met someone on the strand the other day that I haven't seen for a while. We prayed during the election that President Trump would remain president. When he saw me, he said that it looks like God didn't answer our prayer. I told him I think He did but we don't like hearing no for an answer. I think there are at least three things that are for certain; Jesus will return, there will be a rapture, and this earth as we know it will be destroyed. There are still a couple of prophecies that need to be fulfilled during the tribulation and it will take demoncrat leadership for that to happen, such as the mark of the beast, persecution of Christians, betrayal of Israel and other sins. God has given us every opportunity to repent and turn to Him, but this country falls farther and farther into sin. Hopefully the rapture is right around the corner which will be the greatest time for Christians. Even though it might be hard to say goodbye to the things of this earth, the new earth will have what we loved and so much more. It's time to tell those that don't believe in Jesus where you'll be when they can't find you here.

### **God Encourages**

1/20/21

It was a very special day at church at the strand yesterday. Just a little while in service a young lady stopped and said hi Mark and asked if she could give me a hug. I prayed with her a month or two ago. She came

to California to get married, but her fiancé changed his mind. She decided to stay and has been walking close with the Lord. She was attending Calvary Chapel Oceanside, my old church, and was trying out for the choir. She looked so joyful. We prayed together before she left, and God just used her as a reminder that He is answering prayer. Before I started back on my walk, I looked above me and there was a couple on the patio above that must have heard the prayer and conversation. I hope that seed falls on good soil. I walked past a grass area across from the ocean where there were several mothers with children in strollers exercising, I have passed them in the past and if someone looked up, I would say good morning. Today one of the mothers said we see you all the time will you pray for us? I said if there is ever a time you would like to get together, I would love to pray with you, at the time they were in the middle of their exercise class. As I was heading to the harbor a car stopped and a lady yelled out, hi Mark. It was someone I've prayed for in the past who just got over COVID. She lives in Escondido and is doing fine but came out to the strand hoping to find me. She was concerned about what was going to happen to the country now that Trump didn't win the election. I told her God has called us to live one day at a time and if there is nothing you can do about a situation you don't worry about it but give it to God in prayer. After talking for a while and praying she felt more at peace. I told her as soon as you start to worry about anything go right to prayer asking God for peace and direction. When I got to the harbor there were two other ladies that have seen me before and asked where I bought the shirt. I explained I had them made and how God directed me in doing so. They took pictures of my shirt and told me they were going to have some made for themselves. Each day I seem to talk to more and more people and Brando gets more and more attention. On the way back a lady and gentleman called out my name they were sitting at a table on the beach. Again, it was someone I prayed with before. As I was talking, I heard someone yell prayer guy. The lady told me there's someone calling me. It was a young man that was in a ministry. He was struggling on deciding in what direction God wanted him to go. I was excited to talk to him and felt the Holy Spirit so strong. We talked for several minutes and the Holy Spirit spoke through me to him. After he left, I was so on fire that I wanted to shout. I walked just a few steps down and there were three of my brothers in Christ from the Bread of Life praying with others. I could hardly contain myself as I described what a great day I was having. We shared our love for Christ and how blessed we were that God can use sinners like us to do His will. When I finally got back to

my car I sat there in Awe, thinking how God made sure that I knew that He is always with me.

### **Limiting My Conversations**

1/22/21

Ever since I've been attending my church on the strand I fellowship with several people. We'll stop and talk, but I've made a rule that I won't discuss anything that I don't know is true or can't change. You can imagine that restricts my conversation drastically. People come up to me wanting to discuss what is happening in the world and I must stop them and explain the limit I put on the topics I'll discuss. We are now forced to share what is happening in our lives, which is much more interesting. I spend more time discussing how God has blessed me and when they look back for the most part, they see how God has worked in their life. It seems once God comes up in a conversation there is peace, love, and hope, even though we may be surrounded by the opposite. Our lives are much like a camera, the pictures we take are the things we focus on. So, do we focus on the things that we don't know for sure and can't change or do we focus on the One that knows all and can change anything.

### **God Directs Our Steps**

1/28/21

The journey God has put me on regarding the strand has been amazing. He continues to guide me and change my heart each day. A couple of days ago as Brando and I made our way down the strand the road was covered with rocks that washed up from the storm the day before. It was difficult to even walk. I met one of my friends that I've met on my journey and as we were talking, he said you need to be careful because cars can run over the rocks and throw them out. On my way back to the car that exact thing happened a car ran over a rock and catapulted it right in front of me just missing my leg and Brando's head. My first reaction wasn't fear or anger, but of gratitude that God kept us safe. Yesterday Teri joined us on our walk and a little way down the strand a man in his late twenties said I can sure use some prayer. I stopped and asked what he needed prayer for and he told me peace. I wasn't sure what he met but the Holy Spirit did. After praying for him he pulled a necklace out from under his shirt, and it was a beautiful gold cross. He said he had it made from his mom's wedding ring. I told him it was beautiful, and he shook my hand then hugged and thanked me. As we were walking Teri said that's amazing. The gentleman was working at

the condos we passed and probably only there for that day and at that moment we were walking by he was getting something out of his truck. God orchestrated that moment so that we could meet, pray, and give him the peace he was praying for. I told her He does it every day and every day I'm amazed. We met several other people and prayed with a few more. God knows where we are in our journey and if we look, we can see him in others as He directs or steps.

### **God's Doing All of the Work**

1/31/21

The other day on my walk someone asked me how I do what I do every day. I told him it has very little to do with me. I told him it started about seven months ago when God put on my heart to have these shirts made and to walk along the strand and harbor. Each day I wake up pray and read the bible. I get my dog, that God has blessed me with, get in the car and head down here to the beach. God has taken care of the itinerary who I'll see, talk to, or pray with and all I need to do is walk down the strand saying good morning to whoever makes eye contact with me. In between talking to people, I speak to God, so I get to spend my days with the person I love most and since He is always with me there is nothing to fear. Each day I'm here in one of the most beautiful places I know, and it never seems to get old looking out into the ocean listening to the roar of the waves. When someone stops for prayer I just stand back and let the Holy Spirit speak to them. God already knew who He was going to put in my path and what they needed. I've made several friends on my walks and I stop to talk with them, and people will say hello or wave as if I was somebody. God takes care of all the details, I'm just along for the ride and what a wonderful ride it is. I thanked the person for asking because it reminded me of how unbelievably blessed, I am to be allowed to walk with Him each day. I got in the car with Brando and stopped to thank Him before heading home for another great day. I thought about it for a moment and thought the biggest part I play is that I show up.

### **Great Praise Report**

2/4/21

Another beautiful day at church at the Strand. I continue to meet more and more people and a day doesn't go by that I don't pray with someone, and God knows that I love praise reports. It's His way of telling me that I'm on the right path. A few months ago, a young lady with her baby stopped me. She was so excited and told me how she was praying for

her husband and looked up and saw me. I asked what she would like to pray for, and she said her husband is in prison and was sentenced to twenty years. She told me how much she loved him and wanted her baby to have both a father and mother. He is a good man and I know that God has been working on his heart, she said. I remember praying with her and that we were both crying while I hugged her. She continued to thank me, and she was so amazed God put me there at that time for her. Today several months later I ran into her on the beach with her daughter and her husband. She told me she was hoping to see me again to tell me about our answered prayer for her husband. She told me that they discovered her husband didn't commit the crime and he was released. He shook my hand and hugged me and told me about when I first prayed with his wife how she continued to talk about it and told me to have faith. He told me that a few people have been talking to him about the love of Jesus and our prayer helped him to receive Him as his Lord and Savior. He asked if I would pray for them as a family and I told him I can't imagine anything else I would rather do. The Holy Spirit took charge giving holy guidance, love, and protection to this wonderful family. She told me after our first meeting how she told everyone about this handsome man with a shirt that simply said Do You Need Prayer. Maybe she said old instead of handsome it was hard to understand since we were all teared up.

Dear Lord, I love You and I'm so grateful that you can use both the handsome and the old to do your work.

### **My Plan Doesn't Work**

2/9/21

Yesterday was really something special at the strand. It was like a family reunion. As soon as I got out of my car someone greeted me that I've met before. As I got down the stairs to start my walk, I ran into someone else and then two others joined us and that continued to happen on most of my walk. It was fellowship day at church yesterday as I hugged, shook hands and I had a great time. I spent more than an hour over the time I would normally be there, because of all the people. It was a wonderful day, but on my way back I thought twenty-two years ago my plan was not to be here. I remember I was excited about the thought of ending my life and not having to suffer one more day on the earth and telling God He made a mistake in making me. Fortunately, that wasn't God's plan for me. When God creates something, He does it for a reason and He was about to show me why He doesn't make

mistakes. First, He took the heart of stone that was in me and gave me a heart of flesh. He showed me how much He loved me and that I can trust Him no matter what. His plan was to lead me on a journey, turning me into the man He can use. As I walked, I looked back at all the miraculous moments God guided me through and stopped to thank Him and cried. I guess I won't know until I go home why He changed my plan to His, but I'm so blessed that He did. My Journey isn't over, yet I wonder what still lies ahead, but one thing for sure I'm going to be following His plan for the rest of my life.

### **Praying for Those Who Trust in Him**

2/16/21

I continue this wonderful journey God has put me on at the strand. Teri has been joining me more on my walks, so I get to spend time with the two people I love most. Sunday was wonderful and busy at the strand and harbor. When I got to the harbor there were over twenty members of Bikers for Christ and they asked me to pray over them. It was great fellowship as we talked about Jesus. Talked to several people on our walk and when we got to the car there was a couple who I just met the day before. They asked if I would pray for their relationship and that it would honor God. It was wonderful talking and praying with them. Occasionally, something very special happens and that is what I got to experience yesterday. We just began our walk down the strand and it was magnificent watching the waves hit the rocks and come over onto the road. However, because of the noise I didn't hear this young lady shouting out to me, but she finally made it to me and touched my shoulder. She had tears rolling down her face as she told me that she is trying to stop her addiction of drugs. It's was only four days since she stopped, and she has been praying to God for strength. Then she saw me walking with my shirt and felt this was God's sign to her that He was listening. She looked so broken but kept telling me that she knew God would help her. I felt the Holy Spirit say step aside I have something I want to tell her. I did as I was told and put my hand on her shoulder while He spoke to this young lady. As words of love, hope and prayers that were going to be answered came through this vessel I was in awe. I'm not sure how long the prayer was, but the words were perfect. She told me I knew God was listening and thanked me. I found a little place in between the buildings to cry, I was shaking and never felt closer to God than in that moment.

## **More Answered Prayer**

2/19/21

What a wonderful day at the strand and it was even more wonderful because I got to share it with my beautiful wife. There were so many people at the beach and harbor today and I prayed for more people than I usually do, but today I got to see more answered prayer. When Jesus would do His ministry and would say according to your faith may it be done unto you. I believe for someone to come to a stranger for prayer takes that kind of faith that God is looking for. Just a couple of days ago I posted about a young lady who needed prayer because she was trying to rid herself of her drug addiction. When she came up to me, she was in tears, her face was cast down and she looked as though she was in a fight and she wasn't winning. Today I saw her when we first arrived in the parking lot. It was hard to tell she was the same person. Her smile was almost as bright as the sunlight off the waves. She was excited to see me and had her friend with her. She introduced me and her friend said you're the guy with the shirt she has been talking about. It's nice to have an official name, guy with the shirt. She asked if we could pray together, and I told her there is nothing else I would rather do. The Holy Spirit jumped in and blessed them both. After the prayer I just looked at her and said, you're going to be great. She smiled and said, I know.

## **Bible Study at the Harbor**

3/6/21

It's been a little over 8 months that I've been attending church at the strand and all that time I don't believe I had a day that I haven't met someone new. Most people it might be a good morning or how are you doing, but there are those who need prayer. Yesterday as I was walking at the harbor a man on a bicycle stopped and said we need to have a bible study. He wasn't wearing any shoes and appeared he might be homeless. I said great and he handed me a small new testament bible and said open the book and pick a passage. I did as he requested and my finger landed on *Colossians 3:2 Set your mind on things above, not on things on the earth.* I said with everything that is happening in this world this is the perfect scripture. I think we were both astonished by the selection and we had our bible study. The man was going through a lot, he had a good job driving trucks in Utah, but the job allows a person to think too much. He quit his job and came to Oceanside for a little vacation before he decides what to do next. I don't think I could have found a better scripture to choose as the Holy Spirit prayed for this man

and me. The prayer reminded him that God has a plan for his life, and He has already given him the gifts and abilities he needs to make that plan a success. Our bible study was about 15 to 20 minutes and was one of the best I have ever attended. He hugged me and said he was still planning on being here tomorrow and hoped to see me and I said I should be here unless God has other plans. God knew what we needed to hear. I haven't watched the news in over 2 years now, but I still open facebook. Most of the posts are regurgitated news stories and opinions and I easily get caught up and turn my attention to the negativity of the posts and the hopelessness of the condition of this country. Colossians 3:2 was God's reminder for me that my attention needs to be on Him and my heavenly home. I'm on God's timeclock now and He has called me to earn rewards in this life until it's time to go home and reminds me: *Matthew 6:21 For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.*

### **Shining My Light**

3/10/21

I can't stop but smile lately because of the joy that my Lord has put on my heart. Just a couple of days ago I was walking in my neighborhood praying and walking Brando. A couple of my neighbors stopped their car, rolled down the windows and told me my smile makes their day. I told them that God has filled my heart with so much joy I can't help but smile.

It was time to go to the strand and Teri joined me. There are about fifteen young mothers who do an exercise class, and you can see them jogging down the strand. Where they use to ignore me and look away in the past, they now are the first to say good morning. As the one mother passed, I yelled out how great it was to see them with their children, and she slowed down and told me they look forward to seeing me smile and yelled for me to pray for them. As we continued our walk a man stopped and told me he could use prayer because he was going through some things, but felt God working in his life. After praying with him he told me that he saw my smile and knew God wanted to use me. Down at the harbor I met an older gentleman, and he was going back to Oklahoma and wanted prayer for a safe trip. After I was done, he started to pray for me to bless my ministry and that I would be a light to others. Each day I do a journal entry picking a verse in a chapter and writing about it. Yesterday I was in the book of Luke and came across *Luke 11:33 "No one, when he has lit a lamp, puts it in a secret place or under a basket, but on a lampstand, that those who come in may see the light.* When you see a light in the darkness, you notice the light, but may not

be sure if it's source until you get closer. The same holds true with our light, people may need to get closer until you can tell them the source of our joy.

### **God Shows Me His Love for Others**

3/18/21

My favorite part of each day is walking the strand. Each day is different and has unique blessings. There is a young man that I see on occasion. He tries to take his lunch about the time I would be passing by. I've prayed with him several times and now when he sees me, he gives me a big hug and smile which could make anyone's day. He usually has request for health of family members, travel mercies, guidance on what he should do about work and the Lord uses these prayers to talk to him. Yesterday was a little different he told me everything was going great, and it appeared all his prayers were answered, and he even got a large raise from his employer. He said let's just thank him. I couldn't agree more, and we took a few moments to tell Him how much we love Him and how grateful we were. We hugged again with tears of gratitude in our eyes and a warm feeling in our hearts. As Teri and I were walking a young lady that I prayed for a couple of months ago, was riding her bike and stopped. The young lady lost her sister from a drug overdose and her heart was heavy that day because it was the fourth anniversary of her sister's death. She shared with me that she was on the same path as her sister, but she had children and wanted to take care of them. I'm not sure how much time that day we spent talking and praying but it was miraculous the way the Holy Spirit spoke to her. She asked if she could hug me and hugged me so hard and didn't want to let go. Yesterday I witnessed a different person someone with this awesome smile and bright appearance. She stopped us and asked if she could pray for us. Of course, I said. The prayer was so humbling, and that God would continue to use us to reach others. We thanked her and she shared that beautiful smile one more time before continuing her ride. I get so much joy from walking the strand that I question myself whether I'm doing it for God or myself. As I walked, I prayed to myself, Lord am I still doing this for You? I felt God say, "You still don't know how much I love You. Your smile and joy glorify me." So, I'll keep on walking and smiling receiving the blessings He has in store for me with a grateful heart.

## **Do I Need a Pastor?**

3/23/21

I'm so blessed going to the strand every day. To see God's creation and to meet so many wonderful people. Yesterday I must have prayed with over ten people and fellowshiped with another ten. One question I get often is where is my home church? I always respond You're in it. I explain how I start my day in the word, listen to worship music in the car, fellowship, pray and glorify God. Most people like my response, but the other day I met a gentleman who didn't care for my answer and insisted that I needed to attend a traditional church. He asked who was my pastor. and I said I didn't have one and he said I need to have one. Please don't get me wrong I love church and without it I would most likely not have been saved. I've had some great pastors that guided me on my journey. Church gave me the opportunity to grow, serve, learn, teach, use my gifts and fellowship with some of the most wonderful people. It's great being part of the church, but better yet to be part of the body of Christ. I believe for some people going to church once a week fulfills their obligation of being a Christian and they may not fulfill the purpose that they were created for. Since COVID the church had to conform to the restrictions and lost a lot of its effectiveness since service was limited along with fellowship. For me I felt it was God's way of telling me let's try something new let's get church out of the building and to the people. The pastors God has put in my life have equipped me to go out to serve God and others. Think of the church as military training. The army is going to get the best training and equipment and would be able to defeat any enemy, but what if that army never leaves the barracks, what good would it be? There is a war out there get ready to fight.

## **Our Kid's Ministry at the Strand**

3/26/21

I love my church at the strand. Yesterday we did curb side prayer as a daughter stopped and asked prayer for her mother that was sitting next to her. One thing about our church is that we have the best kid's ministry around. I love walking down and seeing the families playing with their children, whether playing catch, playing on the playground, swimming, making sandcastles, volleyball, riding bikes and many other activities. There is something so special about seeing a parent taking the time with their child and enjoying that time. As I was walking with Teri and our dogs a young boy, about six years old, asked if he could pet Brando. I didn't see his parents but told him sure and introduced him to Brando.

He petted him and looked up at me and asked if I loved God. I told him more than anything, but my wife comes in at a close second. I asked him if he loved God and he said yes. He then said he wanted to be good and follow the commandments. When he was finished petting Brando, he thanked me and got back on his scooter. I thought how wonderful it was that his parents are teaching him about God. God has given us the blessing of raising His children and an awesome responsibility to raise them right. It seems as this country continues to grow further away from God, we as parents and grandparents grow further away from our responsibility. Take some time and bring your children to the kid's ministry at the strand, I guarantee you it will be time well spent.

### **Stage Four Cancer**

3/31/21

Another perfect day at the strand. Sunny and eighty with the beach full of families enjoying this wonderful weather. Today as I went to the harbor a man called me as he parked his car on the other side of the street. We prayed together a few weeks ago for him to find a way back home to Oklahoma. He came up to tell me that God worked things out and he was heading home today but was hoping to find me to tell me the good news. We prayed for travel mercies and blessings. On the way back to my car a man ran past me and asked if I would pray for him. He seemed so desperate. I asked what he wanted prayer for, and he shared that he was in the middle of a divorce and had stage four cancer. He told me he felt that the cancer was caused because of sin in his life, and I told him if that was the case, we all would have stage four cancer. I asked if he believed in Jesus and he shared that he used to walk with him, but it's been a long time and he wasn't sure if he still was saved. He shared he has been contemplating suicide and that he felt he didn't want to live any longer. I told him he came to the right man and shared my testimony of depression and my past suicide attempts and how God guided me through Satan's mine field. I gave him my card with my website and phone number. We went into prayer and I stepped aside to allow the Holy Spirit to speak to him. After this amazing prayer he broke down and I hugged him reassuring him that God loved him and then he recommitted his life to Jesus. I told him to go through the website and to call me whenever he wanted. He thanked me and went back on his run. It's been almost exactly 23 years ago that I tried to end my life on the beach just down the road. There is no reason I should still be alive, but God had other plans. Just think God knew I was going to

meet this gentleman today and share the hope that only comes from Him, even before I was born.

## **Prodigal Son**

4/5/21

Every day at the strand is special. I get to speak and pray with so many people and now there are so many people from out of state to talk to. Some days however are even more special and those are the days you know God is putting someone in my path that really needs Him. Today we started a little late because Teri had a doctor's appointment. It used to be that those things would aggravate me if I didn't do things according to my schedule, but God is teaching me I'm on His. Teri and I walked the strand and harbor talking and praying, but when we were almost to the end of our walk a young man passed me and then doubled back. He asked if I would pray with him and he seemed so lost. He was in his mid-twenties and shared that he was raised in a Christian home but had lost his way. He knew God was the answer, but he was too ashamed to reach out to Him. He wanted prayer for guidance and for his wife and three-year-old son. I put my arm around him and began to pray. The Holy Spirit reminded him of the prodigal son and how he left his father in search of what he hoped to be happiness. He didn't stop him from leaving and was patient hoping for his son's return. When the father saw his son in the distance, he ran to him and when he got there, he embraced him. When his son tried to explain he wasn't worthy the father would have nothing to do with it but celebrated his return. I prayed that today is that day for you. There is nothing you could do to lose the love of your Father; He's been with you all along. I shared that about twenty-three years ago today I tried to end my life just down the beach and what a terrible person I was. He looked at me and told me that was what he has been thinking that he didn't what to go on any longer. I told him we get so busy trying to find happiness in this world and we can't find it and we get discouraged, but if you search for joy, you'll always find it in your Father's arms. He hugged and thanked me, and I gave him my Getting Over Depression card. What are the chances that I would be there at that specific time and place to be able to pray with him? The chances must be one in One. Like a good Father He always knows where His children are.

## **Speaking to Others about Depression**

4/7/21

Another amazing day at the strand. There are fewer people wearing masks and I'm able to see and react to others on my walk. Life has never been better for me since COVID, because I would never have talked and prayed with so many people. Teri and I walked down to the harbor and met these two wonderful ladies, and one was going through some serious family problems. We talked and prayed and it's so wonderful to see the expression on other's faces as the Holy Spirit is finished talking to them. Just before we headed up the stairs to our car three ladies were talking. The younger one asked my name, because she sees me often as she drives by on the strand. I introduced myself and Teri and after talking for a little bit I asked them if they needed prayer for anything. She thought and said that her stepfather committed suicide in 2019 and she still struggles with that. I must have looked surprised and told them my testimony of depression and attempted suicide. As I was speaking the younger one and her mother started crying. They both attempted suicide and the mother showed me a tattoo that was on her wrist which said, "I Can Do This." We held hands as the Holy Spirit led us all in a prayer of love and purpose. The prayer encouraged us all to seek God's purpose using the gifts and talents that He has blessed us with. It's going to be exciting when I get to heaven and meet the wonderful people God has put in my path and share the stories of His loving grace.

## **No Is an Answer**

4/12/21

My church at the strand has been packed lately with all of those that are enjoying spring break. God has put so many wonderful people in my path from all over the country. A lot of the prayer requests deal with depression and it's understandable with all that is happening in this country. I find myself not only praying but sharing my testimony and what God has taught me over the years. Yesterday I prayed for a mother and her adult daughter. The daughter was struggling with raising her young child and being a good wife. She says she has been praying but hasn't seen any answers to those prayers. I shared my first prayer when I was trying to comment suicide twenty-three years ago. I told her before I took the drugs that I told God that I didn't feel that I belonged in hell because I did the best I could, was faithful to my wife, met my children needs and really didn't do anything bad. I also said I

understand I don't belong in heaven and I don't blame Him that He didn't want me there. I asked if I could just die, and it would be like I was never here which would be better for everyone. I told them that was my first prayer and God answered it. They looked a little confused and I said His answer was no. I told them that no is an answer, and we are like children and don't like to hear it, but when raising children that parents will say no more than yes to their requests, because they know what's best for them. So, when God says no listen to Him, and He'll show you why. We all hugged and as I walked away, I felt this overwhelming peace about me and stopped and thanked God for saying no twenty-three years ago.

### **Answered Prayer for a Meter Maid**

4/19/21

I love my walks on the strand. The other day I got out of my car and there was a meter maid. I prayed with her a couple of weeks ago for her cousin who was in the hospital on a ventilator. She came up to me with tears in her eyes and said He heard us. Shortly after praying for her they were able to take her off the ventilator and she is home doing well. I made my way down to the strand and there were a lot of people. The city removed all the mask required signs so most of the people weren't wearing any and it seemed just like a typical summer day with temperature close to eighty. We came up to a mother with her two young daughters picking up trash on the beach. The girls were maybe five and seven and the mother asked if they could read my shirt. They read the one side and I turned around and they read the other. The mom asked if we could all pray, and I asked what they wanted prayer for. The older of the two said they would like to pray for the homeless and for people to stop throwing out their trash on the beach. I thought what a wonderful heart to pray for those in need. We held hands and let the Holy Spirit do His job. I then prayed for a group of women who came together to celebrate their friend and sister's birthday. We talked to so many people as we walk our dogs. One of our dogs, at least for now, Teri is raising for Canine Companions. She has been a puppy raiser for many years. As we walked under the pier, we heard someone say thank you. He was a disabled vet sitting in his wheelchair and had his yellow lab sitting next to him. Teri went over to speak with him, and he said he just wanted to thank her for what she does. The dog he had was the second dog that he received from Canine Companions and didn't know what he would do without him. Teri is the most giving person I know, and she never expects anything in return, but I know that thank you met so much to her.

## **First Prayer Answered**

4/20/21

Every day is special on the strand, but yesterday was special all day long. I start my day by walking Brando and praying around my neighborhood. I stopped to talk to one of my neighbors and we must have spent twenty minutes praising God for all He has done in our lives. As I was walking and saying good morning on the strand a woman who was with two other women stopped me. She said do you remember me? I said she looked familiar, and she reminded me that Teri and I prayed with her last July 4<sup>th</sup>. July 4<sup>th</sup> last year was the first day that I went out to pray, so she must have been the first person I prayed with. Each year they stay in a small condo on the strand, and she reminded me that we prayed for her brother who was in the hospital. He fell off a ladder and was in serious condition. I said yes, I remember how is he doing? She told me when he was in the hospital, they discovered he had a brain tumor and since they were able to catch it early, they were able to remove it and he was doing great. I said we did ask for a complete healing. She also said we prayed to strengthen her marriage and that her and her husband were doing very well. The other two ladies with her asked if we could pray together and gave me their prayer requests. I talked and prayed with so many other people it was wonderful. The last prayer was from a young man who was staying at one of the condos on the strand. He asked if I would pray with him and he asked for courage. I told him that he was already on his way since he stopped a stranger for prayer, that took courage. I got in my car thanking God for such an amazing ministry. I had to go to the doctor for blood work. I was still wearing my Do You Need Prayer T-shirt. There was hardly anyone there. When I walked up to the counter there were two receptionists and they both raised their hands. I asked them if they had questions. They both laughed. As I was giving my information, they both committed on how much they liked my t-shirt. I explained what I do each day at the strand and shared some of my experiences. We all shared how much we love God and how grateful we were. By the time I left the counter each one of us had a tissue wiping our eyes. When I got home, I shared everything that happened with Teri, she is my greatest blessing. There is nothing better than showing your gratitude for the blessings you have and to share with others where those blessing come from.

## **Prayer for Wisdom**

4/22/21

During my walks on the strand, I've had all kinds of prayer requests. Requests for healings, guidance, marriage restoration, overcome addiction, family and more. I even had a request for a sword and scepter along with a young girl for a blessing on her dead goldfish. Yesterday I was really blessed when a ten-year-old boy on a skateboard stopped and asked if I would pray for him. He was with his sister. I said of course and asked what he wanted prayer for. He asked for wisdom. My first thought was King Solomon's request when God asked Him what he desired. The Holy Spirit spoke to him and after praying he smiled and thanked me and went on his way. With all the evil that is happening in this world it felt wonderful hearing such a request from someone so young. I think we all need to add wisdom to our list of prayer requests.

## **On the Right Road**

4/25/21

Have you ever drove somewhere and realize you might have passed your exit? You've been driving for a while and haven't seen any signs on what road you're on and think you might need to turn around, but then there is a sign ahead and you realize you've been on the right road all along. At times I feel the same way as I continue to walk the strand. It's been over eight months and a couple of different opportunities have come along and I'm not sure if I missed my exit, but then God gives me a sign. A couple of days ago I came across four ladies talking, and they stopped me. The one stopped asked if I remembered her. She said that I prayed with her about her friend. She was about to give birth but the doctor's told her that the baby was deformed and wasn't sure if the baby would make it. Her friend gave birth a couple of weeks ago and the baby was perfect, and the doctors have no explanation of why. She hugged me with tears in her eyes and said but we know why. Just yesterday an ambulance was driving down the strand and the passenger was waving frantically at me as it passed by. People wave at me all the time, so I didn't think a lot of it, but then as I was walking it came by again. He put down the window and yelled do you remember me? You prayed with me a few weeks ago because I was nervous about taking a test that afternoon. He said the prayer gave him peace and he passed his test with flying colors. The test was for becoming a paramedic and he got the job and introduced me to the driver, his new partner. It appears I'm still on the right road as God

continues to show me the signs I'm going in the right direction after all I shouldn't get lost, I'm a GPS (God's Prayer Servant)

### **Our Trials Can Be Someone Else's Gift**

4/30/21

God has blessed me with such an unbelievable life there is no words to show my gratitude. I get up each morning with Him and get to spend time walking in one of the most beautiful places I know, meeting and talking to some wonderful people. God uses me to talk to His children, but the greatest thing I have to offer is the pain I went through suffering from depression. Yesterday as I was walking just enjoying another wonderful day a couple came up to me almost to the end of my walk. They told me how much they loved my shirt and asked if they could pray for me. We began to talk, and I explained how God put me on this path and told them how I used to suffer from depression and my suicide attempt 23 year ago. The woman began to cry as her husband held her. She told me how she suffers from depression and that her 22-year-old son committed suicide a year prior by shooting himself. I spent almost an hour with them explaining what I went through and all the treatment and hospitalizations. I was able to tell her what I felt she was going through, and she was amazed that I knew her pain. I told her it was no one's fault that her son took his life. I told her people who commit suicide don't want to die, they are in so much pain they can't imagine living another day and that Satan is more than happy to reassure him that is the right thing to do. I told her I can't imagine her lose, but instead of asking why her son, maybe you need to pray and ask God how do You want me to use this pain? We prayed and we were all crying as they hugged and thanked me. I gave them my contact information. One of the greatest gifts we can give someone is to share how God worked in our lives through our greatest trials. Lord thank you for getting me through my darkest times may they be a light to those who need to see You.

### **Our Memories Are Up to Us.**

5/1/21

If you ever need to be humbled allow a four-year-old to do it. Yesterday as I was enjoying my walk, I met a mother with a six and four-year-old daughters. They were excited to see Brando and I told the mother if it was okay with her that they were welcomed to pet him. The younger one kept telling Brando how cute he was, and I looked at her and said what about me I'm cute. She looked up and made this face

and yelled, “NO WAY!!!” The mother tried not to laugh, and I said cute kid.

The place I used to work Chef’s Toys moved their location in San Diego and Teri and I decided to go down to see my coworkers that I Haven’t seen in over a year. I was still wearing my shirt as we arrived and there were a lot of people. It was great as they recognized me and asked how I was doing. I had a wonderful memory for each person, and it appeared they also had one of me. The main reason I went was to see Jesse, my old boss. Jesse is a young man still in his twenties, but one of the most knowledgeable people I know in restaurant equipment. The time I was working for him, was the same time that my right hip was giving out. I was scheduled for a hip replacement, but the pain was unbearable at times and was delayed once because my blood sugar was elevated. Jesse was always watching out for me and at times I would come into work and only able to work an hour or two and he would be the one to send me home. There were times I would be sitting in the conference room in so much pain all I could do was cry and he would come in to comfort me and send me home. He would always pay me for the whole day and I just wanted to thank him one more time for his support. I looked down one of the aisles and he was standing there talking to a couple of his superiors with his back to me. I said his name and he turned around and even though he was wearing a mask you could tell he was smiling. He came up to me and we hugged. He introduced me as the best person he ever worked with. I told them that Jesses was the best and that I could never repay all the kindness he showed me. Then I joked and said not that I was going to give him any money. Then he hugged me again and said just knowing you is reward enough. On the way home I thought about every person I saw again and the wonderful memory I had for each one. My Memory could have been about the pain I suffered those few months, but it wasn’t. It was about the connection I made with a young man and how grateful I’ll always be. We decide what our memories will be, we can search for the good or focus on the bad. When you focus on the good, you’ll be able to see God’s hand in your life.

### **Nine Months**

5/4/21

Today marks my ninth month that I’ve been enjoying my church at the strand. I’ve gone from being nervous in the beginning to anticipation on who God has planned to put in my path and what He plans on doing. I get plenty of private time with my Lord as I pray and walk with Him.

I've grown so much, but still have a difficult time understanding why He cares and loves us so much. Yesterday I was watching an episode of the Chosen, it was the third one where Jesus was with the children. Jesus was talking with the children, playing, and answering questions. He was so patient with them and was enjoying this time with them. He asked them if they knew the Shabbat and all the children started reciting "Love the Lord your God with all your heart, mind and soul." As they continued to recite Jesus's reaction was remarkable, He was almost moved to tears and you could see the love He had for these children and how this moment blessed Him. On my walks I've experienced these same moments where I would meet a brother or sister in Christ, and we would just talk about how God has worked in our lives and how grateful we are that we belong to Him. I now have a little more understanding of my Lord. It's as if the child you have raised and sacrificed so much for came up to you to tell you how much they loved and appreciated you and were grateful that you were their parent. That would be a memory you would never forget, so it is with God. Take a moment from all the distractions of the day and look back on how God has blessed you and thank Him. Remarkably we have the power to bless God.

### **Taking Care of a Friends Son**

5/11/21

I love this journey I'm on as I walk the strand and harbor each day. God continues to put wonderful people in my life and the beautiful view of the ocean never gets old. Yesterday on my walk a brother stopped me and told me he was hoping to run into me. I see him often and recently prayed with him, because of a surgery he is going to have. He told me he wanted me to know that I encouraged him to set up a Facebook page on prayer. He gets up by 3:00am every morning and has it set up that people can message him with their request. It was important to him that I know my ministry encouraged him. I went on thanking God for the great news, and I came up to several men under a canopy on the beach. They said they can use prayer and that they were a men's group from Lake Elsinore. We all went into prayer just to thank God for all that He does and asked to be used by Him. I left them flying with the grace of God. As I went down to the harbor a prayed with another couple and then they prayed for me. When people see me, they will either say I love your shirt, or we all need prayer. When I first started if someone said we can all use prayer I would ask them if I could pray with them and the answer was always no, I'm good so I stopped asking. On my

way back this young lady stopped and said I love your shirt and smiled and said we all need prayer, but something hit my heart and I asked do you need prayer. At first, she said no, but looked at me and said yes, I do. I asked her what she needed prayer for, and she told me her best friend just died the day before. She said she had cancer and leaves behind a husband and a seven-year-old son. As we were praying, she started to cry and held on to me. The Holy Spirit just covered her with love, and I believe this was the first time she was dealing with the loss of her best friend. I held her for a little while as she continued to cry. Before she left, she told me that she was moving to Florida to help raise her friend's son and thanked me again and that God most have put me in her path today. As I was walking back God put on my heart, I should have told her to tell her son about her friend. I could only imagine what that boy must have gone through as he had to experience the death of his mother. His memory of her most likely clouded by the pain she must have gone through and may be difficult to remember the good time he spent with her. The young lady I prayed with is not going to be able to share memories of her friend being a mother but can share the stories of her best friend. This lady must have been awesome to have the love of a friend that is willing to move and help raise her son. I think it would help her son realize not just the mom, but the amazing women this lady must have been and that one day he will see her again and the three of them can share the stories he was told. I sure hope God puts her back in my path today.

### **Man in the Mirror**

5/15/21

Yesterday on my walk I heard someone call my name and as I looked around there was a mother with her adult daughter. I must have prayed with them before but didn't remember them. As they approached, they said they were hoping to see me. The mother told me that they rented a place there for the week with her husband. They've been having problems and was hoping this vacation would help, but it wasn't. They didn't know what to do and was hoping that I would pray with them. I asked what the problem was, and the wife told me that her husband suffers from depression and he is very abusive to both her and their daughter. She then stated that he doesn't hit them but it's verbal abuse and she doesn't think she can take it any longer. I told her how men with depression acted; the constant anger, that he acts superior, doesn't allow her to explain or talk when he is in these moods, belittles her and doesn't spend much time with them. I explained that men that are

depressed hate themselves and that hate turns to anger, lashing out to others releases some of that self-hate that he has, he doesn't spend time with others because he is so self-consumed, he needs to hide, he can't show affection because he doesn't know how, and he feels as if he is in a pit with no way out. They just looked at me with tears rolling down their faces and I said the most important thing to remember that this is not your fault. They asked how I knew so much, and I said I use to be the same man that your husband is now. I never actually knew the pain I caused my family, because I was so wrapped up in my own pain and didn't think of them. The most important thing you can do now is exactly what we are going to do and that is pray and that will be something you'll need to do often. They looked at me and couldn't believe I was that kind of man and I said I was probably worse, but if God can change me, He can surely change your husband. The prayer was awesome as the three of us hugged and cried, I gave them my Getting Over Depression card and contact information in hopes her husband might want to talk. The last few days the verse in *Genesis 50:20 But as for you, you meant evil against me; but God meant it for good,...* Kept coming up. The evil of my own depression God is using for good. There is nothing He can't do.

### **What a Blessing**

5/16/21

Yesterday I received the greatest encouragement I ever received. First on my walk a family was having some type of reunion. A young man ran up to me and asked if I would pray for them. He told me they were from Arizona and heading back. There was about 15 to 20 people as I prayed. It was at a playground area with a lot of other people surrounding us and the Holy Spirit turned up the volume. I thanked them and let them know how blessed praying with them made me and the young man gave me a hug and thanked me. As Teri and I continued our walk a woman on a bicycle stopped and said, "there you are!" I said, "Thank you I've been looking for me all day." She laughed and told me how she heard of me and that I prayed with one of her friends and have talked to others that she knew, but this was the first time that she saw me. She told me that she just wanted to stop to tell me that my ministry is making a difference and not to stop. I thanked her for stopping and that it meant a lot to me. As she left, I stood there in awe at the idea that I could make a difference. I guess it's true *1 Corinthians 1:27 But God has chosen the foolish things of the world to put to shame the wise, and God has chosen the weak things of the world to put to*

*shame the things which are mighty;* What a privilege it is to be a fool for Christ.

### **The Love of Money the Root of Evil**

5/20/21

The other day on my walk I had an unusual and sad request. There was a couple from out of town and they wanted to pray for her friend. She told me that her friend's husband had died a few weeks ago from cancer. He had been battling it for over a year and spent that last week of his life in the hospital. They took out a special life insurance policy that could only be collected if he died of cancer. When she went to submit the claim the insurance company said they couldn't process the claim because the hospital put on the death certificate that he died of COVID and not cancer. Her friend contacted the hospital assuming it was a mistake since he wasn't even treated for COVID and explained the situation and that they needed to amend the death certificate with the real cause of her husband's death. The hospital refuses to change the death certificate, since they get extra money for COVID cases, and now she is forced to hire a lawyer and they wanted prayer for a just outcome so she may get the insurance settlement. Then she said that she has two sons and doesn't know how she could make it without this settlement. We prayed together for God to judge the evil that is going on today and show this family mercy. Satan uses the love of money to control evil and when you look around at all the evil that surrounds us it exists because of the love of money. I wonder how the world would look if we replaced the love of money for the love of Jesus.

### **Praying with Children**

5/25/21

I am so blessed. Today was wonderful on the strand. It was as if everyone I passed said good morning and smiled. The first person who asked for prayer was just down the strand in a car, I then passed three young girls and one stopped and asked for prayer and the two of us prayed while her friends looked on. As I was coming to the pier there were about 30 children from a Catholic School with two teachers and one of the teachers stopped me and asked for prayer. She gathered all the children in a circle and the Holy Spirit had a ball. As I was finished there was a woman standing under the pier with tears in her eyes. She said that my ministry was wonderful, and I stopped and talked to her for a while giving my testimony and how God started this ministry. She was going through some tough times and we prayed and the Holy Spirit

told her how special she was. I talked to several other people that I see on a regular basis and told them how great my day was going. I was going over to the harbor on the bridge and passed two people, one was in a wheelchair. I was a couple hundred feet away when I heard my name and turned around. A couple behind me said I think you have some business over there. The man wanted prayer he has Parkinson's, and I spent some time with him. By now I could have flown the rest of the way but continued to meet people talking and laughing. There is this woman who roller skates and she looked like she is having a lot of fun. Today she stopped and introduced herself. I told her I just watch her, and it gives me joy. We must have talked for twenty minutes about our love for Jesus as I walked, and she skated. We stopped and sat on a bench to pray and praise our Lord. There is another woman I see that does the fishing tours at the harbor. She recently found out she has breast cancer and just had her hair cut short and died pink. I stopped to compliment her new hair style. She's not a believer and I only pray when someone asks for prayer, but I'm praying that one day she will ask. So much more happened today and I spent over an hour longer than I typically do. I felt so close to my Lord that I could feel his arm on my shoulder today. Hope He had as much fun as I did.

### **Brando the Prayer Warrior**

5/28/21

Each day Brando and I go out to the strand and harbor. Brando is a great dog, and everyone seems to love him. People are always stopping and saying how beautiful or handsome he is and ask to pet him. Even though people pet him he doesn't seem that impressed. He stands there and waits until we can go on our way, even though children are making a fuss over him. Yesterday as we went to the harbor a lady with her grandson asks if they could pet Brando and as always, I said of course. This time it was different he pushed into the lady's leg looked up at her and gave her a kiss. She tried holding back her tears and told me that she just put her dog to sleep the day before and was really struggling. She said, "I was going to ask you to pray for me, but Brando already did." That's my boy Brando the prayer warrior.

### **Sharing My Story with a Friend**

6/1/21

There is a young man I meet on occasion; he works at one of the condo complexes by the strand. He's been a Christian for about a year and is

on fire for the Lord. He is involved in a ministry for ninth and tenth graders. He asked if we could get together and so we did last Saturday morning. We sat down for coffee and all he asked was how did I become a Christian and what has it been like. I must have talked for an hour sharing my testimony, things that I've done, trials I've gone through, my walks on the strand and how God has always been faithful getting me through everything. Any time that I thought he might have heard enough he encouraged me to go on. He didn't ask many questions and encouraged him to seek God and follow whatever He tells you to do. I prayed for him and the prayer was the Holy Spirit telling him, he will be used. I was flying after our meeting and sat down for a moment just Brando and me. I thought about the things that I shared with this young man both bad times and good and I started picturing how God was always with me. Some of the times I don't remember seeing Him when I was going through them, but that day I saw Him so vividly putting me in the right place and the right time and protecting me from myself. The stroll through memory lane was humbling and opened my eyes even further to His grace. In my depression class I say not to dwell in the past but it's not bad to occasionally relive the blessings God has already given you.

### **Summer Is Here**

6/12/21

It's been busy on the Strand. The new beach resort is open, and kids are out of school and the beach is getting full. A day doesn't go by without meeting someone new or praying with someone. There is such a variety of prayer request from guidance, health, dealing with a death of a loved one, marital, substance abuse, protection for children and praise reports. I love talking to families, joking around with the regulars, watching as some are blessed to pet Brando, sharing smiles and hugs. I can't believe I'm so blessed to have this life. Some people God puts on my heart more than most like the couple who needed prayer for their 15-year-old daughter that has gone astray. When I prayed, I got chills through my body and we broke down knowing God was going to answer that prayer. A young lady that has gone through her share of troubles, suffering from Lyme disease, her husband hung himself in their house, but she still had the joy of the Lord. We prayed and praised God for His goodness right there on the strand as people passed by. I keep hearing what a coincidence that I was there at that time and I tell them a coincidence is just a miracle God didn't get the credit for. As I was walking down from the harbor and there was a young man working construction. He looked

at me and with this great smile he came running up to me and shook my hand. He told me he has been clean of drugs for two months and he believed with God on his side he was going to beat it. He got me so excited I just hugged him and felt his joy. The Holy Spirit took over and prayed for him in such a way I had goosebumps halfway down the strand. After we prayed his smile was so contagious and he kept thanking me. I just told him that he was going to do some great things and the joy that he brought me by just meeting him. Teri joins me almost every day and she said did you ever think you'd be doing something like this? I told her no, but now I can't imagine not doing it.

### **The Church is Not A Place**

6/23/21

I don't think a day goes by that someone doesn't ask me where I go to church. Typically, I tell them that this is my church the strand. Yesterday however I said, "I believe the church isn't a place you go to, but who you are in Christ." Don't get me wrong I loved going to the church building and I was saved in a church service. I was involved in outreaches, classes, service. And I grew in my faith being mentored by some wonderful pastors and surrounded by my brothers and sisters in Christ. The one thing I miss is serving together with my church family. I had a ministry called the CIA (Christians In Action) and together with my church family we accomplished a lot. But if you feel going to a church service an hour a week is fulfilling the purpose God has given you, I feel you are falling short of what God desires. God has given us gifts and talents He wants to use outside the four walls of a building. Think of it as an army that is trained, has the best weapons and technology, but never went to battle, what use would that have been? There is a war and God is recruiting soldiers to go and fight. Time to be the church Jesus died for and loves so much. Don't forget your sword.

### **I Was Hoping to See You**

7/1/21

I am so blessed. On July 4<sup>th</sup> it will be one year that God called me to pray on the strand. Every day has been special, always meeting new people, but yesterday was wonderful. I started my walk and didn't get far when a man and his adult son were riding their bikes. They stopped and turned around and the man said I was hoping to see you today. He said he sees me quite often and he wanted me to pray with them. He told me his other son had just died and the family is a mess and wanted

prayer to help him lead his family in this crisis. The Holy Spirit was expecting them and gave him love, guidance and hope. After praying with them I made it to the pier when a gentleman I've prayed for was waiting for me. We were praying about a surgery he was going to have about four weeks earlier. He told me he was hoping to see me today and shared that he felt called to do a prayer ministry online and he wanted a selfie with me and him as his profile picture. I told him if God called you get ready to be blessed. We talked for a while encouraging each other and prayed. I then went down to the harbor, where a lady I talked with before was waiting for me. She told me that she was hoping to run into me today. Our last meeting, I gave her my card with my website, and she told me she went to the site and watched the video. She wanted to let me know that she has shared my website with several other people and that it really helped her. After talking for a little bit, I went on my way and met three ladies that I've prayed with before. They called out to me and said we were hoping to see you today. They started by saying that I was a good man, but I said I'm not a good man I just serve a good God. They recapped our last prayer meeting with updated praise reports. They asked for prayer because one of them was going through a difficult time with health. We again talked for a while and I headed back. I can't count how many times I say good morning, how many children and adults ask to pet Brando, how often I stop just to talk to a stranger, how many hands I shook or people I've hugged, how many stop to tell me they love my T-shirt or how many smiles I see each day. Yes, I'm truly a blessed man.

### **Happy Anniversary Strand**

7/4/21

Today is my one-year anniversary at the strand. It's been a remarkable year for me. Yesterday was special. The first person I prayed with last July 4<sup>th</sup> was renting the same cottage. We prayed for her brother that was in the hospital and for her marriage. When I passed the cottage, a gentleman said, "I love your shirt" Then the woman I prayed with came out and gave me a huge hug. The gentleman was her husband. She explained to him that I was the guy who prayed for her a year ago for their marriage. He came over and gave me a hug then thanked me. They both said they are both growing closer to God and shared some of the things they were doing. There was something special about him and the passion he had when he talked about his faith. She continued to tell me about her brother. When he was in the hospital, they found a brain tumor, but since they found it early, they were able to remove it and that

he was doing great and was back to work. They both said that last year had been one of their best as husband and wife. They asked me to pray that they might grow even closer to God and to each other. After praying we all three hugged before I left. I had chills going through my body as I continued to walk. As I was walking over the bridge to go to the harbor, I met a man I've prayed with before. He looked a little downcast and I asked how he was doing. He started by saying okay, I guess. Last time we talked I suggested getting involved in some ministries or a bible study. He told me he was in a great bible study group and started to tell me of other ministries he was doing. After he was finished talking, I said you know when I first saw you, you looked down, but when you started to tell me all the wonderful things you are doing for God's glory you brightened up and smiled. Maybe you're thinking of the wrong things most of the time and I told him to look up *Philippians 4:8 Finally, brethren, whatever things are true, whatever things are noble, whatever things are just, whatever things are pure, whatever things are lovely, whatever things are of good report, if there is any virtue and if there is anything praiseworthy—meditate on these things.* He left smiling. As I walked down the harbor a man passed me then turned around and was yelling sir. I turned around and he said do you really pray for people. I said yes and he asked if I would pray for him. I said what do you need prayer for. He told me he was contemplating divorce and suicide. When he said suicide, it seemed like everything went black for a moment. I told him you might not believe this and started to tell him my testimony. I then proceeded to tell him how he was feeling and what he most likely was thinking about to get him in this state of mind. He looked surprised as I spoke. I gave him my card with my website to look over and to contact me whenever he wanted. Then we prayed and the Holy Spirit pushed me aside and spoke to this gentleman with love and understanding. At the end of the prayer, we were both crying, and we held each other for a moment before he went on his way. As I walked back, I thought about the prayer and realized it was everything the Holy Spirit has been telling me all along on my journey and then He put on my heart.

*2 Corinthians 1:3-4 Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies and God of all comfort, <sup>4</sup> who comforts us in all our tribulation, that we may be able to comfort those who are in any trouble, with the comfort with which we ourselves are comforted by God.*

What a great anniversary, my Father really does know how to give good gifts to his children.

### **You Have A Choice**

7/10/21

People have asked me why I appear to always be happy and smiling. A man asked me the other day if when I get up do I go to my mirror and put on my smile. I tell people my joy comes from the Lord and not my surroundings. Each of us has the ability to be what we want to be no matter what our circumstances. I've learned if you are going to focus on negative things you are going to have a bad day and if your focus is on God and the blessings He has given you, you will have a blessed day.

Day is a key to peace. God's word tells us it's a day at a time, from manna being provided each day to the Lord's prayer which tells us to ask for our daily bread. I also have made a promise to myself to only be anxious for things that I can change and then I realize the only thing I can change is me. I talk to many people and hear how someone has made them angry, sad, afraid, or humiliated and I tell them no one has that power over you unless you give it to them.

The other day I was walking down the strand and a man yelled something from his car and gave me the one finger salute. The people behind me started yelling at the driver. They caught up to me and apologized for him. I asked why are you apologizing I assumed he told me that Jesus was the only way and pointed up, but he had some deformity in his hand. They laughed and said we don't think that's what happened. I said so what? My way I continue my walk feeling I'm doing God's work instead of getting myself upset about someone I'll most likely never see again. They asked if I would pray with them for that same peace in their lives.

*Psalms 118:24 This is the day the LORD has made;  
We will rejoice and be glad in it.*

### **Homeless at the Strand**

7/22/21

I love my daily walks on the strand and harbor, but the saddest thing is seeing the many homeless there. I always say good morning to anyone who makes eye contact with me, but for most they refuse to look up, most likely because they don't want to be bothered, judged, or rejected. There are so many different types of people that end up in this situation, each with their own story. sometimes I can say good morning and they will say good morning back, but later they will be screaming as if demon

possessed. I'm sure there are some who decided to serve our country and experienced something so devastating that they can't deal with it and their reward for serving is to live as an outcast and in constant turmoil. Occasionally people that I pray with or meet want to give me money for my ministry. I always say no, but when they are insistent, I tell them I will give it to someone I know that is in need. Once I met a young man who appeared to just end up at the strand with no place else to go. His bags appeared to be almost new and he stopped me for prayer. He told me his story and that he someone had took all he had. We prayed and I offered him five dollars to get something to eat but he refused it and he told me the prayer met so much more. I told him to please take the money to buy lunch and I wish I had more to offer. Later that day a couple felt led to give me money and they offered me sixty dollars. I wasn't going to take it but told them of this young man I just met and that if they still wanted me to receive this money that I will give it to him. When I got back, he was still there, and I told him how God arranged my meeting with this couple and gave him the money. He hugged me and we both cried. Not sure what happened to him, but I haven't seen him since. Another time someone gave me five dollars and there is one man I see often but would never look up. That day I stopped him and explained how someone gave me the money and asked if he could use it. He looked up and thanked me. The next day I saw him, and he stopped me and told me he bought some ice cream and how good it was and thanked me again. I still see him and now he says good morning with a smile. One gentleman I see almost every day always talks to me and is a gentleman. He sits in this one place and says good morning to whoever looks his way. He makes some extra money working for the concessioners that are there, but his bed is the sand each night. Living that way is dangerous because of the other homeless that live there. One day I saw him, and his hands were bandaged as he had a fight and was thrown in a fire. A few days later he was wearing sunglasses and his face was swollen. He was beat up and his phone was taken. He talked about going back to Indiana for his mother's eighty-fifth birthday. He was hoping his family might help him with a bus ticket. I told him if there was anything, I could do to help let me know. He told me he just appreciated the times I stop and talk to him. I haven't seen him for a couple of weeks now and have talked to others to see if they might know something, but without any luck. I know he didn't make it back to Indiana and he's not in jail, maybe a hospital, I don't know. I just know

he isn't there. Some think that God might have abandoned these dear souls, but I think they are God's invitation to us.

*Matthew 25:34-40 Then the King will say to those on His right hand, 'Come, you blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world: <sup>35</sup> for I was hungry and you gave Me food; I was thirsty and you gave Me drink; I was a stranger and you took Me in; <sup>36</sup> I was naked and you clothed Me; I was sick and you visited Me; I was in prison and you came to Me.'*

*<sup>37</sup> "Then the righteous will answer Him, saying, 'Lord, when did we see You hungry and feed You, or thirsty and give You drink? <sup>38</sup> When did we see You a stranger and take You in, or naked and clothe You? <sup>39</sup> Or when did we see You sick, or in prison, and come to You?' <sup>40</sup> And the King will answer and say to them, 'Assuredly, I say to you, inasmuch as you did it to one of the least of these My brethren, you did it to Me.'*

### **I'm Not the Legend**

8/5/21

It's been thirteen months that God has called me to walk the strand and pray and talk to people. It has been the greatest experience of my life as I spend time with my Lord and His children. More and more people that have seen me come up to me for not only prayer but ask how my journey all began. I love sharing my testimony how I lost one job and God gave me another. My plan was to work two more years to accumulate money for retirement, but God had a better plan, and the rewards are more than I could imagine. My journey also has allowed me to share my testimony of depression and how it was twenty-three years ago I attempted to take my life for the sixth time. God always puts those people in my life that need to hear that God doesn't make mistakes and that He has a plan for their life. A day doesn't go by that I don't share these testimonies and pray with someone and God always puts someone I haven't met before in my path. A couple days ago a young man that I prayed with a while ago came up to me. I even remembered his name which is a trick for me lately and he hugged me, then said, "You've become a legend around here." I told him if that was true that I'm doing this all wrong. I told him the only reason I can do this is because of the grace of God and I do it for His glory and not for my recognition. As I left him and continued my walk, I was praying asking God for guidance and to humble me. I felt in my heart the Holy Spirit saying what's wrong with being a legend of someone who loves God so much that he does his Father's will each day.

## **As Iron Sharpens Iron**

8/11/21

I love my daily walks at the strand and harbor, but at times I struggle a little bit. Being alone my mind wanders and I'm not sure that I'm on the right path doing and saying the right thing. That's when my Christian brothers come in. Last week a dear brother, Jack, stopped and talked to me. He joined me while I was talking with someone. We prayed for him and then just talked for a while, he updated me on a homeless gentleman I haven't seen in a while that was in the hospital. We discussed the new homeless shelter that the San Diego Rescue Mission was doing in Oceanside and just how much we owe to our loving heavenly Father. He reminds me of: *Proverbs 27:17 As iron sharpens iron, So a man sharpens the countenance of his friend.* Jack is my iron. Today I met a couple of other men, Charles who is studying to become a minister, we discussed how much we love the show, "The Chosen" and reenacted several scenes. Then right when we were finished talking Mike another man, I met during my time on the strand yelled out and I went over to him. Mike had surgery on his jaw and was recovering. He told me that my ministry inspired him and that he is doing a facebook page for anyone that needed prayer. He took a selfie with the two of us and that will be his profile picture. He told me he has had a lot of response and several of the people commented that they either knew me or saw me. Both men encouraged me on continuing doing what God has called me to do. So today, thanks to all these Godly men, because of them I'm a little sharper. God thank you for not just surrounding me with your angels, but also the great group of people you put in my life, may I be able to bless them as much as they bless me.

## **Where Does Suicide Lead?**

8/13/21

Yesterday I was talking to a dear brother who knows my past with depression and my several failed suicide attempts. He asked me what I thought about a believer who commits suicide. I told him the times I tried to commit suicide I was not a believer and would right now be burning in Hell. At first, I told him that if they were a believer, I thought they would go to heaven and the scripture that came to mind was *John 10:28 And I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; neither shall anyone snatch them out of My hand.* He told me that he felt that we can't automatically believe that they were still saved but that it was up to God to judge and we really don't know. He said if that was true

why would any believer not take their life and get home sooner and not go through the pain they might suffer here. To tell others that there is a shortcut to going home may be a fatal mistake and that we don't know what God's judgement would be. I agreed and started my walk again while thinking of our conversation. I thought of John 10:28 again that no one can snatch us out of God's hand, but it doesn't say anything about us jumping off on our own. He calls us a new creation 2 *Corinthians 5:17, we are the Lord's Romans 14:8, His masterpiece Ephesians 2:10, His children 1John 3, His temple 1 Corinthians 3:16 and 1 Corinthians 6:20 For you were bought at a price; therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God's.* We are God's and not our own. When we are saved, we say, "I gave my life to Christ." So, when someone takes their life they are taking something that doesn't belong to them. I agree with my brother that it is not for us to say what happens to God's children in this situation, only God knows. For myself I don't want to stand in front of my Savior on judgement day and admit I didn't have the faith to finish the race. I live to hear the words well done good and faithful servant.

### **More Answered Prayers**

8/23/21

I love walking and praying on the strand each day and God always has someone new for me to meet and pray with. This last week He was showing me answered prayers. A few months ago, I prayed with a gentleman around eighty years old. His prayer request was to meet a godly woman that he could share the rest of his life with. A couple of days ago I met him walking with this wonderful woman. He stopped me and Teri and ask if I remembered him and that we prayed for him to meet a godly woman. He said that it was a powerful prayer because God sent an angel to him and they have plans to be wed in September. He told me never to stop praying and not to take my shirt off. I told him believe me no one wants to see me with my shirt off. We all hugged and prayed together before they went on their way. Yesterday I met a woman that I prayed with a couple of days earlier because her son got Covid. She told me that he was doing much better and thanked me for the prayer. Going down to the strand and harbor have given me numerous opportunities to share my depression testimony and give out cards for my web site. A young lady that I prayed with a couple of months ago called me last week. She was very distraught and wanted to talk to me. I remembered her and she told me that she was in the worst predicament she has ever been in. She told me that her boyfriend, whom

she hoped was going to be her husband, left because he found out she was pregnant. She kept beating herself up because she had sex with him and understands why God would punish her this way. I said, God didn't punish you; He loves you more than you can imagine, but when we do things there are consequences to our actions. God is your heavenly Father, and He is always watching over you and He's there whenever you need him. This is not a time to alienate yourself from Him this is a time to go to Him for guidance and comfort. I prayed this beautiful prayer with her over the phone, we both were crying when we hung up. Each day I would think of her and pray to Dad. I wondered what happened to her and then the other day I saw her at the strand. She said she hoped that she would see me there so she could talk to me. She said she decided to call her father who lives in Hawaii, she hasn't spoken to him for a long time. She told him everything that was happening to her and he told her to come out to Hawaii to live with him. She told me all the talk about her heavenly Father led her to call her earthly one. We prayed and she hugged me and thanked me. I told her what I do has nothing to do with me, God just chooses to use the foolish things of this world.

### **A Humbling Experience**

8/30/21

It was a wonderful day at the strand. As Brando and I were walking down a lady yelled out, "will You Really Pray with me?" I turned around and a very thin woman sitting with a man and two dogs was sitting at one of the picnic tables. I went over and had Brando sit about ten feet away and stay. I asked what she needed prayer for, and she began to talk, some of which was incoherent, but I sat patiently listening to her while the man sat there with his head down. She must have talked for fifteen minutes or so and once I got her prayer request, we prayed. After I prayed, she looked at me and said I can't believe you came back to pray with me. Nobody ever notices us and if they see us, they turn their head and don't look, but you came when I called and listened and prayed and treated us like we mattered. She held my hand so tight with tears rolling down her cheeks and I said you matter to the most important person in the universe, and he loves you more than anyone here can love you. I left and felt so humbled by the encounter I just cried. I went off to the harbor and on my way back they were still sitting there, and she got up and yelled thank you for praying for us and I just said it was a pleasure meeting you and it was. Just before I got to the end of my walk another woman yelled from across the street, I can use a

prayer. I walked over and she explained that her sister just went to heaven. Her heart was heavy all day until she saw me, she said God must have brought you to me. I said yes, I believe He had.

### **God Provides**

9/3/21

It's hard to believe at times that God has me praying and talking to people each day. What a privilege and joy it is. I'm praying and sharing my testimony with more people lately and I love when God shows answered prayer. The other day I was talking to these two lovely ladies. One of them I met before and she brought a friend to walk with her that day. After talking the lady handed me twenty dollars and I told her I don't take money for this, but she said she felt led to give me this money. I told her I would give it to someone that was in need. As I was walking at the harbor a gentleman walking his dog stopped and said, "do you really pray with people?" After I said yes, I asked him what he needed prayer for. He told me someone had broken into his car and took his phone which was also his wallet. All his credit cards and ID was in there and without those he was stranded. We prayed together and then I asked if he had any lunch, which he said no that he spent the little money he had in his pocket already. I gave him the twenty dollars and explained how I got it and felt that God wanted me to give it to him. He broke down and cried as he continued to thank me, and I told him it's not me. As I continued my walk, I ran into the two ladies again who gave me the money and told them what just happened. I left just thanking God for being able to use an old sinner like me. I thought of the scripture that states we become a new creation when we are born again. This new one is much better than the old.

### **God's Plan and Not Mine**

9/18/21

Two years ago, my plan for retirement was to work until I was seventy and build up my 401K. We owned a truck and was planning on purchasing a travel trailer and Teri and I would do some traveling. Then COVID hit and I lost my job, designing restaurants and my plans would have to change. Instead of developing a new plan I asked God what His plan was for my life. I believe it was that night I was called to have my t-shirts made that read, "Do You Need Prayer? And the back, "I'll Pray with You." God's plan was for me to walk the strand in Oceanside and eventually the harbor as well. These last fourteen months have been the

best months of my life. I get up each morning around 6:00 walk around our park and pray, get home, and read the Word, journal, and head to the strand. As soon as I park my car the Holy Spirit takes over and guides me the rest of the way. I get to go to one of the most beautiful places I know, talk to others, establish friendships with wonderful people that I would have never met, share my testimony, and pray for the needs of others. Each day is different since I always meet someone new, and each prayer request is unique. I might be there for two hours or five depending on who God has planned for me to meet. I think of my plans and it would be nice to see other places, but there is nowhere on this earth that will be as breathtaking as when I get home to the Lord. God has allowed me to witness answer prayer, be there for others that needed Him so desperately and be used as a vessel to speak to His children with words I could never imagine saying. One of my fears used to be that when I leave this earth and knock on the door that I would hear, *“away from me I never knew you”*, but not anymore, I get to walk with Him each day and He calls me His friend and I can’t wait until He holds me in His arms. Well, it’s time to head to the strand and see what God has planned for me today.

### **Busy Weekend Surf Contest and Harbor Days**

9/21/21

It was a busy weekend with the World Super Girl Surf Contest and Harbor Days. I met a lot of people and got several of those who is the weird old guy in the T-Shirt looks. On Saturday a pastor and his wife from Denver stopped and asked me some questions. They were looking to do a community outreach and when they saw my shirt, they knew what they wanted to do. He took a picture of the front and back of the shirt and was going to have some made for their church and ask the members to wear them on a specific day and walk all throughout the community. We talked for a while and I gave them plenty of praise reports and how I have been blessed by praying with others. We prayed for the success of their outreach and hugged goodbye. I thought how great it would be if a church did that and people would see hundreds of people through their community offering prayer. I know God would be pleased. On Monday I wasn’t feeling very well at all and wasn’t sure if I was going to be able to do my walk, but I remembered times in the past when I wasn’t feeling good it was just the enemy distracting me. As I made my journey towards the pier there was a gentleman sitting on a bench and in a low voice said I need prayer. He was down and on the verge of tears as he told me what was wrong. I felt to share my

depression testimony and my last suicide attempt 23 years ago. He broke down and turned away from me and came back and told me that's all he thinks about is killing himself and he just left the end of the pier where he wanted to jump off. I shared God's love with him and told him what God has done in my life and that us meeting wasn't an accident. He called me an angel and I told him I'm far from being an angel, but we do have the same Boss. After that meeting I was feeling so much better as if Satan gave in. We made it to the harbor and told Teri I was going as far as the sealions. As I was turning around two ladies were sitting watching the sealions and one turned around and saw my shirt. She told me that she really liked my shirt and asked if people took me up on the offer. I told her everyday God puts someone in my path that He wants to talk to. I typically don't ask people if they want to pray, I wait until they ask me, but this time was an exception and I asked. They said yes, we really need prayer and walked in front of them. The one younger lady had a cast on her arm and told me that she has cancer, and it was in her breast and moved to her shoulder and arm. God had me pray one of the most loving and compassionate prayers that I ever heard. The lady cried and said God must have sent you here for me today. I told her He does that a lot.

### **An Amazing Day**

9/25/21

What an amazing day I had today. I started the day journaling, and the passage was *1 Peter 3:15 But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts, and always be ready to give a defense to everyone who asks you a reason for the hope that is in you, with meekness and fear.* I only walked a few yards at the strand when a young man who was jogging on the other side of the road came over to me. He told me he really needed prayer and told me he kept seeing me each day and felt God leading him to pray with me. I asked him what he needed prayer for, and he told me he was suffering from depression and just a few months ago he tried to commit suicide. As he was telling me his story, I got chills and when he was finished, I told him my testimony of depression. We were both in tears even before we prayed. The prayer was from a loving Father comforting and encouraging his child. He was very sweaty, but I didn't care I needed to hug him and hugged we did. I gave him my card and we hugged one last time. I was flying as I said good morning to anyone that passed me. When anyone asked me how I was doing I would say, "I'm having an amazing day." I passed a gentleman in a parked car and asked how he was doing, and he told me okay, I guess. I asked if he needed

prayer and he said if I have the time. We prayed and after we were finished, he told me he felt much better, and I said of course it's an amazing day. I talked to a couple about my ministry and testimony for some time and as I walked down the strand, I met a couple with a baby in a stroller. They commented on how great my shirt was and asked how I was doing and guess what? I said I'm having an amazing day. They shared how they are foster parents for babies and how friends are judging them since they have grown children. They were feeling a little down because the last child they fostered they thought they would adopt but he got placed. I told them of this amazing woman I met a few years ago that felt her life wasn't worth living but decided to trust God. She had a condition that she was always in pain and wouldn't be able to have children and the man who she thought was the love of her life just left her. I told them that she met the man who God had for her and they started a foster care home. They adopted four of the children and she's an advocate against child trafficking. We talked about God and His plans for our life, and we are not here to please others, but to do the will of our Father. We talked for a while and encouraged each other. I continued my walk telling those who asked about my ministry and telling them about the hope God has given me. I prayed with a gentleman who recently had pancreatic cancer surgery, prayed with four young ladies who asked for prayer afterwards I told them I'm having an amazing day, someone yelled from a boat have a blessed day and yelled back I'm having a blessed and an amazing day. I can't even remember how many people all together I prayed with today there seemed to be so many. So, I pray whoever is reading this that you have an amazing day, it's up to you.

### **I'm Not Worthy**

10/1/21

The last few days have been so special as God shows me how He's using me. I told the account of a young man who came up to me last Saturday telling me that he tried to end his life just a couple of months before and now he wants God to take charge of his life. It was a very special moment for me as we prayed, hugged, and cried. Just this last Monday I was talking to one of the many people I see on a regular basis, Steve, as this gentleman was jogging past me. He stopped and came over and gave me the greatest praise report, he told me he came down today just to find me and couldn't stop thanking me for my help and love. As he left, I tried to compose myself and told Steve I better get going. Many people I talk to I don't know whether they are saved or not so I'm not

sure what kind of impact I'm making when they see me praying for others, only God knows, but the next day I saw Steve and after we talked for a while, he said you better get going you're making difference. This morning another young man who I've been talking and praying with from the beginning of this ministry stopped me. There is something very special about him and he would stop for prayer when he was struggling with different issues regarding his faith and life. I haven't seen him for a little while and he came up and told me he was hoping I would be there this morning. He told me he just graduated and was moving to Las Vegas for a job there and wanted me to know how much I've meant to him. He said at times he wasn't sure if he could make it, then I was there to talk and pray with him. He teared up and thanked me and gave me a huge hug and then turned to Teri and gave her a hug. He told me he still has my number and would keep in contact and hugged me one more time. As I walked trying to compose myself, I'm thinking, God why would You use someone like me to make a difference in someone's else's life? As Teri and I were going over the bridge to the harbor a man stopped and looked in awe when he saw me. He didn't look familiar, but I just thought I must have forgotten. He introduced himself to me and told me this is a miracle, he was from Arizona and just met some people he knew, and they prayed for him, then he passed someone reading a Bible and was in the book of Esther and now he runs into a man wearing a shirt that says "Do You Need Prayer. As he looked at me in unbelief, he explained that he is a pastor, and his church is in Arizona. He has been struggling whether he should continue in ministry. He told me about his bouts with depression and that he didn't feel as if he was making a difference. I shared my testimony on depression, and he asked me to pray whatever God puts on my heart. I just sat back and allowed the Holy Spirit to talk and build up his child and guess what? We cried and hugged. He told me he was here for only two more days and hoped to see me before he goes, and I gave him my card with my contact information. As Teri and I walked on I told her I'm not worthy of doing this, why would God use someone like me to help others? Teri in her compassionate and encouraging way says the bible says that God uses the foolish things of this world. I know that as long as I have my beautiful wife beside me, I will never suffer the arrogance or pride.

## **What I've Learned at The Strand**

10/7/21

1. Our life is a day at a time, as God gave manna for a day, our daily bread and rejoice this is the day the Lord as made we are called to live in the moment.
2. Never judge anyone. We are each an individual created by God going through different journeys.
3. Worry only about the things that I can change and then realize the only thing I can change is me.
4. Treat others as I want to be treated no matter on how I'm being treated.
5. The most beautiful thing we can wear is a smile
6. Neither circumstances nor people can control my reactions, but only I can decide how I react.
7. Listen more than I speak.
8. Only give your opinion if asked and when you do use discernment in what you say.
9. Realize that common sense is a gift and use it always.
10. Take any opportunity to make someone laugh.
11. God doesn't make mistakes.
12. To love the lord your God with all your heart, mind, and soul you need to spend time with Him.
13. Time is a gift to be shared with others.
14. Make sure there is a moment in each day that would bring a smile to God's face.
15. A Coincidence is a miracle that God didn't get the credit for so when you meet someone know that God planned the meeting.
16. Before going to bed thank God for that day and if He chooses to give you another day ask Him to use it to glorify Him.
17. Each day is a step on the journey home and it's okay to be homesick.

## **A Wonderful and Disturbing Day**

10/11/21

One thing about the strand there is no shortage of hugs and love. The weekend was great and full of many wonderful encounters, but I want to focus on what happened to me today. One of the most wonderful things that I experience is answered prayer. About nine months ago a young

man came up to me for prayer. His wife just gave birth and was going through post-partum depression and didn't want to take care of the baby. He also didn't have a job and wasn't sure what he was going to do. As always, the Holy Spirit showed up and gave him peace. Today as I was walking a car pulled up and the same young man asked if I remembered him. I did and he said I was hoping to see you again and in the back seat was Donovan his now ten-month-old son. He tried to explain to his son this is the man that prayed with him. He told me that he and his wife are doing great and that he is the chef in a restaurant. He just wanted to thank me and let me know God answered our prayer. I thanked him for stopping me with a great praise report and to enjoy his beautiful family. As I was walking back there was a woman who said I can use some prayer. She told me that she was a teacher for the fifth grade and really loved what she did and her students, but she refuses to wear a mask and as she put it take the job. She's been on suspension and was supposed to go in today to give them her decision. She said as you can see, I didn't go in, but I don't know what to do. She said she wasn't sure whether to cave in or if God is calling her to do something else. I told her all that I know that good teachers are needed at this time more than ever and I felt the most important thing in this world is our children. We prayed for discernment and guidance knowing that God will lead her in the path He has chosen for her. I make sure I don't give my opinion on anything, even though I have them. However, after I left her, I thought how terrible it was to put people in these situations. I watch a Tucker Carlson segment where he said the one question no one can answer is how does an unvaccinated person effect a vaccinated one? All I know for sure God is in control and I'm called to:

*Proverbs 3:5-6 Trust in the LORD with all your heart,*

*And lean not on your own understanding;*

*<sup>6</sup> In all your ways acknowledge Him,*

*And He shall direct your paths.*

## **Homeless on the Strand**

10/15/21

There have been many times that I've prayed with the homeless on the strand. There has never been a day that I haven't seen someone that lives with no home. Very seldom does anyone ask for money, but most ask for direction, protection, and hope. As I walk most will not even

look up as I pass but if they do, I always greet them with a good morning. Occasionally, someone will give me money for my ministry, but I always try to refuse it, but if they are insistent, I tell them I will give it to someone in need. Once I was given five dollars and I passed a gentleman I see each day that would never look up and I stopped him and explained someone gave me this money and I was wondering if he could use it. He looked up and smiled and thanked me. Now every day that I see him he looks up and says good morning and he tells me to have a good day. Of course, there have been some strange encounters, just two days ago someone wearing one shoe with a towel on his head stopped me for prayer. He told me his father was murdered the day before. I asked him his name and he told me King David and he kneeled before me and asked that I put my hand on his head when I prayed. So, I prayed for him and afterwards wondered what people must have thought as they passed by. Then yesterday I passed a man that I prayed with before and he stopped me. He has this great smile and told me how God has blessed him and that he found a new blanket and a pillow the other day. He told me he wasn't sure where he was going to sleep, but after finding those treasures he had one of the best night sleep he's had in while. He praised God and thanked me for my prayers, and I thought he is rejoicing over a blanket and a pillow and I'm concerned about the worldly things that I have no control over. This is a man that I will see in heaven, because God tells us unless we become like little children, we can't see the Kingdom of God. That is what he was doing appreciating the little blessing that God gives like a child receiving a gift. He did much more for me than I could do for him by changing the way I see God. It's not about the toys you get, but the love of the giver.

### **Do What You Feel is Right in Your Heart**

10/19/21

Yesterday was a little rainy and gloomy day at the strand and harbor. There were still several people that I had the opportunity to meet and talk with. As I was walking a young man, in his mid-twenties, stopped and asked me if I really prayed with people and I said of course. He asked if I could pray with him and gave me a rather bizarre story of what he was going through. We prayed and asked God to direct him in his journey. He quoted some scripture and told me he wanted to do what

God has called him to do. He told me he hasn't eaten for three days, but if God wanted him to fast, he would do that. I told him if he followed me, I'll get him breakfast at this restaurant nearby. I went to the hostess stand and told them we need a table for one as I gave him a twenty-dollar bill. I made sure he was seated and then went on my way. As I was walking, I thought to myself I only had twenty-two dollars and now I'm down to two, but in my heart, I felt I did what honored God. Through this whole time without work and retiring early, God provided for Terri and I. As I made my way to the strand, I met these two lovely ladies whom I've talked to before. The one asked if I was already at the harbor today and I said yes. They asked if I met a young man that seemed a little bewildered. I said oh you mean, and I said the man's name. I told them I talked with him for a while, and we prayed together then afterwards I took him to breakfast. They thought that was great but asked the question what if he was conning you? I said why would that matter. I did what I felt was right and the only thing I have control of his me and I felt I honored God which is my main concern. We talked for a while as I told them the wonderful people God has put in my life and the answered prayer I get to see. They both hugged me and said they love hearing my stories and I continued my walk. Even though it was gloomy I still had a wonderful day as I continued talking with my brothers and sisters in Christ. As I was crossing over the bridge to the harbor and back to my car, I saw the gentleman I bought breakfast for on the other side of the street. He waived and thanked me, and I asked how breakfast was and he said great. I thought I may never know this side of heaven what the real story was for that young man, but God knows.

### **It's A Lot of Fun on the Strand**

10/20/21

I know if I did God's will, my life would have joy, purpose, and a closer relationship with Him, but what I wasn't expecting that it would be so much fun. I truly enjoy myself each day and never had a day that I didn't laugh and make someone else laugh. Yesterday was another wonderful day. I know so many people and they'll stop, and we'll talk, tell stories, and laugh. A mother and daughter were carrying a box of donuts and as they were going to pass by, I yelled donuts! I said I love donuts as a matter-of-fact donuts and love are about the same. The young girl said yes, I believe donuts is a synonym for love. We talked

for a moment more and before they left, I said I really donut you guys and they said ahh and we donut you to. I ran into three surfers that I talked to often and we had a mini bible study on the beach. The one gentleman just had surgery on his jaw and started a prayer ministry online. He asked why I thought that not all prayers are answered, and I said they are, but we don't want to hear no as an answer. We talked a little longer on the power of prayer and I said when Jesus was healing what did the person have to have to be healed? He said faith. Jesus said because of their faith they were healed or when they saw they had faith and even when they lowered the paralytic through the roof, He said because of his friend's faith he was healed. Prayer is only effective if you believe that it will be according to God's will. Just as we were talking a woman approached me to take a picture of my shirt and I said of course. After she took a picture of the back I turned around and posed for a front view. Everyone laughed and she said excuse me for bothering you and my three friends said no problem we can see Mark any day. I talked with her for a little bit, and she told me that wearing the shirt was a real blessing to her. I asked do you need prayer and she told me her husband is very sick, but the doctors aren't sure exactly wants wrong. He continues to lose weight and isn't digesting food properly. She shared with me what her and her family have gone through and depression came up on the list. I shared my testimony and gave her my card. We prayed and the Holy Spirit gave her comfort. She asked if it would be all right if her husband called me and I told her I would love to talk with him either on the phone or in person. She told me she knew God put me in her path that day, because the only reason she was there was to pray and seek His face. I told her I'm sorry about the face He chose, and she laughed and went on her way. I noticed that when I walk toward people that they know me and start to smile even before I say good morning, what a joy that is. When I got to my car, I checked my phone and there was a message. It was from a woman that I've prayed with in the past and the message was, "You prayed with me and my daughter a while ago and we see you when we walk, but we haven't seen you and was checking to see if you were alright. We miss seeing you and your smile." I was in awe that she was so concerned that she called. I left a message back and told her I wasn't sure why are paths haven't crossed again, but I'm still out there every day and if she wanted to meet to tell

me a time and where she would be at the strand. I don't ever remember being anywhere that I've been so fulfilled and had so much fun than the strand.

## **Spending Time with One of My Best Friend**

10/25/21

It was a great day yesterday as I spent time with one of my best friends that I haven't seen for several years. We've been talking on the phone and he decided to come and walk with me at the strand. Mark was my mentor when I first got saved and got me involved me in serving and bible studies. It was great walking and talking with him as we greeted others at the beach. As we walked, we came across one of my favorite pastors, Pastor Adam from At the Cross Church. We talked for a while and prayed together. We continued our journey to the harbor where we met up with a wonderful woman that works down there. She is going through breast cancer and just finished her chemotherapy. As we were talking a family that had a memorial wreath were going to bury a family member out at sea came up. The girl admired Brando and I told her she was welcome to pet him. The older gentleman read my shirt and said I can use some prayer. I told him I would be happy to pray with him and he asked for prayers for his family today as they go through their loss. I prayed with him and afterwards he told me that I was a good man and I said no not at all, but I do serve a good God. He gave me this wonderful hug and looked into my eyes and said again you are a good man. Mark had other plans that he had to attend to and had to leave so I continued my walk without him. Heading back down to the pier I met about thirteen people that were part of a bible study group from a local church. One lady said I see you down here all the time and a couple of others chimed in and said the same. They asked questions and asked if I would walk with them for a while even though they were going in the opposite direction. It was nice as I talked to different members of the group and when we got to the pier they were going to walk up, and we had to part ways. They asked if I would pray with them and I told them it would be an honor. So, we all huddled together to give God the glory He deserves. I often wonder what others think as they pass by, do they hear something that might touch their heart and maybe a seed is being planted, only God knows. As I was coming to the end of my walk a couple stopped me and told me that

they've seen me before and walked with me asking Questions about my ministry. I do love to talk about how God has and is working in my life. I know God loves us with a perfect love and that He can't love us any more or less and that His love is not based on what we do. When you do something for someone else you love you usually get more joy from doing it than the person receiving it and that's what happens when I'm doing God's will. That joy I receive is like a huge hug from my Dad and there's nothing better.

### **The Most Important Commandment**

11/4/21

Today I celebrated my sixteenth month praying at the strand. Each day is such a blessing as I continue to pray and share my testimony. There has never been one day that I haven't met someone new on my journey. A couple of weeks ago God put on my heart *Matthew 22:37-39 Jesus said to him, "You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind."*<sup>38</sup> *This is the first and great commandment.*<sup>39</sup> *And the second is like it: You shall love your neighbor as yourself.* The more I try to keep this commandment the more I realize it's impossible to do in the flesh. To love someone that much you would have to spend plenty of quality time with them, know their desires, want to please, trust them, be completely honest, just the thought of that person would bring you joy and be willing to change if it meant getting closer to them. Each day I try to get a little closer to obeying that commandment and the closer I come the more I realize this commandment is a blessing for us. Imagine what your life would be like if you could accomplish loving the Lord that way. You would never be anxious, you would know that He will take care of you, He will always be with you and never leave or forsake you, you would always feel loved, never fear, or worry, that your life would be full of joy, that He will work the good in all things and no matter what might happen here that we will live forever with Him and that's right where we would want to be. If we were able to meet the first commandment the second one would come naturally. I doubt if I'll be able to love God the way He deserves, but I won't stop trying. After all I have all eternity to get there.

### **My Greatest Blessing on the Strand**

11/6/21

Since the beginning of my journey walking at the strand sixteen months and 2500 miles ago God has blessed me, but even if He didn't

yesterday's encounter would have been more than enough. I wrote about a man that came up to me a couple of months ago while jogging. He told me he really needed prayer and told me he kept seeing me each day and felt God leading him to pray with me. I asked him what he needed prayer for, and he told me he was suffering from depression and just a few months ago he tried to commit suicide. As he was telling me his story, I got chills and when he was finished, I told him my testimony of depression. We were both in tears even before we prayed. The prayer was from a loving Father comforting and encouraging his children. He was very sweaty, but I didn't care I needed to hug him and hugged we did. I gave him my card and we hugged one last time. Yesterday as I was walking the man came up to me again. Before saying anything, he gave me this great hug. He told me he came down today looking for me knowing he would find me. He didn't want to call or email me but talk to me in person. He was so excited and started telling me how God has been working in his life, that his relationship with his girlfriend was the best and that he even prayed with her for a friend that was sick, people were noticing the difference in him, he is going to start a new job this Monday and he just went on how his life was changing now that he is putting God first in his life. He said it's all because of me and I stopped him to say it's all God, but he just hugged me again and told me he loved me. We were both excited and I just prayed and gave God the glory. Then he looked at me and said you're right life is worth living and he pulled out his wallet and showed me the card I gave him that day, it's now tattered, and he said he pulls it out and it reminds him to pray, and that God has a purpose for his life. After the hundredth hug he said goodbye and went on his way. As I was walking and crying, I thought about the first time I thought that life was worth living and remembering the night I prayed to my Heavenly Father thanking Him for making me, me. I thought if this man was the only reason God had put me on the strand it was worth it, but He continues to show me there is more to be done.

### **Invited to Bible Study**

11/11/21

Last Monday my wife and I were invited to a bible study. They wanted me to share my testimony on depression and about my experiences on the strand. I love sharing how God has worked and is working in my life and every time I share it's a reminder to me how much He loves me. There was nine of us all together and two of the people I've prayed with before on the strand. It was great hearing about

how their prayers were answered. I brought my Getting Over Depression Books to hand out and shared how God has guided me on the path of healing. It was wonderful being together with a group of believers it was as if we've been friends for a long time. I would love to be able to do more of that and I know if it is God's will, He will open those doors.

I wrote about a gentleman that was suffering from depression a few days ago and attempted suicide and now he is glad to be alive. That day I shared that testimony with others that I knew. On my way back from the harbor I met a woman with a child and her father. She stopped and told me how much she liked my shirt and asked me about my ministry. As I was sharing, I brought up my depression testimony and meeting with the man who tried to commit suicide but now was feeling good to be alive. Her husband came down as I was telling about my last suicide attempt. They asked my name and as I told them my name the woman said that is my husband's brother's name. The man looked down at the ground and she told me that he committed suicide. I told them I'm sorry to hear that and said my goodbyes. As I was walking back, I wondered why God arranged this encounter. Perhaps it was just a reminder that could have been me, a life cut short my depression. I know what God has done in my life and the people He allowed me to touch with the testimony of His grace, but it makes me wonder how many other have missed out not only for their own life, but the opportunity to help others. Lord, please use me in any way you desire and open doors for me to share your love.

### **Is It August Again?**

11/15/21

What a beautiful weekend it was. Even though it's November it felt like I was back in August with sunny skies and temperatures in the eighties. There were a lot of people on the strand and harbor and another special day for me. As I was walking down, I greeted many people and stopped to talk to a few. As I passed the pier there was a gentleman getting ready to have an exercise class with several women. He stopped and said we can use prayer and gathered the ladies around. I asked what they wanted prayer for, and they simply said life and the Holy Spirit honored their request. As I went, I met two ladies sitting by the sidewalk and they asked about my ministry and I was happy to tell them about it and my depression testimony. The one's son is suffering from depression and had many questions, and I answered the best I could and gave her my card and

said he can contact me any time. As we were talking several people yelled my name and good morning and the one lady said you're popular and I said I hope it's my message and not my wonderful personality. As I left, I headed down to the harbor and there was a man with his two sons and his girlfriend. He looked at me with pain in his spirit said I can use prayer. I said I can pray with you now and the family looked as if to say we agree. I asked what he needed prayer for, and he said life in general. I gave it to the Holy Spirit, and He started the prayer with how God has blessed him in the past and that we were surrounded by some of that blessing in his family and that God is as close as we want Him to be. We all hugged, and I went on my way, but I thought about what I said. God is as close as we want Him to be. He is always right next to us, but it's our choice whether to reach out and embrace Him or not. As I was coming back a husband and wife were waiting their turn to have breakfast at the Stratford. He commented on my shirt and started to ask questions as I was answering I brought up my depression testimony. He introduced himself as being the regional director of Behind the Walls, a prison ministry. He was a retired police officer and was interested about my suicide attempts. It was a long wait, and I spent several minutes talking. He wanted to know if I would be interested in helping with the ministry and I told him I've learned when God puts people in my path there is always a purpose and yes of course I would like to help. I was almost to my car when a woman who I've prayed with before came up to me. I was glad to see her, and she came up and hugged me. She started talking to me about her concerns about her son, whom we prayed for before, but then she said she remembers what I told her that it's a day at a time and we only worry about what we can control and take the rest to prayer. We hugged one more time before we parted company. When I got to my car, I thought what an amazing life God has blessed me with and thanked Him for another day.

### **A Great Worship Service at the Strand**

11/17/21

Yesterday was an unusual and wonderful day. When I first got there, I went down the stairs to go onto the strand and there were four men that appeared to be homeless. I said good morning to them and the one said he liked my shirt and asked if I would pray with him. I told him I would love to, and he came up to me and just hugged me. I held him in my arms while I prayed, and the prayer was so beautiful it was from a loving Father to His son that He loves. As I was praying, he was crying on my shoulder holding me even tighter. I finished praying and

I didn't want to let go, but we finally separated, and he thanked me. I proceeded on my way down the strand and to the harbor praying and talking to people, but on my way back I met Jim and Dan. Jim and Dan are both in prison ministry and on Tuesday they wear a T-Shirt from the Bread of Life that also says do you need prayer? I love meeting up with them and sharing our experiences on how God is using us. Today we were talking more about the wonders of God and as we were talking a gentleman and his son came up and introduced himself as being a pastor from San Antonio and requested prayer for his church. We got together while Jim led the prayer and we all trusted God that He would answer. When he left three young men came up to us and explained they came down today to evangelize. We shared testimonies, scriptures, and the love we have for God. We prayed for all our ministries and that we would be used to glorify God. When we were finished another young man came up on a bicycle to tell us he was a believer and how great it was to see so many brothers gathered at the beach. He started to share some of his current struggles and began to cry. We again all went into prayer for this young man and laid hands on him. He thanked us and had to leave to catch a bus down to La Jolla. We all were amazed how God put us together that day then Jim and Dan went their ways, the three young men there way and I headed back to my car. I thought to myself, now there was a worship service that glorified God. As soon as I finish writing this post Brando and I are heading back to the strand, I wonder what God has planned for me today.

### **Another Divine Appointment**

11/19/21

I woke up this morning not feeling very well but got myself going. I've found out in the past the days that I'm not doing well are the days the devil is trying to stop me from going to the strand. Today was one of those days. As I headed down the strand, I saw several people that I've seen before and said good morning. Just a little way down there is a condo complex that has a large, elevated deck in the front overseeing the ocean. I looked up and a woman was looking down and I said good morning. She said she loved my shirt and said we could use prayer and invited Brando and I up on the deck. She was with a man and we sat around a fire pit. They began to ask about my prayer ministry and I shared how this has been the best time of my life. They explained they were once married for twenty-one years, got divorced and are now getting back together again. They wanted prayer for guidance and asked if I was married. I shared that I was married once for thirty-two years

and that my wife wanted a divorce. I then went into my testimony of depression and the hell I put my ex-wife and children through. They both looked at me as if in shock. She left her family because she was going through depression and was hospitalized because of it. She said her husband was always supporting her, trying to get her help, and always stayed in contact, but now they were both worried about telling their children that they were getting back together. She kept going back to the mistakes she made if she didn't make them this would never had happened. I told her the best thing about the past is that it's over and doesn't deserve another moment of the time we have in the present. I told them when I got divorced, I didn't know what I was supposed to do. Then I told them God introduced me to the love of my life, Teri and that we have been married over sixteen years. I told them God has called me to live a day at a time and only worry about the things that I can change and then realize the only thing I can change is me. I told them we spend so much time trying to be that person others want us to be, but we never ask the one who created us what He wants. We talked for about forty-five minutes and ended with the Holy Spirit filling their hearts and giving them peace. We hugged and they needed to leave to catch their flight home. I gave them my card and they said they will stay in contact. Just to let you know I was running a little late for my walk, I looked up the same time the woman looked down as she was leaning on the railing, this was their last day with only an hour left before they had to leave. If you think this might be a coincidence just know the definition for coincidence is a miracle God didn't get the credit for. I'm giving Him glory for this one.

### **Unity Through Praying**

11/24/21

The weather sure has been beautiful lately with sunny skies and above normal temperatures. There are more people at the strand as many come from out of state for the Thanksgiving holiday. Yesterday as I was walking down the strand a young man stopped his car and said I've seen you walking here for at least a year now and he wanted to talk to me. We began to talk, and I asked him to pull off to the side so we wouldn't be in the way of others. He told me how his mother was a believer and would pray for him and then he told me how he has been addicted to marijuana, that he recently became a father and was going to be married next month. He started to get choked up as he told me he wanted to be a better man and have a closer walk with Jesus. I told him what a

coincidence that's exactly what God wants for you. After talking I prayed with him as cars were passing by, I listened as the Holy Spirit welcomed back His prodigal son. We hugged and told him that he had a great smile and needs to use it more. As I was heading toward the harbor under the pier two ladies and their young daughter stopped and asked for prayer. I asked what they wanted prayer for, and one was having health issues and the other ask for unity. All four of us held hands as the young girl held Brando's leash. We all hugged, and they thanked me and went up to the top of the pier. As I proceeded on my walk, I thought about all the people I've prayed with they were of all ages, different races, nationalities, men, and women, but each one had one thing in common that they knew they needed God. You hear about unity in this world, but all we seem to get is more division, but God desires unity among His children, and He can deliver. There is unity in prayer because we are all focused on the same goal to come before our Father for comfort.

### **A Message of Hope**

11/28/21

I went to the strand a little later Thanksgiving, because of an event called the Turkey Trot. There were still plenty of people, since Oceanside was a vacation destination, and the weather was perfect for those out of state to enjoy the day. I prayed for several people the last two days, a man and a woman stopped me while they were driving asking for prayer, so I had them pull over to the side of the road. The woman just came from the hospital with a brain aneurism, and she was sitting quietly in the passenger seat. We prayed for healing, comfort and that she would spend time drawing closer to God. As I continued walking a woman, I prayed with a few months ago stopped me, she was with her mother. She wanted to give me a praise report. We prayed that the old car they had would make a long trip that her husband had to go on, but God decided to get him to his destination quicker, safer, and cheaper. She asked for prayer because her husband was recovering from heart surgery. The three of us prayed for a quick recovery and for peace for her. Another woman with her mother stopped me as they passed by and said my mother can use prayer. The mother who was about my age and the daughter said her mother was going through a big change in her life and was having some difficulty adjusting. The Holy Spirit knew exactly what she was going through and gave her hope, guidance, and encouragement. The mother looked at me as if to say how did you know and gave me this huge hug. One gentleman stopped me and commented

that he has seen me in the past and he was going through some struggles. He's a pharmacist from Las Vegas, but the store closed, and he lost his job. He was offered a job in Carlsbad, but he misses his friends and family in Vegas. I love when people first talk about how down they feel and all by themselves they start talking about the blessing God has given them and you see their joy restored. As he was talking a told him I had the exact same thing happen to me, I felt God calling me to Kentucky and I didn't want to go. When I was there, I felt miserable and lost but God had a job for me to do and he sent me there to help this one lady in a nursing home to receive Jesus as her Lord and savior right before she died. I told him God knows exactly where you are and if you focus on Him and His will you can enjoy this journey, He has you on. We prayed and the Holy Spirit gave Him hope and love. One thing I know there are no accidents at the strand God knows where we are and has scheduled divine appointments. When I got back in the car, I checked my phone since I don't take it with me and there was a message. The message was from a young gentleman I prayed with a few days earlier. He called to tell me how blessed he was that he met me that day and it has really changed his life. He knew God put me there for him and talking with me helped him get his focus back on God. Since our meeting he got back into the word and has been praying a lot. He told me we prayed that a door would open for a job for him, and he told me a door did open and it was a job he has been hoping to get. He thanked me again and said he wishes I was there so that he could give me a hug. He ended the message thanking God that He put me in his life. I hung up the phone and broke down in tears and thought how unworthy I was to have all this joy in my life. I know I don't have it because I'm worthy but only that it pleases God to give it to me. How can you not love a Father like that?

### **When the Fog Clears**

11/30/21

Today when I left my house the sky was clear and sunny. It stayed that way until just before I parked my car, and the fog was so thick you could only see a few feet in front of you. I made it to the harbor where I met a sister in Christ who I've spoken to before. She asked for prayer for her son who had gone astray from his faith. After we prayed, I said I can't believe how thick this fog is you can barely see the boats. She looked at me and said it won't be long until the fog lifts and the beauty is revealed again. When I went on my way, I kept hearing what she said and thought most of my life when I was suffering from depression that's all I

saw was the fog. I wasn't expecting to see anything beautiful, so I didn't and continued to stare into the fog. The fog is those moments that cripple our faith and limit our view. We can stay in the fog if we want, or we can be assured it will clear up to see the beauty it was covering up.

### **We Are All God's Children**

12/6/21

It's been seventeen months now that I've been praying on the strand and walked over 3,100 miles and in that time, I've prayed with hundreds of people. The people I've prayed with have been from all walks of life, race, age, many nationalities, men, and women. What's interesting I could tell you a prayer request and you couldn't guess what type of person requested it. This world tries to divide us whether race, political views, status, occupation, gender and now whether we are vaccinated or wearing a mask. We are more unified than we think. We are all going through the same tribulations, we rejoice in the same things, suffering the same pain, experiencing the same losses, and searching for the same hope. Our founding fathers wrote it down "We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness." And God calls us all His children that believe in Him, well that's good enough for me. Brando and I are ready to go to the strand and spend some time with family.

### **Blessings in the Rain**

12/9/21

It was a damp and cloudy day at the strand, but that didn't stop God from showing up. There weren't many people walking so the good mornings were few, but not totally absent. As I was walking there was a man standing on the side rifling through his backpack. His dog just pooped on the sidewalk, so I asked if he needed a plastic bag and he said yes. He told me he had some but was having some difficulty finding them. As I said goodbye, he said I appreciate you. I thought what a great thing to say to someone. As I walked, I thought I should make a point to say that to those that I do appreciate, so they know I do. I talked to several people and came up to a woman that I prayed with at a bible study I was invited to. We prayed for her son and he was doing much better but had a trial date in a month, so we prayed for that. As I walked to the harbor there was a homeless man sitting outside Joe's Crab shack. He was looking at the paper and I recognized him as someone that I

prayed with before. I asked how he was doing, and he said he was doing good. I'm not sure if he was on drugs or had some mental problems. I asked if there was anything he needed and he stood up. He looked me in the eyes and said you're a good man and just hugged me. He was sobbing as we hugged, and I prayed for him as a father would pray for his son. He assured me that he was okay, and I left. I met another man as I walked, and he read my shirt and just smiled. He wanted to know my story and I shared how God had worked in my life. He wanted to hear more of my testimony, and I was more than happy to continue talking. I love talking about how God has worked in my life, because it reminds me how much He loves me. He shared how God came into his life after a life of alcoholism, but he's been sober for ten years thanks to God. We hugged before we parted ways and I told him that I appreciated you. Going back to the car I met two brothers in Christ who also pray for others on Tuesday. As we were talking a gentleman stopped his car and said I would like to pray with you and that he was going to park in the lot up ahead. The other gentlemen were going the opposite way, so I headed towards his car. He introduced himself as Cecil and that he had MS. He looked familiar and I asked if he use to sell manufactured homes? He looked surprised and said yes and I told him that he showed us the home that Teri and I live in now. Cecil had a scam where he was able to take the down payment people were giving him and invest that money without them knowing it. When all the deals went bad, and several people lost their money he was put in prison. He served four years for his crime, but when he was in, he received Jesus as his Lord and Savior. We talked for about forty-five minutes about God's word and how He changed both of our lives. It was a great time and we prayed before saying our good-byes. As I was walking back to my car, I thought about the conversations of three sinners now saved by the grace of God. I prayed and told my Lord how much I loved Him and how thankful I was and that I really Appreciated Him. I think that brought a smile to His face.

### **The Prayer of a Dying Father Answered**

12/10/21

The other day as I was walking down the strand, I heard someone yell for me. I looked and a man came running towards me. He told me that he saw me the day before and couldn't believe someone was going around praying for people and promised himself if he saw me today, he would ask for prayer. He said his father passed away a little while ago and he was flying out to Houston for his memorial service the next day.

He then said his father was truly a man of God, but when he was sixteen, he repelled against him and got these tattoos that he showed me. He proceeded to say that he even became a Jehovah Witness for ten years. One day when his dad was sick, he sat down with him and said he prayed that he would receive Jesus as his Lord and Savior because he couldn't imagine heaven without his son there. He began to cry and told me he would never forget that moment and he did receive Jesus as his Lord and savior. He said that he will never be the man of God his father was but continues to try to be better. He was called to give the eulogy at his father's memorial service but wasn't sure what to say. Just tell them what you said to me I told him. He continued to talk about how wonderful his father was and how he wants a closer walk with Jesus. He asked for prayer and as you might guess it sounded a lot like the prayer of the prodigal son. He thanked me and wanted to hug but he was sweating, and I told him we can't part without a hug. The rest of the day was just awesome as I prayed for guidance for a man that was about to end a 32-year marriage, a grandma who was with her young grandson and prayed for a wonderful time with him and a sunny day today which looks like it was answered as I look out my window, peace for a daughter whose mother is going through the final days with cancer and will be home soon, a couple who wanted a stronger relationship with each other and God then a homeless man who needed peace. My prayer is only that I continue to do God's will and a run this race in a way that pleases Him.

### **Will's Awesome 20<sup>th</sup> Birthday** **12/11/21**

It was a beautiful day at the strand, clear blue skies, and great waves. On my way back today, I met up with a brother in Christ who does street evangelism. As we were talking and sharing God's love we looked out into the ocean and there were three dolphins leaping out of the water. It appeared they were trying to get the attentions of the nearby surfers. As I looked out into a wave, I could see them swimming as if it was a picture. I turned and looked down the strand and I saw a woman pushing her adult son in a wheelchair. I remembered we prayed several months earlier. It was her son Will's twentieth birthday when we met. Will is blind, can't use his arms or legs, his head is almost twice as big as it should be, he sits in a fetal position and the worst part is that he is in constant pain. She also shared that her husband divorced her because he wanted a more normal life, as she put it, but has two older sons that are always there when she needs them. The day we met she was waiting to

go to a doctor's appointment to see what could be done for his pain. I remember praying for them and telling her one day when we get to heaven, she is going to experience a blessing most of us will never be able to experience. The day she sees her son running up to her giving her a hug and telling her how much he loves and appreciates her. When she came up to me, she was surprised I remembered her. I reminded her that we met on Will's birthday. Oh my gosh she said, that's right, let me tell you what happened the rest of that day. She told me somehow, she was able to push the

wheelchair up the ramp to the pier and sitting on the bench was someone playing the guitar. He looked up and told her you are truly loved by God and asked if he could play a song for Will. She told him he loves guitar music, and it would be a wonderful birthday present. When she got to her car to put Will in, a car came around and a man came running out. He hoped that he didn't startle her, but that he was a believer and felt called to tell her that she and Will were blessed. He also prayed with them. She went on to say that she got into a Christian support group, which has been a God sent for her and that they are making progress to relieve the pain Will feels. I put my hands on Will shoulders and he smiled. She told me she remembered my prayer and what I said about seeing Will running to her. She thinks of that often and it helps her get through some of the tough days. As they left my brother said how can anyone not believe in God and I said some just choose not to.

## **Lymphoma Cancer**

12/16/21

It rained all day on Tuesday, so I missed going to the strand. The day after was sunny but still a little cold, but I was so looking forward to seeing what God's plan were going to be for the day. It was wonderful saying good morning and talking with those that I see on a regular basis. One gentleman I enjoy talking to is Phil. Phil is in his mid-seventies, has only one arm, just went through treatment to remove a tumor from his lung and rides a two-wheel Segway. He's always upbeat and an inspiration to me. As I made my way to the harbor a gentleman about my age, old, came up to me and asked if I would pray with him. We were standing in front of the restaurant where he was about to go to work, and I asked him what he needed prayer for. He told me that he has Lymphoma Cancer, and it is getting more aggressive. He is about to go through a more complex treatment regiment, and he

was studying the side effects and was very anxious and scared. I told him I have no idea what you must be going through, but I know God does. The prayer was so comforting and that the Holy Spirit would be with him through this journey. When I was done, he picked up the prayer and prayed for me and expressed his love for our Heavenly Father. He then offered to buy me breakfast. I thanked him but told him I should be on my way and then he told me the offer

stands, anytime I wanted. I told him how about we have breakfast once God heals you and then we'll have something special to celebrate. He smiled and gave me a hug and told me to please keep wearing that shirt. The rest of my walk I continued to pray for him, and thought would I be as faithful to God if it was me going through that? I hope I will have the courage to go through anything on this earth knowing that God has a purpose for it. I just need to realize whatever I go through that I'm not going through it alone.

### **My Greatest Compliment Ever**

12/20/21

What a beautiful day at the strand and harbor. Unfortunately for the surfers the ocean was calm and with the sunlight glistened off the water from a distance it looked like snow. Almost everyone I saw said good morning or hi Mark. As I approached the pier people were looking out towards the ocean to watch dolphins playing and jumping out of the water. As I walked to the pier, I stopped at this coffee shop where they have a bowl of water for dogs. I said hello to a couple that I knew who was sitting there and then behind me came a gentleman I also knew, and he gave me a hug, then another couple came up and we talked, then another and another. It was almost like being in a reception line at a wedding as the people went by. When I ran out of people to greet, I went on my way, but it wasn't long until a gentleman I prayed with stopped his car. I prayed with this young man a few months ago for his wife and new baby, but now the baby is riding in a car seat in the back. He said look with the smile of a proud father how big my son has gotten, and I looked at his boy and said he's beautiful must look like his mother. He laughed and I

said you are truly a blessed man and he shook his head in agreement. As I headed to the harbor I met a family from Seattle who was vacationing here. I said good morning and they committed on my shirt, while the kids made a fuss over Brando. They asked about my ministry and committed how wonderful it would be to live here. The woman said how could you be unhappy with this unbelievable view and great weather. I told them that I learned that it isn't what you see, but what you focus on. When you focus on this world and the trouble it can bring you can fall into a trap of despair even if you're walking along this beautiful beach. The man nodded and said that's for sure. I told them God has taught me it's a day at a time and instead of seeing the troubles I remember all the blessings and situations He has gotten me through. Before departing I told them about my web site and gave them my card. They thanked me and went their way. I talked to several other people along with families and I was having just a wonderful time. A man that I've seen before but never talked to stopped me to thank me for doing what I'm doing. I told him that I've been doing this for a year and a half and that it's been the best part of my life. He wanted to know more about my testimony, and I took the time to tell him how God started me on this journey and then shared my depression testimony and that it was twenty-three years ago that I tried to end my life for the sixth time. I told him in detail what happened that day and that I shouldn't be here at all, but instead I get to live this blessed life. As I thought about it, I got choked up and looked at him and said I really love Him. He looked at me with tears in his eyes and said I believe the people you talk to love Him more just by listening to you. As I continued to walk all I could think about was what that wonderful brother said and that it was the greatest compliment I had ever received. Love the Lord your God with all your heart, mind, and soul.

### **I Got Prayer!**

12/24/21

Yesterday I started a little earlier in hopes to beat the rain that was supposed to be coming. Even though I was early God knew I would be

right on time. As soon as I went down the stairs to the strand a young lady was coming my way. She told me she saw me yesterday and was hoping I would be there today. She told me she needed prayer and is suffering with bipolar and depression. I waited for her to tell me everything that was on her heart before telling her my past battle with depression. As she talked, you could tell she had so much faith and hope and couldn't believe when I told her about my past suicide attempts and how God led me through depression. We must have talked for at least thirty minutes and she looked at the time and told me she had to go, or she'd be late for work. Imagine if I would have come the time I normally do I would have missed meeting and talking to this wonderful young lady. I continued to walk towards the pier saying Good Morning and Merry Christmas to all the people I met. When I got to the pier there was an older woman carrying beach games, towels, and toys. She stopped me and asked for prayer. She told me that her husband had just went home to the Lord and that he planned this vacation with his children and grandchildren here in Oceanside. She said that she knew that he was okay, but still having a difficult time and needed strength so it wouldn't ruin their vacation. She wanted to be as perfect as it would have been if he was still with them. The prayer must have come from her husband as words of comfort and peace came out of my mouth. When I was finished, she continued to pray, but for me. She asked God to continue to bless my ministry and thanked God for using me. I went on my way thinking that Jesus was standing next to her husband allowing him to watch his family enjoy the vacation that he planned. I couldn't count the Merry Christmases I heard and said there were so many. As I reached the harbor two of my favorite people, Jack, and his wife Virginia, were standing outside a restaurant. Jack is my iron that keeps me encouraged. We stood and talked about our love for our Father and before he left, he prayed for me. Nothing better than a prayer from a righteous man. I continued to the harbor and a young man came up to me and asked if he could pray for me. I told him that would be great, and he thanked God that I was out there praying and loving others. I thanked him and wished him and his family a Merry Christmas. I left feeling energized and loved. As I was walking back, I thanked God for the prayers that I received today and hoped they received the same joy that I do when I pray for others. I hope you all have a Merry Christmas and a Christ filled day every day.

## **We Can Enjoy Our Vacation**

12/26/21

The weather is different than it was last year at this time in Oceanside. Last year it was sunny with the temperatures in the seventies and all the people who came here were on the beach, playing games and swimming. This year we've had rain almost every day with the temperatures only in the fifties with gusty winds. I'm sure there were a lot of disappointed families who made the trip to Oceanside this year. I still walk in between the periods of rain meeting and talking to several travelers saying good morning. Even with the weather conditions you can still spot children playing in the ocean or families playing games in the sand. They still seem to be having fun and not letting the conditions steal their joy. However, I'm sure there are others that have given up on having a good time and barricaded themselves in their very expensive rooms just waiting to get back home. Some will get home and tell their friends of a wonderful time with their families highlighting all the good times and telling their friends they were so glad they came. Others will tell of their disappointments and how their expectations of a great vacation were never met. Have you ever felt as if your life was like that vacation you had high hopes for, but ended up being a disappointment? That was my life I expected so much and got so little. I was at the point to end my vacation early because it wasn't what I expected. I didn't want to make it work I just wanted it to work without putting much effort in myself. All I saw was the weather, I didn't see the wonderful people I was surrounded with, the beach and the ocean were still there, there were plenty of fun things to do, a lot of joy to be had but I locked myself in my room only focused on the misery I created. It wasn't until my vacation planner, Jesus, came into my life. The weather conditions were still the same, but I realized the only thing I can change was me. With the leading of the Holy Spirit, He showed me that joy was always there I just needed to decide to receive it. My Lord didn't need to change my surroundings He only needed to change my hard heart into the heart of flesh he promised me, He renewed my mind and gave my life purpose. He taught me how to find joy even in the worse weather and to

help others on their journey. I'm not sure how much longer I'll be on vacation here but can't wait to get home and thank my Lord for all the great travel tips He gave me. I hope to bring Him back something I know He wants, a good and faithful servant.

## **Happy New Year**

12/31/21

The last couple of days really ended a wonderful year for me. The other day as I was coming down the stairs there was a homeless gentleman who saw my shirt and said God bless you. I told him that God blesses me every day. He then asked if I would pray for him and I said I would love to. I asked what he wanted prayer for, and he said for success in the future and that he would grow closer to God. The request really hit my heart and the heart of God as he assured this man that He is always with him and that he is loved beyond anything he could imagine. As I continued my walk to the harbor there was a gentleman with a grown son that appeared to be mentally challenged. He told me that he loved my shirt and I told him that I loved wearing it. He introduced himself as Joseph and his son who wouldn't look at me but was focused on something in his hand. He told me that he was the youngest of triplets. He asked if I would pray with him and I told him that I would be honored and asked what his prayer request was. He told me that his family has been growing away from God and that he would like them to go back to church. I told him that it was an honorable request and something that God would like to happen also. I put my arm around him, and we prayed for wisdom, courage, guidance, and peace. He thanked me for praying with him before I left. Just today I was walking back from the harbor and someone yelled my name from a car, and it was Joseph thanking me again. I yelled are you going to church Sunday and he yelled yes and named the church. On my way a mother and grown daughter asked if they could pet Brando and I happily consented. The woman had this amazing smile and said I would like prayer. She told me that she had been sober for three weeks and she said with God's help she knew she could do it. I told her we can do all things through Christ who strengthens us. I put my arm around her shoulders while we prayed. The

Holy Spirit talked to her as a loving Father that will help her along her journey and that she was loved above measure. After praying and wiping our eyes she introduced me to her daughter and explained that because of her she wanted to be the mom that she could be proud of. They both smiled at each other and hugged. I told her if she had any problems just to call on her heavenly Father and that He is always there with her. Today I couldn't count how many times I said or heard Happy New Year. I thought about it and discovered that 2021 was my best year even with all the upheaval in this country. I said to God I don't know how You can top this one and a verse came to mind.

*1 Corinthians 2:9 But as it is written:*

*“Eye has not seen, nor ear heard,*

*Nor have entered into the heart of man*

*The things which God has prepared for those who love Him.”*