

LIFENEWS

LOOKING FOR A SIGN?

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A man walked into the church office recently, and the ladies up front greeted him and asked how they might help him. He looked weary and out of sorts and simply said he had been walking in the heat for quite a while and needed a place to sit down and rest. Carol offered him a seat in the reception area and brought him bottled water, which he gladly received.

As he sat quietly sipping the water, she asked him if he would like to speak with a pastor. He responded that maybe that would be okay, and they summoned me. I introduced myself and invited him to my office, where we could talk privately. As I began asking him questions, he told me that he lived in Exeter and had set out walking that morning, unsure where he was going. He had been a hard worker all his life, but three years ago, he suffered a head injury on the job, which left him disabled and no longer able to work or drive. He is married with teenage kids and feels very disconnected from his family, struggling with any sense of purpose in his life. When he walked in front of our church, he read the message on our sign and was prompted to stop and see if anyone was there.

The message on the sign? ...

{ **“Looking for a sign?
This is it!”** }
God

As we talked further, I asked him about his relationship with God. He shared that he does go to a church but that in his depressed state, he had isolated himself, feeling that no one cared, would understand, or could help. He had previously made a commitment to Christ but now felt that God was far away. I asked him, “If God seems further away, who do you think moved?”

The light went on, and we began to have an encouraging time of remembering God’s love and faithfulness. We looked at the Scriptures declaring God’s promises to be with us in the storms and struggles of life, promises to never leave us or forsake us. I reminded him that he was not alone. As a Christian, he was a part of the Body of Christ, and his local church was his family. I encouraged him that it would be healthy for him to talk with some of the leaders at his church and get better connected for support and service.

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After a time of sharing and seeing his spirit lifted, we prayed together for a fresh sense of God's presence, strength, and purpose in his life. I offered to drive him back home to Exeter, and he thanked me but said he preferred to walk. He thanked me for meeting with him and for prayer. Then he reached under his chair and handed me something, saying: "Here, take this. I don't need it anymore," and he walked out of the office with a new pep in his step and a fresh awareness of God's love and hope in his heart. I stared at that something that he handed me ... a rope ... and praised God for always being at work, for providing a sign for a desperate man and inviting me to join Him in handing that man a spiritual lifeline to reconnect with Jesus, the Way, the Truth, and the Life! At the end of his rope, he found hope in Jesus!



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