

History

Written by Administrator

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While listening to Gil Stricklin at the 2000 FCCI Annual Conference, God began the process. Gil began to speak about the Good Samaritan. Right in the middle of his lesson, he stopped and remarked that he was toying with a concept different from the ordinary in regards to the Good Samaritan. The Good Samaritan appeared to bring a dead man back to life, even the two religious leaders believed the man to be dead. Well, no one can bring someone back to life except Jesus. So, if the Good Samaritan can represent Jesus, who are we in the story? He remarked that all of us at some point are the “left-for-dead” traveler but who are we to relate to in the story now? The answer was the innkeeper. The Good Samaritan had come to the inn; told the innkeeper he must leave and gave him his purse. Jesus has gone ahead to prepare a place for us, leaving His ‘purse’ (all that is required to bring the wounded traveler back to full health), the Holy Spirit, and commanded the innkeepers of this world to take care of the wounded travelers.

My wife and I knew in our hearts and sensed in our spirits that He wanted us to become innkeepers full-time. When we got back home, I did what any good businessman would do – I incorporated! Innkeeper Ministries, Inc. became an officially recognized legal entity on October 26, 2000.

The filings for a 501©3 were developed without any real inkling what God wanted Innkeeper Ministries, Inc. to look like. My lawyer knew me as a down-to-earth, ‘manufacturing type’ who planned everything against a goal to be accomplished. Here I was asking him to prepare documents for submittal to the federal government on a ministry that I didn’t know what it was for or what it was supposed to do. We traveled a road we were unfamiliar with, that being one of total dependence upon God, in the one area where I, at least, had always had control, my own spiritual giftedness - organization. What a rush!

Over the next year, while pouring ourselves into other ministry opportunities, the yearning of our heart’s desire was eased (isn’t that what we do, as humans, we tend to fill our lives with activity and thereby avoid seeking the deeper things of God). What all this activity actually yielded was a frustration, a frustration that kept us from being content with any of those activities. But God was preparing our spirits for what happened at yet another FCCI annual conference. God met us again in our search. Henry Blackaby and Bobb Biehl, through their talks and challenges forced us to look at the milestones (where God worked in and through us for His Kingdom) in our lives, in other words what brought us to this point? What events (milestones) clearly showed direction from God?

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Most of our married life, God had used us to encourage others by holding the arms up of fellow businessmen, by binding the wounds of full-time Christian servants and by walking alongside and giving counsel to husbands and fathers in broken and hurting relationships. These have not been mass productions but one-on-one encounters that ministered to them and fulfilled the godly desire God had placed in our hearts. We had originally thought God wanted Innkeeper Ministries, Inc. to be a large ministry with all the bells and whistles. But what God was calling us to, was a couples ministry targeted at Christian leadership within the areas of business and the church, and to that end we are committed.

During the first year, He brought us in contact with many local churches, whose pastors had been beat up and left for dead by their church membership, where the spiritual demands of ministry left the leadership empty and unable to refill their own tanks and where church demands put ungodly pressure on the wife of a full-time servant of God. These servants of God needed an innkeeper.

These experiences made our mission clear. We began the search for a farm or large home with land, not in the papers, but on our knees. That act of obedience before God has brought us to this point. God has prompted a godly couple with the same desire to offer to Innkeeper Ministries, Inc. their 8239 square foot home located in the rural community of Lewisburg, Ohio as a place to begin the ministry. This facility was adapted to the ministry in a way that appears to be pre-ordained by God Himself. It is surrounded by the giving family's farm that provides an atmosphere of tranquility. It also provided a place where ministry could begin immediately. God provided, in that moment, the Chesed Inn.

During the first year, we ministered to 168 guests, free of charge and with excellence. In February 2003, the neighbors, living in a 6370 square foot home, offered to sell it to us, but because we do not ask for funding and we were not going to go into debt, we declined their offer. The original giving family called us in early March, offered to send us the funds needed to purchase this facility. By mid-July we were operating a small group conference center, named Eagle's Wing Manor. That year we hosted over 680 guests between the two facilities.

In 2004 and 2005, we hosted 1205 guests and 1180 guests respectively, all without asking for a single dime from the guests. Every major denomination from twenty-two states and eleven foreign countries has been partaken of the ministry here at Innkeeper, since its inception, just four short years ago.

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In 2006, we were gifted the surrounding 48 acres, which includes four fishing ponds, a deer field, and a walking trails through the woods. Plans are to build three 'honeymoon' cabins and two counseling centers on this portion of the property, as soon as funding is available.

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