



# WWE

We dare you to care, serve, sacrifice, give, and go.

# dare you to ...

by tpe staff

**t**o accept a dare, you need courage and boldness to do something you normally wouldn't do. The same is often true when you answer a call of God on your life.

Scripture abounds with examples of people whose lives were interrupted and redirected by divine mandate.

Noah, perhaps a farmer, builds a ship to sail on yet-to-be-formed oceans. Abraham leaves family and community to live as God's pilgrim among Canaan's warring city-states. In the midst of domestic chores on the family homestead, Jael defeats a heathen general. Esther moves from anonymity to royalty and risks her life to plead for the lives of her people.

Fishermen drop their nets to become disciples, an Ethiopian official climbs from his chariot to accept muddy baptism, an aging apostle in exile pens letters of hope to persecuted churches — all move from Point A of the predictable toward points unknown, though surely known to the God they serve.

You might have a call on your life right now and are trying to discern if the time is right to answer that call. You might feel pulled in two directions and are at a crossroads as to what you should do. Maybe you've ignored God's call on your life so long that you're not sure He is even calling you anymore.

No matter where you stand in terms of a call of God on your life, one thing is certain — we're all called to fulfill the Great Commission.

In the following pages you'll meet several people who dared to answer the call of God on their lives. As you read their stories, be encouraged to share the gospel and answer whatever call God has placed on your life. In other words, we dare you to do exactly what God wants you to — today, tomorrow, from here on out.

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# dare to care

## Retirement plans? Couple adopts half-dozen children

By John W. Kennedy

**K**ent and Linda Perry don't seem to be ideal candidates as adoptive parents. Kent, 59, is partially disabled after recovering from a traumatic head injury. Linda, 56, survived cancer surgery less than a year ago.

Yet the Perrys exude a quality more important than vigorous youth; they possess a godly compassion for the future of children who have a distressing past. Last July, the couple adopted six children.

Like many people their age, the Perrys didn't plan to be raising a new family at this stage in life. By 1988, biological children Tammy and Todd had graduated from high school and left the family's Shelbina, Mo., home. Kent and Linda, on the cusp of middle age, were empty nesters.

Kent spent the next decade pastoring a full-gospel church. Linda embarked on a career as a social worker.

Then, in 1998, Kent went through a truck windshield. He could no longer minister as a pastor, and Linda quit her job to care for him. The couple didn't learn the extent of Kent's injuries — which ultimately resulted in memory loss and difficulty maintaining balance — until two years later.

Despite these challenges, the Missouri Department of Social Services approached the Perrys about becoming foster parents. In the next four years, the Perrys provided care for 26 foster kids.

When they moved to Springfield, Mo., in 2001, the couple continued to be in demand as foster parents. They began watching Samantha and T.J.

Kent remembers an early conversation he had with T.J., then 7.

"Dad, how much money you got in the bank?" T.J. asked.

"I have a little bit," Kent responded. "Why? What do you need?"

"Are you going to run out of money so we won't have any groceries tomorrow?"

"No. It looks pretty good for us. We'll be able to eat tomorrow."

"What about the next day?"

"You don't have to worry about groceries. We'll have plenty to eat."



The sister and brother sobbed at length whenever they visited their other four siblings — who lived in four separate foster care facilities. The Perrys determined to unite the brothers and sisters under one roof, and within a few months all six children lived with them.

The following year, the state terminated the rights of the biological parents and the children needed an adoptive home. With the adoption, the children are officially Perrys: Vanessa, 15; Michael, 12; Samantha, 11; T.J., 9; Anthony, 8; and Matthew, 7.

"We didn't go into this with the idea of adopting," Kent says. "We just wanted to help these children."

In the midst of their medical crises the Perrys sometimes asked themselves how they could go on. Yet Kent says his body has healed and he is no longer in pain. He has completed vocational rehabilitation and is well enough to drive a shuttle bus for Missouri State University.

A year ago, after months of not feeling well, Linda learned from medical tests that she had

a cancerous mass. In February, she had surgery and surgeons removed all the cancerous cells from her stomach.

"God has always been there, whether spiritually or financially," Kent says. He and his wife cling to 2 Timothy 1:7: "For God did not give us a spirit of timidity, but a spirit of power, of love and of self-discipline" (NIV).

Meanwhile, there has been a marked improvement in the grades of the half-dozen children, who are attending public school in Fair Grove, Mo.

"We've stressed to them that keeping God in their life is the most important thing," Linda says.

T.J. still has a tendency to be anxious, however. Recently he asked his parents if they would live long enough to see him graduate from high school. Kent and Linda plan on being around, but their biological children — now in their mid-30s and with teenage children of their own — have agreed to raise the adopted children if anything should happen.

"We get up every day and ask God for guidance and strength," Kent says. "We can't do this on our own."

The Perrys attend Landmark Christian Center, a new church in Strafford, Mo., started by Assemblies of God Pastor Wayne Neal.

"They obviously love and care for the children in a tremendous way," Neal says. "They're really involved in nurturing those kids."

# dare to serve

## Father of five enlists in Army

By Kirk Noonan

**T**im Hayes used to believe there would never be a day when the United States and Soviet Union were not warring superpowers. Then the Cold War ended. There no longer seemed to be an imminent threat in the world. Hayes still highly respected those serving in the military, but he viewed the military as something more for show than as a necessity.

"I thought our country's or my family's security would never be threatened," says Hayes, who lives in Ozark, Mo., and is a personal-injury attorney. "Of course, 9/11 changed all that."

In the weeks after the attacks on the Pentagon and the Twin Towers, Hayes began the lengthy process of enlisting in the Army Reserves. But after praying about it and discussing it with his wife, Janis, she expressed deep concerns and he

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## dare to serve

didn't enlist. After all, he had four young daughters and was starting his own law firm.

"But it was obvious that our country was not on the same footing it once was," says Hayes.

That fact nagged him. Seeing family and friends who were in the military being deployed to Iraq also bothered him. He felt that he, too, should be making sacrifices for his country.

Two years later Hayes once again prayed about enlisting. This time Janis gave her approval even though she was pregnant with their fifth child.

"It seemed I could offer my services as a lawyer, and if the Army would accept me I would enter the military," says Hayes, who attends James River AG in Ozark, Mo.

In 2004, at 37 years of age and the owner of an up-and-coming law firm, Hayes enlisted in the Army Reserve's JAG Corps. He was sent to Fort Lee in Virginia for a month of training, and now spends one weekend a month with the unit he has been assigned to.

"There are times when it's not convenient to spend a weekend away from my family," Hayes says. "But it's been worth it. It was something I had in my heart to do for a long time."

He has received communications from superior officers stating that it is not a matter of if, but when he will be deployed to Iraq for a one-year tour of duty. He and his family have made preparations and he is ready to go when called. Deployment to Iraq will put his life in harm's way, but Hayes says his faith will carry him through anything.

"Christians don't have to live with any regrets," he says.



## dare to sacrifice

### Factory worker turns down promotion to follow Christ

By Christina Quick

**A**fter 15 years at a Montana sugar factory, Tony Sifuentes' hard work was finally paying off.

The 39-year-old, who was already making what he considered a comfortable salary, was about to be promoted to foreman. With his wife, Martha, and two young sons to support, Sifuentes knew the pay raise could be put to good use. He also knew he couldn't accept it.

The son of migrant workers, Sifuentes had been taught to value steady work and a dependable paycheck. Quitting his job with no guarantee of other employment didn't seem like a reasonable option. Yet he felt that was exactly what he needed to do.

Sensing God calling him to ministry, Sifuentes resigned from the factory, loaded up his family and belongings, and headed to Trinity Bible College in Ellendale, N.D.

"Everybody thought I was crazy," says Sifuentes, now 49. "They said, 'Most people go through a midlife crisis and buy a car. Wouldn't that be easier than changing careers?'"

The change was far from easy. There were bills to pay and groceries to buy. Clothes were needed for their growing children, ages 3 and 7. The family went from depending on their cash flow to relying totally on God.

"People at Bible college told us to hang in there," Sifuentes says. "Once in a while we'd receive a blessing at just the time we needed it. Sometimes our home church would bring groceries or send money. We knew we had support, not only financially but in prayer."

When the family returned to their hometown for Christmas, Sifuentes' boss offered him his job back — complete with the promised promotion. Though he admits it was a tempting offer, he politely declined.

"There were some tough times," Sifuentes says. "Still, I knew the Lord had called me, and if He called me He would provide."

Sifuentes eventually graduated and helped plant a Hispanic church in Grafton, N.D. To make ends meet, he also served in the National Guard, and he and Martha worked as bilingual teachers aides at a public school.



Today Sifuentes is senior pastor at Cando (N.D.) Assembly of God. He is still involved in education as well — serving as a teachers aide, head track coach and assistant football coach for Cando public schools.

"No matter where I'm at, the kids know I'm a pastor and they respect it," Sifuentes says. "I've had kids and teachers come up and say, 'Pastor, pray for me.'"

Sifuentes says he never regrets walking away from that promotion.

"I tell kids, 'Sometimes you have to take risks, but if you keep your eye on Jesus and do what He wants you to do, He'll help you through,'" Sifuentes says. "It would have been so easy to cash it in and say, 'I tried and I didn't make it.' Instead, we can now look back and say, 'With God's help, we did make it.'"

By Ashli O'Connell

**R**eidar Holmen, 83, could be excused for slowing down. The retired cabinet maker, who immigrated from Norway to the United States in 1955, has had more than a few health setbacks — including a heart bypass, three back surgeries and a pinched nerve in his neck.

But when Holmen became a Christian in his early 70s, he gained an understanding that there was too much need in the world for him to slow down.

After reading Rick Warren's *The Purpose-Driven Life*, Holmen began to pray about what purpose God had for the rest of his life.

"In prayer I suddenly heard God tell me that I needed to go and see the homeless children in Mexico," says Holmen. He traveled with a friend across the Arizona/Mexico border to find a

## dare to give

### Senior citizens take on Mexico's poverty

place where he could be of help.

Today Holmen travels several times a year to a little village in Mexico — not even a village really, he says, just a garbage dump where people have gathered to live in cardboard shacks — and takes food, clothes and supplies for the people.

Holmen and his friend, Wayne Holden, pass out Spanish copies of the New Testament, along with candy and toys for the children. They purchase everything themselves and do not solicit donations.

Holmen and Holden do not speak Spanish, but they have an interpreter who knows a little English. When the villagers thank them, they simply say, "Thank Jesus instead. We bring you these things in His name."

"I realized how much need there is for charity around the world. I'm trying to do the little I can," Holmen says. "I am not in all that good of health. I use a scooter when I can, and walk as little as possible. But I get along and I do whatever I can."

He challenges others to find the courage to go where they are needed. "Look around and see how much need there is around the world," Holmen says. "Watch the television and see the disasters. There is always something you can do. If you can't go personally, you can send money. Collect food and clothes to give to different organizations."

Holmen attends Freedom Worship Center (Assemblies of God) in West Jordan, Utah (Patrick A. Marino, pastor).



# dare to go

By Scott Harrup

**W**hen Tim Inman read “U-turns in Ireland” in the August 4, 2002, *Today’s Pentecostal Evangel*, he believed his own life was ready for new direction. He prayed that his wife, Lauri, would feel the same way.

A few days later, Lauri picked Tim up from Sunset Community Church (Assemblies of God) in Livermore, Calif., where he served as children’s pastor.

“I saw the magazine sitting in the car,” Tim remembers. “I told Lauri, ‘I’d love to go and do something like that.’”



For young family, missions article translates into missions ministry

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Lauri quickly voiced her support. “I read that magazine,” she told Tim. “I felt like God was speaking to me through it that we’re supposed to go to Ireland.”

The Inmans, just shy of 30 at the time, had been emotionally poised to serve God overseas. They had taken missions courses in Bible school, and the desire to pursue missions ministry went with them when Tim accepted the staff position at Sunset Community.

But God’s timing needed to be clear. A divine timetable crystallized for them with the *Evangel* article.

“We stayed at Sunset until that October,” Tim says.

The Inmans were accepted as missionary candidates by Assemblies of God World Missions. For nearly two years they traveled in order to raise the necessary funds to go to Ireland.

“The whole itineration process is still fresh in my mind,” Tim says. “We were overwhelmed with the generosity of AG churches and individuals. People who are sold out for missions made it possible for us to be here. We thank God for people who are sacrificing so we can minister here.”

“Here” is in Derry, Northern Ireland. It’s a community that has faced a variety of challenges in the past, but that is experiencing a new atmosphere of openness to the gospel.

Tim’s years as a children’s minister have dovetailed perfectly with the Inmans’ ministry in Derry.

Arriving in May with their children, Madeline, 7, Claire, 6, and Max, 4, Tim and Lauri began expanding the children’s ministry at Cornerstone City Fellowship (Andrew McCourt, pastor). Soon, they were caught up in Kids Week with visiting ministry teams from the United States. The teams visited three schools and shared the gospel with about 1,000 children.

“School assemblies with Bible teaching are allowed here,” Tim says.

The next step is “Explorers,” an after-school club the Inmans hope will regularly connect schoolchildren with the gospel.

“Explorers is going great,” Tim says. “We’re having 40 kids a week, which is half the school.”

Tim and Lauri see unlimited potential for touching a new generation in Ireland with the gospel. They’re approaching the task a day at a time, remembering how God’s long-term guidance intersected with a weekly magazine to clearly redirect their lives for years to come.

## a daring proposal

No matter what obstacles and challenges you are facing, embrace the call God has placed on your life. When you do, He will provide for you in ways you’ve never imagined and you’ll begin the journey of a lifetime.

When times get rough, fall back on His promise: “Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make your paths straight” (Proverbs 3:5,6). **tpe**

E-mail your comments to [tpe@ag.org](mailto:tpe@ag.org).

# ABCs

OF  
SALVATION

**To know God and be ready for heaven, follow these steps:**

### A. Admit you are a sinner.

“There is no one righteous, not even one ... for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.” Romans 3:10,23  
(See Romans 5:8; 6:23.)

### Ask God’s forgiveness.

“Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.” Romans 10:13

### B. Believe in Jesus (put your trust in Him) as your only hope of salvation.

“For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.” John 3:16 (See John 14:6.)

### Become a child of God by receiving Christ.

“To all who received him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God.” John 1:12 (See Revelation 3:20.)

### C. Confess that Jesus is your Lord.

“If you confess with your mouth, ‘Jesus is Lord,’ and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved.” Romans 10:9 (See verse 10.)

For further help, contact the Assemblies of God church near you.

If you would like someone to pray with you concerning your decision to follow Jesus Christ, please contact the church indicated on the back cover or call:



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