



## GREETINGS FROM THE GRIFFINS

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In the beginning, before we ever heard from the Lord, we were lost sinners living in the world and for the pleasures of the world. In 1992 we purchased a house in New River, Az. It was an old (1961) house sitting on 5 acres. We were striving to fulfill our life's dream of building an Appaloosa training/breeding facility. We had several brood mares and a winning stallion. The mares were producing winning babies. Bill was even voted onto the Board of Directors for the Arizona Appaloosa Association. Things were coming together.

Shortly after moving into our new home our two boys, Josh (5) & Curtis (4) wanted to attend church. We found a little Southern Baptist church down the road. So being the responsible, but lost, parents we took them each Sunday morning for Sunday School, dropped them off, and went home. After a month or so we felt we needed to at least be there for them and started attending weekly services ourselves. We slipped in and out hoping not to be noticed.

It didn't take long for the Holy Spirit to convince us we needed Jesus in our lives, and we accepted the free gift of God's Salvation. We were starving for the Word and could be found at church every time the doors were open. We even followed the Pastor home questioning him extensively about things in the Bible we didn't understand. We grew in our faith with leaps and bounds.

Our only neighbor was an eccentric 70 year old man; Jim, who had no water, electricity, or any worldly conveniences. He lived a solitary life. Repeatedly, the Lord showed us that we were to show our love for Jesus by taking care of Jim. Occasionally we wondered what we had gotten ourselves into. Twice the Holy Spirit prompted us to look in on Jim, only to find him almost dead from a fall and extreme cold. We even took him into our home to live and recuperate.

In 1998 Cindy felt a call on her life to be a part of a short term mission trip to Russia. She went but felt the trip was a waste of her time and money because nothing was gained, as far as she was concerned. We had said many times we could not be missionaries because we were taking care of Jim, we were needed in our loving church, and our house was too old to sell for any real money. But the seed was planted, and we soon felt the call again in 2000. We both, along with our two boys, went on a mission trip to Israel with Teen Missions Intl.

We were Head Leaders on a preteen team of 27. While we were in Israel we received a call from our pastor's wife about the death of Jim. He had died from a stroke and she needed a contact number for the next of kin. During our phone conversation she told us our freezer had burned out, the meat had spoiled and spilled out all over the kitchen floor. The insurance company condemned the whole inside of our house and our entire house was completely remodeled. They replaced carpet, walls, appliances, and repainted every wall. All this happened while we were in Israel and we returned home to a new house.

While we were gone our church went through a terrible split and all of the friends we had loved for the last 10 years were gone. Our life was turned completely upside down. Everything we thought we knew about God seemed to be the opposite of what we were experiencing. It was a very emotional time for us as we struggled to understand what God was doing. We took care of the funeral for Jim, moved back into our house, and continued attending church. However, church was different without our friends. God seemed to be saying "Do you love Me or your friends, your home, and your life?" Our answer was of course we loved Him more and would soon answer His call into full time ministry.

In December Bill felt that he was supposed to be an area rep for Teen Missions Intl.; the ministry we went to Israel with in July. He flew to Florida for two weeks of training. While he was there the Holy Spirit clearly spoke to him revealing God's

desire for us to leave the world and join Him in His work. Bill called Cindy excited, exclaiming "Guess what honey, we are selling our house and becoming missionaries." Cindy replied "I don't think so." The next day during the classes the Holy Spirit spoke to Bill again. In one of the classes the Director was showing some pictures of orphans in Africa and talking about the need for more staff to care for these children. It was here that the Holy Spirit gave Bill the Scripture verse that propelled us into full-time Christian service.

We know love by this, that He laid down His life for us; and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren. But whoever has the world's goods, and beholds his brother in need and closes his heart against him, how does the love of God abide in him? Little children, let us not love with word or with tongue, but in deed and truth.

1 John 3:16-18

Bill called home again, this time exclaiming "Guess what honey, not only are we going to be missionaries, we are going to Africa." Cindy's reply... "If God wants us to go to Africa, He will tell me also." Two weeks later God did just that; He made it clear to Cindy that we were on our way into the mission field and to Africa as our place of service. We were joining the staff of Teen Missions Intl.

God had answered all of our earthly reasons for not serving Him. He took Jim home, showed us our focus is to be on Him and not our church, and remodeled our home. We started raising support, as we were to be faith supported (which means we would rely on fellow Christians giving to the Lord to provide for our monetary needs). It was not possible for us to earn a wage and serve the Lord full time. The Lord also made it clear that we were to be in Florida by January 2002.

There was a lot that needed to be done before we could move to Florida. Bill was still working a full time job at American Express. We needed to sell our house and all of our animals; horses, rabbits, dogs and cats. It was an exciting time for us as we looked forward to serving the Lord. In December we finally had all of our monthly support promised but could not sell our house. In a hot sellers market we were quite surprised by that. One night in a dream, Bill was questioned by the Lord as to why we were still in Arizona. Bill answered "We couldn't leave without selling the house". The Lord replied "You trust Me to provide for all your needs but don't think I can sell your house?" We made plans the next day to leave. We arrived in Florida the first of February. After one month in Florida, when we received our asking price for the house, we saw that the Lord would indeed provide for all of our needs.

Whether we are digging wells in Africa, building Bible schools in Belize, working with at-risk children in Belize, in a children's home in New Mexico, working in a youth drug rehab facility in Flagstaff, or assisting churches across America, we are serving the Lord as He directs us. We will always serve Him because that is what He has asked of us. Some people have said we are no longer missionaries since we left Belize and that we should just get a real job and earn a paycheck. We are still missionaries and can't remove the call on our lives. We are still the same workers we have been since we joined the ministry back in 2002. Currently we are camp hosting during the summer because we have lost more than half of our financial support and have to pay our bills. We would love to be serving year round in ministries that truly need the help we can provide. We need the Lord to touch the hearts of people that will join with us by providing the money necessary for us to live and serve. The Lord has always provided for what we need. He has also kept a few of our faithful supporters that make it possible to serve half of the year. We are earnestly seeking new supporters, and ask that you pray for us in that regard.

Thank you all for your prayers and support.