

## What Do We Count?

by Jim Shaner

Very early in our lives, we are taught to count. Then we are taught how to add. Two apples plus three apples equals five apples or one fruit basket. From that time forwards, we have not stopped counting, but sometimes I noticed that young people can be more precise in counting than older people. When it comes to age, a young boy or girl may say that he is seven and a half years old. Have you ever heard a person say the he or she is twenty-seven and a half or thirty-seven and a half years old? And some adults, when it comes to age, can not count past thirty-nine. We all count days. How many days until Christmas? While soccer moms count the days until the soccer season is over, students count the days until the end of the school year and some people count the days until April 15.

In our modern day society, we count everything. Sports is a good example. In golf, we count strokes except when we cheat and take a mulligan. In baseball, we count runs, hits, errors and almost anything else that can be counted except the number of sunflower seeds that lay on the dugout floors.

Some people today even count invisible calories while they eat, so they themselves can become less visible. Policemen count the number of times that they fired their weapon in the line of duty. Miners count tons of coal. McDonalds count hamburgers. Churches count attendance, tithes and offerings. The list can go on forever.

As a prayer walker attempting to cross America, I, as most long distance hikers, count miles. At the present it is 852 miles and holding. This year only 27 miles were added to my total. Do I count this as a bad year? My answer is no. The ministry, One Nation Under God – Walk Across America, greatly transformed the life of one person.

On the evening of February 11, 2008, at a small group bible study, the leader prophesized over each person that attended. I was told that my prayer walk ministry would include a healing ministry for those who are emotionally hurting. The next morning I received an email from a woman who was bitter at the church in general. She wrote that everything she did was challenged by a church full of gossipers and judges. She asked for prayer for herself, that God would reveal Himself fully to her again and her faith be restored. She also asked me to pray for Christians to become real again instead of the plastic that they seem to become. She also hoped that the church would be a place where everyone, no matter race, color, gender, hairstyle, clothing, etc would be welcomed in and taught the love of Christ.

After asking if I could disciple her, we began corresponding by email since she did not want to talk on the phone and I did not have her phone number. When her faith in God eroded, a vacuum was created and darkness entered to fill the void. I sent an email to intercessors to pray for her. The following are portions of her next email.

**“I’m just really confused right now...Most (churches) have only taught me what God is definitely not...I’m miserable, and it’s beginning to flow into every area of my life right now...my relationships with my family, my job, and my walk, what little there is of it, with God.”**

**“I need to know who He is...Is God just a figment of everyone’s imagination, something made up to help people get through life?...I’m ready to just take a large bottle of pills and go to everlasting sleep or drive my car off a bridge so that I don’t have to fight this battle any longer...I need help.”**

**In my next email to her, we began studying one facet of God, Jehovah-Jireh, God the provider. We examined how God provided a ram for a burnt offering for Abraham so that Abraham would not have to sacrifice his son, Isaac. Then we studied in the New Testament, the miracles of how Jesus fed thousands with only a few loaves and a few fish. After writing how God provided for me during my walk across America with finances, rooms to sleep, free meals and people to walk with me, I asked her to name five more things that God provided for her besides her husband, and children.**

**In our next lesson, I sent a photo that I have had of her children and I told her to read John 3:16. I wrote, “God loves her so much that He sent His son, Jesus, to die on that cross on Calvary so you may have eternal life with Him. Now look at that photo again. Look at your son. I know that you love him. God provided His own Son as a living sacrifice for our sins. That is how much God loves you.”**

**Then I asked her to name one thing that God has provided for her husband and each of her children and three things that God provided for her in the past week.**

**I closed the email with the following verse:**

***Whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things.***

**Philippians 4:8**

**As emails continued into May, a transformation took place in her life, but I could no longer write because of failing mental health. Later when she sent me an email that I will always treasure, revealing to me that she was healed. In August, I received a phone call from her stating that she had prayer groups of five churches praying for me. She thanked me verbally for the time I spent getting her through her crisis. What did I really do? I had her count her blessings, one by one.**

**This year has been very difficult for my wife and me. After being diagnosed with normal pressure hydrocephalus, an abnormal accumulation of cerebrospinal fluid in the ventricles of the brain, another doctor told me I had dysexecutive syndrome, a working memory impairment. Because of that I am no longer able to work as a structural designer and went on long term disability. Sometimes my**

thinking process can not handle writing or typing and some days it can. I get my right and left confused and my short term memory is mediocre. Just recently, another doctor told me that I have restless legs syndrome (no wonder I like to prayer walk) and sleep apnea.

But during all of this I still feel blessed. I live in America where we have freedom of religion not freedom from religion. I am married to a wonderful wife, Nadine, and have two sons and three grandchildren. My wife and I are members of Praise Fellowship Church, who believes that the Holy Bible, both Old and New Testaments, are verbally inspired of God and are the revelation of God to man, the infallible, authoritative rule of faith and conduct. Although I am not able to work, we do not lack for food, clothing or shelter nor do we worry about those things. There are people in many parts of America praying for my health, and I know that there is a Living God in heaven who hears their prayers. I know that nothing will separate me from the love of Christ and I still believe that next year the One Nation Under God – Walk Across America will continue.

Today are you counting?

*The blessing of the Lord be upon you: we bless you in the name of the Lord.*

**Psalm 129:8**

To learn more about the One Nation Under God –Walk Across America, go to our web site, [www.walkacrossamerica.info](http://www.walkacrossamerica.info).

God bless and have a Merry and Blessed Christmas,  
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Total miles walked of the American Discovery Trail - 852 miles  
Number of prayer walkers - 64 prayer walkers  
Number of people praying for America - 56,334 prayer warriors