

RESPONDER LIFE'S STORYBOARD



LIFE SUPPORT - A RELATIONAL FAITH

by Seth Andrews, Area Director Tennessee

It was my first day on shift, and I quickly realized my new career wasn't going to be easy. I walked into the station, having just given my resignation to my church--I was leaving the "ministry" for a job as an EMT. There I stood in the station, embedded in a totally new world. No longer was I sheltered by the walls of my church office. I was now in an environment where my faith would be challenged daily.

So from my first shift until this very day, I have found myself surrounded by profanity, immorality, skepticism, drug and alcohol abuse, depression, divorce, suicides, and burnout. And after five years, I've come to the realization that the Christian life is often counter to the very culture of our profession as First Responders. I don't mean that you cannot be a Christian in this environment; what I mean is that it is oftentimes difficult to maintain a deep and growing faith in the face of the dysfunctional world we see around us.

It is not a culture where you can easily survive on your own. I discovered this after spending four years drowning in a sea of loneliness and cynicism, with a faith that grew

increasingly more timid each day--call by call. Not until I shared my feelings with other Christians on my shift did I realize that to survive, I had to challenge the culture and seek to change the culture around me. But this isn't the sort of thing one person can accomplish alone.

You may be having regular devotions and prayer time, even reading the Scripture between calls... This is a good spiritual discipline we all must have. But what I have found is that it is simply not enough. I need to be relationally engaged with co-workers who keep me accountable and who encourage me to work toward Christ-likeness. I currently am developing a group of co-workers that plan to meet together off shift. We want to spend time sharing our faith, studying Scripture, and encouraging one another in ways that help us live out our faith in the First Responder culture.

Christianity is also relational in that we are called to win others to Christ. If we want to see a cultural transformation in the First Responder community, then we must introduce Christ to our community. I think it is easier for us to do the old "invite your partner to church" than it is to seriously engage them in a spiritual discussion.

Often we find ourselves spending at least a third of our lives with our co-workers, yet never engaging them in a relationship or conversation that goes beyond the job, sports, or hobbies. We rarely, if ever, get to the spiritual and emotional level. However, God calls us to build bridges and relationships. These relationships should be intentional and authentic. We must open ourselves up spiritually and emotionally to reach our First Responder community. Don't look to your peers as projects for evangelism. Love them. Invest in them. Build lasting relationships that are genuine and purposeful.

I think God is challenging us as First Responders to not only deepen our faith, but be engaged in our culture. Remember, Christianity is relational! It is not a faith we live out in solitude. I am challenged each shift to seek out coworkers for the purpose of building Christian community, a network of disciples. I am also challenged to build authentic and intentional relationships with my hurting and lost peers. My faith is no longer a static belief system. My faith is a relational movement of God through my First Responder culture. Is yours? Oh, and about me leaving the "ministry" five years ago? I have discovered--I never left the ministry. I simply found a new one!

INSIDER DISCOVERY
EVERYONE IS CALLED

ARE YOU READY TO LIVE THE LIFE YOU WERE CALLED TO LIVE?
BECOME AN INSIDER TODAY, LEARN HOW TO RESPOND TOMORROW...

WHO IS AN INSIDER

by Skip Asjes, Vice President of Mission



“The God who made the world and everything in it is the Lord of heaven and earth and does not live in temples built by human hands. And he is not served by human hands as if he needed

anything. Rather, he himself gives everyone life and breath and everything else. From one man he made all the nations, that they should inhabit the whole earth; and he marked out their appointed times in history and the boundaries of their lands. God did this so that they would seek him and perhaps reach out for him and find him, though he is not far from any one of us. ‘For in him we live and move and have our being.’ As some of your own poets have said, ‘We are his offspring.’ Acts 17:24-28 NIV

One of Jesus’ early “sent out ones” was talking about God to a group of folks in Athens, Greece. He was known by them as a Jewish teacher. Paul wanted to make a couple of things clear to them. Of greatest importance, Paul wanted them to know that this God of the Jews was really the God who made everything and everyone. He wanted them to know that they were included in God’s work and plan. According to Paul, everyone everywhere has had their place and time of birth or existence in God’s mind, and He has placed us in geography and history to give us the best shot we can possibly have to “perhaps reach out for him and find him, though he is not far from any one of

us.” We are all Insiders in that place and time that God appointed for us to live. His desire is for us and our network of families, neighbors, friends, and community to find Him and experience Him as our Master. And Paul wanted the Greeks who were willing to listen to know that this God he was talking about was not served and worshipped only by the Jews who gathered together in the temple built in Jerusalem. The implication was that they could get in on it, too. That was a part of the good news as Paul saw it.

We are all Insiders, and we are all drawn toward God because of His ongoing work. That means we need to learn how to live in this world He has placed us in. There are lots of clues and stories in the historical accounts of people’s experiences with God in the scriptures. There are stories from our own experiences. It is our desire at Responder Life to see the world through the lens of how God sees it and what He is doing. The work of God is beautiful, and He wants us to experience His goodness.

In future articles we will look at several aspects of being an Insider. For instance, why does it matter? What do Insiders need? How do we overcome the obstacles to fulfilling the purposes God has for us? What are the life patterns of Insiders? What can life as an Insider look like? The ideas and structure of this year-long series are based on a book called “The Insider,” by Jim Petersen and Mike Shamy, two friends of the Responder Life ministry. Let’s join together to seek and discover the work God is doing among us!

COMING 2012



Insider^{Too}

Launching Fall of 2012

A ministry to the Spouses of First Responders

For more info email Diane at diane@responderlife.com

FOCUS ON THE FAMILY'S
THE TRUTH PROJECT
FIRST RESPONDER EDITION

ONLINE TRAINING NOW
AVAILABLE
FOR MORE INFORMATION
EMAIL US AT
TRUTH@RESPONDERLIFE.COM



LIFE UPDATES

Development Team Updates

Hero’s Dinner and Desserts starting Fall of 2012, with select few starting this Spring.

www.responderlife.com/partner

“Insider Bus Tour” idea for the Fall of 2012. The vision now is to travel to 30 cities. Each city would host a training time and a Potluck to meet Insiders and Coaches

Production Team Updates

Insider Discovery DVD: The production team is working on the first phase this Spring.

The Production team will be working on a new Responder Life Promo starting this month. The promo will be available online for your use. Watch Facebook as we gather feed back from our followers, starting mid-March 2012.

Canada Update

RL Canada has obtained a temporary nonprofit status and will begin working later this month to file for a permanent non-profit status in Canada. The process can take up to one year.

L.A. Doyle will be in Vancouver, B.C. in late March, with Chris Green, Trey Doty and other key leaders continuing the Canada planning meetings.

OUR LEADERSHIP

Dave Williams
Founder and Board Chair

Chris Green
President & Chief Executive Officer

Trey Doty
Executive Vice President &
Chief Operating Officer

Scott Dorr
Vice President of Finance &
Chief Financial Officer

Skip Asjes
Vice President of Mission &
Chief Strategy Officer

Clarke Cayton
Divisional Vice President U.S. (Eastern) &
Content

Steve Chadwick
Divisional Vice President U.S. (Western) &
Staff Development

L.A. Doyle
General Director of Canada & Divisional
Vice President U.S. (Northeast) (Starting
1/1/2012)

Michael Banes
Divisional Vice President U.S. (Strategy)

Scott Spaulding
Regional Director of Texas

Ronnie Rivera
Regional Director of Florida

Dr. Robert Nelson
Regional Director of South Carolina



PHOTO OF THE MONTH
New staffer Trey Doty,
facilitating the weekly
leadership meeting at
Responder Life.

Responder Life - Contact

888.668.8490 - Toll Free
503.668.8490 - Fax
www.ResponderLife.com

RESPONDER LIFE - STORYBOARD

P.O. Box 1216
Sandy, Oregon 97055