

5/13/2002

## A PERSONAL WORD FOR YOU from Mack McCarter

### **“From Allendale To Afghanistan And Back Again: The Power of Applied Love: IV”**

Ever since the horror of September 11, 2001, I have been sharing my deepest convictions about the necessity and reality of a renewed and renewing world by linking one neighborhood in Shreveport, Louisiana to one nation on planet earth. I have said that *if we cannot solve terrorism in Allendale, then we cannot cure it in Afghanistan*. I have said *that there must be an awakening to the absolute solidarity of the human condition: that what affects one affects all*. (As a nation we are linked to Afghanistan, as a neighborhood, we are bonded with all Allendales.) And I have said *that the only possible solution is the answer found in the power of applied love*. (For change to take place on the massive scale necessary to transform our world and our lives, then love/caring must be focused individually and personally within an enabling system which can methodically reach the masses of hurting human beings on planet earth.) And finally I have said *that all true love is God’s love, we did not create it, it was here when we came on board, but we can appropriate it and let it use us as instruments*.

You and I know that the love that one person has for another has the power to change them both. But the burning question is this: *Is it possible to develop a way that can inspire, instruct, and mobilize millions of people to give themselves to one another in such numbers that an entire planet’s population can be transformed?* I not only believe that there is, but I have seen it with my own eyes. I should tell you of Allendale.

**Pam Morgan** is twenty-eight years old. She has four children. She had her first child when she was sixteen. She has never been married. She lives on Clay Street in Allendale. It is a part of Allendale known as “The Hill.” “The Hill” is filled with row houses known down south as “Shotgun Houses.” The conditions are tough. One year ago Pam Morgan met Jewel Mariner. Jewel came to visit Pam. She was visiting everyone on the hill. Jewel is trained as a Community Coordinator. She is equipped with effective means of delivering the love of God by her presence and her personal caring. She is saturated by a strategy for transforming a whole neighborhood through a process of called, “Teach Each To Reach.” Love people. Don’t judge. Don’t try to make them jump through your hoop. Just love them for the precious child of God that they are. They will respond. They will want to go and love others. That is what we teach.

Jewel became Pam’s friend. True friendship is not a *means to anything*. **True friendship is an end in itself**. (Don’t you, even you, feel used if someone befriends you so that they can invite you over to join a network marketing scheme?) True friendship is the most profound theological concept and reality we know. That is what we teach.

Pam began to change. She wanted a new way to live. She wanted hope for her life and the lives of her children. She quietly demanded that the man she lived with enter this hope with her or leave. He left. Jewel asked if she could take Pam's children to Sunday School with her. "Yes" was the answer. After several weeks, Pam began to go, too. Then after a time of wonderful friendship Pam decided to consciously dedicate herself to live the life of loving others. Pam Morgan was reborn from a life of self-centered living to a life dedicated to other-centered loving. It was a decision of her will, inspired by the tug on her heart. She said "I will live for others." She said, "I can't do this on my own, so I will need help." Pam Morgan joined a fellowship of likeminded people.

***Then Pam Morgan went to work.***

We begin hearing reports of Pam visiting her neighbors on the hill. Jewel was relaying to all of us the quiet determination that she saw in Pam to make hope a reality. Pam signed up for classes to get her GED. When she heard about how we train people to become the catalysts for caring on their own streets, she signed up to be trained as a Haven House Leader. (Remember the Haven House motto: "*We are remaking our city by making friends on our street.*") And when Jewel formed the first Allendale Kids Club, Pam's children were at the first of the line to sign up.

I should tell you of Pam Morgan. On May 28<sup>th</sup>, Pam Morgan will get her GED. ***But listen, Pam Morgan signed up ten other neighbors from "The Hill" to get their GEDs!!*** When you drive up the hill and pass Pam's house, lined up with the others, look close and see the wooden "WE CARE" Haven House sign in front, (with lovely pansies planted around it – symbolizing the emerging beauty budding all over that neighborhood.) ***But also be aware that Pam has recruited five others to be Haven House Leaders on "The Hill."*** Each one of those is reaching others. A quiet revolution is taking place all over that hill!!

Jewel Mariner and her husband Hank have now moved into our new Friendship House on Clay Street. They are residents of "The Hill." So are Sherry and Norm Brown and their two young sons. Our agents of applied love are in place. Pam Morgan has joined our team as "Neighborhood Ambassador." Let her tell you of the change in her life and the lives of her beautiful children. But don't stop her there. Because you will want to hear about Sister Annie on Rear Clay street, Rose \_\_\_\_\_, on Alston Street, and \_\_\_\_\_, and Fred Haley on Buena Vista Street, and \_\_\_\_\_, Haven House Leaders who are working for hope even as they wait for it. Space does not permit me to tell of them all.

But here is what I know. I have seen new life in Highland, in Cedar Grove, in Queensboro, in the Barksdale Annex. I have seen it in Allendale. The plan? It is simple: Each one reach one and each one teach one with love. But the big break through is this: we are going about this systematically and methodically. It is small now, but it is way bigger than it was. And it will become the means to reach Afghanistan. This I believe. This I know!! God bless you for believing with us in the power of applied love!

***Oh, by the way, the people are now calling their neighborhood, "New Hope Hill!" Don't you just love it?!***