

## **A WORD WITH YOU - By Ron hutchcraft**

### **# 10203 – “Why It Is Too Soon to Give Up”**

**Galatians 6:9**

February 18, 2026

Ten more minutes and my wife would have never been born. The story that changed everything is hope for any of us who love someone who's making some very bad choices. My wife's grandfather, Bill, had given up on life. Trashing a profitable career for the alcohol and cocaine he could not resist. He was labeled with a prison record, he was penniless, he was hopeless and he was suicidal.

And that night, as he walked South State Street in downtown Chicago, he was minutes away from Lake Michigan where he'd decided to end it all. One thing saved him. A mother who had never given up on him. There, on the street, he heard the song, the one his mother used to sing to him. It was coming from the rescue mission he had just passed. Something made him stop and go inside. And there a caring mission worker shared a Bible verse that has probably changed more lives than any other. The worker started, "For God so loved the world that He gave..." Suddenly, Bill finished it. "...His only begotten Son, that whosoever believes in Him will not perish but have everlasting life." (John 3:16). Somewhere in the long-clouded corners of his memory, he could hear his mother teaching him those words.

And that night - minutes away from ending his life - he found life. He never touched or wanted alcohol or drugs from that night on. And he spent the rest of his life bringing the hope he'd found to forgotten people across the country. And now three generations Bill never met are here, and they're living and spreading that same hope because of one man's choice that night.

I'm Ron Hutchcraft and I want to have **A WORD WITH YOU** today about **“Why It Is Too Soon to Give Up.”**

The story behind the story is told in the inscription on the back of a photo of young Bill. His mother wrote, "O Will, every night when I read my Bible, I look at this picture and I ask God to keep you and somehow seal your heart with His love. You may see this after I'm gone and you'll know that I never ceased to pray for you. Mother." She did live ten years after the night God answered those prayers.

Even as her son's life got darker and darker, this mother was hanging onto a powerful but easily-forgotten truth. That's one that I, too, have hung onto - even today. Because so much of my life's work has been trying to love and rescue people who just keep spiraling downward. It's a hope-preserver for all of us who grieve and who pray for broken, prodigal people.

Never forget the difference between a chapter and a book. See, many a book with a happy ending has some very dark chapters. A loved one's seemingly unstoppable rush to the edge of the cliff? That's not the book. It's a chapter. If we lose that wide angle lens perspective, we're going to lose hope. But the Bible urges us in our word for today from the Word of God in Galatians 6:9, "Do not become weary in doing good, for at the proper time we will reap a harvest...". And Jesus said that we "should always pray and not give up" (Luke 18:1).

That's what Bill's mother did. She wept over many chapters. She never lost sight, though, of the ending God could write to the book of her son's life. She just kept loving, praying and believing. And the final chapters of Bill's life were more glorious and more miraculous than she could have ever dreamed.

If we can remember, in the darkest hours of a loved one's heartbreaking journey, that this is a chapter, then hope can win when despair is strong. Even as I write this, there are young men and women whose life-eroding choices I grieve for. But I know there is a relentless Shepherd who came (He said) to "seek and save those who are lost" (Luke 19:10). He says, "I will search for the lost and bring back the strays" (Ezekiel 34:16). He will do whatever it takes to bring them home. Even when it meant a cross.

So, as long as there's breath, there's hope. I know, because Bill's beautiful granddaughter, my wife, told me.

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