

**Spirit**

**Driven**

**Steps**



**by Ken Proctor**

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While perusing the book selection at our local Goodwill Store, I stumbled across a title that caught my eye: **“Just Walk Across the Room: Simple Steps Pointing People to Faith,”** by **Bill Hybels**. Since launching our small group ministry, two years ago (Snowbirding for Jesus: Reaching the World One Cushy Resort at a Time), I’m always on the lookout for “how to” books we can study and apply to that ministry opportunity.

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While perusing the book selection at our local Goodwill Store, I stumbled across a title that caught my eye: **“Just Walk Across the Room: Simple Steps Pointing People to Faith,”** by **Bill Hybels**. Since launching our small group ministry, two years ago (Snowbirding for Jesus: Reaching the World One Cushy Resort at a Time), I’m always on the lookout for “how to” books we can study and apply to that ministry opportunity. This copy appeared to be in very good condition (unread?) so for \$4.99 plus tax, I snagged it.

Bill Hybels, pastor of Willow Creek Community Church, south Barrington, Illinois, jumps right into his subject... being sensitive to Spirit lead opportunities in our everyday lives, moments where our paths cross the paths of acquaintances or strangers and the Spirit gives us a nudge that says, “This one. Speak to this one. Listen. Get to know this one.”

Too often, according to Bill, we are wrapped up in what he calls our “circle of comfort,” surrounded by like-minded believers. It takes a conscious effort to scan our surroundings, ever watchful for the individual that needs someone to take a chance, excuse themselves from their circle, and take a walk. “Being walk-across-the-room people,” Bill writes, “means that we walk when the Spirit says walk, and we don’t walk when the Spirit says not to.”

By Chapter Two, I was already looking, scanning my surroundings. By Chapter Three, as Bill suggests, I prayed that the Spirit would open my eyes to opportunities to engage folks in casual conversation. Boom. Suddenly, everywhere I go, I’m bumping into people (mostly other men my age) willing to engage me right back. I don’t even have to cross a room. Here are a few examples.

— New to the game of golf, I haunt thrift stores looking for good, used, cheap clubs to add to my growing collection. The same day I prayed about it, another fellow steps up and starts rummaging through the clubs, too. Boom. Opportunity. Here’s a retirement aged guy shopping at a thrift store, looking at golf clubs. Instantly, without saying a word yet, I know we have three things in common, any one of which presents a golden opportunity to break the ice. So I do. Turns out Ray is recently retired, new to the game of golf, needs to fill out his set of clubs, and knows even less about golf than I do (shocking, I know). Within ten minutes, Ray and I traded contact information with the intention of meeting at a local nine-hole par three course.

— A week later, I followed up, inviting Ray to join two friends and I for nine holes at an easy course (my favorite kind, at this point). With prior obligations, Ray had to take a rain check, but while waiting to tee off, I noticed a gentleman who’d arrived to golf alone. Boom. One casual comment led to another. Within two minutes, I suggested he join our three-some to make a four-some. Danny agreed, happy to have someone to spend a couple of hours with.

— I know this is beginning to sound like a golfing ministry, but it happened again. Golfing with my buddy, we were overtaken by one guy golfing alone. We offered to either let him play through or to join us. He joined us. And this guy really needed someone to talk with. I'm getting the impression there are lots of guys so lonely and bored they go golfing alone just to get out of the house.

— By the time we finished that nine holes, we all agreed to grab a snack and play another round. By the second hole, it happened again. Frank, golfing alone, caught up to us. "Hi. I'm Ken, this is Craig and Joe. Want to join us?" It was that easy.

— Did any of these turn into deep philosophical conversations on faith or salvation? No, not yet. But they did present opportunities to get better acquainted, to build relationships that have earned the credibility and trust that lead to deeper conversations. Bill Hybels, in subsequent chapters, covers being sensitive to the Spirit's guidance and timing. Maybe this was just a one-time chance meeting. Or, perhaps, the beginning of a long and, eventually, fruitful friendship that leads a seeker to grace and salvation. Or not. Only the Spirit knows.

While putting the fifth green yesterday, someone said, "If you don't hit the ball hard enough, there is a 100% probability it won't go in the hole." This is true of walking across the room, too. Unless we step out of our comfort zone, willing to "take a whack at it," we will miss these opportunities 100% of the time. And, according to Hybels, scripture tells us that is not an option for believers. Where the Spirit leads, we go. What He does with that opportunity, after that, is up to God.

I found "Just Walk Across the Room" very readable and very relevant, and am recommending it to friends. Amazon Books has copies available (I checked), so no excuse.

Get out there and take a whack at it.

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A friend of Spirit Driven Leadership introduced Ken Proctor to us because Ken has a gift of communicating valuable lessons through stories and poetry. Fortunately, Spirit Driven Leadership has the wonderful opportunity to bring to our audience Ken's work. This material will come primarily in the form of articles, poems, short stories, lyrics and books.

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