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Do You Suffer From **Minilomania**?

By Jeff Bonzelaar, Executive Director

My 4-year-old loves to help me whether I'm washing the car, working out in the yard, or attending to basic household repairs (the latter can make my wife rather nervous, especially when I've got a hammer in my hand!).

Last summer, Jonny would regularly put on my ear muffs and proceed to "cut" the lawn with his mower. When I wasn't looking (which Lori complained was most of the time . . . Hey, I get focused when I'm involved with a project!), little Jonny would take my pruners and attempt to cut off various tree limbs.

Jonny recently received some money as a gift and went to Target with his mother and bought a *Little Tikes*® plastic shovel and rake. So the other day as I was preparing my garden, I wasn't surprised to see Jonny fitted with my gloves and his trustee shovel at his side. He was planning on assisting me in my labors.

Jonny wants to make a contribution. He wants a job affording him the opportunity to do something meaningful. Jonny wants to have "causal impact."

You and I are no different. We need to know that we matter, that our lives count, that we have a vital role to play in the universe.

**"God has a tailor-made task
for each one of us."**

We need to know that we can make a positive difference and effect lasting, meaningful change. At the very worst, a frustrated need for causal impact can lead to violence and aggression—from vandalizing buildings to rape and murder. At the very least, unmet needs of causality can lead to flirtation with the oppo-

site sex, being a “neat freak,” uncontrolled spending, being sickly, . . . you name it. One way or the other, we must find a way to gain a measure of control and recognition. We want to feel important.

A few years ago I preached a series of sermons addressing the topic, “Why I am a Christian.” One of the reasons I gave was that Christianity fulfills my need for significance and causal impact. Life lived for no other purpose than making money, having a nice house, raising children, climbing a corporate ladder, and improving one’s golf game is a life not worth living.

Christianity informs me that I matter . . . profoundly. God has a tailor-made task for each one of us. The Apostle Paul puts it like this, “For we are God’s workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do” (Eph. 2:10).

“Minilomania” is a condition of our postmodernism times. It is birthed in a culture which believes that you and I are products of impersonal, undirected natural

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forces. As such, we are just a bunch of atoms that accidentally evolved from nothing and is heading towards nothing. (That doesn’t do much for one’s self-image!)

Now if you try to find “minilomania” in a *Webster’s Dictionary* you’ll be hard pressed. The word “megalomania,” however, may not be unfamiliar to you. A person who suffers from this disorder has delusions of grandeur and greatness. Such a person is most arrogant and ego-centered (which doesn’t make for a very good neighbor).

At the opposite end, someone suffering from “minilomania” has delusions of his or her unimportance and insignificance. Persons experiencing this will say or think things like, “I’m not needed,” “I’ve got nothing to

contribute,” “My life has no purpose.”

But the Bible tells us otherwise. We were fashioned by God for His glory. At the very outset of creation, God gave Adam and Eve an assignment—to work the earth and take care of it (Gen. 1:26, 28). The entire history of man is about God sharing His power—His job—with us and inviting you and me to join with Him in advancing His rule and reign. The Apostle Paul revels in this wonderful truth when he boasts that “we are God’s *fellow workers*” (1 Cor. 3:9; see also 2 Cor. 6:1).

CONCLUSION

You are needed. You have been gifted to do an important job, a mission nobody else can do (see Rom. 12:3 ff.; 1 Cor. 12:7 ff.). Regardless of your age, gender, economic status, or health, you have a critical role to play in the Great Drama.

I am a living testimony to the power of one simple woman’s work. My mother was a high school graduate and home-maker all her life. She had few marketable skills. She was greatly limited in what she could do because of her health. She had personal issues that adversely affected her socially. In the world’s economy, she wasn’t important.

But what the world discounts, God uses. Mom could pray. And that she did. And here I am today, serving Jesus Christ, ministering to hundreds of people yearly about God’s love, all because one woman trusted God for her son. That’s causal impact!

Mom made a difference. You can too!



Testimony

Trisha Garrett

“I grew up in a small town in Illinois. I attended church regularly with my family and gave my heart to Jesus at an early age.

When I was 11 years of age I had some friends

whose parents had bars in their basements. We would sneak down when the parents weren't there and drink the liquor. From my very first drink, I loved the way alcohol made me feel.

When I entered junior high something happened that turned my father against our church. We tried other churches but never made a commitment. My involvement in sports increased, and soon we stopped going to church altogether.

In high school I joined the cheerleading squad. Although I was fairly popular, I still felt insecure. I would save my lunch money so I could buy alcohol on the weekends.

When I was 18 a friend introduced me to cocaine. I was hooked immediately. I never wanted to stop. I thought this was the life for me.

At 24 years of age, I went back to church and re-dedicated my life to Christ. I met my husband in church, and we got married. I expected things to be perfect and when they weren't, I turned back to drugs.

Two years into our marriage our first daughter was born. Our second daughter arrived two years later. The pressure of raising two children was overwhelming. During this period I tried crack for the first time. I was immediately addicted.

I plunged deep into sin. I did things that I never thought I was capable of doing. I would leave my family for days at a time to go and get high. I overdosed twice. While I was in the hospital the second time, my pastor came to see me and told me about Life Challenge. I told him flat out "No!" One year sounded way to long for me. I didn't think I was that bad.

So God turned up the burners. I got in trouble with the law for possession of cocaine. On top of that, while at a party a man started beating me and burning me with a pipe.

I was so out of it that I ran and jumped out of a third floor window. I landed on my feet and shattered both ankles.

For months I could not walk. I started seeing how tragic my life had become. I knew that if I was ever

going to beat this thing, it would only be through the power of God.

A friend of mine brought up Life Challenge again. A week later someone came to our church and spoke about Life Challenge. He talked to me after the service, and I was convinced that this was where God wanted me to be. In October of 2006 I entered the program.

A month after I came in I was caught trying to leave the women's center at night to meet one of the men in the program. When it was discovered, we were dismissed. After two weeks I was allowed to re-enter. There were several conditions I was expected to follow upon my return. I was so angry. I was given all kinds discipline. I fought every inch of the way.

I was dismissed a second time. God was breaking me. I had to be willing to submit to authority. Upon re-entry, I finally started to enjoy the classes and daily worship. I stopped trying to do everything on my own and started relying on Jesus.

When I graduated in November of 2007 I returned home to find out that my husband had been having an affair on me. He is presently seeking a divorce and our marriage seems beyond recovery. We have both made so many mistakes. I am just grateful I have Jesus now. Without Him I could not go through this. I thank Him for His forgiveness and strength.

I am currently raising my two daughters. I have received my continuing education hours in cosmetology. I attend church and oversee a women's Bible study. God is doing so many miracles in my life.

All praise and glory to God who sits on the throne!"



The economy of Southeastern Michigan has greatly affected us. We've got 75 students we are committed to helping become fully devoted followers of Jesus. Please keep us in your thoughts and prayers.

Gratefully His,

Jeff