



# The City Gate

To Reclaim, Rebuild and Restore, Lost and Broken Lives

## About the God who Hides

By Russ Deniston

It's been quite a long time now, but years ago, my cousin married this really great, nice guy. I liked him a lot: personable, smart, funny- a great match for my cousin. One of the interesting things about my new cousin, which I found out some time later, was that he knew and was pretty good friends with one of the world's richest men. Turns out, before his friend had become rich and famous, my cousin had been his first boss, way back when the future household name had been a freshman in college.

For me, it was fascinating to hear the occasional story that would be told about what it was like to be that wealthy: the mansions in all the cities, private jets, massive ocean liner yachts, the unheard of luxury. Sometimes, my two cousins got to participate- how cool! It was, frankly, in a weird way, kind of enjoyable for me. A reflected glory that somehow made me feel just a little bit more valuable as a person, having participated vicariously through their experience with this icon. Of course, I also felt a bit jealous, and secretly hope that one day I'd be with my cousins and actually get to meet this rich guy and get to shake his hand. Wouldn't that be something?

Their friendship made perfect sense to me- once you become that well known, who else would you be able to trust, really, except those who you'd known before? Once you became as rich and powerful as this man had, you'd never be able to tell what people's real motivations really were. For years now, hearing a story here and there, I understood why the rich guy might take real pleasure in being with my cousin. I thought about this whenever the topic came up, how their relationship could remain untainted despite all of his wealth. This friendship was actually something that no amount of the man's fortune could purchase. I also watched how carefully my cousin would ask for nothing. How careful he was to never betray the trust that was at the basis of their friendship. My cousin by marriage was that kind of a guy. I'm pretty sure that I wouldn't have been able to resist the temptation to take advantage of the situation.



# February 2015

*"We love because  
HE first loved us."  
1 John 4:19 NIV*



## Holiday Update

February marks the end of a very busy season here at The City Gate. We have made it through Christmas and Thanksgiving and can now see spring on the horizon. We are so grateful to all that made it possible. Food donations, financial donations, time volunteered and prayers for The City Gate make our ministry a success year after year. We continue to RECLAIM, REBUILD & RESTORE lost and broken lives with all of you walking with us.

Our two holiday meals were amazing! For Thanksgiving, 297 meals were served & on Christmas Eve, 205 meals! A total of 34 volunteers helped serve the meals and countless more supported the ministry through giving and prayer.

Men, women & children came through our doors to spend these blessed holidays with those who have become family. Please continue to remember and pray for our City Gate family as this “season of giving” comes to a close, keeping in mind that in the inner-city, the “season of giving” is year round! Thank you for your continuing support of our ministry.



## Please PRAY for:

- Donald Smith
- The Murinko's
- Catie & Daniel
- Dave
- Bruce
- Kathy & Family

The word **LOVE**

appears in the Bible on an average (depending on translation) of **588 TIMES!**

## The City Gate Staff

- John Murinko, pastor
- Shirley Murinko  
co-director / office mgr.
- Bonnie Murinko  
co-director / food bank
- Donny Saunders, food bank
- Buffie Harmon, clothing bank
- Don Lanegan, dining room
- Jimmy Hahn, coffee station
- Jim Horton, cook
- Glory Phelps, kitchen
- Brenda Gulbranson, kitchen
- Wes Heimbecker, social services
- James Gulbranson, security & maint.
- Elisha Shelton, Alberta House mgr.

## Help us to be good stewards of our finances

To receive our newsletter **IN COLOR** by email. Simply email us at: [thecitygate@qwestoffice.net](mailto:thecitygate@qwestoffice.net) with your name and “email newsletter” in the subject line.

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So, why am I telling you this story? Well, one of the weirdest things that ever happened to me occurred a couple of months ago. In the early fall, I was out working in the yard, moving some hoses in fact, certainly not thinking about any of this. Out of nowhere this thought comes screaming into my mind, something along the lines of, "I'm a bit like (rich guy's name withheld), you know!" Not an audible voice or anything like that, but just this knowing that God was showing me that when it came to relationships with man, for him, it was just like being the world's richest man.

If God were to show himself to somebody, anybody, then there was going to be a problem, a big one. There just wasn't any way that the person wasn't going to be overwhelmed by who God was and is. It just wasn't going to be possible for the person's motivation to be in any way pure, to be able to want God for WHO He is and not for what He is and what He can do.

God, if He was really going to enter into a true relationship with someone, was going to have to be very careful. In fact, the way I see it, the only way it was ever going to happen was for God to hide Himself, and to reveal Himself only in the very simplest measures. Otherwise, it just wouldn't mean anything; everybody and anybody would simply be overcome and overwhelmed when God showed himself.

As I've reflected on this, I've realized how true this is. Did I want to meet my cousin's rich friend because of who he is or because of all of the trappings that surround him; his wealth, his power, his fame? Sadly, the answer is all too obvious. I didn't want to know this man for himself, not at all.

So, if you are seeking God, and can't find him, something along these lines might give you some pause as to why the going might be tough. This difficulty might actually be a good thing. I am convinced that God wants the same thing that you are seeking, but He wants it badly enough that He only wants it if it's real. For this reason, He moves very carefully. Moving only in the dark, where you can't see him. Speaking only in a still, small voice. He loves us enough to hide, so our choice to seek and follow Him is unadulterated, without influence, so that it really means something. So that HE is what you are pursuing. So that you choose Him for HIMSELF, without all his many trappings. And so I think that this just might be the case. He hides.





To Reclaim, Rebuild, and Restore Lost and Broken Lives

## The City Gate

*"A Gathering Place"*

*Matthew 11:28*

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[www.thecitygatespokane.org](http://www.thecitygatespokane.org)



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- Type The City Gate in the search box.
- Select The City Gate by clicking on the circle.
- Click SAVE and you are done!
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Easter will be upon us soon. Scheduled for Sunday, April 5. Volunteer positions fill up quickly. If it is on your heart to serve with us for Easter, please call and get your name on our list. Contact Shirley or Bonnie at 455-9670. Office hours are Tues.-Fri. 10am-3pm



Without the support of volunteers who give their time and energy to this ministry, The City Gate would not be the haven it is to so many people. Whether you come once a week or once a year, you have contributed to keeping this place up and running. Your donations, regardless of time, money, food, prayers or clothing, have done so much to help the people who walk through our doors every-day. As pastors and as Christians, we want to thank you for heeding the voice of the Lord and ask you to keep us in your prayers as we continue this journey.

Love, Pastor John & Shirley