After a night flight on Jet Blue to JFK, I was now traveling at high speed to New York City in the back of a New York taxi. The flight was not one to yearn for again. It was cold and all the blankets were used up before I could request one. I was shivering as I stepped into the terminal to meet my friend, Mary. She is a precious friend that I had desired to come see for some time.

But, my greatest longing was to step onto the streets of New York City and confront the people with Jesus Christ. Now we were zooming in that direction.

'How are you today,' I said to the black Taxi driver?
'Not bad,' he replied, with an African accent.
'How long have you lived in New York,' I asked?
'Ten years,' he replied, trying to see my face through the back seat glass.
'You are African, aren't you?'
'Yes, I am,' he said. 'I'm from Algeria, and my name is Wally; I am very pleased to meet you.'
'I had a very hard life when I first arrived here,' he said. 'But, it was even harder in Algeria. First, I had to learn English, and that took months while I lived in ugly circumstances. Then I got a job as a garbage collector. That job almost broke my back. Life has not been easy for me, but today I am speaking English to you, and I am proud to be a New York cab driver.'
'I am from Africa also,' I replied.
'Really,' he said, somewhat shocked. 'You don't look like an African.'
I laughed in agreement. 'My name is, Maureen. I was born and raised in Zimbabwe, what used to be Rhodesia. I am here in New York on a mission.'
'Really, what kind of a mission,' Wally inquired?
'The one mission that is really worth spending my time on,’ I said. I smiled and caught his slight smile.
'Well, what is it,' he asked?
This is the chance I was waiting for, and I eagerly answered his question. 'I want the whole world to know that Jesus is alive; that he is coming soon; and that he loves you with an everlasting love.'
'Cool,' Wally said, smiling.
'What do you think of Jesus Christ,' I, pointedly, asked?
'Jesus is really cool,' he said.
'Just pretty cool,' I said. ‘You obviously do not know that Jesus is God, and the ONLY way for you to qualify for heaven, is to be in 'relationship' with him.’
He replied, ‘Where I was raised is Islamic, and I am in the Islamic faith. But I do really like your Jesus.’ Wally grew silent before saying, 'I don't meet many people like you in New York City.'
My eyes were scanning everything they could take in from the taxi window, including the good, bad, and ugly, of NYC. But, my thoughts couldn't leave Wally for long, he was the very reason I was in the city in the first place. I wanted everyone in New York City to know about Jesus.
'I know,' I replied. 'Born Again Christians are on the narrow road, and there are not so many of us. The cares of the world snatch people away, but the truth is, to live the Christian life, is the best life you can live. And I suggest to you that you consider Jesus Christ as the Savior of the World, and get to know him. You will never regret that, I promise you.’
'I have delivered the message to you, Wally. Now you have to decide what you will do with it! You may never hear this message again, but one day you will stand before God and he will ask you what did you do with Jesus Christ; your answer will gain you heaven, or hell.’
'Your eternity depends on what you decide, Wally. Choose wisely,' I said.
As the taxi rolled to a stop in front of Mary's apartment on 57th, Wally said, 'give me a call sometime, I'll show you New York.'
I looked him in the eye, and said, 'Nice chatting with you, Wally, Jesus loves you.' Then added, 'bye-bye, Wally.'

One-Tooth, Very Old Lady in Black

I was enjoying the sights and sounds of New York City's, Central Park. I marveled at the beauty of it, and how much laughter and smiling I encountered as the people enjoyed the sunshine and freedom of such a manicured park. I have truly never seen a more beautiful setting where people walk, ride bicycles, and even ride in Rickshaws. Everybody was having fun.
My eyes were going to and fro looking for the person that God would show me, the one he wanted me to spend a few minutes with. I hadn't come to New York City to pursue my own self interests. I was in a way, putting myself on a leash, God’s leash. I wanted him to lead me where he would.
In the distance I saw her, completely wrapped in a black coat from head to toe. She wore a pair of large sun glasses as if to hide behind them. I felt the Lord say, 'yes'.

I made my way over to the shapeless bundle of a person and found it to be a very old lady. Her mouth revealed only one tooth when she looked up at me. I asked if I could sit next to her. She looked surprised, but nodded yes.

'Are you a New Yorker?' I asked.

'Yes, I think so. I have lived here more than 50 years, and my only regret is not seeing many other places,' she said.

'This is my very first visit to New York,' I said.

'Well, how are you enjoying it?' she asked.

'It's beyond marvelous,' I replied. 'But excessively noisy, and the humidity is not what I expected,' I said.

'It's the city that never sleeps,' she said.

'I found that out,' I replied. 'In the middle of the night, buildings are imploding, and emergency vehicles and police are seen and heard everywhere. It's quite a shock for me, coming from Arizona, where we seldom have any noise other than a barking dog, or maybe a coyote howling in the night hours. I just don't sleep as well here in New York as I do back in Deer Creek, where I live happily with my husband.

The old lady smiled a knowing smile. 'What do you do?' she asked.

'My husband and I are born again Christians and my prime job is to tell people about Jesus, who is God, (the triune God), the only God. He is the one who told us that no man can come to the Father without coming through Jesus Christ.'

There was a sudden chill in our encounter, as the old lady stiffened up, grabbed her walking stick, and almost bumped me over getting away from the park bench to escape. She turned, looked at me, and mumbled, 'my god is money, and that is all there is.' She added as she scurried away, 'there is no heaven and hell either!'

I smiled to myself, thanking God for the old lady with one tooth. I prayed that God would reveal himself personally to her. Satisfied that I had been God's messenger, I went on my merry way, looking for the next person that God would single out.

A Very Young Bag lady

It takes artistry to walk on the streets of Manhattan Island. People are moving in every direction as they press by one another. Every language can be heard, and a certain amount of impatience is felt as you try not to step on the feet of the person next to you. The streets are somewhat like a stream of water where you see every color skin, and every type of dress, or undress.

Because I am taller than most I have the advantage of seeing further ahead, and in so doing I noticed a lady going through one of the garbage cans located along the street up ahead. I knew I had to speak to her.

I approached her and noticed that she was very young, maybe less than twenty years old. Her clothes were shabby, but I also noticed that her hair was shiny and pretty. I engineered my
steps so as to stop right next to her. She was intent on what she was doing, sorting out garbage. Attached to her arm was a leash with a large black dog fastened at the other end.

'Hi, young-lady,' I said.
She looked surprised, and said, 'yes, what is it?'
'What a nice obedient dog you have,' I said. 'Does your dog protect you?'
'He is a good dog, and I couldn’t make it on the streets without my dog,' she replied.
'I know a protector who will protect you, and your dog,' I said.
'I don't know of a better protector than this dog,' she commented while still intent with what she hoped to find in the garbage can.

'The protector I am talking about is, the Savior of world, and his name is, Jesus. He loves you, miss, and if you put your trust in him, you will see, and experience, wonderful things way more marvelous than what you are experiencing today,' I said.

A lovely smile came on her young face, and she almost put the garbage down as she looked deep into my eyes. 'I know there has to be a better way,' she said.

I continued, 'His name is, Jesus, and if you call out to him, He will hear you and come to your aid. He has a whole new life for you; a life you can be very proud of, and I can guarantee you, He will not fail you. I know, because, what he has done for me, He will do for you. He loves you with an everlasting love, and I am here to tell you that you will never be the same again. He sent me to tell you this.

She looked straight at me, smiled a real smile, and said, 'Thank you, miss, you will never know how much I needed to hear that.' I was sure there was a tear forming in her eye.

'I know,' I said. I sent a warm smile, and a wave, her way as I stepped back into the steadily moving line of people on the sidewalk.

The only words I could come up with as I strode away was, 'Praise you, Jesus.'

Our Tunisian Cabby

I raised my arm like I had been hailing taxis’ all my life, and a bright yellow cab swerved to the curb for Mary and me. I could see that there were too many places to see, and too many blocks to navigate. It’s just a way of life in the Big Apple.

'Where to,' asked the cabby.
'Madison Avenue, and thank you,' Mary answered.
'How are you enjoying this high heat,' I asked the Cabby?
'I am OK with it,' he said, 'it's much like where I come from in Tunisia, Africa.'

'You have to be a great driver to move through this city traffic and keep it safe,' I said. 'I would like to talk with you, can you drive and talk at the same time?'

'Sure, I can talk and drive at the same time, talk to me,' he said.

I began. 'It's interesting that you come from Tunisia, slap bang in the middle of where the Arab Spring in the Middle East started recently. I bet you have quite a story.'

Gazing back my way in the mirror, he said, 'So, you must know then that the Arab Spring problems started in my country of Tunisia. One man of our people set himself on fire and burnt to death to demonstrate the sad plight of the Tunisian people. He wanted change in our government that much.'
'No, I did not know that,' I replied. 'Life must be very hard for the people of Tunisia.'

'Yes, very hard indeed, I came to America looking for a better life, and I guess I have found it,' the cabbie said.

'Can I ask you what do you think of Jesus Christ,' I asked?

The Cabbie was silent for a few moments, and then he spoke. 'Do you want the truth, or a story?'

'Of course I want the truth,' I said.

'I am Moslem, and I was raised in the Arabic lifestyle, but I do love Jesus Christ. Jesus is everything good, and wonderful.' He seemed confident in his knowledge.

'Jesus Christ is, God,' I said.

'Well, I don't know about that,' he said. 'I will tell you that Christians are a sad disappointment; they should be more like the Moslems. We band together and take good care of each other. Christians are a great failure in this area I have noticed.'

I could not argue. 'It's true, we are not, "family," as we should be. You are quite right.'

'I hate the Jews,' he went on.

'Could it be that you are indoctrinated,' I asked?

At this point I noticed the cab driver was angry, he banged hard on the steering wheel and turned his head to stare at me.

'Hey, don't kill the messenger,' I said, with a smile.

'You had better be careful with your words,' he said.

'I tell the truth, and it's up to you to either take it, or leave it, I said. 'Just consider that I may be an angel come to you with this message.'

I noticed he was breathing heavily, so I said, 'Forgive me if I have upset you, but again I tell you, I am speaking the truth.'

The cab pulled to the curb, and Mary said, 'Here we are.'

I smiled again and handed him a Christian tract. 'Thank you very much for the interesting discussion.' He smiled back.

Mary and I went on our merry way being jostled by the crowds and praising the Lord.

JEWISH  PAUL

(I was having too much fun; too much activity; and too much wind in my face with rain on my back. I went down very fast with a head cold, and the next day I could hardly put one foot in front of the other, weak as a kitten, and with a deep cough that hurt. Soon I would be diagnosed at an Urgent Care directly across 57th Avenue, where I was staying with my dear friend, and her husband, on Manhattan Island. I had Pneumonia and Acute Bronchitis. Two entire days lost, and then I bounced back and hit the streets again.)

Feeling decidedly weakened, I found a small park bench in the center of Manhattan and just sat there, trying to breathe properly. I said, 'Lord, You see I am not myself today, I'm feeling quite banged up. So, please, would you bring to me those whom you have determined from before the foundation of the earth that I should have the honor of revealing truth to.'
I did not have to wait more than a few minutes, when along came a rather tall, and clearly Jewish, man about my age. He was taking care of a much older man who seemed very weary. I thought he must be a friend.

I guess you are wondering how I was so sure this man was Jewish. No big mystery, I study people, and having lived in Israel for 15 years, I have got very good at observing and pin pointing nationalities.

'Hi, and good morning, Madam,' he said.

'Hi to you, too,' I smiled to myself.

'My! What beautiful hair you have,' he said. 'Have you just had your hair done?'

Oh, this is going to be fun, I thought, knowing that he was a sure candidate for the Gospel of Jesus Christ. 'My hair is not looking so good today, but it's easy to care for. I do my hair myself, and I just threw it up today. I am not feeling so good, and just came out to get some sunshine before I fly back to Arizona later this afternoon.'

'Oh, pity you are leaving so soon,' he said with his constant smile. 'Young women love the hairstyle you are sporting today and it really is most elegant.'

'I know, and thank you,' I said.

I prayed, 'Thank you, Lord, let this man never forget this encounter.' I was headed to find myself lunch on the busy streets on New York, but this would be a welcome interruption.

He sat down next to me and said, 'So, lovely lady, what are you doing in New York City?'

That was my cue, and I smiled visibly at him. 'I am here to tell everybody that Jesus Christ is alive, and he loves you very much. Do you know that?'

Surprised, he looked at me, cleared his throat, extended his hand and said, 'my name is Paul, what's yours?'

'Maureen' I said, grasping his hand, 'good to meet you."

I continued, 'It's funny, Paul, because I am not feeling so chirpy, I asked the Lord to please bring to me the people he chooses for me to speak to today. Usually I go after them myself.'

Again Paul looked surprised. Then out of his mouth came a most amazing sentence, 'I am a liar,' he said.

'Wow! That's just about the worst thing a person can be called,' I said. 'Out of lies, every evil is done, did you know that?'

'Oh-hh,' Paul groaned, 'surely it's not as bad as theft or murder.'

'Oh yes it is! It's the sin that God hates most,' I said, looking straight into his eyes. God calls it an abomination in the bible.

Paul squirmed a little. I could see he would rather the subject be changed.

'I guess you know that you have a very famous name,' I said. 'Paul, the Apostle, who lived at the time of Jesus, is probably the most famous. He hated Jesus, and his followers, until he eventually had an encounter with, Jesus, himself, on the road into Damascus. That encounter totally changed his life. He became quite an advocate for Jesus. Yes, indeed, this Paul was some man, greatly used by God in spreading the gospel. It's thanks to this, Paul, that we have most of the New Testament. He suffered shipwreck, poison, imprisonment, snake bite, slander, and much more for, Jesus, and the gospel.'

'I have a question for you,' I said. 'What do you think of Jesus Christ?' The loaded question.

'Ooi,' Paul smiled. 'Why do you ask such direct questions?'

'Why not,' I replied.

'I am Jewish you know,' he said.
'So what,' I replied, 'it's just a question.' I smiled back.
'I think my friend and I have to be going,' was his answer, wanting to avoid my question.
'Not before you answer my question,' I said.
'Jesus is a good guy, but more than that, I don't know.' Paul said.
'Jesus is not just a 'good guy, JESUS IS GOD, and he will demand an answer to this question when one day you meet him face to face,' I said. 'You should really think about it, Paul. You may think you can live without Jesus, but, sure as hell cannot die without Jesus. Heaven and Hell are real, and the choice is yours, remember that.'
'I think I will be thinking about it,' he said.
We parted with a smile.

ARE YOU A PEOPLE WATCHER?

(Do you enjoy studying people? If so, New York City is the place to watch people, every size and shape, every color, and every dress code ever seen together, with every language spoken, it's like a festival smorgasbord.)
This day I was not feeling so chipper, having spent two days bedridden with pneumonia and acute bronchitis. Amazing that I was able to get up and move at all, considering how weak and exhausted I had been for the last 48 hours.
Walking down 57th Avenue, in Manhattan, I spoke to the Lord and said, 'Could you bring to me only the people, from your agenda, today? I just don't have the energy to handle it as I usually do.'
I remembered a wonderful international deli just around the corner where people gather to enjoy foods from many countries of the world. Off I went in that direction. I chose a dinner already prepared, from India, that I had never seen, or heard of, and made my way to the only seat available, next to a window. From this seat I could watch humanity moving, and that is exactly what I wanted to do.
It was just a matter of minutes when I sensed someone was standing behind me, and at that moment the chair next to me became free. A shy Jewish man, very softly spoken, and looking a little sick said, 'May I have this seat?'
'Sure,' I said, excited with anticipation. Knowing full well that God had a message for him, and would prompt me when it was time to speak about eternal things.
'It's another beautiful day,' I said.
'It's hot and sticky, but then that is New York,' he replied. 'Do you live in New York?'
'Funny that you should ask,' I answered. 'Today is my last day in New York. I fly back to Arizona this afternoon. I am now an American Citizen, but originally I came from Rhodesia, which is now called Zimbabwe.'
'Wow,' was the response. 'I've never met anyone from Zimbabwe,' he added with delight obvious on his face.
'I am a messenger from God,' I said. Again he said, 'Wow! Are you really?'
'I sure am,' I said. 'You will probably be the last person I speak to, because my time has run out.
'Are you ready for the message?'
'First, let's talk about Africa,' he said.
After I answered a few questions about Africa, he went on to tell me that he teaches, and lives, by the code-of-defense. In other words, he protects himself against a sick and sad world. He clarified his statement by standing up and jabbing his elbows in various directions to show how to strike at anyone who comes to close.
'Hmm, really,' I said. 'I encourage people to come close to me. I have the key to life, you see, and I want everyone to possess it. I have never needed to defend myself. God has promised in his word to defend me.'
He shook his head, like you would to a child who knew not what he was doing.
'I recall,' I said, 'having a man friend in Israel, where I lived for 15 years; he carried a gun wherever he went. I carried the Bible wherever I went. Even this man friend agreed that I was better protected than he was.' I then added, 'You do know that Jesus Christ is God, don't you? Do you know, Jesus Christ, personally,' I asked?
He demonstrated some frustration and said sharply, 'I am Jewish!'
'Sure, I know you are Jewish, remember I lived in Israel for 15 years. My Bible tells me that it's my job to go into all the world and preach the Gospel, TO THE JEW FIRST, and then to the uttermost parts of the world. You cannot inherit eternal life, without knowing Jesus Christ. He is the sacrificial lamb that hung on the cross, and died. Those who believe that, have hope of eternal life.'
By this stage he was stunned, and had nothing to say.
I went on, 'I am telling you the truth, I asked God to bring the person to me whom he wanted me to speak to, and it's you. Ponder what I have told you. It has great benefit. Oops! Look at the time, I must away, I have a flight to catch. Shalom, my friend, hope to see you in heaven one day soon.
With a wave, and a smile, I was gone. His mouth was still hanging open, I noticed with joy.
My mission was accomplished. 'Lord, let him have no rest until he calls out on you, Jesus. Thank you, Lord, for giving me the honor to touch yet another precious Jewish soul,' was my prayer as I disappeared in the crowd.

Phoenix Bound With Daniel

Delta Airlines made the announcement to board my flight back to Phoenix. I began making my way to the line when I noticed a good looking young man ahead of me. He turned, smiled at me, and waved me ahead of himself. I thought, 'how nice,' and smiled back as I passed him.
I boarded, and would you believe? The flight from New York to Phoenix was heavily booked, and who should come to sit next to me but this good looking young man. We smiled once again. I mused to myself, this was a five-hour flight and this is who God had ordained to hear the gospel from me on this flight through the evening, how delightful.
The young man was very friendly, and we started chatting, and by the time the flight took off we were deep in conversation about, anything and everything.
'My name is, Daniel' he said, extending his hand.
'My name is Maureen,' reaching my hand toward his. 'It’s nice to meet you. Are you going to Phoenix on business,' I asked?
'Yes,' Daniel answered, 'I have just bought a house in Scottsdale, and I am going to check it out.'
'That’s wonderful,' I said. 'Do you know that in the Phoenix area, Scottsdale is the most preferred location?'
'Yes, that’s why I have purchased there. This is my second home, and soon I will be looking for my third one. Not bad for a 25-year-old Jewish boy, huh?'
'Not bad at all,' I replied, somehow knowing that, Daniel, was Jewish.
He gave me his business card, and I gave him my card that stated, 'Ambassadors for Christ' at the top, and sported my name and my husbands.
'How did you make so much money at such a tender age,' I asked?
'I am a professional blogger, and my interest is in high fashion. And when I say high, I mean high! Such as, house names like, Christian Dior, Channel, Ralph Lauren, and the like.' He said with an air of pride.
'How positively delightful,' I said. 'Would you believe I was a fashion model when I was young?'
'I can see that,' Daniel kindly said. 'My life is extremely busy, I fly all over the world and am in the air at least twice a week. It's tiring, very tiring, and sometimes I wonder why I am doing this, when there are so many other things that I am also interested in. When I was younger, I used to wonder what it would be like to walk into high quality men's shops and buy the best of what they had. And now that's what I do, and don't even give it a second thought.'
He continued, 'I was married, but divorced because my wife said I was not spending enough time with her. I was so obsessed with reaching the top of my profession that nothing else mattered.'
'That’s a sad shame, Daniel,' I said.
'So enough about me' tell me about yourself please,' he said.
'How much time to you have?' I said laughingly.
Daniel just smiled back.
Here I go, I thought, as I breathed a prayer. 'Did you know that you look very much like what I think Jesus Christ looked like when he walked the earth?'
'Wow, that’s quite a compliment,' he said, giggling a little.
'I was Born Again, that is, made total commitment to Jesus, at the age of 33 in Durban, South Africa. That’s more than half my life ago,' I said. 'My Christian conversion was very dramatic, and I have not looked back since. I serve Jesus Christ with every ounce of my being, and I think it’s really cool that he sent you to sit next to me for five hours.'
We both laughed.
'What is life all about?' Daniel asked.
'That's a real question, do you really want to know?'
'That’s why I am asking,' he replied.
I looked right into his eyes, and said, 'All right, you asked for it. Life is all about knowing God and serving him to the very best of your ability.'
I went on. 'I have lived in many places around this old world, and that includes your country, Israel, for fifteen wonderful years.'
'Really,' Daniel's interest heightened. 'How did you go over in Israel? Did you win many Jews to Christianity?'

'Actually, the Jewish people, as do all people, respond to truth. I win people, all people with love, which is the greatest force on earth. It’s difficult to reject love. Love is what makes the world go round. And scripture says, 'God is Love."

Daniel seemed pensive, and said, 'I have never considered any form of religion, including my own people’s Judaism. Tell me more.'

I had Daniel's ear and he was attentively listening to me as I began to share about biblical prophecies. I went on to tell him, 'The capital city of Syria, ‘Damascus,’ will become a heap of rubble in the last days, according to Isaiah 17:1. Damascus is one of the world's longest standing cities, and has never been totally destroyed by war, or any other means.'I added, 'Christians think that this momentous event could take place any day now, because the stage seems to be set.'

Daniel eyes got big as he went into a silent mode for an extended time. Then he said, 'So, tell me, is there anyone on earth that you do you look up to?'

'Nobody on earth,' I answered, 'we are all flawed, every human being is just dust, nicely arranged dust, but still dust, and then only for a very short time. We are all destined to return to dust, except Jesus return before that time. Only God can be honored, and trusted, not man.'

Daniel replied, 'how come you as a Christian know all this, and I, as a Jew, do not?'

'Simple,' I said. 'You have been building your own kingdom on earth, and have had no time for anything else, while I have invested 35 years of my life in the task of extending the Kingdom of God.'

And so it went for virtually the entire flight. I was planting seeds of truth, wrapped in love, with joy, into the soul of another one of God’s chosen people.

Daniel was a very good listener, and did not say much at all, except asking more questions. I know that my words, which came from my Lord, were landing on rich fertile soil. I also suspect I will hear from Daniel, in person, one of these fine days. Nobody could absorb so much scripture and not be changed. Scripture promises that when spoken it is powerful to the separating of marrow and bone. God also says his word will not return void.

Thank you, Lord.