

## Jumping Into Mission by Mike Ruhl

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He brought tears of happiness to hundreds upon hundreds of pairs of human eyes. He brought hope to many passive pessimists. He brought inspiration to thousands of lonely, isolated people who are convinced that no one really cares any more.

A New Yorker dubbed *Subway Superman* received the city's highest civic award recently after pinning down a stricken stranger on subway tracks just enough to allow an oncoming train to run harmlessly over the top of them. Fifty-year-old Wesley Autrey jumped onto the subway tracks at a station in Manhattan's Harlem neighborhood to help Cameron Hollopeter, who had fallen onto the subway tracks after suffering a seizure. Audrey held down Hollopeter's convulsing body in the track bed as the train *passed over* the two of them, just centimeters above them.

I hereby confess that I was one of those "hundreds upon hundreds" who wiped away some tears as that news swept over them. I even wondered if I would have had the courage to make that same kind of leap, or if I would have simply stood there and stared, with a horrified look on my face.

What an incredible *jump into mission!* What an inspiring example of *taking action* for the sake of one who is in harm's way. What an inspiring illustration of reckless abandonment to provide covering for one in desperate need.

And what a metaphor of mission!

After Adam and Eve fell into sin, God provided a *covering* for their nakedness (a symbol of their sin and estrangement from the Lord) with animal skins. Innocent blood had to be shed in order for that covering to be provided. And the very heart of the pre-Exodus *Passover* was the smearing of innocent lamb (or goat) blood on the lintels and doorposts of homes, and the *passing over* of those homes by the angel of death. And through the sacrifice of Christ on the cross, the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world, by grace and through faith, God provided a *covering of* blood and delivered us from the thundering train of sin, death and eternal damnation.

The message of that *pasach*, that *Pass-over*, that *covering* of the shed blood of Christ, has been entrusted to all the saints, people and pastors of the church. We are speaking of your church and my church--you and me. We are the *sent ones*; we are the ambassadors for Christ and missionaries one and all.

We encourage you, then, to *take action* and to be engaged in mission. In fact, **jump** into mission. Leap onto the subway tracks of your vocational context and community and

provide *covering* for those who are not yet connected to Jesus Christ, as the Holy Spirit draws the unsaved into the arms of Jesus through your witness of the Word.

Pray that we do not simply stand passively in the gathered crowd and watch in horror at the impending eternal disaster. Surely the Holy Spirit will give us the faith and courage to jump onto the subway tracks!

New York Mayor Michael Bloomberg awarded Wesley Autrey a Bronze Medallion, the city's highest civic award, for saving the life of a stranger by providing a covering. And even real-estate mogul Donald Trump gave Autrey a \$10,000 check.

We do know that *jumping into mission* is not a "good work" by which we earn God's favor. It is a *fruit of faith*, a result of His Love ~ and Our Response. But let us not overlook that *jumping into mission* is recognized, commended and appreciated by Our Lord Himself, for Scripture declares:

*"Those that are wise will shine like the brightness of the heavens, and those who lead many to righteousness, like the stars for ever and ever" (Daniel 12:3)*

Joyful Jumping in Jesus' Name!