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11-2009

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#### Recommended Citation

Blosser, Andrew, "The Little Colporteur Who Couldn't!" (2009). *Lake Union Herald*. 508.  
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# The Little Colporteur Who Couldn't!

BY ANDREW BLOSSER

The fervent recruiter stared at me with inviting passion in his eyes after enthusiastically saying, "You must join us in selling Christian books door to door this summer!" Having just finished speaking at my church, I apparently made a good impression on him. "I can tell you have the Spirit of God in you," he said. "God's power will work mightily in you through Christian literature ministry."

That was enough to lure me on board. The Spirit was in me. I could experience God's power. Warmed by the recruiter's encouraging words, I signed up.

Things went downhill from there.

A more difficult summer never happened to a teenager. While my colleagues cranked out 15 to 30 sales daily, I could barely close a deal on a vegetarian cookbook. I knew something was amiss.

My supervisors did, too. At the end of the third week, with still no progress, I was called to a special meeting. The supervisors hastened to the point.

"What is wrong with you?"

I nervously shrugged my shoulders. Didn't I have the Spirit of God in me? With a faithful heart and a diligent hand, I must succeed with the Spirit's help. Right?

Wishing I could say otherwise, I must confess that I did fail—with a faithful heart and a diligent hand. The summer ended, and I was still the worst salesman on the team.

True, there were probably good reasons for this, such as my ridiculous penchant for starting theological disputes at the door. Numerous times my supervisors caught me immersed in a vigorous discussion on the formation of the canon, the problem of evil or the merits of ecumenism. But aside from that, I was flawless.

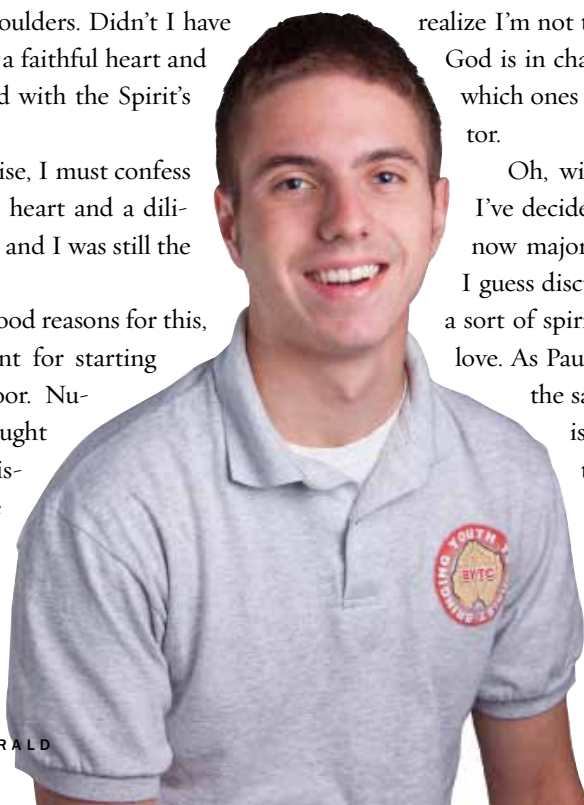
I tried every trick of the sales trade. I ran between doors to save time. I prayed more, read Scripture more and claimed the promises of God. Nothing worked.

What did I gain from this summer fiasco? Of course, I learned I'm not good at sales—a truth not altogether irrelevant to the rest of my life. But on a deeper level, I learned that I cannot force the Holy Spirit to bless any endeavor I wish Him to. There are certain spiritual gifts I simply do not have, such as selling Christian books. I must not assume that just because I work hard, I will succeed at a job that God hasn't called me to do.

And that means I shouldn't be discouraged when I realize I'm not talented in a particular area, because God is in charge of which gifts I've received and which ones I have not. And He's a fair distributor.

Oh, with regard to theological disputes—I've decided to make a career out of that, as I now major in religion at Andrews University. I guess discussing the formation of the canon is a sort of spiritual gift, if done with kindness and love. As Paul said, "There are different gifts, but the same Spirit. There are different ministries, but the same Lord" (1 Corinthians 12:4, 5).

Andrew Blosser, 19, is a junior at Andrews University where he is a religion major. Although he usually worships elsewhere the majority of the year, he calls the Lansing Church in Michigan his home church.



Martin Lee/INC