



Never

Pastor Nick Kim

Bart Millard grew up in Texas under a cloud of constant fear. His father, Arthur, was a former college football star who became embittered after a work accident left him with severe brain damage and an explosive temper. When Bart was still a boy, his mother left the home to escape the violence, leaving Bart alone with his father. Arthur took out his deep frustrations on his son, beating him and verbally abusing him for years. Bart’s primary escape from the terror at home was music, a passion his father openly mocked as a useless dream.

Arthur was later diagnosed with terminal cancer. Facing his own mortality, Arthur underwent a radical spiritual awakening. The man who had been a violent monster transformed into a deeply devout Christian who spent his remaining days reading the Bible and showing genuine love to his son. Bart watched the father he hated turn into his best friend. They shared a deep bond during Arthur’s final years until he succumbed to the illness. At Arthur’s funeral, Bart’s grandmother remarked that she could only imagine what Arthur was seeing in heaven. Bart wrote the words “I can only imagine” in his

journal.

Bart wrote and performed songs but had a hard time making a living in the music business. Record company after record company shot him down. Christian music industry insider Scott Brickell saw something in Bart despite him having an odd personality and being overweight. Scott pushed Bart to write deeper songs. Frustrated, Bart started reading through his journals and saw the words, “I can only imagine”. He wrote a song that blew Scott away. Scott got Amy Grant to agree to record the song. When she sang it for the first time, she grasped how personal it was and said that Bart needed to sing it. Bart’s band “Mercy Me” recorded the song and it still ranks as the best-selling Christian music song of all time.

Out of pain, abandonment, abuse, rejection, healing, loss, and more rejection, God used Bart to give the world a song that has touched millions. Often we look at our circumstances and wonder where God is. We feel abandoned and rejected. In September, we’re going to explore this. Does God break his promises? Does God give up on us? Are we forsaken? The answer is “Never”.





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Never

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In His Service



1011 W. Wilson

120 years ago last month, the doors opened at 1011 W. Wilson Ave., and the Gospel has been shared from this address ever since. We're going to continue looking at the history of God's house.

Safety Campaign (1912)

Wilson and Sheridan were both busy streets with Uptown being the fastest growing neighborhood in the city. Street cars, horse and carriages, and automobiles competed for narrow lanes. Ethel Degerman (16) left the church and was struck and killed on Sheridan Ave. by an automobile. Rev. Ainslie led the campaign that led to Chicago getting stop signs.

Rev. James Stuart Ainslie (1923)

Rev. Ainslie left the church in 1923 to start Argyle Community church. His contributions to this community cannot be understated. He died at his home on Lawrence Ave. at the age of 75 in 1931.



The Grace Movement (1923)

Pastor J.C. O'Hair succeeded Rev. Ainslie and started a movement called the Grace Movement. The movement focused on the letters of Paul being the central instructions for the church. The church became a publishing hub and would soon be known for an emerging media that would change the world: radio.



Rev. Ainslie published flyers calling out reckless drivers in the neighborhood during the Safety Campaign. The most notable resident was Charlie Chaplin who worked in the neighborhood during this era and stayed in Buena Park.

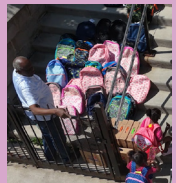
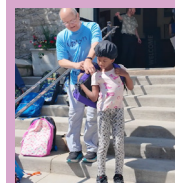


The Loren and Miller Department Store later called the Uptown department store opened in 1915. This would be how the neighborhood got its name. It went on to become Goldblatt's and was right next to the Riviera Theater.



The rain pushed back our Backpack Giveaway & Cookout by one week, but it wasn't able to stop us. On August 22nd, we took over the sidewalks surrounding our church and our front steps to show love towards our community through our annual Backpack Giveaway & Cookout. There were other backpack giveaways in the community, but I don't think they got smiles like the smiles we got. We encountered a lot of kids who missed those events, and we made sure they didn't start school without the needed supplies.

In previous years, we had partnered with local schools by donating the backpacks to them for them to distribute to kids in need. We had no interactions with the kids receiving them and sometimes very little with the staff at the school. Was it worth the time and investment to place the giveaway at UBC and give the backpacks directly to those in the community? The Lord said yes, and we started to get a vision. We took over the sidewalks, got out the grill, turned up the music, and showed love to neighborhood children by having them go back to school in style. This year, District 19 Chicago PD even joined in on the festivities.



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