

*Come Holy Spirit  
Use me to Your glory*

*Precious Pilgrim,*

*My prayer was, "Lord Jesus, may I be open to this opportunity."*

*This is foreign to everything I've been taught that nice girls are supposed to do. I'm standing in a booth peddling. It's just that you feel so exposed! To stand and smile at everyone who comes by for 9 ½ hours each day for four days in a row is a bit much even for an ex-debutante.*

*I am at the Christian Booksellers Association International Convention in Atlanta. It is huge, and our booth is tiny. The big guys have videos and neon to help attract the buyers. All we have are silk sunflower garlands and little gold stars thrown on the rug. Our look is uniquely different. I'm not saying that we necessarily have the better look; it's just the one we could afford. We have an identical booth set up at the Atlanta Gift Market, which our office manager and dear friend, Marla, is running.*

*The logistics of loading, driving, unloading, setting up and then selling for four days at two different locations is, needless to say, a bit tricky. After a day and a half, I bet if Marla or I offered a free foot massage with every order taken, we would really drum up the business.*

*I know it's hard being on the selling side, but I bet it is equally as difficult on the buyer. They look tired. We look*

tired. It's not really a dog-eat-dog world. The atmosphere here is nice. The people are nice. Everyone is united in the mission of lifting up the Name of the Lord. The theme for the convention is "Cast a Brighter Light."

It's just standing in one place and smiling and selling for hours is hard and humbling. Maybe that's what this is all about, or about meeting some incredibly encouraging people. Every time I've started to get a little discouraged and thought, "I don't know if I'm going to make it all day," up will walk a Barnabas-type encourager. The timing has been incredible.

I'll never forget the girl who's come by each day and brought different friends to see our booth. She said ours was the most joyful in the whole place. I'll never forget the girl in the wheelchair and her friend, who seemed to continually circle the aisle, always with a big smile and laughter.

I'll remember the man with the kind eyes who listened to my five-minute spiel about our products and our company and my anxieties of being new and small. He said he also started with just one book. I later found out that his name was Ken Taylor. His company was Tyndale. And his one book was The Living Bible, his modern-English paraphrase of the scripture.

I've seen and heard prominent authors and singers. This has been the ultimate people-watching opportunity. Again, I have to keep giving myself silent pep talks: "Think opportunity, Lucy." You've gotten this opportunity to have eye contact with over 2,000 people a day. You've gotten the opportunity to watch

*repeatedly the movie, Jesus of Nazareth, which is being shown across the aisle. You've gotten the opportunity to hear continually the author R. C. Sproul live and on tape. (His booth is next to ours.) You've gotten the opportunity to write while standing and selling.*

*You've gotten the opportunity to brazenly hold out your arm and try to stop passersby with, "Hi, can I give you some information? We're a brand new publishing company out of Montgomery, Alabama." I've gotten that statement down to a two-second blurb and no longer feel like crying when met with the occasional rejection.*

*Again, opportunity. Don't understand. Don't need to understand. Just need to be open. "Yes, Lord, I'm here, Lord, use me, Lord."*

*Oh, if only I could go out into the world with this new mindset - not so much, "Hi, buy me," but rather, "Open to opportunity." Today as I stand and smile, I'm going to try and memorize a little bookmark, which was given to me.*

*"Lord, make us instruments of thy peace. Where there is hatred, let us sow love; where there is injury, pardon; where there is discord, union; where there is doubt, faith; where there is despair, hope; where there is darkness, light; where there is sadness, joy. Grant that we may not so much seek to be consoled as to console; to be understood as to understand; to be loved as to love. For it is in giving that we receive; it is in*

*pardoning that we are pardoned; and it is in dying that we are born to eternal life. Amen.”*

*That's a prayer attributed to St. Francis. That's an open-to-opportunity prayer, don't you think, Pilgrim?*

*I am your peddling sister in Christ,  
open for opportunity,*

*Lucy*

*God bless.*