

'God Uses the Internet, Too'

Wendy has three kids. She homeschools two of them and recently celebrated her oldest child's graduation. Her kids keep her busy, but lunchtime is her time. That's when this ministry-minded South Carolina woman chats with people around the globe.

Wendy is one of more than 100 Search for Jesus volunteers who share the **gospel** online. She talks to people about God while her youngest takes an afternoon break.

Search for Jesus is an **Internet evangelism** outreach started by BGEA in April 2011. When people take their spiritual questions to the web, Search for Jesus can direct them to an **evangelistic** website called , where they find a compelling, interactive **gospel** presentation. While browsing the site, visitors can chat with trained counselors online. Wendy is one of those volunteers, or e-counselors.

"My opportunity to do Matthew 28 is so limited to our church ... and our home," she said. "Other than going in the grocery store or occasionally volunteering, there just aren't a lot of opportunities to share."

Matthew 28 calls Christians to "make disciples of all nations"—to spread the **gospel** around the world. Prior to volunteering, Wendy prayed for more than a year that God would use her in another way.

Then one morning, she woke up and felt the urge to visit—something she had done before but not on a regular basis. That's where she read about Search for Jesus.

"As soon as I saw it, I knew. There was just no question about it. This is what I am to do," she said.

Wendy is a petite woman with a warm smile and gentle words.

“There might be times when we wouldn’t as easily talk to the person who has tattoos all over them or look like they have a drug or alcohol problem,” she said. But on the Internet, she can talk to anyone.

“When you are on the computer, background is leveled,” she said. “You are just loving that person no matter what their situation is.” In the same way, the people she talks to can’t judge her based on appearance or assume she won’t understand what they’re going through.

It’s been a couple of months since Wendy started volunteering, and “it has gone extremely well.” E-counselors must volunteer at least two hours a week, but Wendy spends one to two hours a day, five or six days a week, chatting with people in need. Sometimes she ends a chat feeling like she couldn’t help the person, but prays that God will use something she said to speak to them.

Usually though, “people really want to hear the truth” and she knows she can help them. Of course, she’s not the only one.

Sometimes Wendy is typing a response to someone but knows it’s not really her typing. Her words might not come from experience or her own wealth of knowledge, but somewhere else. “I know that’s the **Holy Spirit**,” she said.

One young person she talked to was a Christian but was steeped in sin and resisting God’s call. Wendy could see the spiritual battle in front of her. In the end, she helped lead the online visitor to Christ.

also allows people to indicate a commitment to Christ or email a question. Those who give their lives to Christ can take part in an online **Bible study** with help from a personal trained mentor or discipleship coach. Wendy recently spent about five hours over two weeks discipling a teenage girl from North Carolina who she chatted with as an e-counselor.

"She is a completely different person," Wendy said. The girl initially came to the chat session with a lot of anger but knew the Bible. She had been to church and knew Christian terms. She might've had the right words, Wendy said, but was "as lost as can be." The teenager didn't fully comprehend the gospel until Wendy helped lead her through its core message.

"You want to make sure it's not just a truth in their head but it's a truth in their heart," she said.

Once the girl committed her life to Christ, Wendy started taking her through the Bible study as a discipleship coach.

"She was so excited it was somebody she had already talked to," she said.

The girl learned how to give her anger over to God and even worked through some issues with her mother. The mother and daughter visited the Billy Graham Library shortly after the daughter's decision.

But people who find aren't the only ones who benefit from chat sessions and online Bible study. The volunteers themselves find that their faith is stronger.

"I'm able to see that God is working all across the world," Wendy said. "In the past years, we've seen more and more darkness in the United States where people are rejecting God, ... but to be able to see His hand in these situations, ... is just amazing."

Satan might use the Internet to spread lies, encourage immorality and tempt people with unlimited opportunities for infidelity, but he's not the only one reaching people online, Wendy said. God uses the Internet, too.

Wendy can see chats between other e-counselors and site visitors, and notices that volunteers often have similar experiences to the people they chat with. That's another God

thing, she said.

Even with 100-plus volunteers, Search for Jesus can use many more. A few hundred more are in training, and BGEA hopes to get thousands involved. Wendy sometimes chats outside of her regular time because she feels led to and knows someone is always in need.

“It burdens my heart greatly when I hang up [a chat] and there’s not [another counselor] already on there to get that next person,” she said.

With more than 3.3 million visitors to since the site launched last year, the harvest is indeed plentiful and Search for Jesus can use more workers in the field (Luke 10:2).

Click [here](#) to read the original story at .