

Mobilizing the *Body* to Build a

BODY

by Kevin D. O'Farrell

When the Body of Christ works together, nothing compares. That truth is best illustrated by the unselfish acts of Tim Smith's brothers and sisters in Christ. Their mission: raise \$31,000 for new prosthetic legs for a college student. This was not an ordinary assignment, but then again, Tim was not an ordinary college student.



NO ORDINARY YOUNG MAN

As a young man Tim wrestled with rage, anger, and frustration at what appeared to be a great disability in his life. Tim was born with no lower legs. At times, he felt isolated and different from his peers. "It hurt me deeply to think people were laughing at me and making me feel I couldn't do things. They were making me feel useless because I didn't have any legs. Sometimes I even felt like I wanted to blame God," recounts Tim.

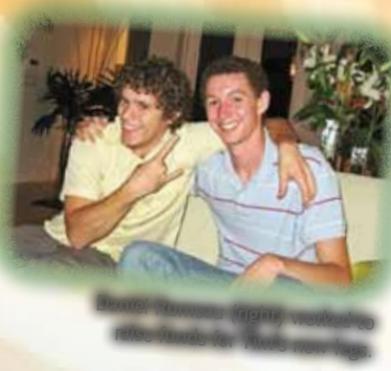
After he graduated from high school, Tim began to realize God had a purpose for his life. God's purpose was greater than Tim's trying to prove to everyone he could do the things people with legs could do. Tim began to realize God was the Grand Designer. "God didn't mess up when he created me. It didn't catch Him by surprise. It's not as though he said, 'Whoa! What happened here? He has no legs!' God knew what He was doing when he made me; He had a reason," touts Tim.

At first, he thought he might spend his life in the field of orthopedic medicine and prosthetics, but God had another calling. Tim, originally from New Jersey, enrolled at Trinity College of Florida in the fall of 2008 to pursue a degree in pastoral ministries and found a supportive Christ-centered community. It was in this setting that God would mobilize the Body of Christ to do something only He could accomplish.

NO ORDINARY FRIEND

It began when Tim's friend and fellow Trinity student, Daniel Rumeau, felt a burden to explore ways to get Tim new legs. Earlier, Tim had led a fundraising effort to collect money from other students to pay for a round-trip ticket for Daniel to visit his mother in New Jersey who was recently diagnosed with cancer. Now, Daniel knew it was his turn to return the effort and reach out to help.

Tim's first time atop the Andes Mountains in Peru, his highest climb ever at the height of 11,000 feet.



Daniel got in contact with *Hanger Prosthetics and Orthotics*. After meeting with *Hanger*, it was estimated that Tim's new legs would cost \$31,000. This was a huge sum for anyone to raise, not to mention a massive sum for a struggling college student. While Tim wondered from where the money would come, Daniel went to work organizing others to come to Tim's aid.

Tim's local church, Jasmine Lakes Baptist Church, raised a couple thousand dollars. Trinity College of Florida took an offering from students, faculty, staff and friends towards the cost of the legs. Together, the combined total was over \$10,000 towards the cost of Tim's new legs. But with only a third of the cost covered, they were still well below the needed amount.

Could they reach their goal? Was the effort "running out of steam?" Would Tim receive the desperately needed new legs? The Body of Christ was certainly active but after announcements, offerings, emails, and phone calls, was anyone listening? Was the Body of Christ paying attention? Or worse, did anyone care? Those involved in the effort knew God was orchestrating events but with time running out and Tim's old prosthetics legs crumbling, even the faithful felt shaken. Yet in this crisis of belief, God was not finished.

NO ORDINARY GIFT

Word reached Trinity College of Florida that a local couple felt led by the Lord to cover the outstanding funds needed to provide new prosthetic legs for Tim. The outstanding amount needed: \$21,000. Like Daniel



left to right: Gavin Floyd & Tim share a laugh as Tim describes his new legs; Gavin Floyd & Tim enjoy an American pastime; Tim on a missions trip; Tim rock climbing in the Adirondack Mountains.

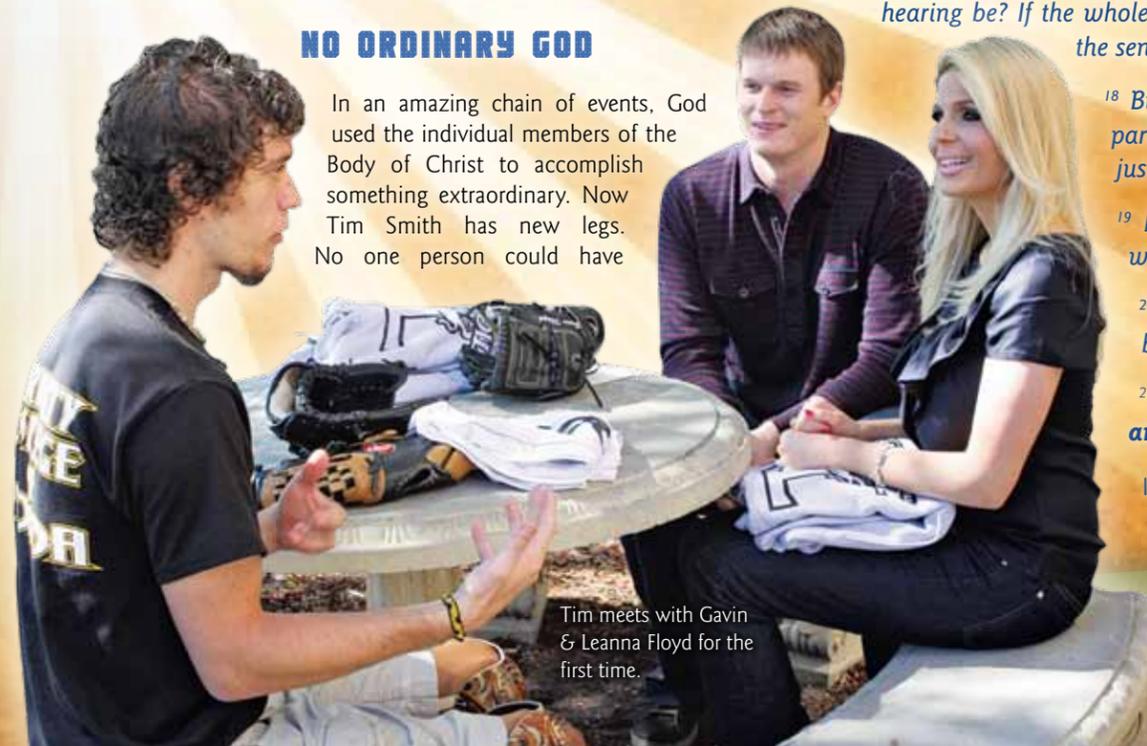
Rumeau, Gavin and Leanna Floyd felt compelled to help provide Tim with new legs. Gavin, the starting pitcher for the Chicago White Sox, was amazed by Tim's story. "We are so encouraged by Tim's example of perseverance. To know that Tim has found Christ in his life and has been able to overcome so many challenges is an inspiration," says Gavin. Since finding Christ in his own life, Gavin with his wife, Leanna, had been praying and asking God to show them how to be a blessing to others.

The generous couple became aware of Tim's story through Leanna's mother, who had heard of the need through Trinity College. Gavin and Leanna were overjoyed to help Tim and believed God had placed them in a unique position to accomplish God's will. "We know that the scriptures teach, 'From everyone who has been given much, much will be demanded; and from the one who has been entrusted with much, much more will be asked.' We want to be good stewards of God's resources," says Leanna, adding, "God has blessed Gavin and me beyond our wildest dreams. For us there is no greater feeling than giving to someone else, especially when that gift honors God."

When Tim heard the news that all the funding was secured for his new prosthetic legs, he was overwhelmed. Tears, smiles and shouts of joy flowed from him. The magnitude of what had happened was incredible. "I was ecstatic and so in love with God," remembers Tim. The love and providence of God was present in a tangible act and enshrined in a new set of limbs.

NO ORDINARY GOD

In an amazing chain of events, God used the individual members of the Body of Christ to accomplish something extraordinary. Now Tim Smith has new legs. No one person could have



Tim meets with Gavin & Leanna Floyd for the first time.

accomplished this task. No one person could have marshaled all the individual components. No one person had the talent, skills or resources to accomplish what God achieved. What happened in this story was that God used each member of the Body of Christ, under the coordination of His Spirit, to reach a goal for which only He could receive the glory. God had mobilized the Body to build a body.

¹² The body is a unit, though it is made up of many parts; and though all its parts are many, they form one body. So it is with Christ.

¹⁴ Now the body is not made up of one part but of many.

¹⁵ If the foot should say, "Because I am not a hand, I do not belong to the body," it would not for that reason cease to be part of the body.

¹⁶ And if the ear should say, "Because I am not an eye, I do not belong to the body," it would not for that reason cease to be part of the body.

¹⁷ If the whole body were an eye, where would the sense of hearing be? If the whole body were an ear, where would the sense of smell be?

¹⁸ But in fact God has arranged the parts in the body, every one of them, just as he wanted them to be.

¹⁹ If they were all one part, where would the body be?

²⁰ As it is, there are many parts, but one body.

²⁷ Now you are the body of Christ, and each one of you is a part of it.

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