

Maureen Onions

GOD
GROWS AN
ONION

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My sincere gratitude to:

God the Father, the Heavenly gardener who has been responsible for growing this onion.

To the Son, who has brilliantly shone His light and love into my life through His Word and His body of believers, helping me to mature and develop.

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To all He has used as fertiliser, pruning and digging the soil around me.

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My desire is that the seeds that will be sown through this book will bring forth fruit for His glory.

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INTRODUCTION

Many people reading my first book "GOD PEELS AN ONION" have expressed or indicated a desire for greater intimacy with God. They long to know that they are being led by the Spirit, and hearing from God.

Jesus said very clearly in John 10, "My sheep hear My voice and I know them because they follow Me."

Our problem is that we are caught up in our five natural senses which make us earth bound. We struggle to enter into the five senses of our spirit. Did you know that spiritually you have five senses that need to be recognised and developed?

TASTE.. TOUCH.. SEE.. HEAR.. SMELL

Psalm 34:8 "Oh TASTE and SEE that the Lord is good."

Matt 9:20 "Someone TOUCHED Me" - Jesus was referring to the 'touch' of faith.

Isaiah 42:18--20 "HEAR, you deaf; LOOK, you blind, and see!

Who is blind but My servant, and deaf like the messenger I send? Who is blind like the one committed to Me, blind like the servant of the Lord? You have seen many things but have paid no attention; your ears are open, but you hear nothing."

John 10:27 "My sheep HEAR My voice."

Heb. 4:14 "But solid food is for the mature, who by constant use have trained themselves to DISTINGUISH (smell) good from evil."

When a baby is born, it is perfect in every detail. The provision of all five natural senses are there. It has eyes, ears, a nose, mouth, and hands. But it has to grow and develop and learn to co-ordinate. Some develop earlier than others. Spiritually, it is the same. When we are 'born again' by the Spirit of God, the potential is all there, but we need to grow and develop. Note Heb. 4:14 once again. "... who by constant use have TRAINED THEMSELVES to distinguish good from evil." During the process of growth our natural senses are developed. As parents we would be very concerned if one of

these senses in any of our children were impaired in some way. Can you imagine how our Heavenly Father must feel when we are quite content to remain with our spiritual faculties undeveloped and unused?

2 Peter 3:18 says, "Grow in the grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ." The apostle Paul had the same desire and said in Phil 3:10-16: "I want to know Christ and the power of His resurrection and the fellowship of sharing in His sufferings, becoming like Him in His death, and so somehow, to attain to the resurrection from the dead. Not that I have already obtained all this, or have already been made perfect, but I press on to take hold of that for which Christ Jesus took hold of me. Brothers, I do not consider myself yet to have taken hold of it. But one thing I do: Forgetting what is behind and straining toward what is ahead, I press on toward the goal to win the prize for which God has called me heavenward in Christ Jesus. All of us who are mature should take such a view of things."

How does one reach this maturity? Development is the key. God has graciously given us One who will teach, help and lead us. This is the blessed Holy Spirit, the Comforter. He works through the written Word, revealing the Living Word to us. Jesus told us about Him, and promised to send Him to abide with us forever.

In John 14:26 He told us that He would teach us all things, and remind us of everything He has said to us.

John 16:13 tells us that the Holy Spirit will guide us into all truth.

John 16:14 promises that the Holy Spirit will bring glory to Jesus by taking from what is His and making it known to us.

1 Cor 2:9 says, "No eye has seen, no ear has heard, no mind has conceived what God has prepared for those who love Him - but God has revealed it to us by His Spirit. The Spirit searches all things, even the deep things of God." Note verse 12, "We have not received the spirit of the world but the Spirit

who is from God, that we may understand what God has freely given us."

The more place we give the Holy Spirit in our lives, the clearer revelation from God becomes.

Gal. 5:25 says, "Since we live by the Spirit, let us keep in step with the Spirit."

I am learning by God's grace to keep in step with the Spirit, and have found that the key is in developing my spiritual senses.

Praise God we never stop learning, as we are disciples of the Lord Jesus. Even after 50 years I am still learning!

I want to share frankly in this book how the Lord has spoken to me or shown me things. You will note that sometimes by "hearing", sometimes "seeing" (or observing), sometimes "feeling" other times "discerning"... and even "tasting" I am led by the Spirit.

I have discovered that He communicates with us in a way we can understand. We are often religious and complicate things! In the natural we find ourselves communicating in different ways, depending on the understanding or ability of the person to whom we are speaking. Let me illustrate. A baby gets 'baby talk' while to a small child we use words we know he will understand. An elderly person needs clear diction and will not understand modern jargon or clichés used by the new generation! When speaking to a blind person we describe things in a way they can grasp, while to someone deaf sign language and animation is necessary. A foreigner who is unable to understand our mother tongue also needs sign language and the 'odd word' we may know of their language.

When we were in the Philippine islands some years back, we were on our way to a seminar. We had travelled to a small island on a ferry, and soon after disembarking, the jeep we were being transported in, developed a puncture. Although it was in the early hours of the morning our driver was unperturbed because he knew there were many small vulcanising works all over the islands. This particular island was experiencing a 'brown out', a break down of the electricity supply, what we would call a 'black out'. Before long our driver

found a friendly vulcaniser who was not in the least put out by his rude awakening but with a smiling face was only too willing to assist us. While the men removed the offending tyre and attended to the repair the ladies stayed with the vehicle. Obviously our arrival wakened the sleeping Filipinos of the village, and before long we were surrounded by a crowd of people all chattering at once. We were unable to understand a word they said, but we could see that they were intrigued by our very white faces! My friend Ann suggested we sing a chorus, and bravely began "This is the day the Lord hath made!"

A lady in the group began to smile, pointed her finger at us and in a loud voice said "Charismatic"! We smiled and nodded and then proceeded to dialogue just using the words 'hallelujah' and 'Praise the Lord'. She had obviously been to a seminar sometime on one of the islands! It was not long before they all began to sing with us. We left glorifying God that there is always the language and love of the Kingdom that can bring understanding and unite us.

In a courting relationship there is the language of love. Often no words need to be spoken but a look, smile, and even companionable silence can speak volumes!

If we are sensitive in the natural to communicate in a way people will understand, how much more will our Heavenly Father give revelation in a way to which we can relate.

I found guidance for myself by the account of Eliezer, Abraham's servant who was sent to find a bride for Isaac. (Genesis 24.) When speaking to Rebekah's family he told them that 'being in the way, the Lord led him.' Once we are in The Way, being Jesus who said 'I am the way', the Lord is able to lead us by His Spirit. Notice the way Eliezer dialogued with God. He wanted to understand clearly God's choice in the matter, so put conditions before the Lord. Whoever fulfilled those conditions, would be the one God intended for Isaac. Wonderful to see how God honoured this. As a result, when I am seeking direction I dialogue in a similar manner, believing that God will direct me.

Referring again to Isaiah chapter 42, God speaks about His deaf and blind servants. A cry comes from the very heart of God in verse 23. "Which of you will listen to this or pay close attention in time to come?" For those who do, there is a wonderful promise in verse 16. "I will lead the blind by ways they have not known, along unfamiliar paths I will guide them; I will turn darkness into light before them and make the rough places smooth. These are the things I will do; I will not forsake them."

May the story of my life recorded in this book help and inspire you to develop a deeper intimacy with Him. As you read may you find times of rejoicing as you identify in the way He has led you. May the insights He has given me bless, challenge and inspire you. Above all, may you develop in a relationship with the Comforter, the Holy Spirit, and in this way find a deepening love and understanding of our blessed Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ.

C HAPTER 1 GOD HAS NO GRANDCHILDREN (John 3:3)

James and Mary Mullan had been missionaries in the Congo (Zaire). They moved to South Africa and lived on a Mission station in the Northern Transvaal. After two lovely daughters, Sheila and Deirdre, the long awaited "son" was due to arrive. Mom was duly taken by car to Louis Trichardt, where she was left in the capable hands of the staff of the Elim Hospital. On the 6th February (no... I am not giving the year!) Maureen arrived! Not a son, but a third daughter!!

The mission station on which we lived was a little out of the town of Tzaneen, and Dad had built our house. Working with his hands was not his forte` as he tended more to being an academic. Whenever he did do some repair or work as a handyman, he would always say, "That will do for the time being!" This was obviously an Irish saying, as we never did find out what the 'being' was all about! It was not surprising then that one night during a storm in which a hurricane sprung up, the roof of our house blew off! I remember lying tucked up in bed in the room I shared with Deirdre, my older sister, listening to the rain pelting down on the "tin" roof. There was suddenly an explosive sound and I heard Mom's voice calling out "The roof has blown off!" We were quickly bundled into the 'old' car, and taken to stay with friends, until Dad could restore the roof "for the time being!"....

When I was barely five years old, we moved to Port Elizabeth. Dad had been led by the Lord to establish "Assemblies of God" churches in South Africa. Linking up with Nicholas Bhengu, an African Evangelist, they planned to work together for the Kingdom. We were supported by Elim in England to the tune of 25 pounds per month, half of which Dad gave to support the Bhengu family.

Our home was a 'converted' caravan which had seen better days. It had ended up being used as a fowl coop by its previous owner. Once again Dad's dubious skills as a

handyman cleaned and fitted it out with boxes and paraffin tins which would have to do "for the time being!".... and for nine months it did!

RECEIVING JESUS CHRIST PERSONALLY.

I remember sitting in the caravan one afternoon in June eavesdropping as Mom counselled a lady. Only a curtain separated us and I could hear every word. Most of what was said went over my head, but the words "NOW my dear, you are a child of God" penetrated my understanding. The emphasis had been on the 'now' after they had prayed together. Obviously something had made this lady a child of God! When the lady left I asked my Mom "Am I too young to become a child of God?" In my generation the saying 'children should be seen and not heard' applied, and was often accompanied with, "run along now, darling, you are too young!" Mom must have realised that I was ready to be "born again" and took my question seriously. She sat me down and very gently said, "No, I don't believe you are too young! Are you too young to take a present if I gave you one?" Having only had a few birthdays and Christmas gifts in my short life, I perked up. With great enthusiasm I replied "No, I am not too young!" "Then you are big enough to take God's present to the world." She then proceeded to tell me how much God loved me. Because of sin in the world which separated us from God, He gave His only Son the Lord Jesus Christ to die for us and shed His blood so that our sins could be cleansed away. Jesus did not remain dead but rose again the third day making it possible for us to come to know God as our Father. Naturally she simplified all this so that I could clearly understand the need to personally receive Jesus into my life. As we knelt down to pray together, a very genuine understanding filled me. Sincerely I invited Jesus into my life, to become my Lord and Saviour. He came in, and immediately I became a true child of God. John 1:12 says, "To as many as received Him, to them He gives the power to become the sons of God." I realised that God has no grandchildren, and I could not rely on my parents walk with God for my salvation, but had to personally

be 'born again' and in this way become part of God's wonderful family. My natural life had barely begun, but now my Spiritual 'new life' had also begun!

In retrospect I am so glad that I gave my life to Jesus when I was so young, He has had all of my life with no valuable time wasted. I am grateful for having had a sensitive mother who was not too busy to spend time answering the question of her five year old with such wisdom. In Basutoland, at a convention of several hundred black and white believers, I was baptised in water! Just 7 years old, I heard that there was to be a Baptismal service. I asked Dad if I could be obedient to Jesus in this way, and he questioned me very thoroughly on what I believed with regard to my own rebirth experience! Questions like "What are you trusting in to know you have Eternal Life?" were adequately answered by "the blood of Jesus has cleansed away my sin" etc.

In the history of the Assemblies of God in South Africa, they had never baptised anyone so young, yet Dad knew my experience with God was very real. He arranged for me to be questioned by the various brethren on the Executive! This was unnerving, but I was determined to be obedient to Jesus, and submitted to being questioned by one after another! They decided that on the confession of my faith in Jesus Christ as my Lord and Saviour, they had to baptise me. There were several candidates on that occasion, and in front of several hundred people Dad 'helped' me with my testimony by once again cross-questioning me! Then it was time to be immersed in the swimming bath which served as a baptismal pool. Fred Mullan, my uncle, was doing the baptising. When it came to my turn, I had to be held in his arms like a baby and immersed in that way because the pool was too deep for me to stand in. I can remember the tremendous feeling of peace I had knowing I had been obedient to Jesus. Shortly after that Howard Carter from England came to South Africa, with a ministry that powerfully equipped believers with the blessed anointing of the Holy Spirit. In the most wonderful way God filled me at one of these meetings. I share the details in the book "GOD PEELS AN ONION".

This experience opened a new dimension of knowing Jesus. Truly the Holy Spirit is our Helper and illuminates the Word of God, opening our understanding.

Maybe you are wondering if I was an angelic child, walking around with a halo? Let me hastily put the record straight! I was a very normal little girl. I got up to mischief, had fights with my sisters, played truant from school, and got hidings like everyone else. But I was privileged to learn from an early age that instead of walking in condemnation and guilt when I made mistakes, confessing them to the Lord brought cleansing and forgiveness. 1 John 1:7-9 says, "But if we walk in the light, as He is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus, His Son, purifies us from all sin. If we claim to be without sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins He is faithful and just and will forgive our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness."

I have discovered that there are many Christians who come under condemnation from the enemy. Because of failure in some way, they feel cut off from God. This blocks them from prayer and fellowship with Him. The longer they leave this condition the harder it becomes. The guilt and depression they experience depends on the severity of their problem. Praise God for this verse of scripture. Why let Satan cut you off from a precious relationship with your heavenly Father. God has made this provision, knowing we would fail. There was only One who was perfect and never made mistakes, and that was Jesus, God's precious Son. In fact in 1 John 2:1-2 we read, "My dear children, I write this to you so that you will not sin. But if anybody does sin, we have one who speaks to the Father in our defense - Jesus Christ, the Righteous One. He is the atoning sacrifice for our sins, and not only for ours but also for the sins of the whole world."

Once we are born into God's family, we become His children. In an earthly family when a child fails in some way he is still part of the family. Discipline is administered, boundaries are established, forgiveness is granted, and life goes on. So it is in the Christian family. This is all part of growing up in Him.

One of the reasons God requires us to become part of a "Body of Believers" is so that we have examples we can follow. The apostle Paul said, "Be imitators of me as I am of Christ." As a child in the natural, I loved 'dressing up' to look like my mother. I would wear her long dresses, high-heeled shoes, hat and carry the inevitable handbag, plus a big Bible and the picture would be complete! Spiritually too, we need examples we can follow. Those who have learned lessons of faith, come through trials and testing, developed in a relationship with God are good examples for us to follow. In my life my mother's very real relationship with Jesus was a blessing as a role-model of true Christianity. She would wake us each morning, read the Word and pray with us, establishing a pattern for us to follow, teaching us that meeting with God should be the top priority of the day. No wonder Prov. 22:6 says, "Train a child in the way he should go and when he is old he will not turn from it." It is important to 'grow up' and firmly fix our eyes on Jesus for ourselves, as sad to say there have been those whose faith has been shattered due to the failure of some role-model! Always remember that no-one is perfect, but Jesus. He will never let you down. He never changes. His love is constant.

C HAPTER 2 MY FIVE LOAVES AND TWO FISH

Living next door to us in East London were the Schrodgers. The youngest daughter of the family, Winsome, in her early twenties was very grown up compared to my 10 years! She invited me to go "hospital visiting" with her one Sunday afternoon. She arranged that while she was visiting adults in the main hospital, I could visit the children in the Orthopaedic wards, and she would fetch me later. At the time Frere Hospital in East London had four Orthopaedic children's wards, two of these were for black patients, and two for white. Armed with some printed texts to give out, I went to a black ward first. As I saw the pathetic sight of children of all ages injured in some way I was filled with compassion and love. Some were crying and alone. Others had visitors and were filled with excitement at gifts or food that had been brought to them. Many had been there for months, waiting for bones to heal. Obviously some were in pain. Going from bed to bed giving out texts I became aware of a boldness rising up within me. Standing in the middle of the ward, I asked if they would like me to sing to them. By the smiles and clapping I felt encouraged. (Just as well they clapped before they heard me sing, as my voice would hardly justify that kind of response!!) I sang a few verses of the hymn "Jesus loves me this I know" and it was not long before they joined me in the chorus, "Yes, Jesus loves me." I began to teach them some lively action choruses such as, "Twelve men went to spy in Canaan" and could not help notice that even some of the parents began joining in. I knew that our time together would not be complete without a Bible story and prayer, but there was a language barrier. I wanted them to understand. One of the nurses kindly volunteered to interpret for me, and without preparation for all this was spontaneous, I gave them a story of the love of Jesus, and prayed for them. I could not help noticing how their little faces had lit up. All the crying had stopped and I had their undivided attention. Only Jesus can bring peace and joy like that. I moved on to the next ward. Once again there was much the same response, so I went

ahead with another Sunday School! On to the white wards, and by now all fear had gone. In spite of the presence of visiting parents, I taught the children some choruses, gave them a Bible story and prayed for them. By the time Winsome met me, I had completed all four wards, having brought to the children the love of Jesus and His wonderful message of salvation. Needless to say when Winsome invited me for the next Sunday afternoon I was excited and eager to go. From that time until we moved to live in Durban, this became my regular Sunday afternoon occupation. Ministering for Jesus not only brought blessing to those who received it, but great joy to me as His little minister! Years went by, and during this time I learned the important principle of being faithful in whatever we do. It is easy enough to begin something but many give up when the initial inclination is gone. Some of my friends from Church joined me on Sunday afternoons, and began developing their ministry for Christ too. When I left for Durban, they carried on!

DIFFERENT OPPORTUNITIES

I discovered early in life that we are led step by step. When we become comfortable with something, we feel that this is our life's work. But God likes to expand our ministry and take us out of our comfort zone. School days were now behind me, and I was working in an office, old enough to join in the "Young People's activities". I thoroughly enjoyed the "door to door" visitation, and the enthusiastic participation of the young people in the Open air meetings on a Sunday afternoon, and sometimes on a Saturday morning. This became an excellent training ground! Hospital visitation was still a burden on my heart, but now I was visiting the adult wards. My sister Deirdre and I were very involved in the youth work which was vibrant with activity. Our home was perpetually filled with young people and there was a wonderful unity among us; we enjoyed great times of fellowship together.

"The move is on" was a constant theme in our family! Not the reference to the powerful move of the Holy Spirit but the

necessity to uproot and move home once again as Dad was going to pioneer another new work. I must admit we were never in a place long enough for deep roots! This time the destination was Salisbury, Rhodesia. (Today known as Harare, Zimbabwe.) I found the constant moving difficult to adjust to, but soon discovered that God's purposes and plans are always for the best.

I have come to truly appreciate Proverbs 19:21, "Many are the plans in a man's heart, but it is the Lord's purpose that prevails."

God has planned good things for His children, but very often we feel disappointment at the events that seem to cut across our own desires. In Rom. 8:28 we find, "And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love Him, who have been called according to His purpose."

Change is never easy, but I now realise that even in the early years of my life, my Heavenly Father was busy preparing me for the ministry we now have! He knows how to handle us, and works gently with our different personalities in a way that will best equip us. With me, it has been step by step very literally.

C HAPTER 3 BECOMING AN ONION.

I was just 17 years of age and eligible to get a driver's licence, according to the traffic laws of Rhodesia. What excitement, when soon after I arrived in Salisbury, David Onions offered to teach me to drive. We had met the Onions family in East London, when they had come to South Africa on holiday some years previously. They had become foundation members of the new Assembly of God my father had pioneered in Salisbury. It was not long before the driving lessons developed into serious courtship.

AN EMBARRASSING EXPERIENCE

Soon after our courtship began, I had one of the most embarrassing experiences of my life! David's parents were having some friends and relatives round for tea one Saturday afternoon, specially to meet David's girlfriend. I remember dressing for work that day with great care. I even borrowed my sister Deirdre's new full-circle skirt for the occasion. My office was a block away from David's family business. So we had arranged for me to walk to his office and after work he would take me to his home on his motorcycle. His Mom had ordered a cake which we had to bring with us. David locked the office early, and I got on to the back of his motorcycle, holding the cake and my handbag with one hand, while holding onto David with the other. We set off in the heavy traffic of this very busy area. Suddenly there was a ripping sound and the motorcycle began reducing speed and finally ground to a halt. To my horror as I looked down, I saw what had caused the problem, I was minus my skirt.. or should I say, Deirdre's skirt. It was wrapped round the wheels of the motor cycle and I was left sitting in just a thin petticoat with the waistband and a few tatters of the now completely ruined skirt. I should have tucked it under me, but not being experienced in riding motor bikes had let it just flap in the breeze. I had no option but to

get off the bike as I was, in my petticoat, and pull the remaining bits of skirt out of the wheel while David slowly wheeled the bike backwards to release the material from the back wheel. This process was accompanied by shouts of laughter, rude comments and the honking of hooters from the slow moving heavy traffic as it drove past! On arrival at David's home we found the guests already seated in the garden, I had to quickly sneak upstairs, and borrow one of Margaret's dresses! (Margaret is David's younger sister). Fortunately she saw my predicament and kindly came to the rescue! Needless to say, the motorcycle was sold soon after that!

SALISBURY YOUNG PEOPLE

For many years David's mother, Ida Onions, had run an Interdenominational Sunday School. Many of these young people who had been well grounded in the Word of God, joined the Assembly and now formed the flourishing youth work. David and I were involved in this, and it was not long before David was appointed the youth leader. Open-air services were also conducted as we were all enthusiastic and in love with Jesus. In fact the "open ministry" time at the Breaking of Bread services was most exciting, as these budding ministries gained experience in sharing the Word of God. The young people were so keen to participate in ministry that they would arrange for the first speaker to announce the next so as to secure a 'slot' in which to speak. Carnality, worldliness and materialism were not a problem in those days, as the love and fervour for Jesus fully satisfied. New young people coming in were taught the Word of God, and got caught up in the enthusiasm and zeal for the things of the Kingdom.

David and I were married on the 5 July and we had a lovely wedding, attended by all the Assembly. The Evangelical Alliance Missionaries were most helpful with the music and catering. Pastor Skinner from Canada conducted the ceremony and Fred Mullan, my uncle, preached the sermon. We were privileged to start married life in our own little home.

PRAYER THE KEY TO GREAT BLESSING

On Saturday night each week the young people would come to our home for tea. While the girls stayed and prayed with me, the boys would all go with David to the rifle range and pray in the open air under the stars. There were times when one of the young men would be praying with eyes closed and hands raised, only to disappear from view having stumbled into a rifle trench in the darkness. But nothing could dampen the fervour, zeal and enthusiasm and undaunted the prayer would continue! We had powerful moves of the Holy Spirit and would pray well into the night. Many nights as the girls and I would pray together, the Spirit of the Lord would come upon us, and we would just sob in His awesome presence. It is no wonder that most of those young people eventually went into full time ministry

Exactly one year after we got married, Dorothy arrived! We were delighted with our precious little gift from God. When she was about 3 months old, we had a special youth camp just outside Salisbury.

This camp was one of those rare but memorable experiences of the tangible presence of God. As David was very involved in the organisation and catering and I with motherhood, we watched from our activities, but were unable to really enter in and experience what was taking place. This was a Sovereign move of the Holy Spirit. The theme song had become, "Oh, oh, oh, oh, Somebody touched me. Must have been the hand of the Lord." Suddenly people started falling under the power of God all over the grounds. I watched with bated breath as a group of young people who were standing on the back of a truck during a prayer time, were knocked off by the impact of the power of the Holy Spirit and fell to the ground where they lay under the anointing of God. 'Powerful' and 'awesome' are the only words one can use to describe what God was doing. The camp meetings went on for hours. I remember feeling left out longing for a new touch from God but due to my circumstances was unable to enter in. David felt the same as in spite of the blessing of God, people still became hungry and

so the catering had to continue! After the last meeting, some fervent young men who had been powerfully touched by God suggested that those of us who had not been able to enter in needed an opportunity. Arrangements were made to care for our responsibilities, and we were taken off into the "bush".

As we gathered together in a clearing, the Spirit of God immediately fell on us. I remember lying flat on my back under the anointing of God and prophesying for the first time in my life. Evidently when they came to lay hands on me they were unable to touch me as the anointing of God was so strong. Hours seemed like minutes as the Lord just bathed us all in His presence. David and I left the camp, knowing that 'the best wine had been kept until last!'

BEING USED IN THE INSPIRATIONAL GIFTS

Whenever God meets with you in a special way, there seems to be a new development in your life and ministry. The first thing I noticed was the impartation of the inspirational gifts of the Holy Spirit.

Sitting in a prayer meeting one Wednesday night next to Deirdre, there came an utterance in tongues from someone in the room. Thoughts began to flood into my mind as the anointing of God began to flow over me. Feeling nervous and not certain if this was the interpretation, I waited. Deirdre gave the interpretation. She began to give exactly what had poured into my mind, but did not give the whole burden of what I had received. I was so excited, I immediately nudged her telling her I had the same interpretation but that there was more. The same person continued with a further utterance in tongues, and the anointing of God began to flow over me once again. This time while I hesitated Deirdre gave me a gentle nudge, and I gave the balance of the message. What incredible joy and peace flooded me, as I experienced the wonder of being an instrument in this way.

C HAPTER 4 THE HELPER WORK

Attending another camp some time later, I was deeply challenged when Richard Baker spoke on the rod of Moses. "What is in your hand? Cast it down before the Lord, then take it up again and use it for His glory." I remember looking at my two hands, and thinking they were rather full, having Dorothy to care for each day. Yet somehow I knew that there must be something I could do for His Kingdom. I did not have much natural talent or ability, but one thing I was able to do was type. I remember in prayer, committing myself in a new way to the Lord, to become His typist. I had no idea at that moment what He would require, but I was willing and desirous of working for Him in a capacity that would still leave me sufficient time to care for my baby. Hospital visitation was no longer possible as there was the need for a daily routine.

About that time my parents-in-law were making plans to emigrate to South Africa, as Victor, David's brother had opened a family business in Port Elizabeth. David managed the family battery business in Salisbury. One day my mother-in-law, Ida Onions approached me to take over a ministry that she had been doing for many years. She had an advertisement in the local newspaper. "Amazing results through prayer. What God has done for others He can do for you. Sick, troubled, desperate, write to 'Helper' P.O. Box 193, Salisbury." She was kept very busy with this correspondence each day as many people responded.

Although I was only 21 years old, and felt totally inadequate, I immediately had the leading of the Holy Spirit to accept this work for the Lord. An excitement rose up within me each time I prayed about it, so I agreed. David got me a typewriter, and I became the Lord's private secretary!

BEING DIRECTED BY THE HOLY SPIRIT.

As letters arrived, I would hastily open them, read them and plan what I would say. But later as I sat in front of the typewriter, I would pray asking the Lord to dictate, as He knew the deeper needs not expressed in the letters. As I began typing, thoughts would just pour into my mind and often when I would re-read their letter, and then read my reply, it seemed there was no connection between the two. But when they replied again, many would express their total surprise and blessing at what had been written, as it had truly met their deepest need.

Very often a visit would be needed, but being so young, I would always send some older person from the Assembly, who looked the part of Helper. A friend and I met each week to pray for the cases.

One day a letter arrived requesting help for a very complicated marital problem. I knew a visit was needed, as the lady who had written was quite obviously not born again. I sat in the 'Breaking of Bread' service one Saturday night looking around, and saying, "Lord whom shall we send, and who will go for us?" But there was just no-one suitable. You see, Salisbury had a general exodus each year during the holiday period, as families would travel to the coast, and it was one of those times. Feeling desperate about the need of this woman I repeated my question to the Lord, and He answered me by putting the words of Isaiah 6:8 into my heart. "Here am I Lord, send me." Once again I was aware of my own inadequacy in this situation, particularly as this was an involved marital problem, I was so young and very happily married, and totally inexperienced in this type of counselling. I said in my heart to the Lord, "Lord, what about the mistakes I am likely to make? I don't think I can go." At about that time, a lady in the meeting got up to minister, and began sharing a message on her heart, which was an immediate answer to me. Her message was entitled "God will take care of the mistakes!" I really appreciated the clarity with which God had spoken to me and now had no doubt that God wanted me to go.

The day of the visit arrived, and my daily reading was "Be not afraid of their faces..." from Jeremiah chapter one. In fact that whole chapter was relevant to my situation right then. Receiving His Word to my heart I set off, dropping Dorothy with a friend on the way. This friend greeted me with a special Scripture from the Lord. The whole of Jeremiah chapter one!! Wonderful the way the Lord confirms His Word to our hearts. Although I was 21 years of age, I looked very young, and unsophisticated. In fact if ever there was anything that completely unnerved me, it was ladies who were very 'made-up' and seemed to have it 'all together', particularly those who sported the fashionable Beehive hairdo's. I tried my utmost to make myself look older. I set my hair in a bun, put on a pair of glasses, and wearing my most mature-looking dress, set off.

ALL I EVER FEARED STOOD BEFORE ME

I got lost en route, as this lady lived quite a bit out of town. Eventually I found the house, knocked at the door and waited. After some time the door opened, and my worst fears materialised before me. There she stood, obviously very mature and well spoken, elegantly dressed and heavily made-up with golden peroxidized beehive hairstyle, a cigarette dangling from her fingers. She looked me up and down, and asked if she could help me! If ever I felt like making some feeble excuse like asking directions for some other house, it was then. But I knew that God had sent me, and He had told me explicitly not to be afraid of their faces, and that He was with me, and would deliver me! At that moment I had an inkling of what Daniel must have felt when he was put into the lions den!

After confirming that she was the lady I was meant to see, I said, "Good morning, I am Helper, and I have come to pray with you." The look of horror that came over her face was similar to that displayed when one has taken a bite into an apple and discovered the remains of what was a worm in it. She let out some words that were certainly not English, nor part of my vocabulary, and then added, "Do you mean to tell me that I have written to a child and shared very deep problems with

you?" It seemed she was going to shut the door on me, but mustering up all my courage, I said, "Please don't close the door, I am here to represent Jesus. I am not as young as I may look, and I know that I can help you. God has sent me." It was as if God blinded her to my age, inexperience and inadequacy, as she invited me in. God did a double miracle, I lost sight of her natural appearance and began to see a very troubled lady with a tremendous need. My heart was moved with compassion. As we sat down in her lounge an amazing peace filled me, and the Comforter, the Holy Spirit began to reassure me that He was there. She began to pour out her heart, and after some time I had the joy of giving her the gospel while answering some of the problems in her life. I had always been taught that any quote from the Word of God should have the appropriate reference given. But I never was much good at learning things, and in my secretarial work for God, made full use of a concordance. But now I had no concordance to refer to, and needed to give the relevant scriptures. God did the most wonderful thing for me. As I began to quote a scripture, in front of my eyes in big block letters appeared the chapter and verse. At first I was hesitant to refer to it. But as I did, to my joy I discovered it was just what I needed. I went from verse to verse, thoroughly enjoying this incredible help God was giving me. An hour or so later, this lady wept her way into the Kingdom of God. As I drove home I literally laughed and cried, sang and gave thanks to a wonderful God who has given us such a gracious helper in the Holy Spirit. God does not encourage laziness, and this was the only time in counselling that He helped me in this way by giving me visible revelation of the needed scriptures. Now He brings the relevant scriptures to my remembrance when I need them, as He promised. In the next few years Barbara and Stephen were born and life became busier, caring for babies and running a home, but I was able to continue with the Helper work, as I could do it in my own time from home.

INSIGHT GIVEN

The Helper work gave me tremendous insight into the problems, burdens and difficulties many people have. The Holy Spirit remarkably came to my assistance, helping me to overcome my natural ignorance by giving me the answers. I have been amazed over the years to find how many people blame God, or question God with regard to calamity or problems that have arisen in their lives.

A lady who was very angry with God came for counsel the other day. She had become His child, knew that He loved her, but questioned why He should bring calamity into her life? Just when things were going well, she discovered her husband was being unfaithful to her. The problem was that she had failed to realise we have an enemy, Satan who comes to rob, destroy and kill (John 10:10) whereas Jesus came to give us life, more abundant life. So she blamed God in her ignorance! On questioning her with regard to her walk with God, I discovered that although she had received Jesus into her life, she did not attend any Christian fellowship, was not disciplined in spending time alone with God and His Word each day, and lived very much according to her own ideas regarding the Christian life! Her lack of the knowledge of God's Word, and her failure to spend time in God's presence seeking his blessing, protection and guidance, had left her ill equipped to handle her problem. She had been deceived by the enemy into believing God was responsible for her traumatic situation. How can you possibly exercise faith towards God for help, when you believe He is responsible for your problem?

NATURAL AND SPIRITUAL LAWS

In life there are natural laws and principles. We cannot change these. For example there is the law of gravity, and so we understand that what goes up, must come down. There is Archimedes principle. That is, weight displaced means loss of weight. In the same way, in the Kingdom of God there are spiritual laws and principles which God has given us to live by.

If we want to enjoy abundant life in Jesus we have to abide by those laws and principles. We are not referring to the Laws of Moses or the ten commandments, but to the law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus. (Romans 8:1).

As God's children it is our prerogative to be led by the Spirit, and as we learn to obey the prompting of the Holy Spirit we walk in the Spirit and enjoy the freedom and blessings of the life of the Son of God. There are therefore conditions to the blessings and promises of God and if we want God's best, we have to be prepared to give Him our best. Have you noticed how God deals in measurements? Mark 4:24 says, "Consider carefully what you hear," Jesus continued, "With the measure you use, it will be measured to you - and even more. Whoever has will be given more; whoever does not have, even what he has will be taken from him." Luke 6:38 says, "Give, and it will be given to you. A good measure, pressed down, shaken together and running over, will be poured into your lap. For with the measure you use, it will be measured to you."

Matt. 7:1 says, "Do not judge, or you too will be judged. For in the same way you judge others, you will be judged, and with the measure you use, it will be measured to you."

Matt. 6:14-15 exhorts us, "For if you forgive men when they sin against you, your Heavenly Father will also forgive you. But if you do not forgive men their sins, your Father will not forgive your sins." I am discovering that God's principles apply throughout. If we want His provision and protection, we must be prepared to meet the conditions of His Word. Note what He says in Malachi 3:10-12.

"Bring the whole tithe into the storehouse, that there may be food in My house. Test Me in this, says the Lord Almighty, and see if I will not throw open the floodgates of heaven and pour out so much blessing that you will not have room enough for it." We desire His great blessing, but often withhold what is His, or should be given to Him.

Phil 4:18 says, "But my God shall supply all your need..." We need to note that Paul was writing to a group of believers who had given until it hurt to support the work of God. No wonder

he could assure them with such confidence that their needs would be supplied. God is no man's debtor, and His supply is relative to our giving. He tells us in this same context in 2 Cor 9:8, "And God is able to make all grace abound to you, so that in all things at all times, having all that you need, you will abound in every good work." What a wonderful God we serve, who reciprocates in such abundance!

While on this subject, may I draw your attention to a great favourite, Ephesians 3:20. "Now to Him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to His power that is at work within us,..." There is no doubt that He is able.... but it is according to His power that is at work within us. How much of His power is at work in your life? He has told us that we would receive power after the Holy Ghost comes upon us in Acts 1:8, but very often we stop right there, and are not continually filled with the precious Holy Ghost. This is so necessary if we want God's power to work in us and flow through us.

Sometimes we get to a place where we feel far from God. We ask Him to come closer or reveal Himself to us. But He says in Malachi 3:8, "Return to Me and I will return to you." James 4:8 confirms this. "Draw near to God and He will draw near to you." Whenever we make a move, God more than meets us halfway. A good illustration of this is found in the parable of the prodigal son. In the pigpen he came to himself, planned his strategy and then began his journey home. Note how the Father responded. When he was a long way off, the father saw him, ran to him and kissed him. He reinstated him with tremendous generosity, blessing and rejoicing. But the young man had to make the first move and arise and go back home. Whatever your need might be right now, apply the laws and principles of God's Word. Make the first move and see how graciously God will meet with you!!

C HAPTER 5 TESTS OF FAITH

When Steve our baby was just a year old we moved to South Africa. It was not long before David joined Victor in the family business he had established in Port Elizabeth. In this city we attended the Assembly of God and soon made many precious friends.

A change is often good, as it causes one to re-evaluate one's walk with God in the light of what He is doing in that body of believers. I soon realised that I had allowed the inspirational gifts of the Holy Spirit to lie dormant in my life over the last few years, being very involved with motherhood. A longing to be part of the fervour and zeal of what was taking place in this church began to fill me. I prayed that God would use me once again, and He reminded me from 2 Tim. 1:6 that I needed to 'fan into flame the gift of God' that was within me.

FANNING INTO FLAME

Often we expect God to do something Sovereignly, when He has instructed us from His Word what to do.

I was not sure how to go about 'fanning into flame' God's gifts but began earnestly to seek His face. One Saturday night at the Breaking of Bread service during the worship, thoughts began to flood into my mind. I clearly remember they focused on Jesus' desire to do the will of the Father in the Garden of Gethsemane. The Holy Spirit then gently brought to me the fact that this was a Word from God for us all, but I needed to be obedient in giving it. Not having participated in the meetings of this Assembly, I was feeling very nervous and unsure of myself. I also had a great respect for the leading of the Holy Spirit, and did not want to operate in the flesh.

To be sure that it was His leading, and not my own, I did what Gideon did! I put out a 'fleece' to the Lord asking Him to help me in my uncertainty and reticence, by inspiring someone to give an utterance in tongues right then. This would help me know that I did have the interpretation! In fact I became so

bold as to ask the Lord to let it be the lady sitting in front of me, so I would not make any mistakes! To my incredible amazement and joy, she immediately began speaking in tongues. At the same time the heavy anointing of the Holy Spirit came upon me and began to affect my whole physical body. My heart began to palpitate and I began trembling all over. I knew beyond any doubt that God had graciously honoured my request, and without hesitation I gave the interpretation. I began with what He had already shown me, and in a wonderful way, He gave me the rest of the interpretation and its application to our hearts. His gracious love was shown me during the time of open ministry when a gentleman the other side of the church stood up and said, "I want to confirm the interpretation Sister Onions gave as God had given me the same message." I never needed a fleece again, and was able to step out in faith in the inspirational gifts, knowing how to be led by the Spirit in this way.

DOROTHY TROUBLED WITH DEAFNESS

David and I were most concerned about our little girl Dorothy when at the age of 6 she became very deaf. Wanting to do what was best for her, we decided to take her to the ear, nose and throat specialist. An appointment was duly made and after a close examination the doctor told me that bad tonsils and adenoids were the cause of the problem. She needed surgery to have them removed, so I booked the operation right away. In the meantime the Lord spoke to David and told him that we had not applied the scriptures and sought healing for her by the anointing of oil and the prayer of faith. God wanted us to be obedient to His Word, totally trusting Him in this situation. (We know that God is not against Doctors or medical science, but He does want us to exercise our faith and there are times when He is wanting to be glorified by doing the miraculous as in the case of the man born blind in John 9:3).

THE OPERATION IS CANCELLED

Imagine how I felt on my return home from the specialist, when David requested me to cancel the operation because God had spoken to him. As Dorothy was not actually in pain I was happy to comply although I found the situation most embarrassing. The specialist was very annoyed and told me that we were not being fair to our little daughter, furthermore he said that we would have to take responsibility for the consequences.

We took her to the Breaking of Bread service that Saturday night, asking the Elders to anoint her with oil and pray for her. There was no change whatsoever in the natural and I must admit that the weeks that followed were a real test of faith for me. One night it was my turn to attend the Breaking of Bread service, so David babysat the children. As I was leaving the home I called out to him, "What is faith anyway?" I was so confused and troubled. David quoted from Hebrews 11:1, and I went to the service with these words ringing in my ears. "Faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen." In our case this was true, nothing was seen yet of her healing. How long would we have to hope? On my arrival before the service began I looked up the Scripture, and remembered saying to the Lord, "I don't understand the concept of faith. Why not just have the operation and she will be fine?" It was then I turned the page over to Hebrews 10 and began reading from verse 35.

"So do not throw away your confidence; it will be richly rewarded. You need to persevere so that when you have done the will of God, you will receive what He has promised. For in just a very little while, He who is coming will come and will not delay. But my righteous one will live by faith and if he shrinks back, I will not be pleased with him."

I got my answer immediately. I then said, "Lord, what do I cling to? I just need something to help me understand about faith." As I turned the pages of my Bible in Hebrews, the Lord highlighted chapter 12:2 for me, "Looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before Him, endured the cross..." I remember saying "Lord, is that all I need to do? Just keep my eyes on Jesus?"

Immediately the Comforter, the Holy Spirit gave me the most incredible peace deep within.

That night we had the most unusual Breaking of Bread Service. It seemed to centre around healing. Two men came uninvited and unknown to the meeting and ministered the Word. It was all about Faith in regard to healing. I sat there open-mouthed with wonder, and felt that the Lord had arranged the whole thing specially for my benefit. I was quite convinced that we had an angelic visitation, as we have never seen or heard of these men since. At the end of the service the church lifted up its voice to God on behalf of our little Dorothy. I went home totally convinced that God had heard our prayers and that she was healed. Even though there was no visible sign of healing, I was now able to stand in faith. I just knew that in His appointed time, the evidence would be there.

GOD'S SIGN TO AN UNSAVED LADY

Each week I used to play tennis at a club in Walmer. I had tried unsuccessfully to witness to the lady who captained the tennis. I had invited other ladies from the group home to tea and a number had received Jesus into their lives as a result. During tennis one week the captain, who was obviously far from the Lord, told me she was studying her Bible. With great joy I asked her who was helping her. She named a sect, and my face immediately fell. The moment passed, and nothing more was said that day. On getting home I felt bad about having let my feelings show, and was led to write a letter of apology to her, explaining my reaction. The next week it was raining where we lived, so I phoned her asking what the condition of the court was like in Walmer. She told me that the tennis would have to be cancelled, so I took the opportunity of asking her if she had received my letter. Obviously she had not, and asked me what I had written about. I shared my apology over the phone, and she said, "I wish I knew what to believe!" I told her that as the tennis was cancelled, maybe I could come to her home and share what I had found in Jesus. So the arrangement was made.

'SERVING' IN A DIFFERENT WAY

I took my three children with me and while they played together with hers, Marion and I chatted over tea. She began to share some of the doctrine of this cult which she had been taught. After a while, I asked if I could tell her what Jesus meant to me, and what He could do. I began by explaining about the joy of serving Jesus, and the wonderful way He answers prayer. I then found myself testifying to the fact that Dorothy had been healed by the Lord. Up to that point there had been no physical evidence of this healing whatsoever. All the girls at the tennis club knew about her deafness. Since that special Breaking of Bread I had believed God had undertaken. Now I was actually declaring the accomplished fact that she was healed! Marion's attention was gripped immediately; she wanted to witness for herself Dorothy's ability to hear. There was a moment of panic as I realised what I had said. Then the blessed Holy Spirit gave me peace and I knew that what I had said had not come from myself but had been an impartation of the gift of faith from the Lord! I fetched Dorothy, and brought her into the room, turned her around so that she could not read my lips and began to whisper. What incredible joy welled up within me, as I realised that suddenly her ears had been opened and she could now hear every word. From that moment she was completely healed. This resulted in Marion giving her life to the Lord, and soon after being filled with the Holy Spirit. How I praise God for His wonderful works and am so grateful that David had been obedient to God's voice in having the operation cancelled. I took Dorothy to another ear, nose and throat specialist for a check-up some time later. I chose a different specialist as I was too embarrassed to go to the original one. I shared the story of her deafness, and the subsequent events. He smiled as I talked and asked me if I was religious? He said in view of all that had transpired he would give her a very thorough check-up. He must have done every test possible and then turned to me with the words "When the Almighty does a job, He does a mighty good job! Her hearing is perfect."

A VERY SEVERE TEST

We were living in a flat in Port Elizabeth. It was a very built-up area with many children in the neighbourhood. The Lord burdened me to begin a Bible Club for all the children in our block of flats. I began with about 10 children and with God's blessing it was not long before I had to move the venue to a Church Hall in the area. Over the months the attendance grew to about 200 from all Denominations.

This went on for a couple of years. We eventually bought a house in Cotswold which was quite a distance from where we had been living. For a while I continued with the Bible Club, and during that time had the joy of leading many of these young children to Jesus.

One afternoon the children and I went to the Bible Club from our new home, and soon after we had started the singing Dorothy came to me and told me that her head was very sore. There were well over a hundred children present that day and being the only adult there I was unable to take her home. I prayed for her, and told her to just sit quietly and rest. Eventually Bible Club ended and we went home, but Dorothy was far from well. I put her to bed, but the headache persisted. Even strong tablets did nothing to alleviate the pain and when she began having difficulty moving her head, I realised that there was something seriously wrong and called our family doctor. When David came home from work he agreed that she needed medical attention, and within minutes Dr Hawke arrived. He examined her, but by this time she was quite delirious, and although it was not a hot evening, the sweat just poured off her. We could see from the expression on the doctor's face that he was more than a little concerned!

He called us into the lounge requesting permission to send for a pediatrician. On asking what he suspected, he told us that it looked like meningitis. Up to that time in my life, serious things only ever happened to other people. When your own family are facing a crisis for the first time, it is really hard to accept. Dr Benson was contacted, and while we awaited his arrival,

David phoned the Pastor of the Assembly requesting earnest prayer for our little Dorothy. Not long afterwards the specialist arrived. He put Dorothy through several tests, and told us that she was to be hospitalised immediately. He would do a lumbar puncture right away, to ascertain how serious her condition was.

We left Barbara and Stephen with a neighbour, and I drove the car while David gently nursed Dorothy in his arms. On the way to the hospital when the delirium lifted slightly, Dorothy asked where we were going. We explained that she was very sick, and we were taking her to the hospital, where they could help her. We assured her that because we had prayed Jesus would be with her all the time. We told her that they were going to do a test that might hurt a bit, but encouraged her to be brave. Dr Benson was waiting for us and immediately the lumbar puncture was administered. He came out to tell us how brave she had been, and that within 24 hours we would know the extent of the damage. He explained that there were two types of this condition. The one was a virus, and while serious, did not normally cause permanent harm to the patient. The other was the bacterial variety, which was much more serious. It was touch-and-go whether such patients would pull through and, even when they did, there was the grave possibility of permanent disability such as blindness, deafness or even mental impairment. He said it was definitely meningitis as the spinal fluid was troubled, but once they established which strain, they would treat it accordingly. They had medication for the viral variety, but if it was the bacterial, it would have to be cultivated and then treated with various different antibiotics to see which one it would respond to. The results confirming that it was indeed bacterial meningitis came at 2 a.m. the following morning. Dr Benson told us that the next few hours were critical, but promised that they would do all they could to help her pull through.

I will never forget that dreadful night! I kept waking, my mind being bombarded by the devil. One of the things he suggested was that the Lord was going to take Dorothy. If He left her, she might turn away from Him and go into a life of sin. As I shared

this with David, he reminded me of the Word of God which said, "Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not turn from it." Praise God there was a Scripture for every attack, and at last peace came and I slept.

Dr Hawke joined us very early in the morning at the hospital to see Dorothy, and we were overjoyed to discover that not only was she alive, but that she even recognised us. Her whole body was swollen, with the arm connected to the drip double its normal size. We later learned from Dr Hawke that they had been unsuccessful in cultivating the bacteria. Dr Benson had a new drug on hand that had just arrived from the U.S.A. This was normally administered to adults in 20 mg. doses, but he had given Dorothy 200 mg. doses. Slowly but surely the bacteria responded, and she miraculously recovered. In fact she was discharged from hospital within a week, and even the doctors acknowledged that God had undertaken in a wonderful way. Both doctor and specialist were Christians, and had been praying while attending to our little girl. We were told that she would probably have severe headaches for the rest of her life, but can testify to the fact that the Lord even released her from that prognosis. Once home she rapidly returned to normal and was able to return to school a month later. We truly appreciate having the Lord to turn to in our hour of need, and know that He is the Lord that healeth ALL our diseases.

One thing that God impressed on me as a result of this sudden illness, was the fact that we are just a breath away from Eternity. One day we can be fine, and the next fighting for our lives, and even passing on into Eternity. With that in mind I was more determined than ever to do what I could for the Lord while I had the opportunity. He had done so much for me.

C HAPTER 6 "LORD SEND SOMEONE!"

One evening I fetched my friend Laura for the Prayer Meeting. On the way she told me about her visits to Santa, a T.B. Settlement about 20 kilometres out of Port Elizabeth. She went each week to conduct a meeting with the little black children who, due to the nature of the disease, had to be there a considerable time. She shared her burden for the adults who had no Spiritual input, and who spent hours sitting outside in the sunshine when they were well enough. Others whose condition was more serious were confined to bed. I told her that we really needed to pray that God would send someone. That night in the meeting I prayed for this request. As I was praying, the words from Isaiah came strongly to me, "Whom shall I send, and who will go for us?" (Isaiah 6:8). And I knew that the answer which followed in same verse was applicable to me. So I answered, "Here am I, send me." Very often we are the answer to our prayers! I nudged Laura as soon as I had finished praying and told her the prayer was answered. She looked at me with wide eyes, thinking I must have had a vision or revelation from God. I had, but not quite in the way in which she was thinking. He had given me the vision for these sick people who were suffering. In the car going home we made the necessary arrangements. She offered to care for Stephen who was not yet at school, so that I could go on a different morning from her children's class, and minister to the adults.

MINISTRY AT SANTA

Not being a preacher, nor knowing the Xhosa language, I set off with a gramophone and records from Gospel Recordings, together with a bundle of tracts. Tremendous joy filled my heart as I became aware of just how much the patients appreciated the little that I was doing for them each week. It

was not long before I found I did not need the gramophone and records, but was able to speak from my heart, using a patient who could speak English to interpret for me. Hundreds came to know Jesus in the years that followed. "I was sick and you visited Me", Jesus said in Matt. chapter 25, and added, "Forasmuch as you have done this to the least of one of these My brethren, you have done it to Me."

What a privilege it was being able to serve Him in this way. There were days when my natural inclination would be to have a day off. After all it was a long journey, and my little Anglia sometimes had to be pushed to start! But the importance of being faithful even when I did not feel like it overruled any other thoughts.

I have always been so blessed by the fact that the Lord takes care of small details. The patients just loved the fact that I was not in a uniform, and wore colourful clothes. I think their pink gowns and the starched white uniforms of the nursing staff must have made them long to see normal clothing. Each week they would take great interest in what I was wearing. The brighter and gaudier the outfit the more it pleased them! Knowing it was important to ring the changes and not wear the same thing each week, I shared with the Lord my need for some really bright colourful things specially for Santa. Imagine my joy to discover that even before I called God had already answered. My mother, living in East London at the time, phoned that very day. She said that someone had given her a parcel of clothes but they were so gaudy, she would never wear them. Being much younger, though the same size, she wondered if I could possibly make use of them. I told her of my request to God that day and we both rejoiced in the gracious provision of our Heavenly Father. No detail is too insignificant for His loving tender care!

BEING LED BY THE SPIRIT.

One day I was returning from Santa when there was a sudden urge in my heart to stop off at a home in the country. I had met Jenny a few times, but had never really got to know her. I had many things to do that day in preparation for the children's return home from school, but as I neared Jenny's house I just knew I had to call there. As my car rounded the bend into her driveway, she came running out to meet me. "I am so glad to see you," she said, "This is a very quick answer to my prayer. I am longing to be filled with the Holy Spirit, and I have just been asking the Lord to send you." About an hour later I left a radiant Spirit-filled Jenny whose joy obviously equalled mine, but for different reasons. She was overjoyed at being so wonderfully equipped for service in the power of the Holy Spirit. I was rejoicing in the fact that I was learning to be sensitive to the leading of the Spirit, and for His faithfulness in meeting Jenny's need and using me as His instrument.

GOD WORKS ALL THINGS TOGETHER FOR GOOD

We were sad to learn that our family doctor, Dr Hawke, had suffered a severe heart attack, and found it necessary to resign from his practice. We wrote him a letter thanking him for caring for us as a family and assuring him of our prayers that God would not only heal him, but direct his future. He was a devout Anglican Christian. We received a reply telling us that he was sorry to have to leave his practice, but now well on the way to recovery had made other plans which he truly believed would benefit both his patients and himself. Little did he realise how prophetic that statement would turn out to be. Santa was being reorganised, and on one of my visits I learned that they were going to have a medical superintendent. I gave this little thought until one day I came rushing round the corner to enter a ward, when I almost collided with someone. To my amazement who should it be but Dr Hawke! He asked me what I was doing at Santa, to which I replied that I was the preacher around the place! I asked him what he was doing there, and he told he was the new superintendent. He invited me to join the medical staff for tea each week on my visits.

Tea time in Matron's office was always enlightening, as I learned about the progress of the patients; of special interest since I had prayed for their healing. Dr Hawke was always frank about their condition, and this gave me insight on how to pray. My interpreters came and went, as the Lord healed them. One interpreter named Moses, had an American accent. I was intrigued by this and asked if he had been to the States? He told me he had never been out of Port Elizabeth! So I asked him how he had acquired this accent. "It was hero-worship", he said. Having worked for an American he had imitated the way he spoke until he had perfected the accent. Then it never left!

MY BROTHER, THE LIFT ATTENDANT!

Shepherd was another interpreter who was healed by the power of God, and I managed to get him a job at O.K. Bazaars through a friend, Terry, who was the manager there. He became the lift attendant. I can remember the odd looks I received one day when I went to O.K. Bazaars and took the lift filled with people. The attendant (Shepherd) greeted me with the words, "Hello, my sister, it is so good to see you again." I guess the world does not understand the concept of the Kingdom, in which language, colour and culture play no part. The precious blood of Jesus brings us into a close relationship with God and one another that nothing can break.

One day at Santa Dr Hawke passed a remark about, "You Pentecostals..." At that time in the 1960's the Charismatic renewal had not yet taken place. Pentecostals were considered weird, and had much opposition from the traditional churches! In fact 'tongues talkers' were mocked and despised. But God was beginning to work in the lives of believers in the traditional churches overseas. The book "Nine o'clock in the Morning" written by Dennis Bennett so blessed us, as we realised God was doing a new thing. Father Bennett, an Anglican priest in the States had just been filled with the Holy Spirit. Over tea with matron and staff that day, Dr Hawke asked me if I knew that there were Anglicans who were

also now 'talking in tongues'. He told me he had heard about Father Bennett, but this had not happened in South Africa yet.

DAVID WILKERSON VISITS SOUTH AFRICA

David Wilkerson, author of 'The Cross and the Switchblade' was visiting South Africa - a man greatly used by God in bringing deliverance and victory to drug addicts in the States. I decided to invite Dr Hawke to attend the meeting, as David Wilkerson was not only Pentecostal, but well known and respected in all Christian circles. The venue was the Presbyterian Church and it was packed to capacity with people from all denominations. As I sat with a couple of friends I noticed Dr Hawke was present with a number of Anglican clergy. There were nuns there as well. A visiting "Hell fire" preacher from England also happened to be in Port Elizabeth having special meetings at the time. Before David Wilkerson took the pulpit, this man gave his testimony. I will never forget the shock and horror I experienced as he began with the words, "I was an Anglican, christened an Anglican, confirmed an Anglican, and on my way to Hell!" You could have cut the atmosphere with a knife! Being elderly, and not a little tactless, he neglected to add a most important phrase which would have made all the difference. If only he had said, "But because I had never received Jesus into my life as my Lord and Saviour..... I was on my way to Hell." This at least would have made sense, even if a little insensitive! I did not dare look at the visitors from other denominations at that moment, but simply bowed my head and prayed that God would somehow save the situation. David Wilkerson's ministry was wonderful, but I am afraid I left the meeting with a heavy heart. I felt that those who were just beginning to be interested in the Pentecostal experience would be put off by that testimony!

June, one of my friends, accompanied me to Santa that next Tuesday, and in the car I told her that we could expect a very chilly response from Dr Hawke owing to what had happened. He was late for tea, but when he arrived he was bright and friendly and remarked about the wonderful talk from David

Wilkerson. I had taken the tape of Father Bennett with me and offered it to him. But he said he would rather come to our home and hear it. I arranged an evening that very week, and invited Matron and her husband as well. David and I did not know what reaction to expect, so bought John Sherryl's book to give to Dr Hawke, and a booklet called "Pentecost is not a Denomination, but an Experience," for matron.

David came home from work early that day, and we were all ready when our guests arrived. That night as we played the tape they all listened intently. They seemed to really enjoy it and after tea left with the books we had given them.

At Santa the next week, June and I were a little late for tea. When we arrived the others were deeply engrossed in discussing patients. We sat quietly and wondered that nothing was said about the tape they had listened to in our home. In fact Dr Hawke seemed very withdrawn and rather curt.

At the end of tea he turned to me and said "Mrs Onions, may I see you alone in my study please?" June and I looked at each other, and I think the same thought crossed both our minds. I was in trouble over something, and it must be because I am Pentecostal! Obviously I was going to be booted out of Santa by the superintendent!

WHEN GOD OPENS A DOOR NO MAN CAN CLOSE IT

I decided that regardless of the opposition I was about to receive, I would take it smiling. I could see Dr Hawke was very nervous, and thought he deserved to be, as he would be going against what God had ordained! How wrong we can be in our assumptions! After we were seated in his office, he looked at me across his large desk and began. "It's about this tape I heard in your home!" I did not reply but just sat smiling. He continued, "I can't do anything at all. I can't eat or sleep, all I want to do is read my Bible and pray!" Incredible relief flooded me, as I realised how wrong I had been. I had underestimated the power of God. He went on, "I want to ask

you and your husband to please pray for me, that I will be able to enter in and receive all God has planned for me."

I burst out, "Dr Hawke, we have been praying for you already." "So you are responsible for this state I am in," he said. I found myself then saying something that later proved to be prophetic. "Dr Hawke, if you are filled with the Holy Spirit you will be able to minister to people that we as 'Pentecostals' will never reach." He then asked if he could come and visit us with questions regarding this experience. I immediately offered the services of our minister instead, feeling he was far better equipped to answer theological questions than we were. He rejected that offer, and said he wanted to chat to us. An evening was arranged for that week and I left his office overjoyed, telling June that a miracle was about to take place. An Anglican was on the brink of being filled with the Holy Spirit. David and I prayed fervently about that visit. The formality of doctor/patient relationships was dropped that night, as on his arrival Dr Hawke asked if he could call us David and Maureen, and for us to call him Don. He asked if we would mind answering a personal question. "Do you talk in tongues, Maureen?" I nodded.. He turned to David asking the same question. David replied that he did. He was then prepared to talk to us. There was nothing deeply theological about his questions that night, all he really wanted to know was in what practical ways the Holy Spirit affected us. What difference had He made in our lives? At the end of a profitable evening he told us he was now prepared to see our minister. Arrangements were made and as he left I was so excited at what God was doing I found myself saying, "Tuesday night you will be filled with the Spirit." He was horrified. "Surely you can't make dates with God?" I explained that God had poured out His Spirit and that it was now up to us to receive what He has given. We did not realise it, but we were on the brink of a tremendous new visitation from God to the traditional churches! That Tuesday night began in a way which really frustrated me! The minister began asking Don questions about T.B. and the advances in medical science. Over an hour passed and I was longing for the conversation to develop spiritually! Eventually the minister said, "Tell me, Dr Hawke, how does your

relationship with the Lord affect your practice?" "That is why I am here," he replied, "I need to be filled with the Holy Spirit, so that I will be equipped to really help my patients!" In a few minutes we were all kneeling in the Lord's presence during which time David and I both prayed. Don had never prayed an extemporary prayer before, but bravely began. As he testified later, he thought up a sentence and said it, then he thought up another sentence and said it, and by the third sentence he could not think of anything further to say, so went back to sentence number one again!

At this point the minister went across to where he was kneeling, laid hands on him, and immediately he quietly but definitely began praying in "other tongues!" God had filled him with the Holy Spirit. It was totally unemotional and extremely quiet. He left grateful to God that night, but told us later that as he got in his car the emotion of the experience hit him. He sat in his car and began to laugh then cry as the Spirit of God moved upon him. He got home somehow and for the next few hours had the most amazing time in the Lord's presence. It was not long before his wife, Betty, was also filled with the Holy Spirit in our home.

RENEWAL IN THE ANGLICAN CHURCHES

About this time the Anglican Synod was being held in Port Elizabeth, and the Hawkes were hosting some of the Clergy. They shared frankly about their incredible experience, and loaned books and tapes to those who were thirsting for a deeper experience in God. Don was invited to Queenstown soon after this, to share his experience in the Anglican Church there, and God used him as His instrument in imparting this wonderful outpouring not only to the Anglicans who attended, but the visitors who came from other churches. He began to be invited to many churches in the country, just sharing his story and God moved mightily by His Spirit. He told us at one point that he did not know whether he was a doctor or an evangelist, as he was being kept so busy for God. We invited him to come to the Assembly of God in Port Elizabeth to share his testimony. The church was packed to capacity with people

from all denominations, and once again God moved mightily, not only filling those who had never received, but reviving the Pentecostals!

Soon after this outpouring had begun spreading, God wonderfully filled Bishop Bill Burnett in Grahamstown with the Holy Spirit. He later became the Archbishop of the Anglican Church in South Africa.

We rejoiced that God was now reaching 'top' influential leaders who as Shepherds were able to lead their flock into this glorious experience.

This was the early beginning of the Charismatic renewal in South Africa, and we were so blessed and privileged to have been just a very small part of it.

C HAPTER 7 EMPILWENI HOSPITAL.

Visitors, being thirsty for the deeper things of God began pouring into our Assembly at that time. One night at Breaking of Bread a deacon of the church told me that a Dr Potts wanted to speak to me. I was taken to this gentleman who began by saying, "Mrs Onions, I am the medical superintendent of the Empilweni Hospital and I have heard that you just have to walk into a ward and smile at the patients and they get healed!" I was quite taken aback at this exaggeration, and hastily assured him that it was nothing like that, but that the Word of God was having an effect on the hearts and lives of patients. He proceeded to say, "I know you are a very busy person, but do you think you could spare one morning to come to Empilweni. It is an isolation hospital for T.B. patients on the outskirts of the location, and works closely with Santa. I will personally show you around, and if you think that you could include this hospital in your work I would be extremely grateful." I asked if I could let him know after I had prayed and chatted to David about it. After prayer, David and I both felt that I should go and see what could be done.

Dr Potts met me and took me from ward to ward introducing me to the staff, asking them to assist me any way I might require! What an open door! He paused before one closed door and told me that Florence not only had T.B. but was mental and became uncontrollable at times. On entering the room I saw such a pathetic little woman lying on the bed. I gave her a tract and she promptly began eating it! After the conducted tour of the hospital, Dr Potts said I should feel free to minister to the patients, but would like to meet me in his office for tea at 11.30 a.m.

After chatting to staff and patients in various wards, and seeing the tremendous mission field that God was opening to me, I went to his office. I had hardly sat down when he said, "Mrs Onions, how can I have what Dr Hawke has received? I too want to be filled with the Holy Spirit." Dr Potts was also an Anglican and loved the Lord. I arranged an evening, and

David and I had the privilege of ministering to him and his wife Joan, as God graciously filled them with the Holy Spirit.

For the next six years I ministered every Tuesday at Santa and every Thursday at Empilweni while on Sunday mornings I had Sunday School in the Orthopaedic wards at the Livingstone Hospital.

MINISTRY TO A JEWISH DOCTOR

One day at Empilweni I was going from one ward to the next when I was stopped by a Jewish doctor. "Do you smile like that on a Monday too?" he asked! I told him I could smile all the time, because of the joy I had in my life. "What is there to smile about?" he asked. I offered to share my reasons with him, so he invited me to his office. The Holy Spirit immediately came to my assistance, and I found great joy in giving him the gospel, taking care not to make him feel as though he were being preached at! I began by telling him that my work was so rewarding, I know that what I have to give the patients really works. When people come into a personal relationship with God they receive peace, the knowledge of sins forgiven and an assurance of eternal life. I also shared my joy in praying for the sick and seeing many receive healing. I was able to relate different cases that had received a touch from God in some way. Some months later our church had a "Bring your neighbour" night. It was an outreach meeting at which the gospel would be simply given. I decided that this was an ideal opportunity to invite this Jewish doctor, who had been struggling with tremendous problems in his life, and who was opening more and more to the gospel each time I saw him to chat. He came that Sunday night and when the appeal for Salvation was made, he went forward for prayer. From that time God began to undertake for him and some of his major problems were resolved.

THE URGENCY OF THE MATTER

Work amongst the patients was most rewarding. They would crowd into a ward and enjoy the service. God gave me an excellent interpreter named Gilbert Hewana. If ever there was a gentleman, it was this man. In spite of being a patient, each week he would be dressed impeccably in a suit, tie and cuff links waiting to assist me. He loved the Lord, having been brought up in a Godly Methodist home. One day as we went from bed to bed before the service we came to a ward where an elderly man lay. Suddenly I had a tremendous awareness deep down that there was an urgency for this man to be born again.

I found myself telling Gilbert this, and that we needed to stop and talk to this man. The African tradition has customs that cannot be by-passed, and one cannot just barge in, but has to go through the protocol of respect. Gilbert stood in front of this rather dirty elderly man, and respectfully bowed his head and said "Dadewe, (Xhosa for father), May we speak with you please?" The old man shook his head indicating that permission was not granted. Gilbert very politely began to explain that we had something of extreme importance to tell him. But permission was not granted. This went on for nearly 15 minutes, by which time the patients had congregated in a ward, and were singing while waiting for the service to begin. I told Gilbert that we had to go, but would he be sure to return to the old man and give him the gospel. He must give his life to the Lord today, I insisted. So off we went. When I saw Gilbert the next week, he had a rather wonderful story to tell me. He began by telling me how the urgency of the matter brushed off onto him, so he took a fellow believer with him right after our meeting to speak to the old man, but once again was rejected. He went back every hour, which meant about 6 times during the afternoon and early evening, but to no avail. Eventually at 7 p.m. the old man granted permission. Gilbert simply but powerfully gave him the gospel. The old man, who did not appear to be particularly frail or very ill eventually at 7.45 p.m. gave his life to Jesus. By 8.30 p.m. that evening he had passed away and was in Eternity! I was so grateful to God for His faithful servant, Gilbert, who never gave up. I am also grateful to God for the way the Holy Spirit leads us.

"THOU FOOL, THIS NIGHT..."

On one occasion I prepared ministry for the meeting, but as I stood to speak, the Lord burdened me to change my message and to speak on "Thou fool, this night thy soul shall be required of thee..." Rather a sensitive subject for sick people. After I had announced my text, and was just beginning to speak, a doctor walked into the ward, and to my horror, sat down on one of the beds to listen. If ever I was tempted to disobey the Spirit of God it was then. I thought this might result in my being asked to stop my ministry in the hospital! But wanting to please God rather than man, I bravely went right on with my message. I clearly gave the gospel, and the need of getting right with God, and just before I finished speaking this doctor slipped off. I was saddened to learn that this man had committed suicide a few days later. I do believe that God was giving him an opportunity of hearing the gospel and getting right with God. God is not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance. But He has given us a free will, and does not force us into accepting His wonderful offer of Salvation.

I'M TOO YOUNG!

At Empilweni one week, I spoke to a young man of about 18 years of age. He was obviously in the last stages of T.B., was painfully thin, sweat pouring off him, and unable to eat. I began by asking him if he knew Jesus Christ. He replied that he was too young. He would wait until he was older before he needed to know Jesus. He went on to tell me that he first wanted to complete his studies, then get a good job, find himself a wife, have children, and maybe then he would become a Christian. I looked with compassion at this young man, whose life was ebbing away. Tragically his plans excluded the only One who could really help him. First by healing him, then with the blessings of the right occupation, wife, and direction in all the affairs of his life. I shared this

with him, but no matter what I said, he kept saying "I'm too young!" I felt very sad when I left him, knowing he had been given his opportunity, but had rejected the love of Jesus. My next visit found his bed empty!

THE CASE OF EMILY

In the work God calls us to do, we are not commended on our success but faithfulness. We are always truly grateful when we see God working through our lives with positive results. I had been introduced to Emily by Gilbert. She not only had T.B. but was totally confined to bed with spinal meningitis. It was not long before she responded to the gospel and received Jesus into her life, and His healing began to flow into her body. I remember promising her a new dress the day she walked again. Her longing and desire was to see her mother who was in a rural area many miles away. Emily was a woman in her forties. The day came when she miraculously took her first steps and then began walking. The dress was duly given and she attended every meeting excitedly looking forward to her discharge from the hospital. I will never forget the shock I received on my arrival one day, when I was called into the doctor's office. "I have some very bad news for you," he said, "Emily has regressed and is flat on her back, refuses to eat, walk or co-operate by letting the staff attend to her." I asked what had caused this, and was told that the day she was discharged she had been informed that her mother had died. Somehow something had happened with the shock of that news.

Gilbert and I went into her ward and found her lying on her bed, smelly, dirty and very aggressive. She refused to speak to me, or answer my questions, and I remember walking away feeling totally confused and saddened that she had been robbed of all that God had done. On my way home that day I prayed that if God was yet going to do something in her life, she would still be alive the next week when I visited Empileni. And she was. Once again she refused to speak to us, and we could see she was at death's door, very weak, and being fed intravenously.

As I travelled home I asked the Lord to please somehow show me what was wrong.

I awoke one night and remember sitting bolt upright in bed with words that rather startled me, deep in my spirit. "Emily has an evil spirit." As I thought about this, I replied, "Lord, thank you. That is easy. I will cast it out!" I went with a joyful spirit to set the captive free that next week, and Gilbert went with me to interpret. She refused to talk, but I leaned over her and said, "Emily, in Jesus Name look at me, you have a dirty spirit." I felt that adequately described the nature of the evil spirit that had taken possession of her. She swung round and looked at me and yelled, "Me, a dirty spirit?" "Yes," I replied, "and I am going to set you free in Jesus powerful Name." While Gilbert quietly prayed, I cast it out in the Name of Jesus. There was no violent reaction, but we knew she was set free, as she put her hands to her head and said, "My hair is dirty... look, my nails are dirty!" Sure enough they were. In fact her nails had grown so long they were like claws. The poor nurses who attended her were unable to cut them, as she fought and struggled with them each time they tried. That day, she got up and walked once again, and when I left, Gilbert was busy clipping her nails, while the nurses were cleaning her up. She was discharged soon after that, and I believe across her file the word "Miracle" must have been written. All glory to God, who gives revelation and insight when we ask Him. When we are left to our own resources we are totally inadequate to deal with the problems that confront us. Often we just guess and nothing is accomplished, but I was now learning to rely on the Holy Spirit to give illumination in each case.

FLORENCE GOES BERSERK.

One day while preaching in a ward I heard a commotion. It began a little way off from the ward I was in, but began to get louder and louder. As it drew close I was aware that it was someone singing, "God save our gracious king..." Loud peals of laughter would follow, then wailing.... I began to suspect that the person was not 'all there'. Sure enough, into the ward

where I was ministering came Florence. (She was the one who 'ate' the tract I gave on my first visit to Empilweni.) She was clothed in a long black robe with hood. Foaming at the mouth, eyes wild, she came in with her two arms stretched out in front of her like a sleepwalker! Fearful at first, I contemplated getting out of the way as quickly as possible, but bravely went on preaching. The disturbance began to get through to me, as she proceeded to go from patient to patient, shaking their hands. Once was not enough, she continued round and round, yet each time left me out! Must admit it was one time I was grateful to be ignored! Righteous indignation at the work of Satan rose up within me. How dare the enemy try to take attention off the Word of God, and on to his activities. A boldness and authority stirred within me and I said in a voice loud enough to command her attention, "Florence, in the name of Jesus sit down and shut up!" Not very polite, I know, but then one does not need to stand on ceremony with the enemy! Immediately I said this, Florence, who could not normally be controlled when these phases took hold of her, suddenly became quiet, found a seat among the group that had gathered, and began to weep quietly. I went over to her, filled with compassion for the poor soul. How awful to be tormented the way she was. I put my arm round her and asked her what was wrong. She replied, "I don't want to be like this, but I can't help myself. Something makes me!" I told her not to cry, that Jesus loves her, and to just quietly listen while I shared the Word of God, which she did.

As I left that day, I planned to minister deliverance to her on my next visit. I had felt that it was unwise praying for her deliverance in front of all the other patients; anyone not truly born again might have been put in bondage. Unfortunately, the next week she was no longer there, they had taken her away because she had become violent, and sad to say, I never saw her again.

This incident gave me new insight into my authority in Jesus, and how when used, the enemy has to flee. Also, it gave me a compassion for the many in the world who have opened themselves to Satan in some way, and have been held in his

vile grip. The torment and turmoil that fills these troubled souls makes one appreciate the wonderful peace and freedom that only Jesus can bring.

MY NEW INTERPRETER - SAMUEL

The day Gilbert Hewana was discharged I prayed earnestly that the Lord would find me a suitable new interpreter for Empilweni. Gilbert was a school teacher, and his accuracy and enthusiasm in this ministry was sorely missed.

On my ward round one day, I noticed a new patient had been admitted. On his locker beside his bed was the book "How to win Friends and Influence People" by Norman Vincent Peale. This was a most unusual book for a Xhosa patient with T.B. to be reading! I went over to the man and introduced myself, and in impeccable English he told me his name was Samuel. I remarked on the book he was reading, and asked if he was a Christian. He hastily assured me he was not. I then began to talk to him about Jesus, and shared what He meant in my life. He looked at me with sympathy, as if I was totally ignorant! "Have you ever been to Israel, Mrs Onions?" he asked. I replied that up to that time I had not had the privilege! "Well I have," he said. "Let me assure you, having walked where Jesus was supposed to have walked, seen the places He was supposed to have lived and ministered in, I soon came to believe that He was not the Son of God!" For a while we debated, as I told him that it was not only the Jesus of history that I knew, but the living, resurrected Son of God. I had experienced Him in my life, and seen His power at work in many lives and that I had a relationship with Him that nothing could destroy. He listened intently while I spoke. In conversation I discovered that he was a theatrical personality, had been a ship's engineer, and was well travelled. An unusual type of patient in this hospital, as most of them were illiterate! He obviously struggled with the fact that he had to share a ward with the other patients. I then invited him to come and join us in the meeting I was about to have, but he declined. Somehow I knew he had to come under the sound of the Word of God in spite of his rejection. I found myself

inviting him to become my interpreter, explaining that Gilbert had been healed and now discharged. He eventually agreed reluctantly, but added, "I am only coming because you need an interpreter, Mrs Onions, and not because I am interested in Christianity!" That was good enough for me, because I knew the Holy Spirit would minister to him through the power of the Word!

When the meeting was due to begin, Samuel walked into the ward. He saw all the patients sitting round the big central table, or perching on the beds, but obviously did not want to associate himself with them, so sat afar off on a chair. After we had sung and prayed, I invited him to join me to interpret as I preached. He was an excellent interpreter, and being an actor, his gestures were even more dramatic than my Jewish blood caused mine to be! I never had a language ability, and in spite of ministering for years among Xhosa people was totally incapable of being able to speak their language. Yet the moment an interpreter gave a wrong interpretation, I would know instinctively by the Spirit and ask them to please interpret what I had said! This caused Samuel to ask me several times if I was sure I could not speak Xhosa!

Week by week the Word was sinking into his heart, as he not only heard, but spoke it out! Although he still resisted making a commitment to Jesus he was definitely softening.

A FRIGHTENING EXPERIENCE

One morning I was conducting a service in the men's ward, Samuel was interpreting and the patients had crowded into the ward. I always chose to stand in front of the bolted door that was never used, facing the passage with the very long rectangular table in front of me. The patients sat in benches on either side of this table while others crowded in from the other wards and sat on the beds. Once the meeting was over, there was always a general exodus to the sunshine outside which was essential to their healing. I had just begun my message when two well dressed black men rounded the corner into the long corridor that faced me. Obviously they were not patients but visitors. As I caught sight of them, the Spirit of the

Lord impressed on me that this was trouble on its way. Wisdom dictated that I finish my message quickly and leave. The one man sat where you would expect a guest to sit, but the shorter more aggressive looking man came right to where I was standing, and when Samuel had finished interpreting, he began rattling off in some African dialect, possibly Zulu. I did not want this, as his whole manner was insolent and aggressive. I turned to Samuel and asked what this gentleman was saying? Samuel told me that he was interpreting into another African language. Very politely yet very firmly I turned to this man, thanked him for trying to help, but assured him we were managing just fine, as most of the patients understood English, and Xhosa was being given by Samuel for the rest. Reluctantly he sat down, but was very restless and disturbing in his manner. I completed my message very quickly, closed in prayer and dismissed the patients. A general exodus took place, until I was left with just Samuel and these two men, obviously comrades of his! I turned to Samuel and as I had done each week, asked him whether he was beginning to understand the love of God and the gift of Salvation through Jesus Christ, God's Son. The one who had been silent up to this point said to him, "Samuel, don't be misled by this white woman. You do not need Jesus Christ, as you can have direct communication with God." I interjected with the words of Jesus, "I am the way, the truth and the life, no man cometh to the Father but by Me." I felt a tap on my shoulder, and the very aggressive man stood there and began to quote, "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God..." He continued for a while, and I remarked that since he knew what is in the Bible, he would know that there is no other way to God but by Jesus. He immediately contradicted this by repeating what the other man had said, and then took hold of my shoulders and turned me to face the passage door and said, "It is time for you to go now, Mrs. Onions... and if you don't mind being seen with a black man, I am going to accompany you."

Amazing the calmness the Holy Spirit gives at a critical time like that. I found myself turning to Samuel and saying, "Seeing

we are so rudely interrupted, I will chat to you next week." Then turning to this man I said, "Of course I don't mind being seen with a black man. You see, black men have black hearts just like the white men have black hearts, and it is only the blood of Jesus that can change that!" He ignored this comment and asked "Why do you, a white woman, come to this hospital and speak to black people each week?" I replied, "Because black people like the white people all need Jesus, and He has called me to do this, so I obey Him." He told me then that I was never to come back to this hospital, or I would be very sorry. Suddenly I found myself thinking about my unreliable little Anglia, and the fact that Empilweni was on the outskirts of Port Elizabeth and on the border of the location, and that there were no nurses, doctors or anyone in sight for that matter. This man was determined to accompany me, and who knows what he would do. An S.O.S. prayer went up silently to my Father for help, and as I prayed I saw my answer coming down the long corridor. One of the pink-gowned patients was on his way to the ward. I knew this particular man did not understand a word of English, but had certainly come to know Jesus. As he approached, I smiled at him, signalled to him to stop and wait saying, "Please wait a minute I want to speak to you." I fervently hoped that he would not shrug his shoulders and say, "Aandiaz, English," as I was so often told by the patients. Instead he stopped, his face lit up, and he waited. I turned to the man who was accompanying me, and very firmly said, "Thank you for accompanying me. As I told you, I have no objection to being seen with a black man, because you need Jesus Christ, and I want to help you find Him. But now I want to speak to this man, so if you will please excuse me, you may go now." He did not like this, but could not argue. He said very emphatically, "Goodbye, Mrs Onions, please do not come to this hospital again or you will be sorry. Goodbye."

He turned on his heel, and went back to the ward to join Samuel and his friend. I turned to my precious black brother in the pink gown and as I shook his hand I said, "Thank you for coming when you did. You have no idea what I am saying, but

God sent you and may He richly bless you." He just smiled and nodded and off I went. Once in the car on the journey home I began shaking from head to toe, realising what could have happened. But once again the Lord comforted me with the fact that He is with us, and His angel encamps round about those that fear Him and delivers them. (Psalm 91).

I was more determined than ever that the devil would get no mileage from his intimidation, and that in spite of the threats I would continue my weekly visits to Empilweni. No further incidents took place, thank God. The next week when I questioned Samuel about the effect the ministry was having on his life he said, "Every night when I go to bed, somehow the words that you have been speaking go over and over in my mind, Try as I will, I am unable to shake them off. What magic do you practise?" I told him there was no magic, but that the Spirit of God was working in his life in answer to prayer.

Regrettably, through misconduct he was expelled from Empilweni a few weeks later. He did contact me after a year or so and told me he had given his life to the Lord. How I have learned to appreciate the on-going work of the Holy Spirit. It is easy for us to forget people over the years, specially when one is involved in serving the Lord and come to meet so many, but there is One who never forgets, and His Word assures us that while one sows the seed, another waters that seed, but God is the One who gives the increase. It is such a privilege being workers together with God.

C HAPTER 8 TESTIMONIES

During the time of my weekly visits to Santa and Empilweni, I was also teaching in the Assembly Sunday School. I saw that because of the involvement of so many people, the children were privileged to be about only eight to a class. I began thinking about those who had no opportunity at all. Once again this was the Spirit of God beginning to stir my spirit. I remembered the blessing of the hospital Sunday schools in East London when I was young, and the joy and expectation of those children who had to lie day after day in boredom. Often our children who have the privilege of hearing God's Word each week do not appreciate it. The children who have very little, who are confined to a hospital ward for months sometimes, are so grateful for anything that is given them. I knew that at the Livingstone Hospital there were a number of children's wards, and on making enquiries discovered they had no spiritual input at all. We often think of a 'mission field' as some distant land. Very often there is one right on our own doorstep.

As the burden deepened, I realised after prayer that Jesus had said, "Knock and the door will be opened!" No door opens until you make the effort to knock. I decided to phone the Matron of the hospital, requesting permission to have time each Sunday with the children in Ward P1, as this was the Orthopaedic Ward. Matron was on leave, and I got the assistant Matron. I made my request and was told that it was hospital policy not to give permission to any church to have services. Evidently several denominations had applied over the years and had been turned down. I told this lady that I was not a church, nor was I coming on behalf of any denomination, but my name was Maureen Onions, and I wanted to come and share the love of Jesus with these children, giving them the Word of God and praying for them. I was told that she had no authority of her own, that any request had to be made to the hospital board, and would depend upon their decision. She was most co-operative though and offered

to speak on my behalf, and let me know the result. I later learned that it was because she was a Christian she had been prepared to do this for me, whereas the Matron herself would more than likely have immediately rejected my request! Already God was preparing the way. About a week later she phoned. "Mrs Onions, the board said they would agree on one condition. You said you wanted to go to Ward P1., but they have requested that you include Ward P2."

Overjoyed at not only one door opening, but two, I resigned from the Assembly Sunday School, explaining my burden, and began my new mission immediately. Week by week I had the joy and privilege of leading not only the children, but very often parents and nursing staff to Jesus.

When I was at school I always had a desire to become a nurse, feeling it would be an ideal opportunity to minister for the Lord. Somehow that door never opened, but God was preparing me for the work He had planned for my life, ministering to sick people! I marvel at the way in which He works to fulfil His will in our lives .

PRAYER MEETING FOR TEACHERS

Some school teachers who had been filled with the Holy Spirit during the early renewal asked me if they could meet with me for prayer each week. Wednesday afternoon seemed the best time, and our home the venue. Each week about ten or more would come and share their particular burdens and problems and we would then have earnest prayer together! A name kept cropping up for prayer each week. (For obvious reasons I will change the name). A very difficult lady, who I will call Cynthia Jones, headed up a department to which many of these teachers had to submit. From week to week one of these teachers would be in tears, or heavily burdened due to the pressure from this particular overseer. Often I would be asked what they could do to change the situation. Not having met her, it was easy to say, "Forgive, show her love, and pray for her salvation." With a sigh I would be told, "But you don't know Cynthia." Needless to say we prayed earnestly for her.

She had trained in the States, and during that time had been involved in some occultist organisation and later in Spiritualism! Intellectually she was brilliant and could tie people up in knots. She had been an alcoholic, but through sheer will power had mastered this problem for over 12 years. She had also given up smoking on her own, once again through will power. Due to circumstances she was very bitter with life, and suffered with rheumatoid arthritis which seemed to be worsening.

HOW DEEP ARE YOUR FOUNDATIONS

We were having a series of special meetings in our church, and the place was full each Sunday night as visitors from all over poured in. Our minister was a very gifted man, and preached with a strong anointing which brought souls to salvation each week. I used to sit at the back of the church with our three little children, while David played the organ for the services. This particular night I was lost in thought as the people were coming into the service. All of a sudden my attention was drawn to a lady who walked in through the door. There was an air about her, and the Spirit of the Lord said to me "This is Cynthia...."!

My advice to the teachers came vividly to my mind. "Forgive, show her love and pray for her salvation." I had nothing to forgive, as I had never met her before, but I knew the rest of this advice needed to be carried out by me. She chose to sit at the opposite end of the same pew that our little family were using. As she settled down she looked at the people round her and her eyes eventually came to me. I decided the best way to show love was to give her a big warm welcoming smile. She immediately looked away in disgust. Perhaps she thought that smiling was out of place in church, irreverent or something! I did not know, but just began to pray silently for her. Each time she would glance my way she was met with a smile, but no smile was returned. She fumbled with the hymn book when the number was announced, so I quickly gave her mine. The subject that night was "How deep are your foundations?" From the very beginning, Cynthia began to squirm in her seat.

She was coming under the conviction of the Holy Spirit. Not knowing how to pray, I was so grateful for the assistance of the Holy Spirit who prays through us in other tongues according to the will of the Father. (Romans 8:26-27). As I was one of the counsellors, I glanced up when the appeal was made to see whether I would be needed. To my incredible joy Cynthia gingerly slipped up her hand! The minister invited those who had indicated a need to come to the front. Quite a number went forward, but Cynthia sat tight. "Obviously needs encouragement and this is where I can show love in a practical way," I thought, as I made my way to her end of the pew. Standing in front of her, I whispered, "Would you like to come to the front with me?" Fear filled her and I am sure if she had not been such a dignified lady, she would have run from the church at that moment. She shook her head violently from side to side, so I knew that she was not prepared to come forward. I am not 'stubborn Irish' for nothing, and was not going to give up. Here was a fish about to be caught for the Kingdom, but was trying to get away. The struggle is always the strongest just before the fish is landed! I smiled and whispered, "If you don't want to go forward to the front, how about coming to the back with me? There is a room, and I can pray for you there." Again I could see the intense look of fear on her face, but she managed to say, "I will come to the back with you."

A TEAR POPPED OUT!

We left and made our way to the small room at the back of the church, I was eager to discover if she was in fact Cynthia and that I had "heard" the Spirit correctly. As we sat down, I began with "Hello, my name is Maureen Onions." To which she replied, "Oh, I have heard all about you!" I asked her what her name was and she replied "Cynthia Jones"! I did not tell her that I had heard all about her, but simply dropped all formalities and said, "I'm pleased to meet you, Cynthia." She looked rather shocked that this very young woman would be so familiar, when everyone else stood on ceremony with her. I proceeded to amplify the gospel, showing her the relevant

scriptures, and then suggested she should follow me in a prayer giving her life to Jesus. At the time it was like counselling a piece of granite, she was so hard, but at the end of the prayer together, I was aware that a hanky was being dabbed to one eye, as a tear had popped out!

I warmly congratulated her on making sure of her foundation, and told her I would get her some literature to take home. As I handed her the literature she said, "I don't want anyone to know I have been here for prayer!" Knowing there was only one door out which opened onto the stream of people already making their exit, I thought she would have some difficulty being a 'secret' enquirer! As I said goodbye to her I added that if ever she needed further help to feel free to contact me. I must admit at that point I wondered if I would ever see or hear from her again!

Monday morning at 8 a.m. my phone rang. In answer to my greeting an unmistakable voice said, "Good morning. This is Cynthia Jones. I have phoned to tell you that you helped me more than you realised. Now I would like to see you again, and I am free Tuesday morning or Wednesday morning at 10 a.m." What a shock I got! I had underestimated the working of the Holy Spirit! I am learning not to judge by outward appearances, but to become sensitive to the prompting of the Holy Spirit. Feeling inadequate for the task, I was glad that I could stall a bit. Tuesday was my day at the T.B. Hospital and so agreed to meet with her on the Wednesday morning, as this would give me more time.

THE NEED OF THE LOVE OF GOD

As I waited on the Lord for guidance as to what to give her when she came, He made me very aware that this poor soul desperately needed His love revealed. Taking my concordance, I made a note of all the 'love' verses I could find, and was ready when she arrived on the stroke of ten! Knowing she suffered much pain from her arthritic condition I

decided to give her the recliner chair we had, put on soft worship music, and then just read the Word of God to her. It was an overcast day which made the lounge a bit dark, so I sat under our reading lamp once she was comfortable, telling her that I wanted her just to totally relax and let the Word of God have its desired effect in her life. As I read I noticed her beginning to relax, and it was not long before her eyes were closed and the peace of the Lord began to fill her being as she listened. I had been reading for about half an hour when I heard her say, "Do you know that there is a blue light all over you?" I shuddered inwardly, knowing she had been in spiritualism, but hastily shrugged it off by saying, "Oh, there is an easy explanation for that. You will notice my Bible has a blue leather cover, and it is obviously the reflection of the reading lamp on this!" Once again she closed her eyes and seemed to drift off, possibly in sleep for a while although there were no snores!!

At about 12.45 she became aware of the time, and was most apologetic for having kept me so long. I told her that it was no problem, as Wednesdays were set aside for serving the Lord, and that I had a prayer meeting that afternoon at 3 p.m. She raised her eyes and asked if anyone could attend? Before I had time to consider, I replied she was welcome. As she left she said "I will be back at 3 p.m., I have enjoyed this morning so much!" Suddenly I was aware of the fact that the very teachers who had prayed for her attended this prayer meeting and I wondered what her reaction would be when she walked into the room and saw them all there! I soon found out. She arrived promptly at 3 p.m. and stood open-mouthed as she surveyed them in surprise. I rushed forward and said, "Welcome Cynthia, we are so glad to have you with us!" The teachers were quite stunned too, as each one formally greeted "Miss Jones!" This was the beginning of a tremendous work of God in her life. The time came when she knew she must destroy all her occultist books. True repentance requires turning away from all that is not of God, and this was an indication that she really meant business with Him.

Unfortunately the enemy always has a counter-attack in some way.

She had gone to bed and to sleep after burning the things in her possession relating to the occult. She awoke in the early hours of the morning in pain, so decided to have a bath to ease the condition. She was no sooner in the bath than the phone rang. This was about 3 a.m. Wondering who on earth would phone that time of the morning, she got out and answered, but there was no-one there. Back into the bath, and once again the phone rang, and again no response. By now she was filled with fear. The enemy was on the attack, and living all alone she did not know what to do. She decided she would kneel down and pray, after phoning one of the teachers from my prayer meeting to pray for her. She later told me that as she prayed it was as if she was at the foot of a flight of steps, and as she sat there the blood of Jesus just poured over her. The fear left and an incredible joy bubbled up within her.

A NEW JOY AND LAUGHTER

About a week later she asked if I would pray with her to be filled with the Holy Spirit. She arrived that afternoon and as I opened the front door she burst into laughter. Between laughing spasms she told me about her experience and the amazing peace that had filled her as she had prayed. From that moment she had not been able to stop laughing. For about 16 years she had never laughed naturally or spontaneously, and now God was beginning to restore her emotions. I asked her whether she was conscious of having spoken in tongues during the time of her experience? But she did not think she had, and said she really did not know. This newfound joy was an indication to me that possibly she had been filled with the Spirit, as there was a new love for people that had previously been missing. After I had shared relevant verses with her, and given a bit of instruction we got down to prayer. I decided to lay hands on her and then discreetly leave her alone with God for a short while. On my return she was kneeling in His presence, her eyes were closed and she was

talking in other tongues! On and on for some time this new language poured from her and then she was quiet. When she eventually sat up, I asked her what had happened. She said she had the same wonderful experience of being at the bottom of the flight of stairs, and again as she sat there the blood of Jesus was flowing over her. I asked if she knew that she had been speaking in tongues but she was not aware of the fact. I now knew she had been filled, but realised that in His time He would convince her. As she left me that day I asked her to let me know when she came into liberty in her prayer language!

The very next day she phoned and told me she could now speak in tongues. She had been writing a letter to someone and did not know how to put the gospel across. She began praying, when she suddenly realised that she was not praying in English, but in some other language! It was wonderful watching her grow and develop in God. The teachers and I often marvelled at the incredible grace and power of God that could change one of the hardest people we knew into what Cynthia had now become. In fact when we went into full-time ministry in July 1970, she joined us in the church we were pioneering!

DELIVERANCE MINISTRY.

God was growing these onions as He prepared us for the ministry. Although we were both involved in spiritual things as much as we possibly could be, we had no idea of what God had in store for us. In retrospect we now recognise that God was moulding our lives, training and giving us insights that we were going to need in the future.

David and his friend Andy were praying together early each morning. He was also involved in ministry to alcoholics who had come to know Jesus. The more we saw of lives in bondage, specially Christians, the more we realised that there had to be answers. In the Assemblies of God at that time, the teaching was emphatic that no child of God could have any demonic bondage whatever in their lives. The problem was always attributed to a lack of discipline! But from examining

God's Word, and also from practical experience we discovered that Christians can have enemy strongholds which need to be broken down!

For example, Judas was a disciple of Jesus, given authority and sent out with the others. Yet because of an area that had not been dealt with and surrendered to Jesus, Judas allowed an enemy stronghold to develop and Satan eventually entered into him. His problem had to do with finance; he was pocketing some of the money put in his care! Even Ananias and Sapphira allowed Satan to fill their hearts causing them to lie to the Holy Spirit with disastrous results. They were Spirit-filled believers and part of the early church!

One day I got a phone call from a lady. Once again for obvious reasons I will change her name and call her Jane Mills. She had given her life to the Lord, and I was present when she was filled with the Holy Spirit. This dear lady had had many past problems. She had been an alcoholic, and had suffered severe depressions which shock treatment did nothing to alleviate. She had also come under tremendous condemnation from thinking she had committed the unpardonable sin. Although she had vastly improved after giving her life to Jesus, she was still bound by a spirit of fear. I knew she really loved the Lord as she would sit for hours at a time reading the Word of God, and listening to Christian tapes. This fear was a fear of death, and as a result she needed many aspirin-type tablets to steady herself in order to wash her hair, bath, or be involved in normal household chores. She never left her home alone and no longer drove her car. If ever there was a Christian who was bound, Jane was. I began to question many things through this, and was fast coming to the firm belief that Jane, and people like her, needed deliverance. One day she phoned crying and quite distraught through fear. I told her I would send the minister to pray for her. I phoned our minister who quite obviously did not believe that a Christian could be bound. After explaining her position to him I asked if he could see her urgently as she needed to be set free from bondage. Very politely he told me he would see her and

assess the problem, and pray for her. A few hours later he phoned to tell me I was mistaken in thinking she needed to be set free, as all she needed was to face reality. Why was she afraid of death? What had triggered off this attack? etc. He told me he had prayed that she would be strong and left her feeling fine. I hoped he was right, but the awareness of her bondage never left me.

I had many talks with my father on the subject. In fact we would debate at great length, as he had always been adamant that no true child of God could have a need for deliverance. He had ministered to demon possessed people throughout his ministry, but it had always been to people not yet committed to Christ. Eventually he told me that if I felt so certain about Jane, I should minister deliverance to her.

TIME FOR DELIVERANCE

I remember going before the Lord after reading a booklet by Derek Prince called "Expelling Demons", and telling the Lord I was willing to set her free. I explained that I was totally inexperienced, but if He wanted to use me in this case, Jane must contact me and bring up the subject. That very day she phoned me. The conversation began by her asking if David could visit an alcoholic contact of hers. Then she asked me if I felt that alcohol was an evil spirit. I explained that alcohol was a man-made spirit, not an evil spirit! But the spirit that drove the person to become addicted was the evil spirit. There was a pause and then she asked if I felt that fear was a spirit. I quoted "God hath not given us a spirit of fear but of love, power and a sound mind." There was a moment of silence and then she asked, "Maureen do you feel I have a spirit of fear?" I replied, "Yes Jane, contrary to regular Assembly doctrine, I do." The relief from her voice made me realise what torment this poor woman had been through in trying to overcome something that was beyond her capability of dealing with! "Oh Maureen, I am so relieved. I have tried and tried to get victory, but have been unable. Will you please set me free?" I told her that I had never done anything like that for a

Christian before, but was willing to try. I arranged to fetch her from her home the next day.

Both David and my mother-in-law were very supportive in prayer. I fetched Jane and took her to our bedroom so that we should not be disturbed, and then began by committing our time together in prayer and inviting the Holy Spirit to do the work. I asked her when this fear had begun and was told that seven years previously when her father-in-law had died she had become obsessed with the fear of death. She had not driven a car or done normal shopping on her own since, had tried many things to overcome it, but to no avail. I then asked if there was any unforgiveness in her life or unconfessed sin, as this would be an effectual hindrance. (I had already made certain that my life was right in every area, as I did not want to be a hindrance in any way..).

She shared about a few disagreements with neighbours etc. Nothing major, yet things that were important to put right. I asked if there was anything else she felt the Lord was saying to her in preparation. She felt there was nothing, so we got down to prayer. Jane knelt the one side of our huge double bed, while I knelt the other side. I began by praying that the Holy Spirit would make His presence manifest by doing whatever was necessary. I then invited Jane to pray, asking God for forgiveness for the things she had mentioned in preparation. I did encourage her to also confess to God anything else He might reveal.

She began praying about the things she had shared, when all of a sudden she began to weep saying, "Lord I am sorry, I really did not realise what I was doing." I wondered what this was all about, but soon discovered as she went on. "Lord it is because people have said I look like Elizabeth Taylor and because of the film "Cleopatra" I have worn this heavy make-up, to make me look more like her. I promise you I will not wear make-up like this anymore!"

Although we lived in an era of legalism in the church, where in some quarters make-up was frowned on, Jane's heavy make-up had never particularly bothered me. Knowing she was a fairly new convert, I knew the Holy Spirit was the One to bring

conviction where needed, not me. She was a very beautiful lady, and I now understood from her prayer why she had painted her face so heavily! As she wept it began to literally drip off!!

NOW YOU ARE READY

How grateful I was for the way the Holy Spirit had manifested His gracious presence in conviction. Jane was now ready for deliverance to take place. I told her not to say anything, but just kneel in an attitude of prayer. Very firmly, yet quietly, I began using my God-given authority. "Spirit of fear, in Jesus Name I command you to release your hold on Jane, and come out." Nothing happened. I became a little more definite and emphatic and a little louder, just in case this spirit of the fear of death was not hearing me! "In the name of Jesus, and in the authority that He has given me as His servant, I command you to release your hold on Jane and come out NOW!" With that I got the fright of my life. Suddenly Jane's back arched and she began to be shaken violently, so much so, that our whole bed began to bounce. She began screaming, and in a split second the enemy suggested to me that she was now going out of her mind and I was responsible. He reminded me that she had previously had shock treatments, and now would probably need to be 'committed'! The precious Comforter, the Holy Spirit came alongside me and clearly said, "Maureen, keep going, this is her deliverance!" I then got off my knees, a new boldness and authority filling me as I said, "That's right, spirit of fear, come out NOW in Jesus' powerful name!" A deafening scream was heard, as the spirit of the fear of death finally left. Jane suddenly quietened, the glory of the Lord began to fill her, and as she knelt there, hands raised now in worship and love for Jesus she began praying in tongues. It was beautiful. What a contrast to the torment and troubled look she had always had. She looked up at me and said, "Maureen, for the first time in my life I have the most incredible peace and joy. I am free!"

As I drove her home that day, we discussed the need for her to be at the Breaking of Bread that night and to testify to what God had done in freeing her. Her husband kept long hours at work, and was going to slip in late straight from work, so I arranged that we would fetch her for the meeting. That very day she put the things right with the neighbours, and drove her car for the first time in seven years.

JESUS HAS SET ME FREE

A new Jane attended Breaking of Bread that night. Gone was the evidence of Cleopatra, and a glowing sweetness of the presence of Jesus radiated from her instead. She stood to testify during the time of 'open ministry'. She shared that she had been so bound by a spirit of the fear of death, but that day the Lord had wonderfully set her free! As she stood there she got so excited and with uncontrollable joy repeated, "I am free, free, Jesus has set me free." Many who had known her and the condition she had been in were moved very deeply; tears flowed freely. Even the minister acknowledged that something wonderful had taken place. Her husband had a brand new wife and was overjoyed.

About a week or so later I got a phone call from Jane. It disturbed me. "Maureen you promised... yes Maureen you promised that I would not be troubled anymore by that spirit of fear." I replied, "WHO promised?" "You promised", she said. Immediately I realised that there were ends that needed tying up in order to prevent the enemy from once again bringing her into bondage. I needed to establish once and for all with her, WHO it was that had delivered her. It was the Lord, and not me. In fact I was only too aware of my own inadequacy and my total dependence on the Holy Spirit to do the work, as I just yielded to Him as an instrument of righteousness. I wanted no glory at all, it all belonged to Him.

I rushed round to her home and shared all this with her after establishing the fact that in testifying to friends she had been

unwittingly giving me glory. I showed her from the Word of God that Jesus had said, "Whom the SON sets free IS FREE INDEED." These were His words, not mine. It was His promise, not mine. She then clearly understood, and in prayer we once again established and confessed the victory that she had received in Jesus, and I laid hands on her, imparting His peace. This brought back the peace, and the work was complete. I am sure there must have been attacks from time to time, but she now knew how to resist the devil, and he had to flee. Today over 26 years later, she is faithfully serving the Lord with fear a thing of the past. Her whole family joined us when we went into the ministry pioneering a church.

Somehow the subject of "deliverance" has always been controversial. People appreciate what God has done in saving and healing, and even baptising them in the Holy Spirit. But when they hear of deliverance and the manifestations that take place during this time, they reject it. I wonder what they would have done in the time of Jesus, when this formed a large part of His ministry. Of course He too was harshly criticised for this ministry as the religious leaders asked "What NEW doctrine is this?"

The nearer we get to the return of Jesus, the more we will see the need to set people free. Satan knows he only has a short time left and is pulling out all the stops. The more people open to his temptations the easier it is for them to become bound. We are now discovering that the anointing of God flowing through us very often disturbs the evil spirits that are in people as they begin to cry out or manifest in some way in the meetings. Wonderful being able to use God-given authority in Jesus powerful Name, and know that demons have to be subject to us.

After Jane's deliverance I asked the Lord one day how our minister and learned men of God found difficulty in accepting this ministry, and yet God had been able to use me? He gave me the answer in Luke 10: 17-21.

"The seventy-two returned with joy and said, 'Lord, even the demons submit to us in your name.'" He replied, "I saw Satan fall like lightning from heaven. I have given you authority to

trample on snakes and scorpions and to overcome all the power of the enemy; nothing will harm you. However, do not rejoice that the spirits submit to you, but rejoice that your names are written in heaven." At that time Jesus, full of joy through the Holy Spirit said, "I praise you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because You have hidden these things from the wise and learned, and revealed them to little children. Yes, Father, for this was Your good pleasure."

What joy it must bring to the Father when those of us who know we are nothing outside of Him, rise up with the authority He has given, in the power of the Spirit.

Jesus said in John 20:21-22, "Peace be with you! As the Father hath sent me, I am sending you." And with that He breathed on them and said, "Receive the Holy Spirit."

Notice that Jesus had promised we would do the works He did in John 14:12, if we believed. "I tell you the truth, anyone who has faith in me will do what I have been doing. He will do even greater things than these, because I am going to the Father."

One of the things Jesus did frequently, was bring deliverance to those who were bound. When He delivered two demon-possessed men in Matt 8:28-34, the whole town pleaded with Him to leave their region. How tragic that the people were more concerned about their financial loss of the herd of pigs, than that two men who were in tremendous need had been set free. Incidentally, being Jews, they should not have been keeping pigs! Many Christians hold back from setting captives free because of the rejection and opposition that often results.

Satan has been robbing people and bringing them into dreadful bondage. God longs that the church would rise up and bring them out of that bondage into the glorious freedom He has provided. In Isaiah 42, just after God shows how blind and deaf His servants are, He presents the need of the people in verse 22. "But this is a people plundered and looted, all of them trapped in pits or hidden away in prisons. They have become plunder with no one to rescue them; they have been made loot, with no one to say, 'Send them back.' " Then there follows a challenge from God to those of us who are willing to hear and obey. Verse 23: "Which of you will listen to this or pay close attention in time to come?"

What an example Jesus was. In the very beginning of His public ministry, just after He had been filled with the Holy Spirit and been tempted by Satan in the wilderness He returned in the power of the Spirit. His first activity was to go to the temple, take the scroll and read from Isaiah 61:1-2.

"The Spirit of the Sovereign Lord is on Me, because the Lord has anointed Me to preach good news to the poor, He has sent Me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners and recovery of sight for the blind, to release the oppressed, to proclaim the year of the Lord's favour.," He then added, "Today this scripture is fulfilled in your hearing."

After making disciples he sent them out to minister, and one of the instructions was to "cast out devils." Later He sent out 70 with the same commission.

I do believe the Lord is waiting for us to rise up like Jesus did, and in the anointing He imparts, bring release to those who are in bondage.

FLOODED IN MORE WAYS THAN ONE.

After Don Hawke had been filled with the Spirit and had shared his testimony, many other ladies from different denominations attended our Wednesday afternoon prayer meetings from time to time.. Very often God filled them with the Holy Spirit. These ladies had a tremendous hunger and thirst for God, and He graciously fulfilled His Word in which He said that those who hunger and thirst after righteousness shall be filled. One day a lady named Barbara from Summerstrand came to our home in Cotswold. She was a Presbyterian and a very genuine Christian. There was such a longing in Barbara's heart to receive equipping from God as she had always been a very active Christian and felt her own inadequacy. That afternoon as I shared the Word before prayer, she literally drank in all that was said. With great intensity and fervour she knelt to receive from God as we got down to prayer. While she received an anointing, she never broke through completely with her new prayer language. As she left I encouraged her to

relax, as this really opens us to God. Striving is not faith and often hinders us!

That night Port Elizabeth experienced a devastating flood which caused much damage and havoc. Summerstrand was one of the areas that became cut off from the rest of Port Elizabeth due to roads being washed away and telephone lines destroyed. This meant that we were unable to have contact with friends from Summerstrand.

The day the phones were connected once again, Barbara phoned to tell me that on her way home from our prayer meeting, she began to sing a chorus. Next thing she was aware that she was not singing in English, but in some language she had never learned. Incredible joy filled her, and from that time Barbara has been such a blessing as God has used her for His glory. She certainly got the 'early and latter rain together' in more ways than one!

C HAPTER 9 INTO FULL-TIME MINISTRY.

While God had been growing this onion over many years, He had also been preparing David for His plan and purpose. David was finding himself more and more frustrated at having to devote so much time to business, when his heart was in the work of God. His days were long and very full. David and his brother Victor had a family business called "Kariba Batteries." God had blessed the business and prospered them because they walked in integrity and were not prepared to compromise. Although the flood had almost wiped them out completely the business soon built up once again, and plans to expand by building new and more adequate premises were being made. David's parents had retired, and the full responsibility was on Victor and David. Over and above this, the call of God to be involved in His Kingdom burned in David's heart. He was an elder in the Port Elizabeth Assembly at the time.

In December 1969 we went on holiday to Cape Town and met up with 'old' friends from Rhodesia who were planning to go into the work of the Lord full-time. As we chatted, we came to realise the tremendous sacrifice this would require. On our return to Port Elizabeth our minister called to see us. He shared that he had a desire to launch out into other areas of Port Elizabeth, but would need a full-time elder, and was guiding the Assembly towards his vision. As he had prayed he felt that we were the ones needed in a full-time capacity. We prayed together that God would clearly guide by providing the necessary financial support, and set a target for July 1970. We agreed that we would not mention this to anyone because we wanted God's provision to be a confirmation to us.. Soon afterwards we spent a weekend with Mom and Dad Mullan in East London. Dad's was an Apostolic ministry that had pioneered most of the Assemblies at the time. Generally he encouraged people into the ministry, but in all the years of his

knowledge of our love and zeal for the work of God, he had never mentioned the prospect of us going into full-time ministry. We had hardly settled into the home that weekend when Dad cornered David. "Well my boy, when are you going into the ministry?" David was quite taken aback and for a moment did not know what to say. He thought that our minister must have discussed his whole vision and plan with Dad, and therefore the question. So David shared that we were waiting on the Lord for the necessary financial support, and we were trusting that by the 1 July he would become a full-time elder.

Dad's vision and policy were a little different! He did not favour full-time elders as there was such a lack of suitable men for full-time service as ministers. He believed that those with the call of God on their lives, who had developed in the ministry of the Word in the local Assembly, should be put into the work of God to prove their ministry. The result was a 'make or break' experience! It was a very tough school, and there were those who did not make it, and had to leave the ministry. He did not share his thoughts with David, but contacted our minister and told him what he felt. This resulted in a change of plan, and instead of David becoming a full-time elder, he was to be thrust forth into the Western Suburbs of Port Elizabeth to pioneer a brand new work as a full-time minister! In the meantime David had the heavy responsibility of business commitments. Pulling out would not only be difficult, but unfair to his brother, in the light of the plans that were afoot for extending business operations. In spite of this we knew that if God was in this He would somehow make a way. We decided that before it got too close to July, we needed to gently broach the subject in conversation with his parents.

We went to see them one afternoon with this in mind. As we sat discussing the plans for the new factory David gingerly put out a feeler. "What would happen to the business, if either Victor or I had to pull out for some reason?" Immediately Mom looked at Dad and said, "What did I tell you, Freddie?" She then turned to David and said, "It's all right. I already know that you will be pulling out of the business. The Lord showed me some weeks ago that He wanted you for full-time ministry.

I struggled with this, knowing the difficulties you would have to face and wept before the Lord in this regard. But I know it is His plan for your lives, and we are therefore prepared to release you with our blessing. In fact I have already spoken to Victor, telling him you will be going into the ministry." If ever we needed confirmation of a Supernatural nature, we got it that day! We had said nothing, but our Heavenly Father had done the talking, and made the crooked places straight.

To cut a long story short, we left the Port Elizabeth Central Assembly at the end of June 1970, together with several families who were led of the Lord to join us in pioneering the new Assembly in the Western Suburbs. The oversight prayed for us, ordaining us into the ministry. We had no idea of what lay before us, but God graciously led us step by step.

Our 'church building' was an old scout hall in the grounds at the back of the large Roman Catholic Church. It was the only venue we could find at the time. We called it instant church. Before each service portable pelmets and curtains were put on the windows. The piano and pulpit were wheeled out of a little room that had been loaned to us for storage, and once the chairs had been set out we were ready for the service to begin! We were blessed to have such a supportive and loving group of dedicated believers alongside us. It was tough going as somehow the imposing Catholic Church rather emphasised the shabbiness of the scout hall, and when people were invited to attend the meetings the venue put them off. Our first Sunday night one soul, a man named Harry responded for salvation, and it was not long before he and his wife Eileen and their two children became part of our 'family' of believers. For a whole year after that we never had a single conversion in spite of earnest prayer, door to door visitation in the area and the starting of a children's Bible Club. It really was tough going, although the believers became a very close-knit fellowship and of course we did have our humorous moments too.

PRAYER MEETINGS IN OUR HOME.

Because the scout hall did not lend itself to close fellowship, we had the prayer meetings in our home. One night we knelt

down to pray and possibly because the room needed more ventilation, we became aware of muffled snores which got louder and louder, the noise competing with the prayers. One of our brothers had dozed off to sleep! The rest of us looked up at one another and tried hard to stifle our amusement as we valiantly continued our time of prayer. Eventually we all sat up and this dear brother woke up, he smiled at us all and remarked: "What a wonderful prayer meeting!" He certainly had found the secret of 'resting in the Lord'!!

I remember one Sunday morning sitting halfway down the scout hall while David was preaching. There was a wind blowing outside, and because of the holes in the roof, pollen would sometimes blow into the hall. This particular morning the pollen seemed to be somewhat larger than usual, as I watched it bombarding my husband from time to time. The amazing thing was that it seemed to come from below and not from above and then I saw what was really happening. Our young son, Steve, obviously bored with the meeting, had been tearing up bits of paper, chewing them until they were the size he wanted, and then was flicking them at his dad! That was the last time he sat alone in the front!

TREMENDOUS DARKNESS WAS COMING

Our breaking of bread service was held on a Saturday night. I remember Dad once saying that the Scriptures referred to it as the Lord's supper, not His breakfast! We always had 'open ministry' in these services. This provided an opportunity for many to develop their potential in sharing the Word of God in preparation for full-time ministry. It also served to bring a balance of ministry to the Body of believers. This practice was based on I Cor. 14:26-33. Being a small fellowship, we would all wait on the Lord for something to share and in this way began to develop in ministering the Word.

One Saturday afternoon when we normally would relax together as a family, I had a very strong urge to go and pray. I asked David if he would watch the children, so I could pray undisturbed for a while. I had such a strong feeling that I needed to be alone in the presence of God, so chose to use

David's study that led off our bedroom. As I closed the door, I got down on my knees, and began praising the Lord. Suddenly I began to be aware of the most dreadful darkness filling the room and enveloping me. I could not understand this, as normally being in His Presence brought light and glory. I began calling out to Him, as this darkness was so oppressive and I found myself weeping under the heaviness of it. "What is this, Lord?" I kept asking. But for some time no answer came, and I became frightened. It was awesome. Then He began to speak to me so clearly.

"This oppressive darkness you are experiencing right now is symbolic of the darkness that My people are going to face very soon. I know what darkness is like, as I went through a time of incredibly tense darkness. I had come to the end of My earthly ministry and the cross lay before Me. It was a time in which darkness also faced My disciples. I warned Peter by telling him that Satan had desired to sift him as wheat, but I had prayed for him that his faith would not fail."

TWO CLEAR PICTURES

I then saw in vision form two scenes side by side. The first was of the disciples in a boat that was being tossed about on the sea of Galilee like a little cork, as the wind howled whipping the waves into a fury. Ominous clouds hung low, and I saw tremendous fear on their faces as they tried bailing the water out, to no avail. I noticed Jesus was not the least perturbed but was lying fast asleep in perfect peace throughout the ordeal. In their terror the disciples awoke Him, and began to cry out to Him to do something.

The other scene was such a contrast. An outwardly tranquil scene of a beautiful garden. Everything seemed so peaceful and quiet. It was quite early in the evening as a group of men slowly made their way into this garden. Leaving the rest of the group together, Jesus took three of His disciples and made His way further into the garden. Jesus was very sorrowful and troubled and told the three who were with Him, "My soul is overwhelmed with sorrow to the point of death. Stay here and

keep watch with me." (Matt 26:36-45). He then went on alone and fell with His face to the ground, as He agonised in prayer, sweat drops of blood falling from His brow. I noticed that the disciples, instead of paying attention to His warning to watch and pray, had succumbed to weariness and the tranquillity of the garden, and had fallen asleep!

The difference between these two pictures caused me to question Him. "Lord, why are you showing me such contrasting pictures? On the one hand the disciples in obvious peril praying to You to do something, yet you were asleep. On the other hand the tranquility of the garden, yet you were weeping and praying with such a heavy burden, and the disciples were asleep. What does it all mean?" He made me understand that in the first scene there was no need for fear or lack of peace. He had told the disciples to get into a boat with Him, they were going over to the other side. He knew that no circumstance or storm could defy the authority and power of His Word. He had said that they were going over, not under, and so there was no need to panic! Storms like that would inevitably come. But no matter how difficult or threatening the situation may seem to be, If He has given a word and we are prepared to stand in faith believing that word, we can be at peace and at rest, knowing with confidence that His word cannot fail but will be fulfilled in our lives!. In Isaiah 43 He has promised us that when we pass through the waters He will be with us, and when we pass through the rivers they will not sweep over us. When we walk through the fire we will not be burned, the flames will not set us ablaze. Yet how often when we find ourselves in situations like these, we begin crying to the Lord to be with us, to protect us. Praying for things that He has already provided would be to pray obsolete prayers! I was immediately aware of many prayers of my own that were obsolete. So often we ask God to do something, when He has already given us the authority to do it. He is glorified when we believe what He has said and obey!

The second scene revealed the subtle darkness, hidden from view, but incredibly powerful in effect. This was the time to pray, as well as to watch, knowing the spirit was willing, but the

flesh was so weak. Because we are unaware of the dangers, we fall asleep like the disciples instead of obeying His instructions, and as a result lose our victory. Notice that this was one time when Jesus prayed with strong crying and tears, and He was heard in what He had feared. (Heb. 5:7.) Many have wondered what He had feared in the Garden of Gethsemane to cause such anguish of soul. I do believe Jesus feared that He would die before He got to the cross, so heavy was the darkness of the sin of the whole world that was being placed on Him. It is hard for us to ever understand what faced the spotless Lamb of God.

WHAT THE SUBTLE DARKNESS WAS

The Lord then showed me why He was revealing these things to me. Satan was wanting to bring shame on the Name of Jesus, and his strategy was to attack God's people, specially those who were being effective in His service. One of the strongest areas of attack would be in the sexual area, and couples needed to strengthen their marriages and their communication.

There would also be those who would toss aside the call and claims of Christ for material things. Materialism would bring a carnality to the church, and effectively hinder the work of God. Others wanting popularity or acceptance would compromise their stand for Jesus, even denying Him by word or action. Some would fall away because of opposition and persecution, not willing to take up the cross and identify themselves with Christ in His suffering. This would cause them to forsake him.

A BIRD'S EYE-VIEW

He then let me have a 'bird's eye-view' of the proceedings at the time of darkness surrounding His death, and the reactions of the various disciples. These were men who had walked with Him for three and a half years, who functioned with Him. and had even gone to towns and villages in the authority of His Name and seen wonderful things take place.

At the last supper Jesus shared with his disciples what lay ahead of him. But somehow they were caught up with eating and having fellowship together, discussing which of them would be the greatest in the Kingdom. The things Jesus said did not penetrate their minds or have any impact upon them! My attention was suddenly changed to focus on Judas. He had come to the table of the Lord having already agreed to sell Jesus. In fact he was in possession of thirty pieces of silver, and was on the look-out for an opportunity to hand Jesus over. I felt such an anger rise up within me against Judas. How dare he come to the table of the Lord posing as one of His own, yet be prepared to betray him for financial gain! His greed and secret sin not only robbed him of a precious relationship with Jesus, but eventually totally destroyed him with disastrous eternal consequences! I remembered the time when a woman had anointed Jesus with a costly alabaster box of ointment, and he had commented that this was a waste, the alabaster box should have been sold and the money given to the poor. The Scriptures add here that it was not because he cared for the poor, but he kept the bag and was obviously in the habit of helping himself!

The Lord made me understand that there were people who would come to His table each week in the Church of Jesus Christ, just like Judas. They were hypocritical, going through the motions of worship yet their hearts were full of sin, and often left the meetings with intentions to compromise in some sinful situation. Just like Judas, they were prepared to forfeit their relationship with Christ for some earthly financial or sensual pleasure.

The focus was then on the disciples who were arguing among themselves about position. Instead of being aware of impending darkness, they were having a 'power struggle'. I was made aware that in the Church the struggle for position and power is often the motivation in people's activities for God. Who will be the greatest? Many do not realise that promotion comes from the Lord. He gives it to those who are humble and are willing to start at the bottom serving others.

Peter's confident and impassioned declaration was most impressive. "Lord though all forsake you, I will never forsake you." Yet not very long afterwards Peter denied even knowing Him. How often have we done the same sort of thing?

It is easy in a meeting when the Spirit of the Lord is moving on us to feel strongly about our desire to be faithful and walk with Him, to make sincere confessions of love and loyalty. But when the circumstances change, we too become weak like Peter. Had he obeyed Jesus' instructions in the Garden of Gethsemane to watch and pray, He would not have denied Him. He would have been strengthened. But he did not listen.

As Jesus was led away to be crucified, the Word says that all forsook Him and fled. The very time He needed support, He was alone. The cross and fear of being crucified had gripped the disciples' hearts. In the same way, when it is tough going, when persecution, opposition and rejection set in, it is hard to stand.

"Lord, please take me now", I prayed, as the tears streamed down my cheeks. "If those who walked with you in the flesh, who were so clearly called and instructed by you personally, failed, what chance do we have?" If ever I wanted to go 'home' to be with Him, it was then. Somehow the thought of failing Him and bringing Him heartache was more than I could bear.

He told me very clearly He was not taking me home, but I would be going through this time. He comforted me with something I had previously never considered. "Maureen, the disciples failed at this time because when I was led away, they were alone. They did not have My presence, nor did they have the Holy Spirit as their Comforter. He had not yet been given. But you are living in the time when the Holy Spirit has been poured out, and He will abide with you forever. He will convict, lead and guide you. You will never be alone, nor forsaken. But it is vital for you to 'watch and pray' so that you do not enter into temptation. Your spirit is willing, but your flesh is weak."

SHARING THIS IMPORTANT REVELATION

I was in His presence for close on three hours when all this took place. I cried and cried as the vivid scenes were portrayed before me. Very subdued and heavy with this burden, and His directive to share whenever He released me to do so, I went and joined David and the children. I told David that in obedience to God I would need to begin that very night at the Breaking of Bread service, before we partook of the emblems. David could see that I had experienced something very powerful in God's presence, and agreed.

I will never forget the difficulty of that meeting. I was not myself at all, as the burden and importance of the message was so heavy on me. Normally and naturally I am a joyful person, but 'Jeremiah' had nothing on me, for this occasion. Throughout the singing I just sat and wept. I remember asking the Lord to give this message to someone else, as I was inadequate for the task. But He suddenly spoke through a message in the Spirit to the effect that His strength is made perfect through our weakness, and what He has burdened us to do, He will anoint and use as we obey. I knew the message was just for me, so stood up. At first all I could do was weep. Not a word would come out. In desperation I looked around through the blurred vision of my tears, and caught sight of Cyril, an elderly man who walked closely with the Lord. I just knew at that moment he was busy interceding for me and I began to be strengthened. When I had finished speaking we had a time of opening our hearts to the challenge of the Holy Spirit, and making sure that none of us were guilty of coming to His table with sin in our hearts.

That night I was still heavily burdened with this message, and asked the Lord to give something to lift me. He gave me Isaiah 40:28-31. He reaffirmed Isaiah 43:1-13 to my heart. My joy was then restored.

From time to time I shared this revelation with various people. Then I was asked by our minister to share it with all the East Cape full-time workers at our quarterly get-together. I knew this was going to be a very important occasion, by the witness of the Holy Spirit. He gave me liberty, and the strength of the

warning was conveyed by the Spirit of God. The emphasis was on the urgency for marriage relationships to be strengthened. It is amazing how often we receive a warning, and at the time feel the importance of what is given, but do not obey the instruction. In retrospect, sad to say, of the fourteen full-time ministering couples present, seven heeded the warning and are together still serving the Lord, while the other seven couples are now divorced! I am grateful to God that He never required that we always had to be successful, but just faithful.

In the two and a half years we were in the Western Suburbs, God graciously added and the work grew and became self supporting. By the time we left the Assembly we were already negotiating for a plot of land to build a church.

C HAPTER 10 MINISTRY IN GRAHAMSTOWN

Our regional quarterly Assemblies of God ministers' meeting was held in King Williams' Town. Travelling in a Combi with a group of ministers we discussed where we felt we would all like to minister, and all agreed 'not in Grahamstown!' Soon after that David took the family to Natal on holiday. Our vehicle was a little the worse for wear, and we began having trouble with the clutch as we neared our destination. We realised that fitting a new clutch plate would be a big job, so decided to wait until we got back to Port Elizabeth. After all, it had only just begun giving trouble. On the way home, the Natal hills took their toll on the condition, and the clutch began slipping badly. We had to drive very slowly and pray fervently each time there was a need to change gear. I do remember in my prayer asking the Lord to please just get us home! As we approached Grahamstown, coming down the hill on the old road into the town, the clutch 'gave up the ghost'. We free-wheeled down the hill and stopped at the first garage. Friends very kindly fetched us from the garage and took us to Port Elizabeth. In my heart I was thinking that I had prayed and asked the Lord to just get us home. Why Grahamstown and not Port Elizabeth? I did not realise that within a month or two, Grahamstown was to be our new 'home'! When we were approached about going there to replace the previous minister who had done an excellent job, our first reaction was the thought that we would be square pegs in round holes! This was a university town, and the Assembly was comprised mostly of students with just a few townsfolk. Neither of us had ever been to university! God's ways are surely not our ways, nor is His wisdom human wisdom. He knew the beginning from the end. Obeying the call, we went. I felt very sad at having to leave the hospital work in Santa, Empilweni and Livingstone, and felt totally unprepared to cope with what lay ahead. Our area superintendent had felt that while the student work was thriving, there needed to be a more established group of town's people in the Assembly, to give stability. The student

work was more a 'missionary vision', as after their years of study they left Grahamstown to return to their homes. Also, during the university vacation, there was an exodus of students that left us with just a handful of people who met together for worship!

Soon after our arrival, while we were still trying to find our feet, and establish some sort of routine, a young man from the university came to see David and asked if he would get involved in a Campus Society, and help bring unity amongst the various Christian groups. Each denomination had its own society, e.g. 'Bap-soc' were the Baptists, 'Meth-soc' the Methodists, 'An-soc' the Anglicans and the Assembly was 'Ass-soc'!!! David firmly declined the invitation, telling him that his vision and commitment was to build up the local Assembly! But God had other plans, and it was not long before David found students flocking into the meetings. The church house had been built around the turn of the century, and was the venue for the prayer meetings and Bible studies. The large lounge very soon became far too cramped, and so the wall was knocked down between the lounge and dining-room to extend the room and seating capacity, but soon even that was full! David's teaching ministry was a great blessing in establishing the work, and the students would feel short-changed if he ever gave them less than an hour's study! An added attraction was the coffee and crunchies that were served at the end!

DON'T GRAB MEN, GIVE JESUS

A few months after our arrival, we attended another regional ministers' fellowship in King Williams' Town and God spoke to us very clearly on that occasion. One of the brethren ministered on the need to 'cast our bread on the waters, and after many days it would return.' The thrust of the message was to the effect that we must not grab men, but give Jesus! Unfortunately there is the tendency when establishing a work for God to be carried away by zeal and enthusiasm and

become insensitive to the Body of Christ, thinking nothing of 'Sheep-stealing' in order to build one's own empire. But we both became aware at that meeting that God's call upon our lives was to build His Kingdom, and not our own. We prayed fervently that the Lord would remove the blinkers from our eyes and let us see His body in its greater dimension, and be willing to freely give to others what He had given to us. Also to be able to receive from others, what He had given them! God heard our prayers, and opened our vision there and then. It began in a way we would not have chosen! One day we were visiting an elderly retired lady doctor who attended the Assembly. Visiting her at the same time was a nun from the Anglican convent. Having a tremendous interest in the Charismatic move that was taking place, and in view of our own involvement in Port Elizabeth, we remarked to this nun that we were delighted to hear that Bill Burnett, the Bishop of Grahamstown, had experienced this renewal. We added that we looked forward to meeting him sometime and trusted we would be able to have fellowship with him. Bill Burnett had been wonderfully impacted by the Holy Spirit in a most supernatural way, and had begun having large interdenominational meetings in his home every Tuesday evening. On this particular Tuesday, we had a meeting in Bathurst, a little town near Port Alfred and returned home very late that night. On our arrival home we found one of our members sitting outside our home waiting for us. She was deeply troubled, and shared that she had attended the Bishop's meeting that evening. Apparently an elderly nun from the Anglican convent had given a testimony in which she stated that she had met the new Assembly of God minister and his wife that day. She also said that we had passed a remark indicating that before long Bishop Bill would become a member of the Assembly of God! What a bombshell! We were horrified to say the least, and wondered how on earth she could have so misconstrued our conversation. We asked what happened next. Our friend said there was dead silence! Bill Burnett, who was obviously highly embarrassed and not a little distressed stood up and gently said, "There is no possibility of my joining the Assembly of God, but let us pray for them."

Although it was nearly midnight David and I felt that we could not leave this situation. The enemy was obviously trying to destroy our ministry in Grahamstown before it had even begun. We went round to the Bishop's home right away. He opened the door to our knocking almost immediately, and told us he was expecting us to come! He was such a gracious man of God, and invited us in. We shared our consternation at what this nun had said, and gave him the true facts of what had transpired. He told us that possibly she had put her own interpretation on things for effect, but he would certainly clear the matter up with the whole group the following week. We then had prayer together, and a firm bond was established! We asked our friend from the Assembly to please attend the next meeting, and let us know what happened. The Bishop was away, but the dean of the Cathedral, Mike Nuttall, a fine man of God was there, and corrected the mistake and once again they prayed for us. This publicity caused many visitors to start attending the meetings! We popped in to see this nun, and David asked her why she had so misrepresented what we had said. She humbly apologised, telling us that others always had such good testimonies and that she wanted to share something that would be dramatic and sensational, but had got carried away! Needless to say, we were more than willing to forgive her and prayed God's blessing upon her life. We knew that in His wisdom God would work all things together for our good.

A crowd of matriculants from St. Andrews began attending the Sunday night meetings. On the first night they attended, many of them responded to the message of Salvation, and were counselled. They came to our home and joined in with the students from the varsity in what we called 'the Late-nite special', a time for refreshment and fellowship followed by earnest prayer. That night the Lord filled them with the Holy Spirit. David felt we needed to walk in the light with Bill Burnett, specially after what had transpired previously, and so went to see him the very next day. David told him that quite a number of Anglican school boys had attended our meeting, made a commitment to Christ and had been filled with the Holy

Spirit. He was very gracious and told us there was no problem at all, the boys were welcome to attend and he would be grateful if all the boys from the school came into a vital experience with the Lord. He said there was no need to let him know each time, as he trusted us!

Soon after that I was invited to speak at the Anglican Teachers training college. Their priest, Geoff, was in the meeting and afterwards as we chatted I invited him to come and meet David one day over a cup of tea. A very close bond of friendship and fellowship developed between them and on occasions Geoff would share ministry in the Assembly on Sunday nights.

One day we received an invitation from the retired Mother Superior of the Convent to join her for tea. Her name was Mother Joanne Mary. We were privileged on meeting her to look into the face of a woman who truly knew and loved Jesus. A delightful hour was spent in her company. Very frail and elderly, she told us a story we will never forget.

She had been a young girl 12 years of age when God poured out His Spirit at the turn of the century. Her father was Alexander Boddy, a devout Anglican Priest. She was aware that something very unusual and strange was happening in their home at the time of this story. Mr Barrett from Wales was visiting them, and praying with people each day, and God was pouring out His Holy Spirit in a most powerful way. They had never experienced anything like this. On this particular day she was doing her homework in the kitchen. Mr Barrett looked in and asked whether she had received the Holy Spirit yet? She said she did not know very much about all this. He explained briefly that it was God's endowment of power to equip His people to serve Him. A hunger and thirst grew in her heart as he spoke, she truly loved Jesus and wanted to serve Him. Mr Barret laid hands on her and she began speaking in other tongues. It was a strange language, and he was certain it was from the East. Some China Inland missionaries were among the guests in the house at the time, and he took them in to

witness what God was doing. They saw this young girl with her face raised to God, tears streaming down her cheeks, speaking in a pure Chinese dialect that one of them understood. She was speaking about the coming of Jesus, and that God was now preparing His people.

As we listened, an incredible awe and wonder filled our hearts, and we felt so privileged to meet this dear lady, who had devoted her whole life at great sacrifice to serve the Lord. She told us that God led her to Africa, and the only way she could really become a missionary was to become a nun. All these many years she had locked this secret deep in her heart, praying that this wonderful experience would somehow become part of the Anglican Church. "At last," she said, "this prayer has been answered. God has filled our Bishop, and a few weeks ago your minister from Port Elizabeth came and prayed with the sisters in the Convent, and God wonderfully filled most of them with the Holy Spirit." Her eyes were filled with tears, as she took our hands, and prayed for us.

We left feeling we had been on holy ground, as she did not see many people, being so frail. I visited her once again at her invitation about a year later. In her greeting to me she asked me how David was, and then mentioned the names of our three children, Dorothy, Barbara and Stephen! She told me that not a day passed that she did not pray for us all.

Today she is rejoicing in His glorious presence, but it is a sad loss for all those she prayed for! No matter what our age, one thing we can do is pray one for another. How we appreciate those who cannot 'go' themselves, but have assured us of their prayers.

THIS ONION MEETS A COOK!

Geoff's wife Roz and I became good friends, and spent many hours together sharing the Word of God. She attended a ladies' interdenominational group that met in the home of Pat Cook, a precious Presbyterian lady with a heart for God. I was invited to this group and soon discovered it was designed to be of help to people who were searching for answers spiritually. Pat was one of the gentlest ladies I had ever met.

A very firm bond soon grew between those of us who met together regularly, and the time we spent each week was most profitable. The numbers varied each week, but we saw many coming into a deeper understanding of God. We avoided making reference to our own particular emphasis in doctrine, desiring to provide an ideal environment of love into which the unsaved could come and not feel threatened in any way. As a result many gave their lives to Christ.

I often invited some seeking lady, who needed further help, home for tea, and then took time to pray with her and give a more comprehensive answer to what was troubling her.

One day a doctor's wife invited me to her home for tea. Kay had been searching for some time, and I felt it was time to 'reel in the line' as this fish was ready to be caught for Jesus. I will always remember her simple childlike faith. After answering her questions I told her it was time to invite Jesus into her life to become her Lord and Saviour. Being a very real person, she sat with her eyes open and said, "Jesus, I can't see you, but I know you are here. Please will you come into my life and change me, making me one of your children."

This sincere invitation to Jesus was speedily answered, as He came into her life and transformed her. So great was the change that her husband could not help but notice. The Lord also filled her with the Holy Spirit. I suddenly began receiving phone-calls from people I had never met. They would begin by saying, "I have just been to my doctor, and he referred me to you!" On questioning Kay about this, she told me that her husband sensed that in many cases the need was not physical but spiritual. God was the only answer, so he referred them to me! Kay grew very fast spiritually, and excitedly told me one day that God had given her a unique ministry. On asking what it was, I was told it was a 'party ministry'! She told me that in the line of their work they attended many parties, and it was there she was able to speak freely about Jesus. She was involved in acting in theatrical productions, and so their circle of influence was wide, and obviously reached many people who did not normally attend church! No wonder Jesus said, "Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature."

We have to reach them where they are before we can ever expect them to come to the church! This was just what Kay was doing!

DOING A CORRESPONDENCE COURSE

One of the members of our church in Grahamstown was a University lecturer. Tim decided to do a theological Bible course and graciously offered to sponsor me. Being surrounded by intellectual students I thought it would be helpful and so readily agreed. I began full of enthusiasm, but soon found that my other commitments rather crowded in on my time, bringing me under tremendous pressure when it came time to send in my assignments! Being a mother of young children, running a home that perpetually had visitors and much entertaining, being involved in ministry in various ladies' groups, as well as attending all the meetings and spending hours counselling people was just too much for me to handle. Instead of being thorough in one area, I had to skimp on all the commitments, and found I was just too tired to do justice to the course!

One day at the ladies get-together at Pat Cook's home, instead of staying behind to help those who were in need, I was about to rush off when Pat stopped me. "Maureen, you are so busy," she said with real concern. "Can I help you with anything?" My quick retort, "Yes, Pat, how about doing my assignment for me?" popped out before I had time to consider a suitable reply. "What assignment?" she asked, not knowing about the course I was taking. Briefly I told her about the theological course I was doing. She looked at me, and in her very gentle way asked "Did the Lord tell you to do this?" For the first time I was faced with the fact that I had not even asked the Lord about it. I had just automatically taken it on! She could read the answer on my face and asked, "Why did you want to do this course?" I explained that we were now working with students from a University, and I wanted to be ready to answer any deep theological question I might be faced with.

Her reply was very gentle and comforting, but also thought-provoking! "Maureen, you have something so fresh from the

Holy Spirit that those with theological degrees would give anything to have. Don't spoil that freshness by becoming intellectual. If ever you cannot answer some question, you could always send them to my husband who is a Professor!"

Smiling and thanking her, I rushed off home still thinking of all that had to be done that day.

Just after 2 p.m. there was a knock at our front door. I opened the door to find Pat standing there. She began by apologising for disturbing me when she knew how pressured I was, but went on.. "I believe the Lord wanted me to come and ask you to stop doing this course. Maureen, you are daily involved with needy cases, and you have always relied on the Holy Spirit who has never let you down. You cannot continue with such a heavy schedule, as something vital in your daily activities will be neglected. Please consider as I pray for you." She then prayed for me, and as she prayed I knew without a shadow of a doubt she was right. But I also knew it cost my sponsor quite a bit to pay for all my books! I told her that I really appreciated her concern and her prayers, and that I believed she was right. But I went on to tell her that I could not stop unless my sponsor was prepared to release me without being offended! Pat then left, and the smile on her face made me realise that she had confidence that God would honour this and make my path straight!

That night before the Bible Study I called Tim aside and asked how it would affect him if I pulled out of the course. Relief flooded his face as he agreed that we both stop. He had also been under much pressure with his many activities, and had found this extra commitment just too much. But he had said nothing, so as not to disappoint me! A heavy load lifted off me as I wrote in my resignation, determining there and then never to ever take on a new commitment without first asking the Lord.

As a result of the experience I am constantly reminded of the incident in the life of Mary and Martha. Martha was heavily burdened with much serving, and neglected the needful part. What she was doing was good, but unnecessary, as it hindered her from giving Jesus her undivided attention! We can get so busy in the work of God, that our position becomes stressful,

and 'burn-out' results. I am so grateful to God that in His wisdom He sent a precious 'Cook' to prepare this onion, and show me the need to always check things out with God first.

GOD'S GRACIOUS PROVISION

The house we lived in served not only as a manse but a venue for all the mid-week meetings. It was a very old building. One day I smelt burning, and rushed out of my study to find the electric meter box on fire. It was situated quite high up the wall, but somehow I managed to put the flames out quickly, and no serious damage was done. Thank God I was at home when this happened, otherwise the house may have burned down! David realised that the wiring being so old was probably faulty and in need of replacement.

As an Assembly, we had just taken a big step of faith by asking the church that had been subsidising our monthly salary to start reducing their giving, as we wanted to trust God to supply our need. It seems that whenever you take a step of faith something happens to put it to the test. This calamity was certainly no source of encouragement to us and yet in recognising that the enemy was trying to destroy our faith we determined more than ever to believe God to supply our need! We called in an electrical specialist who confirmed that the whole house needed to be rewired and quoted us R400 to do the job. Not much by today's standards, but this is going back many years, and to a financially struggling church comprised mostly of students, it was a big sum of money! David suggested that we say nothing to the church, but that the two of us pray a prayer of agreement, bringing this need before the Lord.

A few days later David was walking toward the bedroom when he noticed a bulky envelope that had been pushed through the old-fashioned mail slot in the door and was lying on the floor. No name appeared on it, so he opened it. Imagine his joy and surprise to find an amount of R200 in cash enclosed. No note or explanation of any kind accompanied it, but we knew that God was answering our need and that half of it was supplied. We thanked the Lord and reminded Him we needed the other half! A few days later David heard a loud plop coming from the direction of the front door, and raced towards it expectantly. Sure enough, another bulging envelope lay on the floor. Knowing instinctively that this was the balance of the needed money, he dashed outside. He wanted to see who God had used to provide this need and thank them. But he was too late, and just managed to catch sight of a Volkswagen car driving off. He made a note of the registration, as the car did not belong to any of our members. We discovered it was indeed the balance of the money, and with extremely grateful hearts got the job under way.

David felt he needed to thank the person concerned and share how graciously God had used his obedience to God to meet our urgent need. He traced the registration number to a man who had recently come to Grahamstown, and called to see him. He began by saying, "I appreciate that you wanted to remain anonymous, but we did so want to express our gratitude and share with you what a tremendous encouragement this has been to our faith." He then told him about the electrical wiring. The man in turn told David his story. He was new to the town, was a Christian and believed in tithing. He had not yet found a church in which to fellowship, and so had held on to his tithe, praying that the Lord would show him where to put it. As he was praying the Lord dropped David's name into his heart, and told him to send R400. He reasoned within himself that this was a large amount to give one man, so decided to halve it, and that was why the first envelope arrived with R200. The Spirit of the Lord made him restless and he was not able to sleep; the Lord reminded him that He had instructed him to give R400. So a few days later in obedience, he delivered the

remaining R200. He was greatly encouraged by the testimony and it was not long before he became part of the fellowship!

This taught us another big lesson. We do not have to make our needs known to anyone, but the Lord. Also, we do not have to look at the resources available to us, as God is able to Supernaturally provide from a source unknown to us! When we shared the story with the Assembly tremendous joy resulted, and it was not long before we were totally free from needing any of the subsidy we had been receiving.

'A LITTLE CHILD SHALL LEAD THEM'

Our son Steve was always full of mischief. Those who have read the "William" books, will have some idea of the pranks he got up to. One incident that caused us all great embarrassment was the time he went to have his hair cut. We were about to have a special campaign with a visiting speaker. Looking at Steve the day before, I realised that he desperately needed a haircut. Normally he did not take too kindly to having his hair cut, but on this occasion his co-operation was amazing. As he left with the words, "Short, Mom?" I replied, "Yes, Steve, please have short back and sides!" Had I been smarter I should have realised that the pleased look on his face was not true to form and that something was cooking! I was chatting to someone on the phone when he returned. I will never forget the shock I got as the front door opened and in walked our son, his head shaved clean! Being very fair, you can imagine what his glistening white head looked like. For once in my life I was totally speechless! Busy counselling on the phone, the recipient must have thought I was having a vision or something, because I became aware of her saying, "Are you there, Maureen?" I finished that call as quickly as I could and turned to Steve, who was about 8 years of age at the time. "You did say you wanted my hair short, didn't you Mom?" he greeted me with his naughty but endearing smile! I had to admit I had, but not that short. He then explained that his best friend at school had recently had an operation and had all his hair shaved off, and he wanted to keep him company! The motive was

honourable, but the embarrassment was dreadful, specially for Dorothy and Barbara. They were asked more than once if Steve had had lice! Fortunately it grew, but being so blonde it took a long time before one noticed he had hair.

During the school holidays one year our neighbour, a dentist by profession, invited Steve to assist him in building his yacht. Steve was delighted with the opportunity, as it gave him something interesting to do, as well as providing some extra pocket money. Paul was not a Christian, but was no doubt aware of who and what we were, because of the meetings we held in our home and all the singing he heard floating through from our lounge windows. One day he knocked on our front door and marched in to tell David, "Your son is a better preacher than you are!" Evidently he had listened to more than the singing, but it was an unusual way to introduce himself. We smiled and asked what he meant. He told us that he had asked Steve if he was religious like the rest of his family and began questioning him about the Bible. It seems that Stephen responded by giving him a Bible study that began in Genesis and ended in the book of Revelation. But whatever it was that Steve had said, it caused Paul to start thinking seriously about Spiritual things. As a direct result of this David had the joy of leading not only Paul, but Debbie his wife, to the Lord. They were both baptised in water and filled with the Holy Spirit and became part of the church. We were so grateful to God that Steve's foundation in the Word of God was bearing fruit in his life.

AVOIDING THE LIGHT

We discovered a new lingo as we mixed with the students each day. They always seemed to have 'hang-ups' and 'hassles'! My growing-up years had been relatively uncomplicated, and I realised that different pressures faced those who went to university.

I remember going downtown one day, and two young students who regularly attended the meetings were coming towards me. As they caught sight of me they ducked into a nearby shop,

very obviously to avoid me. Some time later they came for counselling. They apologised for the incident, and told me it was not the first time they had done this. Evidently, when they knew they were sinning in some way, they feared coming into contact with me in case the Lord revealed it to me! When we represent the light, we can expect this kind of reaction. To be light means we dispel the darkness! To be salt means we bring out the flavour, but also destroy corruption.

SIN REVEALED

One night in the prayer meeting a lady began praying very fervently about something. As she prayed, I was suddenly filled with the thought that she was committing adultery! I did not know her personally, and was disturbed by this thought that seemed to persist. I began feeling condemned that in a prayer meeting I could think such a thing. Considering the fervency of her prayer I must be mistaken, but the more I tried to free myself from this thought, the more it persisted! I decided to pray for one of the prayer requests; surely as I concentrated on seeking the Lord in petition these terrible thoughts would leave me. But no sooner had I finished my prayer than they were back again stronger than ever. I then realised that God was trying to show me something! I did not know what to do with this word of knowledge, so spoke to David. After all, he was the pastor and needed to know. He said that if I was sure that God was revealing something to me in a word of knowledge, I should ask God to give me a word of wisdom so as to know His directive in how to handle the matter. As I prayed, the Lord impressed on me that I needed to see her, not with the purpose of condemning her, but winning her back to Himself. Satan is the accuser of the brethren, and we must never do his work for him. Jesus did not come to condemn but to pardon and release, bringing life and peace. Aware of this, I went to her home. For obvious reasons I am changing her name and calling her Joan. I knocked on the door, but there was no reply. I waited and knocked again. Eventually the door opened and Joan stood there. When she saw me she made an excuse that she had to go out quickly, and could I

come back some other time? I told her I needed to see her right away as the Lord had sent me. Could we chat somewhere undisturbed, and I would not keep her longer than absolutely necessary? She agreed and took me into the kitchen. There was fear all over her face as she faced me across the table. I began, "Joan, the Lord showed me that you have a big problem in your life." She immediately began to cry and nodded.

I told her that because the Lord loved her so very much, and wanted her for Himself, He had shown me the nature of her problem in order that she would confront it, and get the victory. She was very full up, and unable to talk as she sobbed. At no time did I accuse her of committing adultery, but asked her questions relative to the issue. Eventually she agreed that she needed to get right with the Lord, break with this man and confess to her unsuspecting husband. I prayed with her as she repented before the Lord. Praise God her husband was a gracious forgiving man and their relationship was restored. About 6 months later while praying one day, the Spirit of the Lord put these words into my heart, "Joan is being tempted once again in the same area in which she was troubled before. Phone and give her a Scripture from Me." When I got through to her on the phone she was absolutely stunned. It was exactly as the Lord had shown me, and as I gave her the verse God had given me for her, she was able to resist the temptation and have glorious victory!

We need to become sensitive to the leading of the Holy Spirit, as just a phone-call and prayer backing can effectively save someone from disaster!

C HAPTER 11 FELLOWSHIP WITH CATHOLICS.

Two dear Catholic nuns arrived at our prayer meeting one night. They heard that God was moving in our midst, and wanted to experience more of God themselves. They really enjoyed the prayer meeting, and asked if they could come again. David told the Assembly that we needed to be gracious and loving to them, not confronting them about doctrinal differences, as they were obviously searching. Love was the key. We all got the message, and were ready to make them welcome in the love of Christ. They arrived the next week soon after we had started singing and said they would like to sing us a song and then proceeded to sing a song about Mary! I think that most of the people were inwardly horrified, but no-one said a word, they just smiled allowing the warmth of God's love to show on their faces. When it came to the prayer time it was significant that all the prayers centred on glorifying and uplifting Christ the Son of God!

A few weeks later the one nun, Sister Fidelis, called to see us in time for tea. She followed me into the kitchen, carrying a small brown paper packet and told me she had brought me a gift. She handed me the packet, and thinking it must contain some biscuits or something for tea I opened it. Inside was a crucifix and I must confess for a moment I was quite non-plussed, not knowing what to do or to say! Holding it up it glistened as the light began reflecting on the green beads. I had never seen one at such close quarters before. "This is pretty, and I guess it is a rosary" I remarked, while speedily sending up a prayer in my heart for wisdom. The last thing I wanted to do was hurt or offend this precious little sister, who really loved the Lord. I glanced into the packet in which it had come and saw there was a booklet inside. Taking it out I discovered it was a well-used instruction booklet on how to pray with the rosary!

God graciously answered my prayer, as I found myself thanking her for her love and thoughtfulness. I went on to say that the booklet was obviously well-used, and as my time was

so restricted, I preferred to concentrate on the Word. The booklet would only lie around so I would return it to her. As I looked at the rosary again I smiled at her, saying, "Sister Fidelis, you will notice in our prayer meetings we all close our eyes when we pray, as we come right into the presence of the Father through the Lord Jesus Christ. We do not pray to Mary, although we respect the fact that she was specially chosen to bear the Son of God. Also we do not pray with a rosary. I'm afraid I would find that instead of entering into the presence of God, all the time I would be worrying in case I left a bead out! I like to pray right from my heart as the Holy Spirit leads and assists me! May I accept this rosary for no other reason than as a token of your love, and something to remember you by. Her eyes filled with tears as I had been speaking and, taking the booklet from me she asked that I keep the rosary just to remember her!

The very next prayer meeting I was delighted to hear Sister Fidelis pray. No set prayer, no rosary in her hand, but she began with words similar to these, "Father God, thank you that I can come right into Your presence, through Your Son, the Lord Jesus Christ....."

The other sister called one day to see us. "I want to be filled with the Holy Spirit of God" she said, as I opened the front door for her. "Wonderful", I said, and showed her into the study. I went to David's office and told him of her visit and request. He said he would be with us shortly, but asked me in the meantime to check out her assurance of salvation. As we chatted it soon became apparent that she was truly born again and had a deep love for the Lord. David joined us and shared the Word of God, giving her some instruction on how to be filled with the Spirit. I remember him telling her that she needed to take a step of faith, having believed the Word in Luke 11:9-13. "Ask and ye shall receive." The simple childlike faith of this precious sister was such a blessing to us. She looked at David and said, "Do you mean I must just start speaking in faith like 'La la la la..!' " and the next thing the glory of the Lord came upon her and it was no longer 'la la la,' but a clear new language flowing from her lips straight from the Holy Spirit.

Sister Scholastica left that day ecstatic with joy, filled and equipped to continue her work for God.

While we were able to help these dear sisters into the things of the Spirit, we learned much about genuine love and servanthood from them. One day I became very ill and scarlet fever was diagnosed. I lay in bed with a high fever, my body covered in a rash and my tongue looking ghastly. Sister Scholastica arrived as soon as she heard the news. Incidentally Grahamstown is such a small town that news travels fast! With her lovely Irish brogue she told me she had come to wash me and make me comfortable. Day after day she showed the most amazing practical love as she attended to my physical needs, making my bed, doing my hair, and often bringing specially prepared food. She always had a prayer with me before she left. I have never experienced such practical love from anyone outside of the family before, and had a new insight and appreciation of the different ministries Christ has placed in His body! Jesus said in Matt 26:36, "... I was sick and you looked after me." In verse 40 He shows us how. "The King will reply, "I tell you the truth, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers of mine, you did for Me." Sister Scholastica certainly qualified!

From time to time we ministered to other sisters from the convent, and I will always remember one sister telling me how grateful she was to be living in the present era. She explained that up until recently they were not allowed to read the Bible for themselves. But she was now reading it for the first time and being so blessed!

Sister Fidelis even came to a Youth Camp we had arranged. She joined in all the activities, but when it came to our Breaking of Bread service, she sat to one side, and did not partake. After this particular meeting she had a chat with David. She said that her heart ached and was torn apart with inner conflict. She had such a witness of our sincere love for Christ and longed to participate with us in our service, but was forbidden to do so. She had been taught that the Catholic church was the only true church and that communion must only be taken in

the confines of that church. David comforted her by sharing the biblical concept of the 'Body of Christ' comprised of all those who had acknowledged Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour, regardless of church affiliation.

She left the camp with a new zeal and fervour for God, and was determined to minister to her Standard three class at the Convent where she was a teacher. God filled her pupils with the Holy Spirit, and it was nothing for the whole class to stand with hands raised in worship to God, praying in other tongues!

A NEW FACE IN THE PRAYER MEETING

One night the Roman Catholic priest arrived with some of the nuns to attend our weekly prayer meeting. We were all somewhat awed by the robes that he wore! At the end of the prayer meeting David, wanting to show love and fellowship, invited the 'Father' to close in prayer. He looked quite taken aback, and we did not realise that he was not used to praying an extemporary prayer, as he always used his prayer book. Here he was minus the book! He stuttered and stammered a bit, and then suggested that maybe we should close by all joining in with the prayer of St. Francis of Assisi. Unfortunately none of the Assembly knew the prayer, and I think he also had forgotten it. Fortunately for us all, the two nuns remembered it and bravely said it on their own. We wondered if we would see him again. The very next week we could not believe our eyes when this same priest arrived without his robes, wearing a brightly coloured floral shirt over slacks. I will never forget the look of horror on the faces of the nuns, and one of them remarked to me, "I am glad he did not come in his robes, but did he have to wear such a zooty shirt!!" Week by week he attended, and slowly but surely opened to the things of the Spirit of God. It was not long before he was praying along with the rest of us, as his relationship with the Lord began to develop. At our farewell about a year after he had begun attending, he was asked to pray, and the difference between the first time and this occasion was incredible. He prayed from his heart, thanking God for having sent us to

Grahamstown to bring such love and unity to the Church of Jesus Christ!

The Mother Superior of the Convent knocked on our door one day. With her was a lady who was obviously in trouble of some kind, judging by the tear-stained face. The Mother Superior began, "Maureen, I have brought this lady to you, as I feel you are better equipped to help her than I am. She has just received the news that her child has drowned, and is in need of comfort and help. You have children, which I have not had, and I felt you would better understand her sorrow and be more able to minister to her need."

I readily agreed, and deeply appreciated the love and trust that was taking place in the Body of Christ in Grahamstown.

I guess we were all changing. This onion certainly was, and was also growing in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

The two and a half years in Grahamstown passed so quickly, and we were truly sad to leave. We had grown to love the town, the students, the Assembly and the tremendous love and unity that existed between us all.

Bishop Bill Burnett and his wife Sheila were also leaving, as he had been elected to be the Archbishop of South Africa. We were invited to attend the ordination service, at which communion was to be served. I spoke to Sheila at a small intimate ministers' wives prayer meeting that was being held in our home at the time. I thanked her for the invitation, asking her what our position was. We had never been confirmed, and according to the Anglican tradition, we would not be allowed to partake. She chatted to Bill and later returned to say that he said he knew we were children of God, and of course we must partake. After all he was the Archbishop elect and had the right to grant permission! When we chatted to him, congratulating him on his tremendous calling and responsibility, we assured him of our prayers for him in this God-given task. He thanked us and said, "Please David and

Maureen, wear out your knees in praying for me, I am going to need it."

C HAPTER 12 UTILISING THE POTENTIAL AVAILABLE.

Arriving back in Port Elizabeth was quite strange, as this time it was to pastor the Central Assembly. This was the church in which we had been pastored and then ordained into the ministry. We soon realised that we were very different from when we had left, as God had opened our eyes and understanding to many things.

When a new minister comes to a church, visitors often flock in out of curiosity and we had the joy of seeing many souls come to Christ. We were committed to using every opportunity for the Kingdom of God. David was approached by a couple who had joined the church to conduct a Bible Study in their home for interested friends. He agreed and the numbers soon grew, and so did their knowledge of the Lord. One of the ladies who had been attending gave me an opportunity I had been praying for. Helen told me she had many friends, but was not sure if any of them knew Jesus. She would hold a tea party in her home, inviting some of her friends to meet me. Praise God, the result was they not only met me, they met the One who would change their lives! It began in the most natural way. Having prayed much about this tea party, I went along to Helen's home. About fifteen friends of hers had also been invited. Helen lived in Linkside, an upmarket area of Port Elizabeth. The friends were lovely ladies, but it was soon apparent that most of them did not know Jesus. General chatter filled the room over the tea, and then someone asked me what my husband did. Reluctantly, I told them he was a minister, knowing this was a far cry from their normal friends! One of them bravely asked me what denomination we represented! I told them that we did not represent a denomination, but Jesus Christ, and added that in Grahamstown where we had just been ministering, there had been such a unity in the church of Jesus Christ, that it really was unimportant what 'label' we went under.

One of the ladies remarked that there always seemed to be competition between the churches, and a lot of sheep-stealing!

What a glorious opening this gave me. I shared what we had discovered in Grahamstown and how in recent years God was doing a new thing. The prayer of Jesus was being answered. This sparked off real interest. They wanted to know what prayer of Jesus I was referring to. I told them what He had prayed, recorded in John chapter 17 v 21-23. This prayer would be answered by the Father, and it was beginning to happen in a very real way, as barriers were melted by the Holy Spirit. This opened the door for me to share some of the wonderful testimonies of transformed lives and situations that we had recently seen. The ladies sat gripped. They had not realised that the things of the Kingdom could be so exciting, and that today there could be genuine answers to prayer. Time just flew by, and one young mother suddenly looked at her watch, let out a shriek, saying she was already late in fetching her child from the nursery school. She said it was so hard to tear herself away, and really wanted to hear the end of the story I was telling! Helen then volunteered that those who were interested were welcome to meet at her home the next week, and we could continue if I was willing. I was amazed at the turn-out the next week. More ladies had joined the little tea-party, and I could see that their interest was great! I was able to weave the gospel into the testimonies, and answer the many questions, and some were 'born again' that day. From then on it became a regular meeting over tea. The numbers grew, and instead of just testimonies, they now wanted the Word, and their questions answered. I am changing the names of the ladies mentioned in this next section of the book for obvious reasons.

Thelma began attending these studies. Each week she would sit and listen. She always wore sunglasses which hid her eyes, and never participated, so it was difficult to know where she stood spiritually. One day we were studying the Word, and I asked someone to read the scripture Ephes. 5:4. They read from one of the modern translations which said "No dirty stories but...." Suddenly for the first time Thelma spoke. In very beautiful English diction she said, "I don't think I like that book!" I looked up and asked, "What book?" "The Bible", she

replied. "I like my dirty stories. In fact there is nothing wrong with a good dirty story!" Immediately I sent up a quick prayer for help and wisdom. This group was certainly not hiding under a mask of religion, and said what they really thought, and I must admit I was not always prepared for some of the comments! Help came, as it always does. I found myself saying, "Don't worry, Thelma, just keep coming along. The things recorded in this book will only make sense to you once you have given your life to Jesus." She kept coming! A few weeks went by, and still no response to the gospel from Thelma. I decided it was time to invite her home to tea, where I could minister to her on a personal basis.

I began by asking her when she was going to decide to follow Jesus? "I don't know, really. Maybe I don't know enough yet." I then explained the gospel in detail, and gave her the invitation. She accepted, and that day as we prayed together, Thelma became part of the family of God.

Over tea the next week, while everyone was milling around all talking at once, Thelma remarked to me. "I went to a party last night, and I was thoroughly disgusted at the dirty stories that were being told." I smiled to myself, and thanked God for the first fruits of her salvation. She was truly a new creature, as things she had not understood before became a conviction of the Holy Spirit!

One thing I have grown to appreciate is the conviction of the Holy Spirit. Many times in our enthusiasm we try to put our convictions on others. We want people to conform to what we feel they should be. But the Holy Spirit transforms, and it is from deep within. Often churches can be successful in achieving an outward conformity to rules and regulations, but unless the Holy Spirit does the work in a life, it will not last, and sad to say the result is sometimes a deep-seated rebellion. Someone once shared that at the end of Autumn, when the old leaves have dropped off the trees, often a few leaves remain. No gardener goes round trying to pull them off. He knows that while they still cling to the branches during Winter, Springtime is coming. New leaves begin to appear all over the tree, and gently the old give way to the new! So it is in the Christian

life. Often people cling to things to satisfy some void or desire in their lives. But as they fall in love with Jesus, and the life of the Spirit begins to flow through them, it is not long before old things begin to drop off!

LADIES HAVE SUCH POTENTIAL

One week while we were having tea before the meeting, I remember listening to the noisy chatter that went on. One lady was talking about having a "Tupperware" party, and inviting the others. Another was enthusiastic about "Golden Products" and trying to organise something in that line. Yet another was on about some 'Toys for Children' market. These were very much the jetset ladies of Port Elizabeth, who did not need to work, but were involved in golf, or horse-riding and other enjoyable hobbies. As I was driving home that day, I was lifting my heart to the Lord in conversation. "Lord, ladies have such potential, and obviously plenty of time. If only all this could be channelled to good use for Your Kingdom." I did not wait long before He replied. As clearly as if someone was talking directly to me came the words, "What about Gospel parties!"

I knew God had spoken and dropped the idea into my heart. As I thought about what He had said, I realised that this was one way to reach the lost. Ladies love being invited to a party. Those who enjoyed catering could do it for the Kingdom, and it would be the bait to catch the fish. Also, like the parties mentioned, instead of speaking of the qualities of some earthly commodity, we have something of Eternal value that can be shared. As I meditated, my enthusiasm grew. While the various parties often offered goods with a life-long guarantee, at a Gospel party we could offer Eternal life, free of charge!

The next week at Helen's home over tea I presented the idea. "Anyone interested in having a 'Gospel party' in your home?" I asked. Immediately they all wanted to know what it was. Not having been to one myself, and not having planned any particular strategy, I was not able to tell them, but simply said, "Wait and see!" I explained that the Lord had given me the

idea, and I wanted to begin. Thelma lifted her hand and said, "I would like to have the first one in my home, please." "Certainly" I said, and turning to a young lady who had a lovely voice and often sang for the Lord, "Debbie you may come." I also invited Jess and Roz, who had just recently given their lives to the Lord. I then turned to the whole group and to their dismay added, "No-one else can come. Thelma will invite her friends and contacts, and just this small team will join me. But if you want to have a 'party' in your home in the future, I am willing to come." At the time I did not know what prompted me to say that, but later discovered what a good psychological move it had been. Human nature is such that when you cannot have something, you want it all the more!

I had no program, no idea of how things would go, but was relying on the Holy Spirit to lead me. As I got to Thelma's beautiful home, and her friends began to arrive, I began to get a feeling like Jonah must have had before he tried to run away! The ladies who attended were all very sophisticated, and elegantly dressed. About 6 or 7 had been invited beside my little team! Thelma had prepared a delicious spread, and once the ladies were seated, she asked me if we should begin with the tea. Anything to stall for time; I agreed. I felt quite out of my depth. I listened to the conversation around me, and watched as one or two 'lit up' and found myself repeatedly saying deep inside, 'Help, Lord!' Praise God He did. I knew that it was vital not to be 'religious', but perfectly natural and at ease. When every one had finished their tea, Thelma looked at me and said, "Well Maureen, its over to you!" Somehow the Lord helped me to convey a calmness and composure I certainly was far from feeling at that moment. I turned to Debbie the singer and said, "Debbie, you don't get a lovely tea like this for nothing. How about singing to us?" I had made no prior arrangements with any of the team! She smiled, looked completely at ease, and as was her custom she took off her shoes, walked across the thick-piled carpet and said, "I would love to sing." I must admit I wished that she had been a little more formal and kept her shoes on for this occasion, as I did notice one or two raised eyebrows!

She stood for a moment looking around her. On the walls of Thelma's home were beautiful paintings and some sculptures also adorned the room. The garden was beautiful. The green lawns had just been mowed, roses were prolific, and the swimming pool completed the picture. Then she began. "There are many things we cherish in life. Our homes, our gardens, our husbands and our children. In fact there are many more things that are meaningful to us. Today I want to sing about something I cherish more than anything else!" Dead silence, as by now the ladies were curious. What more could there be to cherish? Without any music, but in a crystal-clear beautiful voice, eyes tightly closed, Debbie began to sing.

On a hill far away, stood an old rugged cross
The emblem of suffering and shame.
And I love that old cross, for the dearest and best,
For a world of lost sinners was slain.
So I'll cherish the old rugged cross,
Till my trophies at last I lay down
I will cling to the old rugged cross,
And exchange it someday for a crown.

By the time she had reached the last verse, the cigarettes had been extinguished, those who were knitting stopped, and tears were making their escape out of a few eyes! I thanked Debbie, who went back to her seat, and turned to Jess. Jess was an antique collector, and I had only met her a week or so before. She was heavily made-up, and seemed to know most of the ladies present. "About a week ago, Jess, the cross began to mean something to you. Would you like to tell us about it?" Often when asking someone of long standing as a Christian to testify they will not be willing. But Jess responded very positively. "I would love to!" She then proceeded with her story. She had gone to a traditional church in her youth, and through the normal ceremonies, but had never come into a relationship with the Lord. Soon after she had married she began to attend the women's auxiliary of the church, but became disillusioned by the 'talk' that went on among them, and so stopped going.

Years went by with no religious input at all. One day as she sat with a friend sunbathing next to her swimming pool they began discussing life. Both had been happily married, had their families, and now had no special goals to achieve. Surely there must be more to life than just that? What happens when you die? They were in the middle of this conversation when a lady from the Linkside group arrived. She had been asked by her church to visit some of the people who were on the register, but who never attended, and leave the church magazine with them. The maid ushered her into the garden where they were sunbathing. After listening to her explain the nature of her visit, Jess said, "We were discussing life, and what it is all about, now that you are here maybe you can help us?" Being a fairly new Christian herself, and feeling it was a little out of her depth, she replied, "Do yourself a favour. I attend a Bible Study Group at Helen's home where a lady named Mrs Onions shares the Word of God. I am sure that she will be able to help you find the answers to your questions."

Jess turned to the ladies in the Gospel Party and added. "I think I went more out of curiosity to see what someone with a name like that looked like! For the first time in my life I learned that Jesus loved me. He died for me so that by shedding His blood, my sins could be washed away. As I looked at the faces of the ladies who attended, I could see they had found the answer to life, and I wanted this. I could not wait for Mrs Onions to finish talking. As soon as she asked us to bow our heads in prayer, I called out, 'Please, I want to give my life to Jesus, and have my sins washed away.' That day, just about a week ago, the cross became meaningful to me. All I can say is I feel like someone who has been in a desert for a long, long time, who is desperately thirsty, suddenly finds water and begins to drink. I have begun to drink, and I just feel I cannot get enough." Her testimony was so fresh and spontaneous. A few 'choice' unsanctified expressions slipped out to add emphasis to what she was saying, but then she was only a babe in Christ and just being real! These ladies could really identify with her.

I turned to Roz, the other member of the Team I had brought. "Roz, the same day that Jess came to know Jesus, you did too. Would you like to share your story with us?" Smiling, she nodded in agreement. "My story is rather different from Jess! I was christened as a baby, and perhaps the only religious experience I had was when I bit the priest at my christening. From that time I was a member of my church, but never attended. Weddings and funerals were the only times I darkened the doors. I had my family, and I am now a grandmother in my forties. My daughter used to fight regularly with her husband, and be very irritable with the children. I was concerned about this, but no amount of talking changed the situation. Then I began to notice a tremendous change come over her. For some time now, she has been totally different. In fact she even began attending church. Quite recently I questioned her about the change in her life. Very casually she let drop that she attended a ladies' Bible study where something had happened to bring about this change. Very curious, I asked whether I could attend. She told me she felt I was too old, as most of the ladies were young. I asked where it was held, and she mentioned Helen from Linkside. I made it my business to find out more details and asked Helen if I could attend. She was warm and welcoming, and a few days ago I attended. As I listened to the message that was given, something began stirring in my heart. I realised that this was the missing dimension in my life. I knew it worked, as I had seen the change in my daughter, who was very surprised to find me there! When Jess requested having what Maureen had been talking about, I said, "Me, too, please," and I opened my heart to Jesus and received greater joy and peace than I had ever known before."

I could see that the ladies present were paying close attention to what was being said, but I also realised that because Jess and Roz were such new converts, there might be the question in some minds as to whether this thing lasts. So I turned to Thelma. "Thelma, these are your friends and contacts. You have known the One who died on that old rugged cross for

about six months now. Maybe you would like to tell your friends your story?"

She stood there, looked at them all and said, "You all know me. We have partied together, skinny-dipped together, had drinks together, and although we felt we were having lots of fun, I was aware that there was something vital missing in my life. I was invited to the study in Linkside, and as I listened each week my understanding grew until about six months ago I gave my life to Jesus." She began to cry as she went on, "I am not what I was, and I am not yet what I want to be, but I know the way I am going." It is not easy sharing with those who know you well, but it is important. They could see the reality of what was taking place in her life because they knew her.

I felt it was time to wind up, but mentioned that knowing Jesus is a lifelong commitment. I shared that Debbie had known Him for about six years, while I had known him since I was five years old. Unlike the hobbies or fashions that sometimes come and go, walking with Jesus was an experience that deepened and brought the most wonderful satisfaction. The thought that this was a party, and not the time to give a sermon flashed through my mind. Looking at Thelma, I asked if we could close in prayer? She looked at me, obviously hungry for more of the Word, as she replied, "Already time to end?"

I bowed my head and began to pray. Suddenly I found that all that I had wanted to say was being expressed in my prayer, as I thanked God for giving His Son, etc. It was rather a lengthy prayer, but the Holy Spirit was giving the inspiration and putting His Words in my mouth. I was aware that He was doing something in the hearts of the ladies at the same time, as I began to hear stifled weeping and sniffing. I glanced up to see that the beautiful purple napkins that had been provided for the tea were now being used to dab eyes and were soiled with a mixture of tears and mascara. The ladies had certainly not come prepared for the Holy Spirit's work of conviction! I knew it was time to make an appeal for those wanting to give their lives to Jesus. Each one of the unsaved responded, and I led them in a sinner's prayer. What great joy in my heart as I realised that an idea planted and inspired by God always

works. As we sat up, I looked around at the tear-stained faces that had looked so different on their arrival. 'Some party,' I thought. No doubt people will think it's the effect of an onion! But this had nothing to do with an onion, it was the work of the Spirit of God. I turned to Thelma and said we could now continue and needed some Bibles. Amazingly she produced a supply that she must have collected in anticipation of such an event. As we went over the Scriptures, different ladies read the verses. One lovely lady began reading in a modern translation that she had been loaned, from Rev. 3:20 which said, "Don't you know I have been knocking and knocking at the door of your heart..." Suddenly Stephanie's eyes filled with tears, and she began crying to the Lord, "Lord, I am so sorry, I did not realise that you had been knocking for such a long time... Thank you for not giving up on me." The next moment they were all weeping again. The reality of His love was becoming personal to each one. As I think back over many years, I am grateful to God that those girls grew in grace, and many of the husbands came to know Jesus through their testimonies and lives.

That Gospel Party was the beginning of a ministry that gained momentum. Small parties like that were held in many homes, but soon we had to get bigger venues. Eventually we were using Church halls and sometimes crowds of hundreds would attend. Invitations came from King William's Town, Port Alfred and many other centres, and the harmony and working together in preparation brought a unity that, together with prayer backing, prepared the way for precious souls to find Jesus.

Today Gospel parties continue, and are a means to reach people in an unthreatening way. Jesus told us to "Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature!" but often we sit in the Church waiting for the world to come to us.

BEING STRETCHED

The co-operation between the ladies of the various denominations in the Gospel Parties was heart-warming. Our

purpose was to reach the unsaved, and the support was excellent. The Charismatic move was spreading through the various churches, and it was such a joy to be able to speak about the same thing. Seminars were arranged interdenominationally from time to time and hundreds attended. One day I received a phone-call. A large Interdenominational Seminar was being organised in Walmer in the Catholic Church, and the theme was "A Programme for Enriched Family Life." This was in 1978. They had a different minister to present each of the subjects, but wanted me to present the subject, "The Role of the Wife." Had this been a little ladies' Bible study group, it would have been fine. But this was to a crowd of several hundred, and included men, among whom were all the highly trained ministers of various denominations. I prayed about it and also chatted to David, who felt I should accept, so I did. To make matters worse, they wanted my notes beforehand, in order to print them out and give a copy to each one to have on hand as I spoke!

Talk about being stretched! I am sure as an onion I must have lost a few skins over that one! David looked at my pathetic notes, which were totally illogical and without any form or sequence, and knowing that I am an inspirational speaker and certainly not a teacher, he offered to do them for me. I was most impressed with what he produced, and wondered if my presentation would bear any likeness!

As I stood to speak in that big Catholic Church, I was feeling very nervous as most of the crowd seemed to be men. God is so gracious, and has given us His Spirit to assist us in times like these. He put His words in my mouth and I was able to cope.

GROWING IN UNDERSTANDING

We were encouraged to support special meetings that were being held in Walmer, Port Elizabeth. An evangelist named Alf Harding was ministering. The night we attended there were about a hundred people present.. I sat halfway down the hall between my Mom-in-law and David. We had heard that he was particularly used in a rather unusual sign ministry, where

short legs grew. Never having seen this before, I was looking forward to seeing it happen. He finished preaching and asked those who needed healing to indicate with an upraised hand. Having suffered with hayfever and sinus for years, I responded along with two other people. The first case was a gentleman who suffered with a back problem. Immediately Alf told him that he had one leg shorter than the other and to come forward for prayer. This seemed logical enough, as back problems are often associated with shortened limbs. He laid hands on the man as he praised the Lord, and I heard him tell the man that his leg had grown and he would have no further problems with his back.

The other lady was next. She was suffering from arthritis. As she made her way to the front Alf told her that she too had one leg shorter than the other.

I remember turning to my Mom-in-law and muttering, "This is too much. Everything in his ministry relates to short legs. If he tells me that I too have a short leg from allergies, then I don't know!!" Sure enough my turn came, and as he called me to the front he asked me, "Did you know that you have one leg shorter than the other?" I wanted to be tactful yet honest so I replied, "I never had any reason to believe that I have!" He was kind and gentle and said, "Have you not found that your one shoe wears out before the other?" "No," I replied. "What about backache? Do you suffer from backache?" I had not thought much about that. From the time my children were born I had always had backache, but became so used to it that it never really bothered me. But the hayfever and resulting sinus were my concern. I told him this. He was very patient with me, and turned to the congregation asking if there was anyone who had never seen a miracle take place. David raised his hand. He always closed his eyes when the sick were ministered to, and so had never actually seen the healing come. Alf called him forward, asking if I was his wife. David had to admit I was! Seated on a chair, my legs stretched forward, Alf put my ankles together. I was wearing stiletto heels, and as he swivelled my feet to the sides, I could see clearly that there was about half an inch difference. I knew

that this was evidence enough that my one leg was a bit shorter than the other, but wondered what the connection was between this and allergies! Holding my feet in this position where my shoes were being supported on my feet, Alf told David not to close his eyes but watch. Then he began to just thank the Lord for the miracle. David's eyes opened wider as he saw a miracle take place as my shorter leg grew until my heels were even, while simultaneously I began to experience the most amazing sensation in my right hip. It seemed to suddenly vibrate and felt like it was being pulled right out of its socket. I looked at Alf, and knew he had nothing to do with it, as he was just holding my shoes on my feet! Something definitely had happened at that moment as he praised the Lord. He then said he would pray for my allergies! He told me that the miracle I had just experienced was not dependent on my faith, but on his. Smiling, he reminded me that I had been sceptical, but God had graciously performed a miracle. "You now need healing," he went on, "and this is where you will have to exercise faith by believing God when we pray together." With that he prayed for my healing.

Spluttering and sneezing, I made my way back to my seat feeling rather confused. I was no better from what had really been bothering me, although I had to admit my back was feeling good! After the meeting I went to speak to Alf. I shared my problem with him, and once again he explained that faith pleases God. In the miraculous, faith is not needed, as this was a gift from God that operated through his ministry. But for my healing I was to take the Word of God seriously which says, "When you pray, believe you receive, and you shall have..." I asked if it would be a lack of faith to continue the medication of the anti-histamine I took to relieve the symptoms? Once again he was very understanding and told me that this did not indicate a lack of faith, it just brought temporary relief. The key was to keep believing I was healed, and when the evidence of healing came, I would not need the medication anymore. I kept thanking God for my healing, and a few weeks later, after years of suffering with this allergy problem, it completely lifted! My healing was complete.

MOVING FROM THE EAST CAPE.

The time came when the Lord showed us we were to leave the East Cape and work with John Bond. The door opened in the Transvaal, and our last meeting in the Port Elizabeth Assembly was one we will always remember. It was packed to capacity. An elder was leading the meeting, and asked for all those who had come to know Jesus through our ministry to raise their hands. What an encouraging experience as hands shot up everywhere! He then asked how many had been baptised in water by David, and again there were a great number of raised hands indicating how fruitful the Word of God had been in motivating people to walk in obedience. He finally asked how many had been filled with the Holy Spirit during this time. Again, every row had many hands indicating God's wonderful blessing.

Can you imagine what Heaven is going to be like? We will stand before Him, and know the results of our labours for His glory. People we have long since forgotten, will be there. Some of us will have many surprises, I am sure. Maybe just a phone-call of encouragement has been the means of spurring someone into a deeper walk with Him. A visit and prayer may have sown the seed which resulted in someone finding Jesus. He says that one sows, another reaps, but God is the One who faithfully gives the increase and therefore must receive all the Glory!

C HAPTER 13 THE LIGHTHOUSE.

It took us a while to adjust to the Transvaal, now known as Gauteng. After having been in a church that had grown and was full, we came to a church that was struggling, the numbers had dwindled right down. In fact in our first meeting there were only about a dozen people who attended! The Assembly had a large property, on which was a house set well back in the grounds and an old horse stable that had been converted into a long narrow hall!

The Lord gave David a vision to build a church, as the facilities were not conducive to building a work for God. He shared his vision with the two elders, who were not the least bit enthusiastic; in fact they were immensely sceptical. The numbers were small, the building fund had only R2000 in it and they were concerned that the Assembly would land in heavy debt, even if funds could be raised! David promised that he would not incur any debt, but asked them if they would trust him to move with the vision, letting him begin with the finance that was on hand. They agreed, and David set to work with those who were willing to help him. The building of that church is really a story in itself, which space will not permit to tell here, but what an incredible testimony it was to what God can do when we step out in faith and obedience to do the will of God! We saw one miracle after another and although it meant a lot of hard work and responsibility, it was not long before we had a beautiful new church that seated 350 people in plush cinema seats that had been re-upholstered.

While the construction of the church building was in progress, the building of THE CHURCH was also going ahead well. Slowly but surely, people were being added as lives were being transformed by the Holy Spirit working through the Word.

I began being invited to many places in Johannesburg to share the Word of God. Christian Women's Club, Women Aglow and also Women's World Day of Prayer regularly invited me to minister.

Min Shaw, a South African singer, who also conducted the children's program on television at the time, contacted me, requesting me to have a Bible Study in her home in Florida for her friends and relatives. It was a joy and privilege to travel each week to minister to these precious ladies from various denominations.

A LIGHTHOUSE IS NEEDED

One day a lady in our Assembly named Marge, was rushed into the Intensive care ward of the Paardekraal hospital in Krugersdorp. She recovered quickly after prayer, but told me that during her short stay in Intensive Care, no less than six attempted suicides had been admitted. I was shocked. I began to get a burden for these poor people who were so desperate that taking their own lives seemed the only way out! I began seeking the Lord as to how to reach people like that. He made me realise that life is like the ocean with many hidden dangers. High seas and strong winds make sailing dangerous, not to mention the hidden rocks and the swirling mists that can sometimes completely obliterate vision with disastrous results. It is only a boat that has Jesus as Captain, that can safely navigate the perils that face many lives! In the natural, there are lighthouses all along the coast that guide ships at sea. Spiritually the church should be like a lighthouse that effectively shows the way, but tradition, formalism and human wisdom have prevented the church from being a light that shines out in the darkness to warn and save those in peril of eternal disaster and death.

I remember once seeing a picture that spoke volumes. A minister was seated at his desk in his office in the church. Piled high in front of him were files of administrative work indicating bazaars that needed to be organised to raise finance for the church, entertainment programs to entice young people into the church, etc. He sat working on these files, while through the window was depicted the devil out in the fields sowing his seed. It was thought-provoking and a challenge! The awareness that God has a different strategy for each place soon became apparent. We often want to superimpose our

own ideas in a new field of service, not realising that each place is unique and we need to seek God for His plan of action. This is why we are instructed to be led by the Spirit, and not follow some tradition or man-made formula. I was beginning to realise that in every 'vineyard' we had laboured God had opened a door of His choosing for my life. He knows the hearts of men, and also what is needed in each individual case. Of course this requires 'stretching' on our part, as it is much easier to go along a familiar route and have set answers. While the Helper work flourished in Rhodesia, it was not God's plan for this area. The people we were meeting in Krugersdorp had desperate needs, but they were living in the 'fast lane', and letter writing was not the answer for the rat race of this mining town on the Reef. Gospel Parties too, were not the answer here, as this was not the jet set, but hard working people who were mainly involved with the mines.

As I prayed and meditated, trying to put myself in the place of someone in these circumstances who was desperate and wanting help, I realised that a non-threatening place was needed. When you are in trouble of some kind there seems to be a feeling of desperate loneliness, and a longing to find someone 'out there' who would understand and have an answer that could change things. I realised that a place was needed in the very centre of town. Preferably upstairs, where there were other offices, so those wanting to come would be inconspicuous!

My vision was becoming clearer, as the Lord was busy illuminating things to me. Whenever there is a vision, be sure there will always be obstacles. The bigger the vision, somehow the bigger the obstacles. But our God is the God of the impossible, and when something is from Him, He makes it His business to supply the need, as we are prepared to be obedient to Him. In fact He has told us to 'speak to the mountain' and if we do not doubt, it will be removed according to what we have said! The obstacles in this situation were firstly a central venue with sufficient facilities at a time when it was difficult to get premises, and secondly the finance to meet

the rental, when we were needing finance for the building of the church.

I remembered the joy David and I had experienced in Grahamstown when we needed the electrical wiring of the house done. We had prayed a prayer of agreement and not mentioned the need to anyone. God had answered in a wonderful way. Again and again we saw His wonderful provision when we were prepared to trust Him. I decided that if this vision was from Him, He would meet the need as I prayed. We always had a time of prayer before the study in Min's home, so I shared my concern about the number of suicides in Krugersdorp, and the fact that it would be wonderful to reach these desperate people for Jesus. I told them that the Lord had been burdening me about a place where they could come, and for them to keep their eyes open for a suitable venue. That was all I said, and we got down to prayer.

Two days later I got a phone-call from one of the ladies asking if she could call and see me. Thinking it was for counselling, I made an appointment for her. What a surprise I got when she told me that my burden for a 'lighthouse' really touched her, and that together with her husband they would like to sponsor this with R100 towards the rental every month! God was moving ahead. Before I had even done my homework in finding a venue, He was beginning to provide the finance I would need. I went downtown to find premises, and there seemed to be only two places available for rental. The first was a large office on the ground floor, all glass frontage and very open to the public. Not suitable I felt, as it was too public for my purpose. On hearing the rental was R1 800 per month, I knew it was not the place. The other was a dingy place in a seamy part of the town, and although the rental was only R167 per month, I was not interested. God would have the right place!

Jean phoned me a few days later to tell me that she had visited her dentist that day, and noticed that right opposite the dental clinic on the third floor was an empty suite of offices! A large 'To Rent' sign was on the door. I went to have a peep through the glass doors and was impressed with what I saw. I realised

that it would have a large rental, and up to that time I had the promise of roughly R200 per month!

Jean enquired about the office, and discovered it was owned by a very hard Jewish businessman. In fact he was known to have a brusque manner and was always offhand with people. She kindly gave me his phone number, so I could make enquiries.

INTO THE LION'S DEN

I prayed much before phoning. He answered the phone in a gruff manner... "What do you want?" I replied, "I am phoning in connection with the suite of offices you have to rent in the centre of town as I am concerned about the number of suicides that take place in Krugersdorp, and would like to be able to help people with counsel and prayer! What is the rental of the place?" "Obviously a lot more than you will be able to afford" he said, "I normally get about five hundred rand a month. How much money do you have?"

I replied that I had about R200 per month. He laughed loudly, but told me that I could go and look at the place! I know that it sounded impossible, but David and I went anyway, and when we walked in we just knew this was the right venue. It had a newly carpeted large front office. Two smaller offices led off a small passage that linked the front office to a good-sized kitchen. It even had a strong-room! Spotless condition, light and airy, and the smaller offices were also carpeted. We stood in the place and told the Lord it was perfect!

I phoned the gentleman, and told him it could not be better. He seemed softer than when I had first called him, and he asked me again what I wanted the premises for. I explained about the suicides and my concern that desperate people did not know where to go. How they needed to talk, and I was willing, together with my husband to be available to minister to people without hope and show them the way to find peace in God.

"How much do you say you have?" he asked. "Just R200," I replied. "I have decided to let you have it at half price, which

means R250, and I will personally supply the extra R50 per month!" he told me. I could not believe my ears. Of all people, a tough, hard businessman, prepared to give like this. "Thank you so much, Sir," I stammered out, "Why are you doing this?" "I don't know why I am doing this, except that I too am concerned about desperate people who attempt suicide. My own father committed suicide." he told me. God had supplied our need in the most amazing way, touching the heart of a man in the one sensitive area of his life!

I was absolutely ecstatic and shared with the group in Florida. It was not long before the Lord provided everything we needed to equip the place! Curtains, desks, bookshelves, a lounge suite, a tape deck and speakers, and even a kitchen dresser were donated along with small tables, crockery, urn, cutlery etc. God left nothing out. A tape and book library got under way, soft Christian music played throughout the day, and Christians from all the churches made their way for a bit of fellowship, prayer, and often a chat. People offered their time to come and man the office, while others prayed much for this venture. I remember thinking that while it was lovely having a library of second-hand Christian books, it would be a great advantage to have relevant books for sale that would help desperate people in their particular area of need. But this would need some capital. A couple of days later, someone connected with the Lighthouse parked their car and kicked a roll of paper that was lying in the gutter. On closer examination, they discovered it was a roll of notes amounting to hundreds of rands. They arrived at the lighthouse and handed it to me explaining what had happened, and suggested we use it for any need we had. We decided the honourable thing to do would be to advertise it first. We notified the police, and also put advertisements in the local newspaper in the "Found" column. But absolutely no-one claimed it. I was then able to stock up with the books that were needed.

I went to see the Matron of the hospital, and told her what we were doing, and she was most co-operative and agreed that any suicidal cases admitted would be given one of our notices,

so they could come to see us if they so desired. She was most interested in the work we were doing, and agreed that it was timely.

Slowly but surely people came. As we personally still had many commitments with David building the church, and visitation etc., while I still had invitations to minister at ladies' meetings, as well as regular Bible studies, God provided suitably equipped people to assist us, so the Lighthouse could function daily. God really blessed this venture of faith, and not only did it meet the need of those searching for answers, but also brought a blessed unity among believers of many different denominations.

C HAPTER 14 CARING FOR OUR THREE “PICKLES.”

While God was busy growing this onion, our three children were growing up quickly. When they were very young I wanted my children to understand that when I corrected them it was because I loved them. I showed them from the Word of God that He says those He loves He disciplines. I wanted them to understand my discipline stemmed from my love for them, so I said, "It is important for me to smack you when you are naughty, otherwise you will never learn. Because you know that I love you, I want you to say, "Thank you, Mommy *darling*", when I have smacked you."

I will never forget the struggle they had after a hiding and they were feeling sore in more ways than one! They would jump up and down rubbing their posteriors and say, "Thank you Mommy darling." At that point to them I was anything but darling. Regrettably many parts of society neglect to correct their children according to Biblical standards, with the result that they go their own way, completely undisciplined. In case you have problems in this regard please read the book of Proverbs, written by the wisest man who ever lived.

Proverbs 13:24. "He who spares the rod hates his son, but he who loves him is careful to discipline him."

Proverbs 23:13. "Do not withhold discipline from a child; if you punish him with the rod, he will not die. Punish him with the rod and save his soul from death."

I must add here that one should never smack one's child in anger, as this is the cause of some child abuse today. But it is important to wait until you are fully in control and have reasonably assessed the situation. At this point ask the Lord to give you wisdom. It is important to show the child love and forgiveness immediately after the discipline has been administered.

Hebrews 12:5-11 shows how God as a loving Father disciplines us! What an example we have of mercy and love as well as gracious forgiveness in spite of what we deserved.

As one looks back over the years one becomes aware of the many mistakes made. In my own case one of the areas was my imperfections in motherhood. Knowing all I now know, there are things I would do differently and changes I would make. While you cannot undo the past, there is One who is able to 'work all things together for good to them that love Him and who are called according to His purpose'. (Romans 8:28). He knows our human weaknesses and imperfections, and by His foreknowledge knows the mistakes we will make, yet is willing to entrust precious little lives into our hands.

FINDING THE BALANCE

Our children were brought up in a very legalistic era of Pentecostalism. It was hard for them having to conform to strict standards relating to personal appearance, dress and social engagements and activities. Well-meaning as they may have been, we now recognise that many of these things had no real Biblical foundation, but were established upon personal interpretation and implementation of spiritual principles. Most of these so called 'standards' have now fallen away.

I was encouraged to hear some years later what our daughter Barbara had to say when she was with Y-One (Youth for Christ). She was speaking at a ladies' meeting and being questioned on various issues. One question was, "Do you think some parents are too strict with their children and should rather let them do what they want?" Barbara replied by saying "In the world there are no Godly norms or values. Anything goes and liberality, total freedom of expression and self indulgence are the order of the day. That is one extreme, but the other is the rigid imposition of morals and standards that were so much part of my own. While I probably felt a little rebellious at the time, when leaving the protective atmosphere of my home and being thrust out into the world to make my own decisions on these issues, I was grateful to have experienced the other extreme, which helped me find the true balance in God for

myself. The Holy Spirit used what I had been taught and the example I had seen to guide me in the right direction.”

GETTING OUR PRIORITIES RIGHT

One of the traps in the ministry which is easy to fall into, is putting other peoples' needs before the needs of your own family!

Matt. 10:37. Jesus said "He that loveth father or mother more than Me is not worthy of Me, and he that loveth son or daughter more than Me is not worthy of Me."

It is easy to make the mistake of thinking our zeal in the work of God is an indication of our love for Him. It is not. Our love for Him is determined by our love for His Word and our obedience as we are convicted by the Holy Spirit. Also our intimacy with Jesus as we spend time alone with Him. It is vital to love His people and be prepared to lay down our lives for others, but this does not include the lives of our families! Sometimes we fail to realise that our first calling is to our own little mission-field, which is our home and children. I had to learn that when our children had a need to chat or be counselled, no telephone call or unexpected visitor should be allowed to interrupt. Our children's needs, specially in the teenage years, should be treated in the same regard we would treat any other person needing help. People will always make demands on your time, and I have learned to be led by the Spirit even in this.

One day I was talking to one of my daughters. She was just opening up and beginning to share her heart. I heard the phone ringing in another part of the house, but ignored it as felt this was an important time. Next thing a knock at the door, followed by a voice telling me the call was for me, had the effect of causing her face 'to fall'. I was led to sit where I was, and called out, "Please tell them I'm busy counselling someone and take a message and I will get back to them later." Her face brightened up, and I knew there and then that I had done the right thing. This helped her realise that she was important to me, and better still, to God.

Our children had to make many sacrifices due to the fact that we were in the ministry and, far from being spoiled, there were many little luxuries they had to forgo. They learned from a very early age that it was for the Lord. When Steve was very young, one day he was asked, "What work does your father do?" Steve looked up, squared his little shoulders, and with head held high replied, "We are in the ministry." The emphasis of his reply was on the word 'we'!

While we were unable to afford to give our children expensive things that other children had, we were by God's grace able to give them stability and security from an extremely happy marriage and home, from which we worked together for the Kingdom. Also an example of a genuine relationship with the Lord. A Godly heritage is wonderful, and having both had this ourselves we know it stands one in good stead when the going in life gets tough. Steadfastness and faithfulness are qualities that cannot be bought. We are so grateful to God that in spite of all our imperfections, He knew our very genuine desire to serve Him and please Him and He gave us the grace to impart to our children the knowledge of the Lord. We rejoice today in the fact that they all love and serve the Lord!

CUTTING THE APRON STRINGS

When we left Port Elizabeth to work for God in the Transvaal, we left Dorothy behind. She was working in the hospital as an ECG technician, and had just become engaged to John Blacklaws. Barbara completed her matric at Collegiate, and went to Y-One for a year. Steve, still at school was with us in Krugersdorp.

It is never easy 'cutting the apron strings' but it is necessary! The time came for Dorothy's marriage to John. The wedding took place in the Presbyterian Church in Krugersdorp and friends and relatives came from many areas to be with us to celebrate this joyous occasion.

As I sat in the church waiting for the bride to arrive, I was grateful for the many friends who had helped with the catering. Margaret, David's sister was at the organ playing softly as the

guests came in. The two officiating ministers had taken their place and John was sitting next to his brother Al, the best-man, when suddenly the notes of the wedding march began to fill the church. Every head turned to watch Dorothy looking radiant and lovely as she came down the aisle on the arm of her father, followed by Barbara. Sam, an old family friend from Northern Ireland gave the message. I saw Dorothy lean across and whisper to John. We had always taught our children to pay attention and not talk in church, and here she was, the focus of attention, talking while the minister was speaking! What followed was like a nightmare! I watched in horror as Dorothy sank to the floor in a 'dead' faint! There was a gasp from everyone, and my father rushed to the front, laid hands on her and prayed for her! As her eyes fluttered open, she asked, "Where am I? What is happening?" Barbara answered, "It's all right darling, you're just getting married!" A large chair was brought, and this little bride sat for the rest of the message and while making her vows! That morning she had been unable to eat breakfast, and we all thought it was due to excitement. We did not realise that this was the beginning of a nasty dose of 'flu that was currently hitting people all over the town! Fortunately she recovered sufficiently to enjoy the rest of her wedding, and they set off on honeymoon! Today, many years later they live in Richards Bay and have two teenage children, David and Jessica!

Barbara, after completing her year with Y-One joined an employment bureau. Although young, she seemed to have a flair for placing people in the right jobs and did very well! When we moved to Cape Town she came with us and it was not long before she met Russell. They got married in the Harfield Road Assembly of God and were part of the revival that took place following the anointing that changed our lives and ministries in 1981-1982.

They now live in Melbourne, Australia, and we are grateful to God that they are involved in serving Him, and rejoice particularly in the development of Barbara's ministry among the ladies in their church. She has been leading two home-cell

groups. They have three fast-growing children, Nicholas, Warwick and Julie.

Our son, Stephen completed his schooling in Cape Town. He chose to make Electronics his career, having shown a very definite aptitude from a young age. He joined Telecommunications to do his training. David and I went away on holiday to Hermanus in the early part of that year, which meant leaving Steve on his own at home. I knew the time had come to 'cut the apron strings' and let him find his own feet. Schooldays completed, and having trained him in the ways of the Lord, it was time to let go! This is never easy, as one has to watch one's children make their own decisions as well as mistakes.

While on this holiday, I decided the best way to really release Steve would be to write God a letter, handing him over to God, sharing my desires, but also my fears. At 2 a.m. one morning I sat in the Lord's presence having a 'heart to heart'. Somehow this was one time when I needed to express myself to God on paper. We often verbalise our prayers to God, and when the answer is not immediate, we allow the enemy to bring doubt and fear into our hearts and we even wonder if we prayed correctly. This result is that our prayers go unanswered! James tells us in his epistle that if we doubt in our hearts, we are like the waves of the sea, tossed with the wind, and that a double-minded man will not receive anything from the Lord. When we write our prayer to God, keeping the letter as a reference, we have a record of what we have asked, the commitment we have made, and the enemy can do nothing to change that!

My letter began with making a commitment of Steve to the Lord, and requesting that whatever it takes, I desired that he stands before the Lord on that day, unashamed in His presence. We had done all we could in being an example to him, teaching him the Word of God and disciplining him. Now I was letting go and asked the Lord to have His way in his life. Steve had never enjoyed studying. Throughout his schooling, in spite of having above average intelligence, he managed to

scrape through his exams on what he absorbed in class. He would make elaborate charts concerning his study schedule, but when it came time to do the actual work he suddenly lost all motivation! Having embarked on a career that would require much study, I thought of all the nagging I had done in the past over his school-work! I told the Lord that I would love him to be a success in life, and to achieve this he would need to study. But no longer could I try to influence him in this. Then as I meditated, the thought came that maybe he would only come into a deep and meaningful relationship with the Lord through failure in this area. "Much as it pains me to say this, Lord, if this is the only way Steve will move into Your plans for his life, it's okay with me." I knew God was a loving Heavenly Father, and while I loved Steve dearly, He loved him even more than I did. He would only allow what was best for Steve eternally. Steve had recently bought a large motor-bike from a friend. Having seen the way young men rode these bikes, I was not happy about this. I continued my letter to God, bringing this aspect before Him. "Lord, I really don't like Steve having this bike. He could kill himself on it, or be badly injured. I really would like it sold." As I meditated on this the thought that very often it is some serious situation that brings people into the deep intimacy with God that I desired for Steve, came into my mind.. I had to let God be God in the way He handled Steve. "Lord, " I added, "If you are going to use this bike in some way to your advantage, much as it is difficult for me to say this, it is okay with me."

Having seen the spiral road downward in many lives from bad habits or wrong company, smoking, drinking and womanising were the next subjects of my letter to God. "Lord, we have taught him by example and from your Word. I would love him to be spared from the effects of these things. But once again, if this is the only way he will come into what I desire for him, much as its very hard for me to say this, it's okay with me, Lord." Sometimes we pray the kind of prayers we feel God would like to hear, but which do not come from the sincerity of our hearts. Covering up our concerns never brings peace of mind! This way I was being real and facing every possibility, but submitting it to God.

As I signed the letter, "With my sincere love and longing for Your best for Steve, I remain your loving daughter, Maureen," His peace just flooded me and the whole burden lifted.

Having released Steve and committed him to the Lord in this way, I needed to know what my attitude should be in the future. 'Just love him, but leave him to Me,' was the word I received. While still on holiday at Hermanus one of my prayers was answered. Steve phoned us and in his conversation to me he said, "By the way Mom, you will be pleased to hear that I have decided to sell the motor-bike!" Previously I might have responded with a comment like "I am so glad, they are dangerous and you might have killed yourself on it!" But I found the Spirit of God giving me a different reaction. "Really Steve. What brought you to that decision?" The very words I had used to the Lord was the reply I received. "I did not want to be a fool and kill myself." A week or so later the bike was sold.

Soon after our arrival home Steve returned from the College, and placed an exam paper in front of me with 92% as the result. Each week the marks were excellent, yet I never had to nag once to get him to study! I could not help thinking I might have saved a lot of nagging if I had only written God a letter on that score early in his schooling! He excelled and in no time he was promoted from pupil to lecturer! He even had occasions when he was sent to the Transvaal to do a course, and on his return had the job of teaching his lecturers! One day during a meal he commented that he was annoyed at the young men he transported in his Volkswagen beetle. When asked the reason he replied, "They will smoke in the car, and I cannot stand the smell of smoke!" A silent prayer of thanksgiving was given as I realised at least that was not a bad habit that would have to be broken in his life.

Slowly but surely over many years I have seen God answer my letter! Life has not been easy for Steve. He has had many trials and heartaches, yet through them all he has never wavered in his faith in God. Yes, there have been times of spiritual coldness and remoteness in his relationship with God

that most people experience, but the Lord has kept His hand on Steve. We have been so blessed to see him rise in victory, free from bitterness and unforgiveness after some devastating experience that in others has had the reverse effect. God has truly been developing his character for His purpose.

Last year a tremendous breakthrough came. Steve received a 'Word' from his minister at a meeting he attended midweek. "God has a special plan and ministry for your life, and it is going to begin now!" With that he laid hands on Steve and down he went. As he lay before the Lord, too embarrassed to get up quickly, as he had previously done, he prayed. "Lord if this word is from You, then I will need to be equipped." Then the Lord powerfully touched him. For nearly an hour it was as if 220 volts coursed through his body, pinning him to the ground, where he was unable to move or talk. He got up with a new love for Jesus, a desire for greater intimacy with Him, and began to flow in the anointing and power of God!

God is never in a hurry, but is faithful. At the right time He answers, and I can echo the words of Paul in Ephesians 3:20-21.

"Now to Him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to His power that is at work within us, to Him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, for ever and ever, Amen."

C HAPTER 15 WRITING “GOD PEELS AN ONION”

In November 1980 we received a phone-call that was to change our lives and ministry! David had just completed the building of the Krugersdorp Assembly and we had a blessed official opening. A few days prior to the phone-call, we had been invited to minister at a church in Randburg. As we drove home we remarked that while a big church like the one we had visited was nice, our vision and desire was to build up the local church in Krugersdorp. Having our own building now, with many visitors attending, plus the Lighthouse and the possibilities it presented, we felt the work would grow quickly. David was in the church praying when the phone rang. His prayer was a very sincere desire from his heart for the will of God in our lives, whatever that would mean. "Anything You want from Me, Lord, I am willing. Please lead me by Your Spirit!" He answered the phone, to find it was John Bond, the general chairman of the Assemblies of God, who was also the person to whom we submitted in the ministry. "A need has arisen in Cape Town, Harfield Road Assembly. Would you consider moving there at short notice?" Having just prayed for the will of God, and desiring to be sincere in fulfilling it, David knew we could hardly question what might be His divine purpose in our lives. It was important to remain open to God even though it made no sense to us and would certainly not have been of our choosing! After some discussion on the phone, in which he was told that John Bond was going to Cape Town to discuss the matter with the oversight there, David agreed that if this was the will of God and things fell into place, we would go. We prayed together, asking God to direct our footsteps and to close any door that was not of Him. Wonderful peace fills your heart when you know your destiny is in the hand of God, that He is in complete control and will bring all things to pass according to His good pleasure. Within a few weeks we were in Cape Town. As we were due to begin our new pastorate in February, we decided to attend the various Assemblies in the area during our holiday.

One really amusing incident took place at the Constantia Assembly. A lady was warmly greeting people as they came into the service and seeing us for the first time, asked if we were visitors. We told her we had just come to live in Cape Town, whereupon we were given an especially warm welcome, and encouraged to come and join their church. We told her that we were going to go to Harfield Road Assembly. Thinking that a geographical situation dictated our place of worship, she enthusiastically encouraged us not to let that make a difference as people from all over Cape Town attended their church! We then informed her that we were going to pastor the Harfield Road Assembly! The poor lady was so embarrassed, but we had to admire her zeal and enthusiasm in trying to swell the numbers of her church!

In my book "God Peels an Onion" I give the details of what transpired in October 1981 during the Wimber meetings in South Africa that radically changed our lives and ministry. I am not going to repeat that, except to say that God placed a very powerful anointing on us. In retrospect I am so grateful to God that in our submission to His plans, laying aside our own, we discovered a dimension of His love and power we had never known. In the years that followed He led us out of pastoring into a national ministry, and subsequently an international ministry.

In the natural, while growth steadily continues given the right conditions, from time to time there are noticeable spurts of growth. So it is in the spiritual. God had been growing this onion, and the new anointing resulted in greater development and a sharper awareness of being led by the Spirit. When you are full of the Holy Spirit, it is much easier being led by Him. God has planned and desires that we be filled with all the fullness of God. (Ephesians 3:19). During the ensuing years I learned the importance of daily spending quality time with Him, and in these times 'drinking the new wine of the Spirit' so there would always flow rivers of living water from my life.

When we were led out of pastoring into an itinerant ministry in July 1984, little did we realise that this was preparation for an international ministry! Once again He was leading us step by step. In the years that followed, we spent a great deal of time

ministering overseas as doors swung open, invitations kept coming and finance was amazingly supplied. Thousands of lives have been transformed as the Spirit of God has taken 'base, despised and foolish instruments' according to the world's standards, and displayed His strength through weakness! Never underestimate God's ability through your willingness.

We ministered overseas for a few months in 1994, but most of the year was spent ministering in South Africa, as we travelled to the East Cape and Gauteng areas. We were blessed and encouraged as we saw a very definite increase in the anointing of God.

While travelling around South Africa, I was questioned at least four times by different people as to when I was going to write a book. Before my dad went to be with the Lord, over many years I would share incidents and testimonies with him about what God was doing, which he found greatly encouraging. He would often tell me I should write a book, as he felt that others would be able to benefit. But somehow I was always too busy, and certainly had no inclination nor training in that regard.

GOD'S TIMING IS ALWAYS PERFECT

We arrived back in Cape Town looking forward to a much needed holiday, though we did have some important ministry engagements to fulfil first. We planned to set the month of December aside to rest. A bulk of mail generally awaits our return home, and among the letters was one from a publishing company. As I opened it, I discovered they were asking me to write a book! It is not often one gets this type of request from a publisher! Generally once you have written a book you spend time trying to find a company to publish it for you! Having headed the letter, "God's women today" they listed three areas in which they were wanting material for publication. The first was the role of a woman in the church. Due to the publicity of what God was currently doing in Toronto and in

England, they gave the second subject as the 'Toronto blessing.' And the third area was an autobiography or anything that was on my heart!

Being in need of my holiday, I merely glanced at the letter not taking it very seriously. I must admit I was puzzled that after the various people had questioned me with regard to writing a book, a company was now asking. I mentioned this to a friend, Ann. I read her the letter from the publishing company, and she rather startled me with the words, "Can't you hear God shouting at you, Maureen?"

Sometimes we can be very slow in grasping the leading of the Lord, and generally it is due to our own preconceived ideas of what God wants! Sometimes He has great difficulty in breaking through our mindsets!

In my quiet time with Him that next morning I apologised for being rather slow on the uptake. I told Him I really wanted to be sure this was what He wanted. As I reviewed the suggestions in the letter from the publisher once again, I had no witness of the Spirit that the first subject should be tackled by me at this stage. Not having been to Toronto, I could not speak with any authority on the blessing that was taking place there. But I certainly knew all about the blessing of the Holy Spirit, and there was a quickening in my spirit as I considered the new anointing I had received in October 1981 at the Wimber meetings in South Africa. As I waited on the Lord, He reminded me of all the wonderful things He had been doing since then as a result of that anointing which could serve to encourage others. I contacted the publisher and made an appointment to see the lady who had written the letter.

In my quiet time after I had spent time with the Lord, I asked Him to inspire me to write something that I could read to her before we discussed the possibilities. If what I wrote was suitable, then it would confirm to me that God wanted me to write a book. Incidentally the pages I wrote early that morning became the first chapter of 'God Peels an Onion'.

Very graciously she listened while I read. "That is just what we want," she said, and went on to tell me that books had been

published in the States and Britain, but very little from South Africa about this current move of the Holy Spirit. They were desirous of getting one on the market from South Africa. When discussing my lack of training in this field I was told not to worry, as she would edit the book. "How long do I have?" I asked, thinking possibly a year or so, knowing how long it generally takes to write books. "Like yesterday, as soon as you can," I was told.

No time like the present, when God has an assignment for you to do! I got to work right away after deciding that the best and most productive time when I would not be disturbed, would be in the early hours of the morning directly after my time alone with God. I got very little sleep at night, but had a nap after lunch each day as often as I could. During the early hours of the morning I would sit at the computer working. I was amazed at how the inspiration flowed and my memory was sharpened by the Holy Spirit as the book came together.

Steve, our son, came to us for Christmas and New Year. I had a break for that week, feeling the need to spend time with the family. Steve took a copy of the computerised manuscript back to Johannesburg with him, had it laser printed and sent back to Cape Town with a friend. He arranged for me to collect it from the friend's sister. As soon as she saw me, she began apologising for the fact that she had read it! She told me it had a profound effect on her. In moving to Cape Town she had grown away from the Lord, was not attending a church, but now felt the need to get right with God and get back into fellowship. This was the first fruits of the book! Far from being annoyed that she had read it, I was overjoyed, and together with her husband she is serving the Lord and fellowshipping in a vital church.

I knew the anointing of God was on the book. Each morning after we had our usual prayer time together, I would read what I had just written to David. Often tears would stream down my cheeks as I read, as the anointing of God would flow over me. I knew it was the confirmation and encouragement from the Lord of His blessing!

It must have taken just on three weeks, and the book was finished and ready for the consideration of the publisher. A few weeks went by and I was notified that while the content was good and would certainly have appeal for those who knew us, they felt that the book would not have a sufficiently wide base of appeal to make publishing it a commercial proposition. I was encouraged to have it printed if I could for those who would be interested! I was not the least perturbed, and after thanking the lady I asked her to please let me have the edited manuscripts back. In my heart I was thinking that perhaps God had been testing me to see my willingness in forfeiting a holiday in order to do something for Him. I was glad I had been obedient. David discussed with me the possibility of having it printed ourselves sometime when funds became available.

The publisher returned my computer discs and graciously included the paperwork done with the first editing complete. This was a tremendous help, as it had been neatly laid out, with headings inserted and the work revised and corrected! I carefully put it away in a cupboard! A few days later a lady who had been through one of my discipleship courses phoned me. She asked when the book would be ready. I explained that it was not being published. "Maureen, you must get that book printed, we are all waiting to read it!" she told me. "My husband and I want to send you something to encourage you to get it done."

That week a cheque of R5 000 arrived from them in encouragement! I knew without a shadow of a doubt that God intended the book to be printed and used for His glory.

We had met a lady during the holiday period who had written a book and had it printed. She told me she had made enquiries at several printers, but had finally found a company that had done an excellent job. We made an appointment with the manager of this press and when he heard my story and saw the work that had been done by the publishing company he was most impressed. He told me that this would make the job so much easier and save considerable expense. I received a

quote, took a substantial loan to enable me to order 1500 copies and the printing got under way.

Book sales went ahead quickly and in a few months my loan was repaid, and I began saving towards having the book reprinted! We decided we would market the book ourselves, keeping costs to a minimum. This enabled us to sell it at an affordable price to the public.

God has certainly blessed many people through the book. We know this by the many encouraging letters and telephone calls we have received from all over the country.

THE SPIRIT HAS FALLEN ON ME!

A neighbour in the flat above ours had received a copy of the book. One day just as I was going to have my rest after lunch, the phone rang. It was Connie, and she was crying. "Maureen please come quickly!" I immediately thought she was in trouble of some kind, and wanted to go prepared. "What is wrong, Connie?" Her reply brought the most incredible joy to my heart! "The Spirit has fallen on me and I don't know what to do!"

I dashed upstairs, walked through the unlocked front door to find Connie sitting on the couch in her lounge. Tears were streaming down her cheeks, her whole body was shaking, her hands were raised to God, and the book was lying open on her lap! God had anointed her while reading "God Peels an Onion." I did not want to disturb what God was so obviously doing, so I just laid hands on her and prayed that God would complete His equipping and give her a prayer language. The next moment she began praying in other tongues, ecstatic in His wonderful presence. Knowing I was not needed anymore, I quietly slipped off!

Soon after that, her newfound boldness and enthusiasm began to whet the spiritual appetites of some of her Methodist friends. We were invited to minister to a group of them in her flat and the Spirit of God fell on them too!

A lady in Johannesburg sent a copy of the book to her sister in East London, where it began to circulate in the church.

Cynthia, one of the people blessed by it, phoned ordering two more copies. A short time later she phoned once again telling me they had changed their holiday plans, and decided to come to Cape Town instead. They wanted to buy a supply of books to give to people in the church. Although it was the first time we had met them, we had the most delightful fellowship with Arthur and Cynthia, and they left with about 20 books! This resulted in them arranging an itinerary for us in East London during October, giving us the joy of ministering in the church they attend, as well as other churches. God graciously poured out His Spirit in each place.

I was most impressed with the vision of a lady in Cape Town. She bought 30 books to give to friends for Christmas. Having been blessed herself she wanted to bless others.

When I contacted Pretoria for the ISBN number which is required when a book is published, they asked me who the publisher was. After a little discussion, I realised I was now the publisher. The lady told me that it had to go under some name and asked what my surname was. She chuckled when I told her and promptly decided that 'Onions Publications' would be a marvellous name that would certainly not infringe on any other publishers rights! So that is how Onions Publications came into being. Little did I realise then that I would be writing this book, and would once again have need of it.

C HAPTER 16 SOME MINISTRY HIGHLIGHTS OF 1995

We were not without many tests during the year! We have come to realise that these attacks from the enemy are an attempt to hinder or stop what God wants to do. David and I have learned not to give in to the enemy, but to rise above the circumstances, while relying on God to turn the setbacks into triumphs. One of the severe tests has been a painful osteoarthritic condition in David's back and neck. Due to injuries sustained in 1985 in the lower back and in 1989 in the neck area, he has suffered much, particularly since having had a heart bypass operation in 1992. Prior to that we had no difficulty with our heavy schedule of constant travel. The degenerative condition of his spine has necessitated a suitable mattress, supportive chair and a strict diet, which has made travel very difficult for him this year. Many have joined us in praying and we know that God is faithful and are believing Him for complete healing. It is wonderful to know that people round the world have been upholding us in their prayers and we have been so grateful to God for this wonderful spiritual support. David has refused to give in and has stretched his faith to do as much as he can, but until the miracle manifests itself in his body, he has faced limitations in terms of travel. This has meant having to go on my own sometimes in order to fulfil ministry appointments in South Africa.

MY SPIRIT ON YOUR OFFSPRING.

We were booked for ministry in the Gauteng area in early May. It was such a joy staying with our son Steve, and seeing the effects the dynamic touch of God had made on his life! Steve transported me to the meeting in the Sandton Assembly, where Andre and Wilma were pastoring. As we drove in the car I casually asked Steve if he would like to share his testimony. In times past a suggestion like that would have had a totally different response from what I received. He told me he would love to. That morning I was so blessed as he related

what God had done in his life, and how he had discovered that just 'soaking' in the presence of God, with a genuine desire for His blessing had brought a new love and fervour for Him. I chuckled to myself as he got quite carried away in his testimony, relating how he had always been 'safe' in the sound-room, while he did the taping and controlled the amplification. He pointed to the men doing the sound in this meeting and said, "The Lord will get you this morning..."

It was hard to believe this was our normally reserved, conservative son speaking! When I had finished ministering the Word, and the people had come forward in response, desiring the mighty touch of God, it was time to pray for them.

As a large crowd had responded, I invited Andre and Wilma to pray for the one section of people, while I would pray for the centre group, and I invited Steve to come and pray for the other group. This was the first time he was going to minister in this way. While I was sharing on how to open to God, I noticed Steve earnestly seeking the Lord, as he quietly prayed in the Spirit. Before I had made suitable arrangements for deacons to assist, Steve was ready and stepped forward to pray for a lady in the front. It was wonderful to see the effect of the Holy Spirit on her life as the power of God impacted her. In her case she fell so suddenly that the gentleman behind her was also knocked off his feet! Steve's expression was priceless, as the privilege of being an instrument of God's mighty hand filled him. This was the beginning of the fulfilment of the prophetic word given him from Lawrence his minister, just a few weeks previously.

In spite of having heavy business commitments, he delighted in accompanying us to meetings and being involved. Whenever he shared his testimony, the conservative people found they could really identify with him, and would make their way to him for prayer! Again and again he would witness the power of God flow through his life as he made himself available.

MAKING THE MOST OF OPPORTUNITIES

I was particularly blessed by the fervour and zeal of one of the ministers in Gauteng, named Brian. He had such a burden to reach the lost, and used his secular work to good effect in this way. No doubt he has taken the Scripture in Ephesians 5:15-17 very seriously.

"Be very careful then, how you live - not as unwise but as wise making the most of every opportunity, because the days are evil. Therefore do not be foolish, but understand what the Lord's will is."

One evening Brian and his wife Heather came to fetch me for a meeting. Being early, they decided to find a nearby shop and get some sweets for their children. Brian noticed a shop called "Sweets from Heaven" and made his way inside. Two men were chatting at the counter. He went up to them saying, "I see you sell sweets from Heaven?" The men smiled and the salesman replied, "Yes, our sweets are out of this world!" Brian continued, "Do you perhaps know Jesus Christ from Heaven?" The companion beat a hasty retreat at this question, but as a result of the continued witness, Brian had the joy of leading the salesman to Christ. How I rejoiced as they shared the story, and I realised afresh that we need to make the most of every opportunity, as there are souls 'out there' who need to hear the good news.

SENSATIONAL MEETINGS

We have discovered that when churches really pray and prepare for special meetings, God makes the meetings very special! This was the case in a small town in Gauteng. Peter and Allison had arranged for me to minister at a ladies' breakfast on the Saturday morning, and in the Church on the Sunday morning and evening. Tremendous effort and care had gone into the ladies' breakfast with a spread laid out in the dining-room of their big home. A large crowd of ladies attended from different denominations, and were seated in the lounge which had been arranged for the occasion. The lounge suite had been removed and the empty space filled with as many chairs as they could squeeze in. I ministered on 'Restoration' from Isaiah 61, and the Holy Spirit graciously

worked in many lives. It was powerful. The Sunday meetings were held in a nursery school, as the church building was not yet complete. The morning service was well attended. Every seat seemed taken, and being a long narrow hall, the front was rather congested, with no space to pray for the people. The minister is a practical man, and when it was time to pray for the people he suggested that those seated in the two front rows vacate their seats, and stand along the wall. A deacon who had left his seat to make room in the front was reaching out to God very earnestly. During the time I was giving instruction, the anointing was increasing in the front of the hall. Peter, thinking ahead to what might be needed, went to this deacon putting out his hand to touch him to get his attention. God touched him simultaneously, and the next thing I noticed Peter was struggling under the heavy weight of this large man who had fallen. This was just the beginning. Chairs had to be speedily removed, and stacked against the wall, as row upon row of people were impacted by the Spirit of God. Peter took me to an overflow room and once again God moved mightily on the people there as He touched them. One lady lay with her arms raised above her for ages as the glory of God just radiated from her face. She had to be carried home later, unable to stand or walk as God had powerfully met with her. Back in the main hall, people were getting up and leaving, as the meeting had gone well over the normal time. The church administrator staggered through from the overflow room, still under the heavy anointing of God. Stepping forward to help him, Peter was impacted by the Spirit of the Lord and fell flat on his back, where he lay laughing continuously as the joy of the Lord filled his whole being. Truly we have been discovering that in His presence is fullness of joy, and the Spirit of God has been releasing people from past inhibitions and religious attitudes into the reality of what He has provided. Back at their home Peter shared how pressured he had been with the heavy responsibility of building the new church, plus ministry in other places, not to mention the bulk of administrative work he had to do. God knew what he needed, and just filled him with joy. The joy of the Lord is our strength!

The evening meeting was packed to capacity. As I walked into the hall, I was immediately aware of the presence of the Lord. The people had come with great expectation, and the singing and worship was wonderful. As I got up to minister, I was prompted by the Spirit to invite a few testimonies. People love to know what God is doing, and when we testify it brings glory to God. I called on the lady who had been carried home from the morning service. As she came forward the anointing began to intensify on me and this generally indicates that God is already moving by His Spirit. In order to be prepared, I called the large deacon forward to be supportive in case needed while the testimony was given. He too began to be affected by the anointing of God. It was not long before the lady was on her back once again glorifying God. I then invited Peter the minister to come and share what had happened to him in the morning. He was seated halfway down the hall. As he stood we could see he was drunk, not drunk with intoxicating wine, but with the new wine of the Holy Spirit (Ephesians 5.15). For a few seconds he was unable to move, then he slowly made his way to the front. He began by telling those of the congregation who had not been with us in the morning that they would find his testimony hard to believe. God had met with him in just the way he needed. It was not long before he too was overpowered by the Spirit and lay on his back for the rest of the service laughing with incredible joy in the presence of God. I did not need to invite any more testimonies, as people just began coming forward to share. An older gentleman shared that he had been in the armed forces, been involved in many different kinds of sport and never been knocked out. He went on to share that in the morning meeting God knocked him out!

There was no time to preach a message as the Spirit of God had already done the work by the reality of His presence. As I lifted up my heart to the Lord for direction, He gave it. I found myself making an appeal to visitors and those who were not serving the Lord whole-heartedly. Sharing that He loved them so much that He had given Jesus to die on the cross and that through His shed blood their sin could be blotted out, I went on to tell them that Jesus had risen from the dead, and was

seated at the right hand of the Father. What they had seen and experienced in the meeting was the promised Holy Spirit, who was manifesting His awesome presence by the signs and wonders they were seeing. I invited those who wanted to make a commitment to God to come forward. A number of people responded, weeping as they made their way to the front. After leading them in a prayer of commitment, I laid hands on each one delivering them from the bondage's of the past in Jesus' Mighty Name. Once again the Spirit of God overwhelmed these people as some were delivered, others restored from hurts and scars of the past and many filled with the Holy Spirit.

PREPARATION PRECEDES BLESSING

In September I went to Natal, where Peter, a minister in Ladysmith, had arranged an itinerary in that town and surrounding areas. Once again, much prayer and preparation had gone into the planning. I was met at Durban's Louis Botha airport by Judy, a friend in whose garden we had parked our caravan years before when ministering in Durban. There was much to share as we travelled to Ladysmith. En route we stopped in Howick for an interview with Helen Gardiner of the 'Joy' magazine in connection with my first book "God Peels an Onion." (The well written article appeared in the November issue, which resulted in many people contacting me!)

The love, care and hospitality I enjoyed in Natal was outstanding. The Lord is so gracious in the practical way He provides for every need! Some people have the mistaken idea that God is only concerned about His work and our service for Him. I have come to realise over the years that God is most concerned about our relationship with Him and our well-being. His love for us is manifest by His infinite care and provision. In this instance I was blessed with loving hospitality, hairdos, even a facial, not to mention a beautiful outfit that had been specially woven for me.

In meeting after meeting we saw God at work not only restoring people in the area of the soul (emotionally), but also filling His people with joy as He empowered and equipped them. The

meetings that had been arranged in some of the outlying towns were very powerful.

I did enjoy dialogue with one small boy during the final meeting in the Ladysmith church. I was kneeling next to a mature lady who was lying on her back filled with the most spontaneous infectious laughter. This young boy about 5 years of age stood nearby watching. His mouth and eyes were wide open as he surveyed this unusual sight in the church. Coming closer to me he said, "Won't you do that to me too?" "Do what?" I asked. "Tickle me like you tickled her, so that I can laugh like that too!" he replied. How do you explain to a five year old that I was not tickling the lady, but the Holy Spirit was causing God's divine joy to bubble up from inside her? From the testimonies I received, I realised that God had transformed many lives. It is always hard leaving a church when you have grown to know and love the people.

GOD ANSWERS MY QUESTION

There are times we do not understand why things happen the way they do. We get really perplexed and troubled. I found myself in this situation one morning as I got ready to go to Winterton to minister. David phoned me from Cape Town early that morning with the devastating news that a dear friend who was a faithful intercessor had been killed while on an intercessory trip in Bahrain. Linda and Rosa have been outstanding testimonies to the grace and provision of God, as they have obeyed His call on numerous occasions to go and intercede in various parts of the world. We had been close friends and co-workers in the Kingdom from the time we moved to Cape Town. Obeying a directive of the Holy Spirit they had left a short while before for Iran, planning to go on to Israel. We had been together with Felicity and Ann in a small prayer group committing our varied activities to the Lord. That afternoon I remember Linda pacing up and down in prayer telling the Lord how much she loved Him, what a privilege to serve Him, and how she could not wait to see Him face to face. She would pause from time to time, and like a small child clap

her hands in pure joy and delight, as with eyes wide open, she would talk to Him. Their previous trips had taken them to the States, Turkey, India and Pakistan, to name some of the places. God supernaturally provided for them both on every occasion.

They had completed their mission and were on their way home, stopping over in Bahrain. As they crossed a road a drunken driver ran into them. Linda was killed outright, and Rosa sustained minor injuries. At the time we had no details about the accident, knowing only that Rosa would return home on her own and that Linda's body would be flown back later. I wept with deep sorrow at losing such a precious friend, and in my heart I was puzzled at why such a thing should happen. My lift arrived a short while later, and I had to control my grief as well as my questions to the Lord as we drove to Winterton. The Lord graciously gave me the needed strength and I was able to concentrate on the meeting and impart what He had given me for the ladies. Later I was given a room in which to rest and be quiet in preparation for the evening meeting.

At last I was alone with the Lord, the One who has the answers to all our perplexities in life. I began by reminding the Lord of how fervent and full of the Holy Spirit Linda had been and that years of fruitful service could have resulted from her ministry. "Please dear Lord, comfort me in my grief today, and help me to understand." The Comforter filled me with an amazing peace as He instructed me to read the account of Stephen in Acts chapters 6 to 8, as here I would find my answer. I noticed as I read that Stephen was in the prime of his ministry for God. He was a man full of the Holy Ghost and faith, and was being powerfully effective in the Kingdom. Yet he was martyred for the sake of the Gospel. Instead of raising him from the dead, chapter 8:2 says, "Godly men buried Stephen and mourned deeply for him."

What began to thrill me was Acts chapter 7:55, "But Stephen, full of the Holy Spirit, looked up to heaven and saw the glory of God and Jesus standing at the right hand of God. "Look," he said, "I see heaven open and the Son of Man standing at the

right hand of God." Within minutes he was in His glorious presence. The Lord reminded me of Linda's prayer during our last prayer time together. She had expressed her longing of seeing Him face to face and He had granted her desire. It was no waste of a life, as God never wastes anything! He wanted Linda with Himself. Her work on earth had been complete. It had truly been a case of 'absent from the body and present with the Lord.' No suffering, but instant death. I must admit at this point I began rejoicing in the Lord, while feeling envious of the privilege Linda had in going in advance. My heart was immediately comforted. While we had lost a precious friend here, she was ecstatic in His presence! I then realised that Rosa was the one who needed comfort and prayer, having lost her own sister and co-intercessor. But there again, God works all things together for good to those that love Him and are called according to His purpose. He still needed her ministry alongside her husband Eugene!

EFFECTIVE OUTREACH

During the year we had ministered on several occasions at the Kensington Assembly in Cape Town. There had been powerful moves of the Holy Spirit in the meetings during which many ladies had been equipped. The elders requested that I spend a day with the ladies giving direction on how to be effective in the Kingdom, and to fulfil their rightful role in the Body of Christ.

Felicity and Ann accompanied me one Saturday where vision was imparted, discipleship classes with Felicity organised, and a challenge given to the ladies, with ideas on how to reach the lost. Two ladies with organising ability took on the responsibility of arranging a "Gospel Party". They planned to have it one Saturday late in November. In the meantime some of the ladies attended the discipleship class Felicity was conducting, where they began growing and developing in the Lord.

The day of the 'Gospel Party' arrived. The large hall looked very festive on our arrival, and there was a general buzz of excitement. Much time and effort, as well as great financial sacrifice went into the preparation. Each lady in the church donated a sum of money, and was instructed to bring two guests who were not part of the church. About 200 ladies, including a number of unsaved, enjoyed the delicious refreshments provided and the program that had been arranged. I ministered the Word, and great joy resulted when about a dozen responded to the Gospel message. Ephesians 2:10 says, "For we are God's workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do." Blessing results when we enter into the things that God has prepared.

It is encouraging to see the various initiatives and opportunities people are taking for the Kingdom. Instead of waiting for the unsaved to make their way into the church, at last the church is waking up to the fact that Jesus said we were to go into the world. "Business Breakfasts" in the different strata of society are being effective in reaching nominal believers as well as the unsaved. What a privilege to be involved at this time.

It is important to realise that we need to be led by the Spirit in everything we do. Often people are eager to serve in some way, but tend to run ahead of the Lord, beginning some venture with great enthusiasm, and then when opposition, discouragement or difficulties arise, they give up. But when we walk in obedience, spending time with Him in getting His blueprint, things happen. When we run into difficulties then, we know that He has the answer and reveals it as we seek Him. More often people lag behind. The Lord may have been speaking and giving direction, but they procrastinate. We need to realise that there is a sense of urgency. As we develop in our relationship with Him may we learn to respond quickly to the prompting of the Holy Spirit.

I have been delighted to see the hunger there is among young people today for the things of the Spirit. Each church at which we have ministered has had an overwhelming response from

them. Often older established Christians have reservations about the new things God is doing. Prejudice and preconceived ideas act as an effective barrier. Young people have not put up religious facades and in their search for reality have come into a very deep and satisfying experience with God. Again and again they have remarked on the awesome presence of God, and their delight in the reality and power of His presence. Church, far from being boring, becomes exciting. I do believe this is the time when our 'sons and daughters' will prophesy. The anointing of God continues to increase as He prepares His church to reap the mighty harvest of souls before His return. The words of that well known chorus declare, "It's beginning to rain...", to which we respond, "Please Lord, send it down in torrents!" I do believe we are yet going to see a mighty outpouring of His Spirit worldwide, resulting in the church becoming powerful and effective in the signs and wonders needed to bring in the lost.

C HAPTER 17 LEARNING TO KNOW GOD

Many people have expressed their desire to develop an intimate relationship with God. To help you practically, once again may I share what I have discovered through experience. Prior to January 1982, my 'Quiet Times' were spasmodic, often being interrupted by the telephone or people. They generally seemed somewhat of a ritual reading the Word of God, and then a long 'shopping list' of requests. Many times my prayers were repetitive due to the nature of the requests. I must admit there were times I wondered if God was as bored as I was with the tedious routine of my prayer life! I read many books on prayer and noted the guidelines and suggestions given. These I would try to incorporate to bring variation, but even these eventually became monotonous.

The change came after I had been anointed by God in October 1981. (In my book 'God Peels an Onion', I share the full story of what transpired. But in order to be constructive and helpful I am going to repeat a little).

I realised that Eternal life was not something I received only when I passed from this life into Eternity, but was in fact the entering into of a relationship with God that I could enjoy here and now. Jesus said, "Now this is eternal life: that they may KNOW You, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom You sent." (John 17:3).

The apostle Paul expressed a very sincere desire from his heart after years of service. "That I may know Him, in the power of His resurrection and the fellowship of His sufferings..." (Phil. 3:10.)

There is a vast difference between knowing all about someone or even being acquainted, and really having an intimate knowledge of them through communication and fellowship. I did know the Lord, and had known Him for years, but there came a dissatisfaction deep down in my heart. There was a dimension of knowing Him that I had not yet experienced! This

dissatisfaction was essential as it developed into a longing for something far deeper.

I expressed this longing to Him at the 'watch-night service' on New Year's eve. I asked that 1982 would be the year that I would somehow be able to spend quality time with Him. My life was always filled with much activity, and at that time we were pastoring the Harfield Road Assembly of God. We still had family at home, and together with counselling, ministry, visitation, as well as running the home, I had little spare time!

The answer came right after the 'watch-night service'. A deacon was arranging to go fishing with David a couple of days later, being a public holiday. They were planning to leave at 4 a.m. As I listened to them the Spirit of God suggested to me that I get up when they leave to meet with the Lord. As the whole family were going, I would have quality, uninterrupted time alone. At that hour there would be no telephone, visitors or any other interruptions! With great excitement I responded.

Seated on the floor in the lounge, soft worship music playing, I asked the Holy Spirit to please help me to get to know the Lord better during this time in His presence. I had no desire to be formal or religious, but to be real and develop in intimacy with Him.

I was prompted to begin reading the gospel of Mark. I always enjoyed reading about the life of Jesus, but this time the Spirit of God was highlighting things to me. I got to verse 35 and read, "Very early in the morning, while it was still dark, Jesus got up, left the house and went to a solitary place where He prayed." As I read, the presence of Jesus was so real to me, it was as if He was seated on a chair right opposite me. I looked up at Him and remarked, "Now I know how You could say that you do and say nothing unless Your Father tells you! You obviously discussed things with Your Father during those early hours of the morning." I knew that there were other references to Jesus rising early before the disciples, in order to be alone with God. He then invited me to also get up early to meet with Him each day in order to know His will and get to know Him in a closer way.

To cut a long story short, from that time I began to meet with Him daily at 2 a.m. for a couple of hours. I cannot express adequately the incredible change that came into my life as a result. I went without natural sleep, but began to discover the supernatural strength that He promised to those who wait on Him. (Isaiah 40:29-31). More important still, an intimacy began to develop as I read and discussed His Word with Him. Questions and problems of the day were solved in His presence. I would often ask His opinion on matters, and share mine!

SOME PRACTICAL HELP

From that time each day the moment my alarm clock sounded I would slip out of the room. (I had noticed that Jesus ROSE UP to meet with His father. Lying in bed trying to meet with God does not work for me. It is not long before prayer gets intermingled in one's dreams!) Dim lights also have the tendency to make sleepy eyelids droop, so I always put on a bright light. A steamy cup of hot coffee has the effect of waking me up properly and is conducive to intimate conversation. If at all possible the room needs to be well ventilated, tidy and comfortable! These are practical helps which are effective.

Instead of my old prayer routine, I begin by asking the Holy Spirit to give me God's plan for that morning's time together. It is refreshing to do this, as He varies the time together considerably.

I do remember an occasion in 1982 soon after I began getting up in the early hours of the morning, when the Lord told me not to be insincere or religious but real in His Presence! He let me see how I would awaken, stagger through to the study with my cup of coffee, wishing I could continue sleeping. But I would smile at the Lord and say, "Lord I am so glad that I am able to come into Your presence like this." On this particular day I distinctly heard Him tell me to be real! He knew exactly how I was feeling, and hated hypocrisy of any kind. I remember looking up quite startled, asking, "Lord, do You want me to tell

you how I really feel?" He replied that when I was honest, something could be done. But while I was trying my best to say what I felt He wanted me to say, there would never come the intimacy of trust and honesty! From that time on, I dropped my religious facades and shared frankly from my heart.

If I awoke feeling 'otherwise', I would tell Him, and ask Him to please help me. In no time at all, obeying His leading to play a worship tape of music or song, as I followed along, my spirit would lift and I would break through. Other times I would be led to pace up and down praying in tongues and the heaviness would lift.

I have discovered when reading the Word, not to rush through many chapters so that you feel you have done your duty, but to meditate on some aspect of what you have read. For example, if you are reading in the gospels about a situation arising in the life of Jesus, ask the Holy Spirit to let you experience being part of the scene. Your imagination will become fired up and things you never noticed before bless you. Very often you will understand why Jesus said what He did at that time. You will visualise the sceptical Scribes and Pharisees, trying to trip Him up with their questions, and exult in the incredible wisdom with which He confounded them. The Word of God will come alive for you!

It is helpful when reading the epistles to note Paul's situation when they were written. Linking up the cross references to the book of Acts gives tremendous insight!

After many years we become familiar with the translation we regularly use. We can quote as we read, with the result we do not appreciate what is written. If you are finding this the case may I suggest you get another translation of the Word. We are so blessed today to have so many to choose from and a new translation, being unfamiliar, brings refreshing new insights.

Many times one's mind gets bombarded by other thoughts when trying to pray. Not necessarily sinful thoughts, but things that might need attention that day. I spend a few minutes jotting down things I need to remember, so that the enemy will

not side-track me during my prayer time. I find praying aloud helps concentration.

I usually dialogue with God. Sharing my heart, I discuss things that are worrying me at the time. When I have a question I wait for the answer. Very often it will come in the form of a scripture given to me, or else He speaks deep in my heart. Sometimes I understand through revelation.

There are times in His presence when no words are spoken, I sit quietly, enjoying the most blessed intimacy of fellowship in companionable silence. This is not an empty silence, barren and unfruitful, but a silence pregnant with the sense of His love and nearness.

Faith in His Word is essential. When He has said we must draw near to Him and He will draw near to us, He meant it. Many times our spiritual sense of 'feeling' is numbed, and we feel nothing at all. This does not mean He is not with us. Our faith pleases Him, and in times of 'no feelings' the very fact that you meet with Him, share your heart, take time to read and meditate on His Word pleases Him.

Have you ever experienced the touch of God come upon you suddenly, when for no apparent reason you find yourself weeping in His presence, awed by His incredible love? At other times sheer joy and delight rise up within you as you again experience His touch, but in some different way. You find yourself ecstatic with laughter bubbling up and overflowing! Anyone interrupting your time with Him would think you were crazy! But you know that His Divine Presence has been manifest to you.

I never know how my time alone with Him is going to turn out, but I must admit this factor does eliminate any boredom, ritual or routine! Unless a burden is placed on my heart by the Holy Spirit, the early hours of the morning are not utilised for petitioning prayer! I can do that any other time. This is my time to know Him and I take time to be filled afresh with the Holy Spirit each day. The result is I discover the joy of knowing Him in the power of His resurrection. God's power that raised Jesus from the dead brings life to my mortal body,

(Romans 8:11) but also through me, brings life to others as rivers of living water flow! (John 7:37-39).

REGARDING HIS SPECIAL ANOINTING.

I would like to answer a question I have been asked many times.

“When God has powerfully impacted your life, and there has been a prophetic word about God’s will and purpose for you, will it automatically come into being?”

Sad to say, the answer is an emphatic no! God is gracious, and has a will and purpose for each of our lives which He sometimes reveals to us, but He gives us the option of receiving this by faith and of co-operating with Him by being obedient to His Word. Having given us a free will, He will never impose His desire upon us, but we are told in Romans chapter twelve to present our bodies as a living sacrifice to Him, so that we may prove the good, acceptable and perfect will of God. In His goodness He graciously anoints and touches us very powerfully at a time when we are responsive, but it is up to us to ‘continue to work out our own salvation with fear and trembling, for it is God who works in us to will and to act according to His good purpose.’ (Philippians 2:12-13).

Over the years I have seen many who have been powerfully equipped by God, but somehow their lives do not add up! I do believe the key is found in Matthew 7:21-23.

“Not everyone who says to Me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ will enter the kingdom of heaven, but only he who does the will of my Father who is in heaven. Many will say to me on that day, ‘Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name, and in your name drive out demons and perform many miracles?’ Then I will tell them plainly, ‘I never knew you. Away from me, you evildoers!’ “

From this scripture one cannot help but note that these very people had been anointed by God. When facing Jesus, who is the truth, one cannot lie, making claims that have not existed. Only a Spirit-filled person would have been able to prophesy, cast out demons, and perform miracles in His Name! Once God has given a gift He does not withdraw it. But from this

passage we discover that there are three essentials in function in order to have His continued blessing and fulfil His purpose:

1. Do the will of the Father in heaven
Be prepared to submit to His directives in your life!
2. Have an intimate relationship with the Father, Son and Holy Spirit.
“I never knew you” implies a need for intimacy and communion with Him. Neglect of this brings remoteness and opens us to the deception of Satan. To walk in the Spirit and to be led by the Spirit require fellowship and communion with the Holy Spirit.
3. Live in purity and integrity.
“You evil doers”, speaks of those entrusted with the power of God, yet do not walk in righteousness before Him. We cannot play the fool with sin or be careless and indifferent about spiritual things, depending upon some past experience. If we want to be a vessel for a noble purpose according to 2 Timothy 2:19-21, we are instructed to turn away from wickedness.

Failure to walk in accordance with these three requirements brings shame to His Name! Obedience on the other hand, effectively causes ‘living water’ to flow!

In 1 Timothy 1:18-20 we read,
“Timothy, my son, I give you this instruction in keeping with the prophecies once made about you, so that by following them you may fight the good fight, holding on to faith and a good conscience. Some have rejected these and so have shipwrecked their faith. Among them are Hymenaeus and Alexander, whom I have handed over to Satan to be taught not to blaspheme.”

From this scripture I note it was essential for Timothy to follow the prophecies made, and not neglect them. But I also see a warning for the need to fight the good fight, as well as holding on to faith and a good conscience. When we resist the conviction of the Holy Spirit, it is not long before we no longer have a good conscience, and eventually can reach the place of having a conscience that has been seared!

There is nothing more precious than having peace with God, and knowing that you are being effective in His Kingdom, as you walk before Him in integrity!

CONFESSING OUR SIN

'Condemnation' acts as an effective block in our relationship. Praise God we have His assurance that there is NOW no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus. (Romans 8:1). Condemnation has the effect of making us feel there is no hope!

Satan is the accuser of the brethren, and he is the one who causes this problem.

'Conviction' on the other hand is the work of the Holy Spirit. In this situation all we need to do is respond in obedience to what He is saying, confess our sin and failure and the blood of Jesus cleanses us. We are immediately reconciled with the Father. Unconfessed sin also acts as a block in our relationship with God. When Adam and Eve had sinned, and God desired fellowship with them, they were hiding! Ashamed of their nakedness, they tried to cover themselves!

Isaiah 59:1-2 says, "Surely the arm of the Lord is not too short to save, nor His ear too dull to hear. But your iniquities have separated you from your God: your sins have hidden His face from you, so that He will not hear." Praise God this is not the end of the story! He gives us the solution in 1 John 2:1-6:

"My little children, I write this to you so that you will not sin. But if anybody does sin, we have one who speaks to the Father in our defence - Jesus Christ the Righteous One. He is the atoning sacrifice for our sins, and not only for ours, but also for the sins of the whole world. We know that we have come to know Him if we obey His commands. The man who says, "I know Him", but does not do what He commands is a liar, and the truth is not in him. But if anyone obeys His word, God's love is truly made complete in him. This is how we know we are in Him. Whoever claims to live in Him must walk as Jesus did."

1 Peter 2:21-23 shows us how Jesus walked. "To this you were called, because Christ suffered for you, leaving you an example that you should follow in His steps. He committed no sin, and no deceit was found in His mouth. When they hurled their insults at Him, He did not retaliate; when He suffered, He made no threats. Instead, He entrusted Himself to Him who judges justly." What an example of perfection we have in Jesus.

There is a desire in our hearts to be like Him and follow in His steps, yet so often we fall short of His glory, through mistakes of sin. Note His precious promise to us in times like this:

1 John 1:9 says, "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness."

When the Holy Spirit makes me aware of sin in my life, I confess it immediately, and receive His perfect peace. Once again my fellowship is restored and my relationship with Him can continue to develop.

DISCERNING A PROBLEM

Another area of difficulty many people have is how to recognise the cause of some problem that may arise in their lives. There are three possible causes that need to be considered.

1. Discipline as a child of God. (Heb. 12:5-13)
2. An attack of Satan (1Peter 5:8-9)
3. A test of faith (1Peter 1:6-7)

I always begin to discern the problem by checking that it is not discipline. The Holy Spirit immediately brings conviction regarding something if this is the case. An earthly parent does not mercilessly chastise his child without explaining the reason. God is so much more loving and gracious than earthly fathers, and He immediately reveals the problem. In fact very often before you have to ask Him, you are aware that you have

sinned! As stated above, there is a need to repent and confess, and immediately you are aware of His forgiveness! Once I have ascertained that my problem is not due to correction or chastisement, then I view it in the light of an attack of the devil. He is always on the attack and that is why we are told to be on the alert in this regard. Making sure my armour (Ephesians 6) is in place, I resist the devil in the name of Jesus and know that he has to FLEE. Never entertain him, or the diabolical thoughts he would afflict you with. Resist him steadfastly, and according to 1 Peter 5:10 you will find "the God of all grace, who called you to His eternal glory in Christ, after you have suffered a little while, will Himself restore you and make you strong, firm and steadfast."

If in spite of this action the problem continues, then I realise that it is a test of my faith in God. Faith pleases God, and when I 'hang in there' in spite of tremendous difficulty, it brings Him joy. A 'test' is like an exam. The purpose is to determine our progress! When God has some enormous task to be done, He needs someone He can trust. I am always blessed by remembering Joseph. God had a wonderful plan for his life, but he was 'tried' by the Word of the Lord. In his case it seemed everything went wrong and was totally contrary to what the dreams God had given had indicated. But at no time did he give up. After many years of hardship he was ready and, overnight at the age of 30 years, was put in the position of honour God had planned!

HIS ASSURANCE IN THE VALLEY

In times of having a valley experience, we feel very alone and cut off from God. Our prayers often seem to hit the ceiling and bounce back! On one of these occasions I remember asking the Lord where He was? He gave me a scripture that I would never have connected with my situation. Psalm 23:4. "Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for You are with me: Your rod and staff they comfort me." I previously understood that the valley of the shadow of death was referring to physical death! But as I read it on this occasion the Lord showed me that the whole Psalm

applies to life. The valley spoken of was not the 'valley of death' but the valley of the SHADOW of death. As I meditated, I realised that a shadow is not the real thing, but certainly gives a reflection, although is often distorted. In this case it was a shadow of death. We understand that death is not annihilation, but separation. When we die, it is not the end of our existence, but simply separation from those who are living. In spiritual death it means separation from God. When God spoke to Adam regarding the garden, he told him that he could eat from any of the trees in the garden except the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. The day he ate of that tree, he would surely die. We know that physically he did not die, but was certainly cut off from the presence of God from that time!

When we experience this feeling of being cut off from God, I believe it is a time when in our walk we are passing through the valley of the shadow of death. But the wonderful promise here is that we are NOT cut off from God, no matter how we feel. The verse continues "... for You are with me, your rod and your staff they comfort me." Next time you are in the valley, keep walking knowing that He is with you, and it will not be long before you begin climbing the mountain once again! A mountain-top experience awaits you!

THE WEDDING IS SOON

An engaged couple enjoy being alone together. Our Heavenly Bridegroom is waiting for His Bride to make herself ready for the great day, but until we see Him face to face we have the glorious privilege of developing in this wonderful relationship with Him.

Some years ago in my time alone with Him, I became aware of His greatness and Holiness, the Majesty, wonder and brilliance of His glory. As this filled me I began telling Him how I saw Him, as I worshipped and adored Him. After a while I asked Him how He saw me. In my own understanding I felt so puny, insignificant and unworthy in His majestic presence. I was overcome with encouragement when He gave me Daniel 12:3. "Those who are wise will shine like the brightness of the heavens, and those who lead many to righteousness, like the

stars for ever and ever." I began reading about Daniel, and noticed that there were a few occasions when he was referred to as being 'greatly beloved of God.'

I purposed once again in my heart that I would walk in integrity like Daniel, and be consistent in the ministry God had given me in leading many to righteousness and in this way I would bring Him joy as I shone like a star!

Another time I was lost in thought about the way He works, His ways being far higher and greater than mine, the incredible way He supplies my every need and the awareness of His unconditional love for me.

"What are your thoughts concerning me, Lord?" I asked, echoing the question probably on your heart too. He gave Jeremiah 29:11-13 (K.J.V.).

"For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, saith the Lord, thoughts of peace and not of evil, to give you an expected end. Then you shall call upon Me, and you shall go and pray unto Me, and I will hearken unto you. And you shall seek Me and find Me, when you search for Me with all your heart."

.Psalm 139:17-18. "How precious also are Thy thoughts unto me, O God! how great is the sum of them! If I should count them, they are more in number than the sand: when I awake I am still with Thee."

The response from my heart was pure delight in Him. To think that He cared for me so much. I began to tell Him, and He replied by telling me from Isa. 62:4, "Thou shalt no more be termed Forsaken; neither shall thy land any more be termed Desolate; but thou shalt be called Hephzibah, and thy land Beulah; for the Lord delighteth in thee..."

As you are also part of His Bride, what He has shown me applies to you too. In the light of this may you be blessed and inspired to get alone with Him at a time that is suitable and will be uninterrupted.

May your longing, like mine, be reflected in the words of John on the Isle of Patmos when he said, "Even so, come Lord Jesus."

Until He comes may we be found not only occupied in His service, but experiencing intimacy with Him daily as we

become filled with His Spirit. Our lives will then truly reflect His glory!

How do you hear from God? Does God speak to ordinary people today? Can you know the will of God in your life? In what way does God reveal things to a person? Can anyone have an intimate relationship with God?

These are some of the many questions that have arisen from Maureen's first book called "**God peels an onion**". This has resulted in this book "**God grows an onion**" being written, where once again you may find yourself laughing and crying as the Holy Spirit answers these questions using Maureen's experiences from her early years. As a result you will find yourself being drawn into a closer relationship with Jesus as you make yourself available to Him for the plans He has for your life.

David and Maureen are a ministry team whose gifts uniquely blend together. In obedience to the call of God in 1984 they stepped out of pastoral work into a full-time itinerant ministry. They have since travelled extensively around the world and have been privileged to see the Holy Spirit move in a very powerful way. They are accredited ministers of the Assemblies of God in South Africa, and have been released with the blessing of the movement to minister wherever doors are opened. They have a vision for unity and wholeness in the Body of Christ. As a result of their ministry, there are many all over the world who have experienced a new anointing from God.

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