

And His

Bride

Has

Made Herself

Ready

An Autobiography
by Sandra Hall

Contents

Introduction		page
Chapter One	My Story	page
Chapter Two	His Story	page
Chapter Three	The Original Lie	page
Chapter Four	Learning Obedience	page
Chapter Five	Building the Bride	page
Chapter Six	An Intercessory Burden	page
Chapter Seven	Mizoram, An Incredible Experience	page
Chapter Eight	Just to Tell You Who He Is	page
Chapter Nine	God's heart	page

“Let us be glad and rejoice
and give glory to Him,
For the marriage of the Lamb has come,
And His Bride has made herself ready.”
And to her it was granted
to be arrayed in fine linen,
clean and bright,
for the fine linen is the righteous acts of the saints.
Then he said to me,
“Write:”
“Blessed are those who are called to the marriage supper of the Lamb.”
And he said to me,
“These are the true sayings of God.”

Revelation Chapter 19, verses 7 to 9

All quotes in this book are taken from The Holy Bible,
New King James Version.
Copyright 1994 by Thomas Nelson, Inc.

I write this book to show you a way that is different, a way to love, a way Jesus gave us to follow.

I dedicate this book to my grandchildren

Ethan

Kira

Zane

Kate

Joshua

You are all so special and I love you all.

This book is a true story, therefore the people I write about are real people. In most of the book, I have just written about a man or a woman. I have not mentioned names. I was told I could not write like this as it wouldn't work. It seems to have worked quite well. I have changed the names of the main people. I have done this reluctantly because I believe I have robbed these people of a blessing by doing so. It would have given them the opportunity to do as Adam didn't do, to take responsibility for who they are and what they have done, the first step in becoming whole.

God's word to me on this is,

“If anyone believes they are the people I am writing about, let them rejoice that the creator of the universe, their heavenly Father, is intimately involved in their lives and wants to bless them.”

Acknowledgements

In July, 2006, I was given the idea for this book, and by December, 2007, I had written numerous notes and pages which I stored in a box, not in any sort of sequence or order. Some of the experiences I was to write about had yet to take place. I knew the Lord Jesus wanted this book to be written. In 2008, I joined a Christian writer's group. There I met young men with the softest hearts, men who encouraged me as I read pieces of my story to them each month. Some of them even shed tears with me as they heard about my childhood. They helped me to believe I really did have something worthwhile to say. Thank you Alex Hall, Jake Elliot, Brandon Hendross, and Ivars Osis for believing in me and helping me to believe in myself. I commenced to organise my notes and to write this book in July 2008 and completed it in October 2011. You guys made it much easier for me to achieve this and I really appreciate each of you and the input you all had into my life.

Sarah P and Coralie, thank you both for being the first ones to read this work and to give me such beautiful comments and confirmation. Coralie, your editing was so valuable. Thank you for the time and effort this cost you. You are both very special people and your relationship with God is unique.

Sarah, Campbell, Alice and Kiera, you all believed this book needed to be written. Thank you for your encouragement and for your computer skills, but most importantly for your love. To have been allowed to have each of you in my life has been an incredible blessing. You are mighty young men and women of God.

Reverend Doctor Henry Martin B. th., Dip. Phys. Ed., M. Th., D. Min., B. of W., you listened to my story and were always positive with me, especially as I walked through the unfolding of Chapter 6. I owe you so much. Thank you for being who you are, and for walking in Jesus as you do. You are awesome.

Lastly, thank you to my family, to my beautiful daughters, for walking with me through the breakdown of our family life in Canberra, and all the years afterwards. I know it was quite often hard, but it has made you both the incredible young women you are. I love you deeply and I am so proud of who each of you are, and of the amazing things you have both achieved.

Introduction

I had a dream to write a book, to tell of the power of the Lord Jesus Christ to take a life, totally shattered by emotional abuse, and put it together again. My life. I wanted to tell of the beauty and peace of a life lived with Jesus, of a relationship so special that it fills every need, a relationship He longs to have with us. The book was to be His testimony, not mine. I had hoped to do this by not having to give my testimony. But my testimony is His testimony. I cannot separate them. I have given my testimony many times over the last thirty four years, since Jesus brought me up out of the miry clay and set my feet upon a rock, Himself. I delight to give it, for without all that happened before I met Jesus, I would not be who I am today. Without giving my testimony, I would not be able to make you understand where I have come from, and so you could not understand the miracle I have received in my life. He truly can make something beautiful out of all our confusion and messed up lives. And all the glory goes to Him.

I do not see my life as negative although, of course, it was. For many years now I have been able to praise God for everything that happened to me, because living with Him, being taught and healed by Him, has made the beginning a small price to pay. So, as you read, please remember this. Also, as you read, you will hear my mother was my abuser. When I first met Jesus, she thought I had gone insane. Three years later, He came into her life and gave her a special relationship with Him. Unfortunately she had damaged her body and her mind so badly in all the years of drinking and prescription drug abuse, she spent the last thirteen years of her life in a nursing home. Yet, even though she had severe dementia, I would say to her in those days,

“Do you still love Jesus, Mum? ”

She would reply in a booming voice,

“Yes I do.”

So His testimony is about two shattered lives, changed for His glory.

Also, as you read this story, understand I never ever held resentment or unforgiveness or hatred for my mother. I loved her, and I always seemed to understand she was not responsible for her actions.

As I listened to the Lord to see where He was taking me with this book, I saw in my mind a key. It was shaped like the old fashioned keys I remembered from my childhood, only it was very large and blood red. As I gazed at it, the Lord reminded me of a time when I first met Him, and started this journey. He told me He would give me the keys to the Kingdom of Heaven. I realised the blood red key represented

all the keys He has given me over the thirty four years. These keys unlocked the frightened, withdrawn, characterless thirty four year old, and taught her how to live in the Kingdom of Heaven here and now, to become who she is today.

The first key He gave me was to come to know Him, who He really is and how much he loves us. He just poured His love over me, let me talk, listened to me. He had taken me into a catholic church to be saved and then to be healed. I found books and tapes by incredible priests and nuns, which showed me how to go about this journey I was undertaking. People who had walked through what I was approaching, and come through shining. There was an awe and reverence for God there that I was not to find again for many years, in all the places I went into. It gave me a foundation in knowing God that I was never to lose, and which has been a protection for me as I went into other churches. It was something I found lacking in other places, and I grieved the absence of it. The Lord God does not respect one person over another, and He will give freely to those who diligently seek Him. But He is a Holy God and will be worshipped as such.

I believe the journey He has taken me on, the moulding, shaping, refining, purifying, all spoken of in scripture, is a journey He wants to travel with every one of us. It is a journey of becoming the Bride of Christ, the Church He is building and whom He loves. The foundation stone of this Church is awe and reverence for who He really is. Through learning who He is, we come to love His people, whoever and wherever they are. There is no separation in His Church, no divisions. It is a body built on Love. Oh, how His heart grieves for His Church, for us to love one another as He loves us.

In 2002, I went on a world trip, the main reason for going being to visit Ireland where my ancestors came from. The itinerary offered the opportunity to visit Vatican City. It was definitely not on my list of places to see. However, the friend I went with wanted to see it. She asked me to change my mind and go with her. This I did. As we gathered outside on the footpath, the tour guide told us not to ask to go into the Popes private chapel, as they did not like the tourists to see the opulence there.

We were in St Peters Basilica, about two thirds of the way through the tour, when I saw the chapel over to the right. The entrance was roped off with thick red ropes threaded through gold posts. Two men were standing there, one dressed in a suit and one in the uniform of the Vatican guards. They were chatting to each other. I heard the Lord say to me,

“Ask to go in.”

As I watched, a woman went up to the men and asked a question. The man in the suit shook his head, and the woman walked away. I walked over to them. Before I could say anything, the man in the suit asked me,

“Why do you want to go in?”

I replied, “To pray.”

He opened the red ropes and let me in. I honoured their request to not look at the opulence, and kept my eyes on the floor. All I saw was red carpet and red velvet curtains all around. I saw a single kneeling pad with an arm rest. I made my way over to it and kneeled. As soon as I did, I was flooded with tears, and I sobbed for about twenty minutes. The words I spoke over and over were,

“Lord, I repent for what we,
Your people,
have done to Your Church.”

The words came from the burden of grief He allowed me to feel, just a small part but as much as I could bear, of how much grief He feels for the beautiful Bride He loves, the Bride He shed His blood for.

I have been His intercessor since I first experienced salvation. Over the years He has shared with me a number of His burdens. But I have never carried such a depth of grief. The burden for His Bride has stayed with me over the last nine years, and He has shown me many things during this time. Or, at least, I should say, He has allowed me many experiences that have taught me many things about building His Church. That is why this book is called,

“And His bride has made herself ready.”

I do not believe it was a coincidence He took me into a Catholic church to be saved, [Chapter two] and into the Pope's private chapel to feel His burden for His church. I believe this was a very deliberate action of His. I believe it is to show His love for all churches. His heart is for all who call on His name. He doesn't see as we see, which is what this book is about.

“He who has an ear to hear,
let him hear what the Spirit is saying to the churches.”
Revelation Chapter 9, verse 7 to 9.

Chapter One

My Story

The Irish are a very beautiful people, but for me it would have been a blessing if I had not been born into an Irish lineage. My bloodline is three quarters Irish and one quarter unknown. The Irish have two problems, one with alcohol and the other their belief in superstition, in particular their belief in leprechauns. Both my grandmothers were Irish, both badly affected by superstitions and my maternal grandmother by alcohol. My mother received the problem with alcohol and the belief in leprechauns.

My mother always told me I was very much wanted. It took four years of trying for me to be conceived. Yet, when I was born, I was the opposite of what she wanted. The quarter unknown in my lineage was my mother's father. She was the youngest of nine, and, in her mother's husband's words, was not his. He came home from WW1 in a wheelchair. My mother was born about a year later. He wrote to his brother at that time, saying the youngest child was not his. We never found out who her father was. My guess is another Irishman. My grandmother's husband was English. My mother had jet black curly hair, olive skin and brown eyes in a family of largely blue eyed, fair skinned, fair haired siblings. She was teased and bullied all her school life for being different. She married a man, my father, who was as fair as she could find, paper white skin, fair hair and pale grey eyes, to try to not give birth to a child who would suffer as she had, by being dark and different. When I was born the nurses in Saint Andrews Hospital in Toowoomba were amazed and delighted. I was born with brown eyes. They had never had a baby born there with brown eyes before. I also had black hair and olive skin. They washed me in olive oil before presenting me to my mother. They thought I was beautiful, but I was everything she had hoped I would not be. I had one sister born seventeen months after me, who had blue eyes, fair skin and fair hair, although her eyes later turned brown.

As we grew older, our mother told us of a leprechaun who lived with her. She called him Ebenezer, and he sat on her shoulder and talked to her. I believe he was a demonic presence responsible for a lot of her behaviour. For many years, from my teens until I met Jesus, I had a recurring dream. I was in a big house on my own. I was making beds, cleaning rooms and preparing for guests, guests who never came. In the middle of the house, totally enclosed by the house, with no windows, was a room I never went into unless I was summoned. In the room lived a demon, huge and ugly. It would call me into its presence. I would always go. I had no choice. It would yell and scream at me until I was sobbing. Then it would be happy and let me go back to my preparations. When I met Jesus, I realised God had been

showing me, through the dream, what was manipulating my mother. When He came into her life, the presence left. She was sixty five.

I cannot know when Ebenezer came to live with my mother, but it appears to have been sometime in childhood, as she told a story of being cruel to animals at only twelve years of age. Her older brother had a dog he kept chained up when he was at work. He loved this dog. My mother was told not to go near it. One day she got the hand mower and pushed it backwards and forwards at the dog. The animal became so frenzied it broke the chain and went for my mother. She ran, but fell. The dog savaged her head and she had one hundred and twelve stitches in the wounds. Her brother had to shoot the dog. She delighted to tell this story, and always found it very amusing. This, to me, was the essence of her insanity. She would get intense amusement from another's pain and discomfort.

When my sister and I were growing up, one of the things that amused her greatly was to call us to her. We always had a cat in the house. She would make us watch as she poured some hot, as in spicy, substance down the cat's throat. Mustard was her favourite. The poor cat would go mad, running around, clawing at its mouth, trying to stop the burning. We had to laugh at its antics. I didn't dare cry. The animal would get worse treatment if we didn't laugh. Only laughter satisfied her. I have been an animal rescuer all my life to try to undo the pain and helplessness I felt at these times.

I want to write here specifically about a couple of the abuses my mother subjected me to. I do this because emotional abuse and it's effects are hard to understand. As you are reading about them, please try to put yourself in the place of the child they were being done to. A child does not see as an adult does. For a child, everything is so much larger, so much more frightening, so much more confusing, so much harder to understand. Children can be damaged by something that, to an adult, seems funny.

Her first cruelty to me was when I was just walking, only a year old. It was during WW2. At this time, every home was equipped with a gas mask, in case of bombing. We were living in a bay side suburb of Brisbane. My mother would put the gas mask on, out of sight where I could not see her. She would then run out at me and frighten me. I would run in terror on legs that were not yet meant to run as fast. There were two results from this treatment. The first was that I started to vomit and lose weight. At eighteen months old, my tonsils and adenoids were removed as a possible solution to the problem. Of course, the doctors did not know what was happening to me at home. So nothing they did helped. The second result was that my feet turned in dramatically, and my shin bone developed a slight curvature inwards. Doctors told my mother I would have to wear leg irons to straighten them back again. She managed to talk the doctor into putting me in boots with a built up sole instead, to force the feet to move back out. This did not help the curvature of the shin bone, and I still suffer from pain in that area today. The effect that wasn't visible was she planted such deep fear inside me, it was the motivating force for every thing I did in my life.

How did a child of such a young age remember this?

I didn't.

She told me about it many times over the years. She always thought it was such a funny story. The damage she did from telling it over and over, eventually did more harm than the original event. I lived with the emotional results of the fear, and the physical results of the vomiting right up to the time I met Jesus, and for many years after. As an adult I could never go for an outing that could be pleasant because fear, mostly of people, of having to communicate, of having to deal with circumstances to me not completely safe, would cause me to start vomiting. Today I still cope with illness caused from the lack of nutrition I missed out on during these years. I was always at the bottom two percent weight for age in children.

The second abuse I would like to write about is when I was six years old and could read simple books. The first grade reader at that time had a story in it about a baby koala left alone to die because someone shot its mother. She would say to my sister,

“Come on, let's have some fun, let's make Sandra cry.”

She would then make me read the story for them until I was sobbing and they were laughing. I didn't dare refuse. My mother was so controlling. I never ever went against anything she did to me. I never threw a tantrum or tried in any way to protect myself. I just let it happen.

My mother was also quite physically violent. We would often go to school with huge red welts on our legs from the iron cord, which was detachable from the iron in those days. It made a fearsome weapon in her hands.

These three occurrences, the cats, the retelling of the gas mask story, and the reading of the koala story, eventually caused deep confusion in me. My thinking became,

“Mothers love their children.”

This to me, as a six year old, was an indisputable fact. But my mother loved to make me unhappy and to make me cry. Therefore my mother couldn't love me. But it couldn't be her fault because mothers love their children. Therefore it had to be my fault she was cruel to me. There had to be something so badly wrong with me that I made it impossible for her to love me. I was too sickly, too thin, too ugly, too selfish. I became, in my own eyes, “unlovable”, and a lie was planted deep within me.

“You are unlovable. No one will ever be able to love you.”

My personality from this point on was built on the foundation of this lie. It has taken thirty four years for me to turn this around, to know I can be loved.

During the process of learning the truth, I have found many people, even those who haven't suffered abuse, but just grown up in a home where there wasn't sufficient love, who have within them what Jesus calls the Original Lie planted deep inside. It is the foundation for their personality. Unfortunately we are unaware the Lie is there influencing us. I write about this in Chapter three.

Where was my father when all this was happening? The Lord showed me in a vision during ministry once, that he knew I was being abused, but he chose to do nothing about it. I had a hard time with unforgiveness towards my father. But I eventually came to realise he was dysfunctional himself, and severely damaged by his Irish parents, especially his mother whom the slavery to superstition had made very neurotic. He was also the fourth pregnancy she had but the first live birth. She had three full term, still born baby boys before my father. She never had another child. She overprotected him. He did not go to school at the correct age. She kept him home for an extra year by putting his age back. Only after he died did we find out he was a year older than he thought he was. He met my mother when he was thirty four. He still lived at home, and had not been trained for any work. But he had an incredible gift of music. He could hear a song played on the radio, and go to his piano and reproduce it perfectly. When he and my mother met, the only job he had ever worked in was as the leader of the resident band on radio station 4GR Toowoomba. But this was most nights till the early hours of the morning.

When they married, he decided to turn his hand to carpentry. Again, he was gifted and became a "spec" builder of houses. We would live in garages or part built houses until they were finished and sold, then move into the next part built house. We moved fifteen times in five years. This was a stress for my mother. I was the one targeted by my mother for specific abuse, but there were other things that happened in our family by which we were all affected. Any one of these would have been enough in one lifetime to handle. My father had a major heart attack when I was six. He was never the same again. My mother did not handle this, and her escape became prescription drugs and alcohol. These two related events stopped my mother's specific abuse of me, but created even bigger problems.

My mother was addicted to pain killing powders before she took her first drink of alcohol or her first sleeping pill. When I started teething, she gave me teething powders for the relief of pain. She did not know what doctors and governments had known since 1887, that teething powders contained mercury and one baby in four given them died. The other three suffered varying degrees of ill health for the rest of their lives. The powders were finally banned in 1948; too late for me and one of my cousins who was also given them. I was born in 1943. I was fortunate or, as I see it, God was already looking out for me.

My mother noticed I was crawling around looking for ash from my father's cigarettes, and licking it up. She took me to a doctor and he diagnosed "pinks disease" which is mercury poisoning, as the mercury turns the skin pink. The doctor told her to give me a shaker full of salt, and let me tap it out on the floor, lino of course, and eat as much as I liked. There is some incredible information in that. I

knew I was sick, at six months of age, and I knew what I needed to do to heal myself. Amazing! I feel this is an ability within all of us, but we seem to lose it as we get older. I myself have sought to be aware of what my body is telling me about itself.

The mercury had done damage though, and I have suffered joint pain, connective tissue pain, muscle weakness, breathlessness, lack of energy, extreme tiredness, and nausea all my life. I never had one day where I got up feeling well or not in pain, until I was forty. I would vacuum one room of the house, then have to lie down for fifteen minutes to recover. The same for every job in the house. Some jobs were impossible, like bathing the dog, washing a car, standing in a queue in a bank, so many things.

The Lord led me to a macrobiotic diet when I was thirty seven, after my marriage broke up and I was on my own with the children. This was a diet of cereals, seeds, nuts, grains and vegetables. It seemed to do a lot to cleanse my body of the mercury, but the physical damage was still there. After forty, I would have one day every now and again where I got up feeling well and had energy. This gradually became one day a week, then a full week but not every week. Now, in my late sixties, I can honestly say I feel better than I have ever done. Only this year have the pains in my legs mostly gone, and the breathlessness is getting better. No, I haven't stayed on the diet all these years. I did for two years religiously. Then I went to vegetarian, then to adding fish and chicken.

What I learnt over the years of struggling to get well was that the mercury left me with a susceptibility to all chemicals. I have to have a chemical free house and use chemical free personal hygiene products. It took me years to learn all about food additives and how to look after myself. If I inadvertently eat something today that has a chemical in it, or breathe something in, I can still have an allergic reaction. Not life threatening, but extreme pain in my body, especially in my legs. They say the mercury never leaves your body. One of my passions is about food additives, especially when given to children. I learnt recently the government allows mercury to again be used as a preservative in inoculations given to children.

How did my mother become an alcoholic and a prescription pill abuser? She had found a bottle of sleeping pills on a shelf in a garage we had borrowed to live in, while dad was building another garage for us as a temporary home. They had decided the next house would be the one they would stay in permanently. They were now financially able to do this. My mother carried the bottle of pills with her when we left the borrowed garage. Not long after the house was finished and we'd moved in, my father had his first heart attack, a very severe one. He was only forty two. He was in hospital for weeks, and months in a nursing home afterwards. While he was away, my mother could not sleep. She bought a bottle of port, and took one of the pills with it. She had never drunk alcohol before. My father only drank beer occasionally. From her very first drink, my mother was addicted. She also started smoking cigarettes. She was thirty, I was six.

I do not remember the early years of her addiction very well, but it must have been severe. When I was twelve she joined AA and was sober for two years. These were the only happy years of my childhood. She was a different person. The cruelty to me had gone. I had an emergency appendectomy during this time. Because of the mercury poisoning, I did not heal as I should have, and spent three months at home recuperating. Every day, AA members would call in to talk. We did not have a telephone in those days. I listened to them and knew they all had something special. At twelve years of age, I could recognise it. Even though I have never suffered from any of her addictions, the AA steps were a tool I used to help myself find emotional wholeness many years later. I still use it today. The original program was inspired by God. It is a tool any one can use for almost any situation.

Even though it was keeping her sober, my father could not handle all the male visitors who were coming to see her while he was at work. Also he could not handle her getting well. This may sound strange, but I experienced the same thing when I started to find health in my first marriage. I write more about this in the next chapter. He began to encourage her to take a drink again. She had lost a lot of weight when she stopped drinking. He told her she was too thin, and encouraged her to drink stout to help her put on weight. I don't remember how long she stood out against the temptation. It seemed to be a few months. Then she gave in. She immediately became an alcoholic again. You read about alcoholics who are right back where they started from with one drink. This was true for my mother. She also went back on the prescription pills.

When I worked in a crisis accommodation, many years later, we took in numbers of female alcoholics. They talked about something called controlled drinking. There may be some alcoholics who can control drink. But my experience with my mother would have me say, "DON'T DO IT." You cannot know if you are the one who, from that first drink, again becomes fully addicted. With my mother, from that first glass of stout, she became so much worse than she had been before. Life became a living hell for my father, my sister and for me. She also started to use the pills a lot more than she had.

We had a house with an attic room upstairs, the ceiling of which was not legally high enough to use as a bedroom, but which was quite high enough to stand up in and raise your arms without touching the ceiling, so could be used as a bedroom. I came home from high school one day, and my father was home from work. Mum was upstairs in the attic. She had been drinking. We did not see her for a week, but at night we'd hear her falling about upstairs and bottles being dropped. One morning there was blood on the wall and broken fibro at the foot of the stairs to the attic. I did not understand what was happening. She had never been a binge drinker before. I asked my father what was wrong with my mother. He told me nothing was wrong but I sensed he was covering something up. This was when I came to understand what an alcoholic was, and that my mother was very sick.

Also parents, never lie to your children. If they ask a question like that, it is because they know there is something wrong, and they need to be told the truth. My father not telling me the truth did a lot of damage.

My mother was, of course, mixing the alcohol with prescription drugs, Seconal and Nembutal. These were strong sleeping pills. She always had bottles of them hidden everywhere, and always one bottle in her bra. She didn't doctor shop. She always got them from the same medical centre. Many years later, when I was married and she had collapsed on the floor of our home, one of the doctors came to attend to her. I asked him why he kept giving her prescriptions for these drugs. Didn't he know she was abusing them? He replied,

“We considered she was a useless human being
and hoped she would kill herself.”

At this time he had been supplying her for at least ten years. I remember thinking at the time,

“Did he ever think of the family who had to cope with her addiction?”

My father had died of his third heart attack when I was a few weeks over eighteen, and my sister a few months less than seventeen. We were left to cope with the problem. Did he ever spare a thought for how hard it was? But I was very withdrawn at that time and did not question him further.

But I am getting ahead of myself. Going back to the week she spent in the attic, and my first real knowledge and understanding of the problem. Some time during this week, somewhere deep inside myself, I made a decision I could not cope with my life as it was any more. A counsellor years later helped me to see I tried to make myself invisible. My confused thinking led me to believe if I could just make myself small enough, I may be overlooked and the abuse might stop. I pulled my shoulders forward and down, in a protective stance. This rounded my back and I appeared to be deformed. I stopped putting on weight. No, I didn't have an eating disorder. As best as I can understand it, my mind stopped my body from growing. I did not develop as a fourteen year old female should develop. Between the ages of fourteen and twenty one, I put on one kilo. I married at twenty one and had three children by twenty nine. After my third child was born, I finally weighed forty four kilos. I stayed this weight, seven stone, until I was forty.

Another major change was, I stopped talking. I would say only the barest number of words needed to survive in school. I had a massive personality change. In those days there was no awareness of such things. Even if someone had become aware of my suffering, like one of my teachers, there were no school counsellors, no agencies to go to for help. Even Alanon and Alateen were not available in those days. I became a misfit, or, as it is called in Grow, inadequate to deal with or maladjusted to life. I was in first year high school when this happened. I was no longer able to sustain friendships, so I lost all the friends I had. There were a couple of other girls

who didn't fit in either, for one reason or another, so we hung out together. But we were all unable to be a friend.

I realised when I became an adult, I was also experiencing shame. Everyone in the town knew mum was an alcoholic. Amazingly she always managed to hold down a job. To get to work though, she would sit out on the centre white line in her Morris Major. I was told, years later, people driving at the same time would say,

“Here comes Mrs Hall, drunk as usual.
Get out of her way.”

She never had an accident. She was never picked up for drunk driving. Southport was a small town in those days. It seemed as if they all looked after her, knowing she was a widow.

I had no one to talk to about the stress of being the one responsible for my mother, after my father died. So everything piled up inside me, making me very unhappy, even more withdrawn and unable to cope. After menstruation began at fifteen, I had become physically sicker and weaker. I became chronically anaemic. One blood test showed a dangerously low blood count. I had to take a foul tasting mixture which I couldn't keep down, and eats lots of liver. Horrible! Steak was a rarity in those days.

There was another major incident in our lives during the time my mother was sober. I did not realise how traumatic it was for her and for my sister and me, until I told someone about it a few years ago. As I always loved my mother, so she always loved her mother. Grandma was an alcoholic also, and quite a bad one according to my mother's stories. My mother was the youngest of nine, so there came a time where she was left to cope with her mother's drinking on her own. Her sisters all went into live in positions at an early age, fourteen, and, even though some of them came home for a day a week, my mother still had lots of time on her own with Grandma. She told of being put to bed in the same bed as her mother, as soon as she got home from school, so Grandma would know where she was. Grandma had had too much to drink to look after her. Yet my Grandma was a strong person, physically and emotionally. In a time where there was no doctor or dentist on the Darling Downs, she would sew up wounds for men, or pull teeth, all without anaesthetic. She was a nurse. Her husband was career Army, an English aristocrat, and so was away a lot. He died of meningitis he picked up in the trenches in WW1, when my mother was a toddler.

One day, when I was twelve, Grandma called the whole family together for Christmas lunch. Home in Toowoomba was a beautiful, old, double story house on four acres of land, magnificent trees, gardens, and an orchard with peach, plum, apricot, and cherry trees. The kitchen was huge with a monstrous iron, wood burning stove. One of my beautiful memories is of Grandma making pancakes for breakfast, and everyone gathering around to eat. I can still smell them today. After the Christmas meal this year, Grandma had an announcement to make. She had decided she had lived long enough. She was eighty three. She said she was going to bed and

would not eat or drink again until she died. She kept her word. I remember travelling up on weekends from Southport, a long trip in those days, and listening to my mother and my aunts begging her to just have a cup of tea, or a sip of water. It took till some time in March for her to die. It was an horrific experience for the whole family.

However, there was one good thing to come out of this heart breaking experience. One of my aunts who was still single could finally marry a man she had loved for years, and who loved her. He was a German and so not acceptable to the family because of WW2, even though he had lived in Australia at the time of the war. They had only about eight years of happy marriage before he died of a heart attack. He was a man who laughed a lot and was easy to be with. All her nieces and nephews loved him. We all went to their farm for holidays. They had no children as they were both in their late forties when they were finally able to marry.

There was a lot of bigotry in my mother's family. Her older brothers, after WW2, would not buy anything German or Japanese made. They carried this through till they died. There was also the catholic bigotry that has plagued Ireland. My grandmother asked my mother to request, at the time of her first communion in the catholic church, for the breakup of her brother's marriage. He had married a protestant. Of course the marriage didn't break up. In fact, he and his wife had the happiest marriage in the family. It was always a blessing to visit them.

I guess readers are wondering how I managed to get married when I was so withdrawn. The next part of my story will explain this.

I had known Wes almost all my life.

When my father had his first heart attack, he was a successful builder, building homes in the bay side areas of Brisbane. He came out of convalescence with a very negative attitude. He felt he was not going to live very long, and would not be able to do any of the things he had previously done, such as drive a car, play tennis, or be a builder. He told my mother he wanted to go to the South Coast, later to become the Gold Coast, to live out the small amount of time he had left. So they sold their home and went to live in Southport. I was seven. I went to school in the state school. There was a girl in my class whose father was very rich. He liked one particular teacher at the school, and used his influence to have his daughter taught by this man. Consequently, every year, we had the same students with the same teacher for years, till the year before high school. So Wes and I were always in the same class. Wes' family and my family lived in the same street in Southport. After building our home slowly to regain his strength, my father went back to carpentry as a wage earner. He quite often worked with Wes' father who was also a carpenter. Wes left school at thirteen, which was allowed in those days if you found work. I continued on at school, so we lost contact for a number of years. I wanted to be a chemist, and had the intelligence to do so, but my withdrawing at fourteen robbed me of every good thing I should have been able to look forward to in life. The withdrawing happened after Wes and I lost contact. So when we met up again, he still remembered me as the

happy girl he had known. I had been a happy child, despite the abuse and the sickness from the mercury poisoning. I had always been a happy child.

I want to put in a couple of positive experiences here. For most of my life I said I could not remember a single happy memory from my childhood, and that was true. But of course, there were some happy times. Unfortunately as humans, we tend to dwell on the negative, in my case to the extent that I blocked out all positive memories. Then one day, when I was about fifty eight years old, and working for a women's crisis accommodation on the Gold Coast, another worker and I went to a Saturday workshop on Transactional Analysis. As the workshop was coming to an end, the facilitator had the forty participants sit in a circle. She brought out a large clothes basket filled with tiny objects of all kinds. She threw the objects onto the carpet in the middle of the circle. She told us to pick out something that seemed to be speaking to us, and to let God show us what it meant. I picked out a small blue dolphin with a happy face. As I looked at it, I remembered my father's love of dolphins and whales. In fact he loved all animals. He was the cat lover. At the time of year when the whales swim north for the winter, he would take us down to Point Danger, at the far end of the Gold Coast. This was in the years before shark nets protected the beaches. The whales would swim quite close to the shore, and we would spend a Sunday afternoon whale and dolphin watching.

The other positive experience I want to write about was my fourteenth birthday present. I had asked for a koala bear and could not be swayed away from this. It caused a major argument as my father felt a fourteen year old was too old to be given a teddy bear. For the only time I remember, my mother stood up for me and insisted I be given a bear. Ted, as I named him, became my best friend, especially when I went into the withdrawal the next year. Ted wasn't a cuddly bear. He was made from kangaroo skin and he was very stiff. But I loved him and felt he loved me. I talked to him when I had stopped talking to everyone else. I still had Ted when I married Wes, but his fur was rubbed very thin in places. I don't know what happened to him as I don't remember throwing him out. A counsellor, not so many years ago, suggested I replace him. I did, and I called him Ted, but he was never the same.

I was actually a few months off fifteen when my mother's attic sojourn happened. I was in year nine at high school doing the Academic course, as opposed to the Secretarial, Home Economics, or Trade courses, as a requirement for becoming a chemist. I was achieving good enough grades to have made my dream come true. Even though the personality change I experienced stopped me from maturing physically, emotionally and socially, I could still learn and pass exams. But, in my year ten, my father had his second massive heart attack. He never regained his health even though he lived another eighteen months. My sister had to leave school immediately and find work. She was in year nine. I was allowed to complete year ten, but then I also had to find work. My mother was able to work in her brother-in-law's fruit shop.

I was already working Saturday, all day, at a Woolworths Variety store, where everything was set out on counters. I stood behind the counter and accepted the

goods and the money the customer tendered. I could cope with this as there was minimal speech required. A chemist a few shops down offered me full time work through my mother. I did not have to go for an interview. It turned out I was a hard worker, and very competent as long as I didn't have to talk to people. But the work in the chemist shop necessitated being able to communicate effectively. I was dismissed after a few months. I could not go up to a customer, find out their needs and fulfil their requests. It was at this point that my fear of people became severe. Getting dismissed took away what little confidence I had. I became terrified of having to have any interaction with people. So I went back to Woolworths where I knew I could cope, and where they were happy to have me back because of my good work ethic. I also had an aptitude for mathematics, and was put in the cash office as an assistant cashier. This suited me better as there was no people contact at all. The head cashier handled all outside enquiries. I just did what she told me to do and that was easy for me.

My social life was anything but easy. I was pretty enough even though very thin, so boys were attracted to me sometimes. But then they would find out I had no personality, and could not talk to them, so they did not stay around long. It was at this time I started to have migraine headaches every time I was to go out with someone whom I hadn't been able to refuse. The headaches protected me from having to go out with boys I really didn't want to go out with, or from situations I knew I wouldn't be able to cope with. I never actually went out with any boy till after my father died.

The time came when my father had his third and final heart attack, one Sunday afternoon at home. I was six weeks over eighteen and my sister was three months under seventeen. Our mother became our problem. Our father's death caused her to abuse pills and alcohol even more than she had previously. Her worst fear had come to pass. He had died and she could not cope with life without him. The next few years became even worse for me. My mother no longer had my father to fight with, so she used me as a substitute. But of course, I would not fight back with her. I was far too frightened to protect myself. She started to punch me with her closed fist on my shoulders and back. I never protected myself. I just took it until she finished. While ever I was living at home, she didn't hit my sister.

There came a time after my father died, so I was eighteen at least, when a young man came into my life. I don't even remember how I met him. He would meet me for lunch every day, and we would walk down to the park. He would talk and try to get me to talk. He had so much patience. He was the DJ at a very small local radio station. On weekends he would take me to work with him, to listen to his programs. For the first time in years, I had met someone I was not frightened of. He was so kind and gentle with me. I remember one lunchtime he actually got me to talk. I don't remember what the subject was, but he was so excited.

He would come at night and watch television at our house. My mother took a very strong dislike to him, and demanded I break up with him. She made life an even greater living hell for me, until I finally did as she asked. I cannot remember any romantic element to our relationship, so I do not know if he was hurt by this. I was

too emotionally withdrawn to consider anything else except to escape from the extra pain she was putting me through. Having learnt what I have in the last thirty years, I do know the thing that was inside my mother did not want me to get free. I believe she sensed this young man could help me achieve this, but I was too weak to fight it. If you ever get to read this Chris, thank you for everything you did for me. You were the only one who saw and tried to help. I believe if we had married, I would have become healed, and lived a very different life to the one I have. And that may have been very good. But I have no regrets for the way my life has gone, because I may not be the person I am today, nor have the relationship I have with Jesus. The cost has been worth it.

Then, when I was twenty, I met a most beautiful young man. He was nineteen. I had met a soul mate and so had he. We met in Brisbane at his home. I had been taken there by a friend of his. The next night, he had come down to the Gold Coast to see me at a party where there were lots of young people. We were the only two that night who drank no alcohol. We lay in each others arms, fully clothed, occasionally talking, but mostly just being together. I don't think we even kissed. But we both knew that what was happening to us was very special. At the end of the party, about 1am, he headed off to Brisbane. It was a Sunday night and we both had to work the next day. I got a phone call in the middle of the morning, asking me if he had stayed with me at my home overnight. No, he hadn't. He had been driving a Volkswagen Beetle, and had gone to sleep behind the wheel. He was airborne when he hit a very large gum tree. He was killed instantly. I grieved. You think you cannot grieve for someone you have only known for two days, but I grieved. I have never forgotten him. Robert, you were my first soul mate and I have never forgotten you. I know you are in heaven as all the good angels are there.

Somehow the experience of these two young men loving me gave me a little strength, and combated the unlovable Lie enough to allow me to consider fighting for myself.

A few months short of twenty one, I left home and moved to Townsville, a long way away. I just could not cope with life at home any more. I am not going to write about the hardness of living with an addicted mother, except for a few lines. Southport was still a very small town at this time, 1961 to 1964. Everyone knew what our mother was. She would come home on a Saturday afternoon and commence to take pills to keep herself unconscious till Tuesday morning, when she had to go back to work. My sister and I worked Monday to Friday. Sometimes, we would come home on a Monday afternoon to find ourselves locked out. It would take quite a while to rouse her and get her to unlock the door. We were never trusted with our own key. It was always "her" house. Quite often she would have to crawl to the door on her hands and knees, as she could not stand up. She always managed to keep in work though. She only lost two jobs between 1961, when my father died, and 1972 when her sister retired and took her to live in her home. This was my beautiful Aunt Jo. Somehow she managed to keep my mother sober and controlling the sleeping pills for many years. In the years before this, I don't know how my mother managed to keep work, but she was very intelligent, hard working and trustworthy.

She was also very likeable. Even though she was taking one hundred tablets a week, she seemed to know how many she could take, and still come out of it and be able to work. It was never a desire with her to kill herself. It was just not wanting to be conscious for any time that she didn't need to be, so she did not need to face the fact that my father was no longer there. I call this part of the insanity of the Irish. No one was taught coping skills, or had a good role model. They just didn't face up to things.

One issue from these times that took me many years to understand was the issue of shame. "Decent" boys in our town would not ask us out because we may turn out to be like our mother. Shame is a deep issue and very hidden. I didn't become aware of how deeply it affected my life until I was in my fifties, and at a conference on shame.

Also, I didn't realise how deeply living with my mother, and being the one to be responsible for her, was affecting my life. The smell of stale red wine, even today, will bring on memories of her being in a bed with sheets that had wine spilt on them, and hadn't been changed in weeks. She was a dirty alcoholic, living in squalor. My sister and I were always finding bottles of pills and taking them under the house and burying them. I don't know why we buried them instead of tipping them down the toilet. I had nightmares regularly. I didn't realise I was building a compulsion to get away from her. This was one time I was completely selfish. I didn't think of my sister, who was younger, being left with the problem. At this time, mum was not hitting her, so I did not think of the possibility of this happening if I left. But this is what happened. Of course it was more than just physical abuse. It was also verbal abuse, bullying, controlling our lives. There were a number of young men, drinkers, hanging around the house as well. We were put in a very vulnerable situation. But God protected us incredibly, even though we didn't know Him. One of the men, older, was very nice, and looked out for us much more than I realised at the time.

It was a major stress also that there was no help for mum, nor for us. We tried to get AA to come but, of course, their rule was she had to ask for help herself. She wouldn't do that. I now understand, unless she had been willing, they would not have been able to help her. She had to be willing to help herself. But it was very hard for us, struggling on our own. No one could suggest where we could go for help. I didn't understand the term powerless then, but this is what we were in the situation. There didn't seem to be a future or a way out, especially for me. So, looking back now, marriage seemed to be the only way to freedom. After my soul mate was killed, I decided to leave home. A young woman who was working her way around Australia, came to work in Woolworths. I decided to go with her when she moved on. I don't know how I got the strength to do this, but I was desperate to get away from my mother. We went to Townsville.

In Townsville, I met a man somewhat older than I was, and became engaged to him. He never tried to engage in premarital sex. He was a practising catholic and probably a very nice person. But I didn't communicate with him, so I didn't really know him, nor could he know me.

I hadn't been aware of it, but my mother had become even worse; she was not handling my leaving. I had letters from my sister saying she was being hit. What I didn't know was that mum was not eating. She had also begun to use a pink sleeping mixture instead of the pills. She would tip the bottle of mixture up to her mouth and drink, instead of taking the recommended one teaspoon full. This mixture was very dangerous and, as she was taking much more than the recommended dose, it caused her brain to swell inside her skull. She went totally insane. She was taken to the psychiatric hospital at Royal Brisbane hospital, the locked ward, a horrible, ugly place. Woolworths immediately flew me home to deal with it. The psychiatrist who was treating her was very nice. He said her blood was like pale pink water. He didn't know how she was alive. He said she was suffering extreme pain down her right leg but there was no physical cause for the pain. It was created by her mind. Yet the pain was real. Many years later, it was my mind causing physical pain and problems in the same leg that caused me to be sent to a psychiatric hospital in Canberra.

Mum was in hospital for about three weeks, while the swelling went down and she returned to normal. I stayed with her another week before returning to Townsville. It was made clear to me, during these weeks, that I was always going to be responsible for her; a very frightening feeling. I had no choice. It is such a horrible place to live in, to have life keep handing you situations over which you have no control and no choice.

I didn't know it at the time, but after I returned to Townsville, mum had met up with Wes, my husband to be. He had offered to take her up to see me for a holiday. They always got along so well together. I didn't know Wes had a hidden reason [agenda] for the trip. He had decided to get married and wanted to see if he could convince me to marry him instead of the man I was engaged to. It wasn't hard to do as I had known Wes for almost all of my life. It was easier to be with him than someone I had only known a short time. I broke my engagement and agreed to marry Wes.

This is something really horrible about the Original Lie, written about in chapters two and three. I had decided the only way to get free of my mother was to get married. I would go to any lengths to achieve this. But I was manipulated by my Lie. I was not free to choose maturely. I knew Wes had a drinking problem, but my need to get away from mum didn't let me consider the wisdom of my decision. It didn't let me consider the hurt I was causing the man I had already agreed to marry. I didn't love either of them, because I was not capable of loving any one. I was only capable of trying to survive. Hurt people hurt people.

Mum went home by train, and Wes stayed in Townsville. In July, I turned twenty one. I celebrated by losing my virginity to Wes. We planned a wedding in March, back in Southport. During these eight months I was happy. In fact, we were both happy. I stayed at the boarding house I was living in, and Wes rented a flat for after we were married. I believe if life hadn't handed me more situations I could not handle and had no choice over, we would have continued to be happy. Wes wanted a large family, but he picked the wrong girl for this. I fell pregnant the month after we

married. I weighed forty three kilograms, six stone twelve pounds. I was very weak. I had morning sickness the doctors could not control. I would eat a meal, then, as soon as I stood up, I would be heaving and vomit the meal up. Our first baby died when I was seventeen weeks pregnant, of starvation. I had to go to hospital and have the baby removed. This was in August. I was pregnant again in the December. I caught German Measles at five days pregnancy, even before I knew I was pregnant. The doctor said the baby would have so many disabilities, it would not survive. Every organ in its body would be affected by the German Measles germ. Because of my extreme fragile condition, the doctor recommended a therapeutic abortion. It would make me more fragile if I carried the baby for ten or twelve weeks, then miscarried. I was guided by him, and had the abortion. I do not know what I would do if I was faced with the same situation today. At that time, I had no definite belief systems and was still in the situation where I let things happen to me without question. I am against abortion. I now know Jesus can help us to handle any situation.

*“I can do all things through Jesus Christ
who strengthens me.”*

Philippians Chapter 4, verse 13.

The third baby was Samantha. Again, I had severe morning sickness. I went to bed for seven months to carry her. I was only allowed up for the fifth and sixth month. All this inactivity, with the problems I already had from the mercury poisoning, made me unprepared to deliver a baby. It was a long and painful labour and I was left physically damaged by the experience. Samantha was born in February. In December, I was pregnant again. I had morning sickness before I had reason to suspect I was pregnant. I started to miscarry at twelve weeks, so back to bed for another couple of months, so I could carry Nathan. He was born safely in October. I would not have been able to go to bed to carry our daughter and son, if it had not been for my mother in law. She did everything for Wes and I. She was wonderful. I owe her a debt of gratitude for having these two children.

Then we moved to Sydney. Again I fell pregnant. Because I had no one to help me, I miscarried at twelve weeks. A year later, I fell pregnant again. I went straight to Queensland to where my special Aunt Jo had bought Wes and my beautiful old cottage. By this time, she had retired, so she looked after me and enabled me to carry Renee. She also came to Sydney to help me when Renee was born. She was the mother I had not had because of my mother's addictions. I had a tubal ligation straight after Renee was born so that I could not fall pregnant again. It was, at this time, I finally put on one kilo from the weight I was when I got married, up to forty four kilos. I had tried other birth control methods over the years. The pill keeps you in a state of pregnancy, so I was struggling with severe morning sickness while I was taking it. Other methods caused extremely heavy bleeding, which, in my fragile state of health, made me weaker. Everything I tried worked against me because of my state of health.

All the difficulty in my carrying the children caused Wes to start drinking heavily, even before Samantha's birth. I didn't handle this because of my childhood. Combined with the physical damage caused at the time of Samantha's birth, damage which caused me pain during intercourse, the marriage was hell for both of us. We stayed together for fifteen years, then he left me for another woman. He told me he had met a woman who would talk to him. I do not want to go into the details of my marriage to Wes. I withdrew further and further during the fifteen years, and was subjected to things I should not have been subjected to. But I have realised we were both from such dysfunctional homes we, neither of us, had a chance of having a happy marriage. I've learnt also that many from dysfunctional homes find each other, marry, and create our own dysfunctional families. It is hard for us to marry those who are not from dysfunctional families. Only meeting the Lord Jesus Christ can change this. My son and my younger daughter have now been married for longer than Wes and I were, and all three of our children have much more stable, functional lives. My younger daughter and her husband are the happiest couple I know. The cycle of dysfunction is being broken.

Wes could no longer find employment on the Gold Coast because of his drinking, so we had to leave to find a new start. Looking back, I can see how God caused circumstances to come about, that had us move from the Gold Coast to Sydney, then to Canberra, for me to find the only doctor in Australia who would not just treat my symptoms, but would look beyond them to seek out my real problem, and be the catalyst that started me on the road to freedom.

Chapter Two

His Story

But what is going to happen to me? The cry was not a verbal one, but one from deep within me.

Wes and I had bought a house which was a long way from where we had been living. I made an appointment with a new doctor. He was a most extraordinary looking man, just like Albert Einstein with a head of wiry grey hair. He listened to my many and varied illnesses. He said he was not satisfied with the diagnosis I had previously been given. He put me into Woden Valley Hospital for a full endocrinological examination. The specialist there found I had no reflex response in either my knees or my feet. He had even run the back of a scalpel down the underneath of my feet, then his car keys, but he could get no response at all. He informed me that this was not a physical illness, but a psychiatric one, and he was making arrangements for me to be transferred to the psychiatric ward.

While he was organising this, my mind was in turmoil. I had grown up in a home where death was constantly talked about. My father had had a massive heart attack when I was six years old. My mother became terrified she would lose him. He had another heart attack when I was sixteen, and became a chronic invalid. Death became a reality and a daily presence in our lives. My mother's constant cry was,

“I'm afraid I will wake up in the morning and you will be dead in bed beside me.”

I became terrified of dying. I came to the decision that if I didn't go to sleep at night, I couldn't die. So, when I lay down, I would fix my eyes on the ceiling and stiffen my body in an attempt to stay awake. What happened next was totally unexpected. I would experience the feeling of falling. Then, just as I reached a place of almost complete darkness, just a pinprick of light above me, I was suddenly out of the darkness, and floating up near the ceiling. I was no longer in my pyjamas, but in a long, soft garment that floated around me as I moved. I found I could go through the ceiling and the roof, to be out in the night air, just by thinking about it. I could hover right above people I knew, neighbours, standing at the bus stop waiting for a bus. While I could see and hear them, they could not see or hear me. This happened on about four or five consecutive nights. I never remember returning to my body. I assume I went to sleep. I realised I was being shown something, by someone or something that had become aware of my fear of dying, and my lack of anyone to reach out to and talk to about it. I came to understand my physical body was only one part of me, that there was another part, the real me, who could separate from the physical body, and do all these incredible things. I also came to realise I was being

shown that this special part, the real me, could live on independently of my body. I began to sleep again normally. I did not ever have this experience again, even when I became involved in the new age movement years later, and really tried to do it. It is called astral travel.

So, now I was faced with parts of my body not functioning properly, and the fear of “what happens to me when I die” came back really strongly. God was never mentioned in our home, and I had no knowledge of Heaven or an after life. I had gone to Sunday school for a short time, but was only taught the Old Testament stories.

The psychiatric ward decided not to hospitalise me. They didn't think I was a danger to myself. How wrong they were. They made me an outpatient who was to attend group therapy every Thursday night, and see the resident psychiatrist every Wednesday. As I was unable to talk to them, just answer questions, I went home with the question “what is going to happen to me” still unexpressed.

I saw the leader of an Al anon group I was attending, one day when I was at the local shop. She had heard of my illness. She spoke words into my life that were to change me forever.

“If you don't get God in your life, you are going to die.
Why don't you come to the church I go to next Sunday?”

She gave me the time of the service and the address. She didn't offer to pick me up, just gave me the information and left. Years later, when my life had changed, I thanked her for speaking these words to me. She denied ever saying them. I have since learnt this happens when the Holy Spirit uses us to speak forth His words. The next Sunday and two following Sundays, I went to her church. It was a charismatic catholic church in the suburb of Wanniassa, the most southern suburb in Canberra at this time. It was very nice and I could feel peace in the place, but I did not see anything there that could help me with my problems. The next Sunday, I did not go.

I was in the front garden the Sunday after that when the woman next door, who knew I had gone to church a few times, called out,

“Are you going to church today?”

“No,” I answered.

I really believed there was nothing there for me. I turned to go inside, and, as I did, I felt as if I could no longer control my will or my actions. Something greater than me had taken over my body, and I could not stay home. I had a shower, dressed, and drove to church.

The sermon that morning was on John Chapter 3, verse 16, on God's love for all of us and His salvation plan for the world. I don't remember any of the words of the sermon, except the last sentence.

“And if you were the only person alive on earth,
God loves you so much,
He would still have sent Jesus to die for you.”

As the priest said these words, he pointed out into the congregation. I felt he was pointing directly at me. At the same instant, I became covered in a drenching of love that came from above, falling on me right down to my feet. I knew deep inside me I had met Jesus, that He lives, and that He loves me. He came into my life in answer to my desperate cry. From that time on, He was by my side all the time. I spoke to Him and He listened to me. Sometimes, He spoke to me. At times it was an audible voice, and at other times, complete direction on what He wanted me to understand, that took ten seconds to impart. I can only express it as from His Spirit to mine. Up until He came into my life, I'd had almost no teaching about Him or His word. I didn't know about the Trinity or the Holy Spirit. I only knew the priest that morning had spoken about Jesus, and He, Jesus, had somehow come to be with me.

Did I question for one second if this experience was scriptural? Whether it was possible for the creator of the universe to come and spend every day with me, or talk to me audibly?

No.

I just accepted without question exactly what was happening to me.

Was I mind blown that the creator of everything would come to be with me in such abundance?

No.

The thought never once occurred to me.

I was so broken, so frightened, so desperate, I just accepted that what I was experiencing was real. It was real, as thirty four years have proved. I now know that God is Triune. I know about the Holy Spirit. I know about omnipresent and omniscience. But for the first three years I only knew Jesus. In a bible study one night, the priest asked who Jesus was for us. My answer was my friend. I was not afraid to tell Him anything. I trusted Him completely. The love He had poured out on me so abundantly told me He would not judge me for anything I had done, and more importantly, for whom I was. I was not a nice person. When your entire personality has been totally shattered, when your life is full of fear, when you let things happen to you because you believe you have no rights, that you are so horrible you don't deserve anything good to happen to you ever, when you are so desperately unhappy there is no hope, no light in your life, when your only

solution is to consider taking your own life because life is so unbearable, you are not a nice person. You are negative and self centred. You have nothing to give out. Yet Jesus saw all this and still loved me, and found me infinitely valuable, so valuable He chose to come and be with me every day so I could get well.

As I said in the beginning, I am writing this book as a testimony to who He is; really is. He is so infinitely more than any of us can comprehend. So I am prepared to tell every horrible thing about me, in order to demonstrate His incredible love for each of us. I am not an eloquent speaker or writer, but I come to you with an experience of how Jesus saw me, and what He did for me. That says everything about Him and who He is, and nothing about me. I was the worst of the worst in my eyes, as I came close to committing the most unforgivable sin I believe any one can commit. It happened this way.

My first husband was a binge drinker. He regularly went out on a Friday night, and I would not see him till Monday afternoon. On one such Friday night, we were living in a caravan, waiting to move into the house we had bought. I had been told the valve on the gas stove was faulty, and the valve on the gas bottle itself needed to be turned off, otherwise we could die from the leaking gas. Our three children were all asleep. I lay awake all night struggling to not walk out and turn the gas bottle valve on, and end it all for myself and my children. I do not know how I did not do it, but the morning light came and we were all still alive. I praise God now for I believe He was caring for us at that time, even when I did not yet know him.

It was at least six months, maybe a year later I met Him. But God's timing is always perfect. He had a plan for my life and for my children's lives. I dare to say here I believe God understands the desperate place the human soul can descend to. When I hear of parents killing their children and themselves, I know how they feel and how someone could come to such a terrible state. I am not saying it is right or okay. It isn't. But if I, in my imperfection, can understand and have compassion, how much more must God, our creator, love and understand. I personally have experienced we have a God who is so much more, so infinitely more, than we could ever comprehend. How could we ever judge how He feels, or decide how He would act in any situation. He is love, and He loves exceedingly, abundantly more than we deserve or should expect. I praise Him that my life, in all it's horrors, has made me able to experience and appreciate who He really is. I am abundantly blessed.

I would like to tell you about the children He saved that night. When my marriage broke up some years later, I was not able to manage on my own in Canberra, so I went back to the Gold Coast to where my mother and stepfather had retired. Samantha had just finished year nine. She would not go to school in Queensland. Both she and Nathan had been in catholic high school in Canberra, and loved it. They also loved Canberra as a place to live. I told her if she got a job before school went back, I would let her work instead of going to school. She got the first job she applied for, in a supermarket. She was always highly thought of, for her personality, her honesty, and her good work ethic. After about a year, we moved to a different house, quite a distance from her job, so she applied for a job in a

supermarket near our new home. She got this and worked there for the next three years. She is still friends with the supermarket owners and their daughter. At eighteen, she chose to go to Sydney to live. She wanted to return to Canberra eventually. Within one week of arriving in Sydney, she had a job in a fruit shop, and a few weeks after that, in a shoe shop. She had always been Formula One car racing mad, and a huge fan of Dick Johnson. She bought all the car magazines and read them. One day, she saw an advertisement for a spare parts salesman at Mosman Toyota. Even though it wasn't her beloved Ford, she applied. She didn't get the job as a male was really needed. Also, Sammy is only five foot and half an inch tall, and of slight build, not the physical attributes required for a spare parts salesman. However, the interviewer was so impressed by her, he told her he would put her into the first position available, suitable for her. Six weeks later, he kept his word, and trained her as a computer operator in spare parts. She worked there for ten years. She has a photographic memory, which made her very valuable in the position. Today, Samantha is financial controller for a Ford dealership on the Northern Beaches. When I first came down to Sydney to live, her boss described her to me as a truly amazing young woman. And she is. Sammy has a son, Joshua, a delightful, intelligent little boy.

Nathan was not as blessed in his teenage years. He tried to go back to school on the Gold Coast, but he could not fit in. He was the child my husband rejected, so he did not grow up with the self esteem his sister has. But he was the one I loved, perhaps because of his father's treatment of him, but also because of who he was as a baby. In the maternity hospital in those days, the babies were kept in a nursery, and bought out at feeding time, in one huge lot. Every one of them would be crying, but one cried louder than the rest; Nathan. But as soon as he was handed to me, he would settle in my arms. It wasn't the food he wanted, but to be held. He was a beautiful baby. He and I had a special bond. One day, as an adult with a wife and two children, he rang me up and started abusing me for loving his younger sister more than him. He told me I would never see him or my grandchildren again. He kept his word and it will be ten years on mother's day this year, 2011, since I have been allowed to be a grandmother or a mother. That does not stop me from being proud of the things he has achieved. He left school before he completed year eight. His teenage years and early twenties were very frustrating for him. Nothing he tried to do worked out. But he always had good work ethics, and honesty, and somewhere deep inside himself, he had the strength and determination to make it. Today, with not even year eight schooling and no apprenticeship ever, he is a shop fitter and does kitchens and bathrooms in houses. He also takes in injured reptiles and looks after them. He is very well thought of. Nathan is married to Lisa and has two children, Ethan and Kira. If you ever see this, know it was never my choice to not see you both all these years. I was not even allowed to send you birthday or Christmas presents. I tried to twice. But I have always loved you both and always will.

Then Renee. She was the one who benefited the most from my walk with Jesus. She was four when He came into my life, and so had a different mother to the other two who were nine and eleven. She went through to year twelve, then completed her Diploma of Child Care part time while she worked. She got the first position she

applied for in the field she had chosen. This was not an easy thing to do in 1990. She never went away from her Christian walk, not even as a teenager. She is married to Zac, a man who, at fourteen, made his own commitment to Jesus and never went away from it. They have a truly happy marriage. They talk to each other all the time, and smile at each other. They have two beautiful and talented children, Zane and Kate.

I am so grateful that before I knew Him, He had plans for all our lives, and loved and cared for us.

So, back to the years when Jesus was my constant companion, and taught me how to get well. I really talked His ears off in those early years. The floodgates of silence were opened and I talked and talked. For many years, I had been unable to face the day. I was so desperately unhappy that not even three beautiful children were enough to get up for. My husband would regularly get the children away to school. Suddenly my whole life changed. I was up to get everybody away so I could go to mass every week day morning, meet with my Lord, and take communion. The sharing of His body every morning with the priest and a small group of believers was so precious to me, even though I could not yet talk to any of them. Still, I knew I was sharing something earth shatteringly special. Communion was and always will be very important to me. I do not know why churches today, except the Catholics, Anglicans, Churches of Christ and some Baptists, do not know how sacred it is, and how powerful, and they choose to take it once a month or even worse, only occasionally. Scripture says to do it as often as we come together. 1 Corinthians Chapter 11 verses 24 and 25. Jesus has shown me that it is at the marriage supper of the Lamb, when He again lifts the broken bread and the wine and blesses it, to share with us His broken body and His spilled blood, that His Church, made up of every tribe and tongue, will immediately become one in Him.

For the first months, He just poured His love over me, let me talk, listened to me. This is a principle for helping others. You must let them get it all out first. When someone is in extreme pain and probably letting it all go for the first time in their life, you need to let them talk until they have said everything they need to say. Then, when I had said it all, the time came for me to begin to be healed.

*The first thing He taught me was not to be afraid of fear.
Fear is satan's greatest weapon.*

And of course, my whole illness was based on fear. It ruled my life. I was afraid of everything, even harmless things like elevators and outside edges of walk ways, even though they had adequate rails to keep me safe. There was nothing I didn't fear. It crippled me and made me unable to do the simplest things out in the world. Fighting to defeat fear was the beginning of overcoming, which was to be the foundation of my recovery.

“I can do all things through Jesus Christ who strengthens me.”

Philippians Chapter 4 verse 13.

Does every one know the promises of God in Revelation are to overcomers? I am very hesitant to break anything off someone, or cast anything out, unless I hear from the Holy Spirit that this is needed. I always encourage overcoming; firstly because I do not want anyone to miss out on the promises, and secondly, because it is the way He showed me to be healed. It works.

He taught me to face up to the fear and not let it ruin my life. If there was something on at the church, I was to go, even if it meant I stood in a corner and talked to no one. I would say to Him,

“If you go with me, I can go.”

And He would. Many, many times, I went by myself and spoke to no one. People were introduced to me, but after hello I had nothing to say, so I wasn't interesting. Most times people didn't register they had met me. My determination to become invisible to escape the abuse and my home life, worked against me in social situations. I wore invisibility as a shield. People could literally feel it and actually did not see me or remember me. Sometimes, I would be introduced to them four or five times, and they would still say they hadn't met me. It took more than thirty years to overcome this. It is only in recent years I have come to understand how powerful a determination like this is, and how hard it is to get rid of it when it is so deeply entrenched. The mind is a very powerful force. In regards to my putting on weight, even though nausea and vomiting were part of the illness and the mercury poisoning, I was not anorexic or bulimic. I tried very hard to put on weight. I ate full meals and lots of fattening foods. I could eat anything I wanted to, one of the very few blessings during those years. Imagine being able to eat anything and as much as you wanted, and not put on weight. I now have to watch my weight like most people. However I did not vomit anywhere near enough to stop me from putting on weight. It was the wanting to be invisible again, another example of how powerful the mind is.

As part of not being afraid, He also taught me to not be afraid of emotional pain. He taught me to “walk through the pain”. What does this mean? It means to not use any of our former coping mechanisms; alcohol, drugs, shopping sprees, losing ourselves in novels, especially unreality romances [my solution], taking pills, overeating, dumping[Chapter 5], retaliation, [I knew a woman once who packed her ex partner's clothes into a suitcase, pouring cold tea with the loose tea leaves in amongst them so they would all be stained. This was in the days before tea bags, when we used tea pots and loose tea leaves---no it wasn't me.] TV Soapies, excessive exercise, so many different things, to stop us from feeling the pain. It means to allow yourself to experience the pain, be aware of it and how it affects you, physically, emotionally, spiritually, until it lessens. The pain itself will not kill you; it is the thoughts that accompany the pain that can do this. Scripture says,

“Know the truth and it will set you free.”

John Chapter 8, verse 32.

I'd like to include here a piece I wrote some years ago about myself for a Christian writers' group. It was to be about the character of a known person.

Hidden Courage

She came into the room very hesitantly. Those in the room who turned at her entry only spared a moment. She did not present a presence that caught anyone's attention. In fact, those who looked at her would not have been able to describe her appearance if asked to half an hour later, and many may not remember her at all. Yet those who looked past the dark coloured clothes, deliberately oversized and covering her whole body, past the rounded shoulders and lowered head, would have noticed soft brown eyes, a gentle mouth and a turned up nose. In fact, a pretty face, framed by dark brown, shoulder length hair. But her inner lack of esteem for herself, and her fear of people and situations, communicated itself to every one who saw her. It set up a barrier around her that kept everyone out. What those who saw her would not realise was the determination and strength in her character that had brought her to the function that day. She knew that to come, even if it meant being not noticed, would bring her one step closer to freedom and health.

By Sandra Hall

The priest in the church I had gone to had suffered a breakdown, and overcome it. He had, in the church, myself and about six other men and women who were suffering from various mental illnesses or maladjustments. He started a Grow group to help us all. The people I met in Grow, and in particular the members of that group, helped me incredibly. They accepted me exactly where and how I was, but loved me enough to encourage me not to stay there. I believe very strongly in self help groups. You need to have walked the walk to talk the talk. The three years I attended meetings gave me a safe place to share, to learn to talk, to learn to trust, to learn to care for others instead of being self centred. But it was a sheltered place. It wasn't the real world. At a social function one night, where partners of members were included, a husband of a group member said to me,

“I have known you for three years, and I have never heard you speak.”

I just smiled at him.

Learning to socialise and hold a conversation, especially to go up to someone and start talking to them, even if it was someone I knew, has been a mountainous achievement. It is only in the last twelve months, i.e. thirty three years after Jesus came into my life, that I can now go up to a stranger and comfortably talk to them. You will hear in the sixth chapter of the book how severe tribulation and rejection finally and totally set me free.

Seems impossible! Yet this is what happened.

My recovery has always been one small step of overcoming after the other. I believe God did it this slowly yet this soundly, so I would build the character He wanted for me. Many people over the years have found it hard to believe it took so long for me to be healed. I've had people say,

“You have had so much prayer, why aren't you healed?”

But my God took His time. Scripture says,

“His ways are not our ways.” Isaiah Chapter 55, verse 8

I do know I learnt to trust Him fully through the process.

All the members of this Grow group improved, some dramatically. I believe this was because we were all believers and focused very strongly on the spiritual aspect of the program. I met a man in this group who had the deepest integrity I have ever found. He was gentle and loving and sacrificial. I have never forgotten him, nor will I ever. He was my second soul mate. He made a decision once that I thought was wrong. But I came to see that only a man with the strength of character he had, could make such a loving, caring, giving, right decision. Thank you. If you ever read this book, you will know who you are.

However, an unexpected problem came from my improving condition. I thought our marriage would improve as I got better. I was not aware, at this stage, how dysfunction could react when the conditions it needed to survive were taken away. My husband's needs and value were being met, in a strange way, by my being ill and needing his help so much. As I got well, he didn't handle it. He left me for a woman who was physically sicker than I was, and who needed him. It is strange how you can meet the most amazing people in the worst situations. The lady he met came to me before making a commitment to him. She told me that if there was any hope for our marriage, she would bow out. This was a major giving response, as the years have shown she really loved him. Again I met someone of extremely high integrity.

The breakup of our marriage when every thing should have been getting better, left me with little self esteem and in a vulnerable condition. I quickly found a new husband and a new disaster. He was an extremely physically and verbally violent man. The marriage didn't last. However, God always brings something good and a learning if we have an attitude to become more like Jesus. We were on the Gold Coast when we married. I had gone home as I could not manage on my own in Canberra, with three growing children, and paying rent, heating bills, school fees, winter clothing. One day, after I had divorced him, I was driving across an intersection when I saw him in the centre of the pedestrian crossing. I did not register a thought. I put my foot down on the accelerator and aimed the car at him. He ran for the footpath and I missed him. I don't know I was sorry I had done it. I was very

grateful I had not hit him. I had not been aware of any hatred towards him, not even as I pushed the accelerator down. In fact, I still loved him and found it hard not to contact him and try to reconcile with him. I had heard of a book called “ Finding the Murderer Within.” I knew I had found mine. This experience has been the basis for not judging others. I believe we are all capable of murder, we are just not aware of it until satan brings the necessary pain into our lives and puts the perfect opportunity in our path. This man had beaten up my fifteen-year-old son, which had caused me to immediately call the police. They arranged for him to leave the home we shared and to not return. I divorced him as soon as I could. Perhaps I did harbour hatred because of this. Scripture says,

“The heart is deceitful above all things.”
Jeremiah Chapter 17 verse 9.

It has taken my whole life since meeting Jesus to overcome fear in all it's insidious forms. Of deep water and boats on a holiday in Tasmania in 2001. I went on a trip down the Franklin river where it wasn't stated, deliberately I believe, that the boat would go down into the Great Southern Ocean first. I froze as the boat turned right instead of left, and headed out into the open sea. The having no choice but to face up to it overcame the fear. I was on the boat so what could I do about it? I decided to enjoy it. *Does every one know that the way to overcome fear is to face it and walk through the feelings until they go away? Until they have no more power in your life.* It works. Also, I had learnt by this time, to see everything as coming from God for my healing. It was no coincidence that I didn't know the boat would turn right, and go into the ocean. I might not have gone had I known. But, once there, I knew He was in control and would use it for my good. I know He always has my best interests at heart, as He does for all who choose to follow Him fully.

Then a boat ride down the Tamar river, at Launceston on the same trip just a few days later. I believe they said it is the deepest river in the southern hemisphere, excellent for shipping. Yet I sat in the rear of the boat, trailing my fingers in the water, just a few inches below, enjoying the freedom. There is no freedom like the freedom that comes after a lifetime of not being able to do normal things.

A year later, I went on the Stratten Island ferry out of New York, and stood hanging over the railings, enjoying the experience. Then across the large expanse of water from the mainland of Italy out to Venice. I sat in the bow of the boat with the water splashing into my face, and again enjoyed the experience very much. This was on a world trip with a lady who was just as quiet as I was. A world trip is a very challenging experience, especially for someone overcoming the maladjustments in their life. It was an excellent way for me to lay to rest many of my personal demons. One of the sadnesses of my life is that the irrational fear of water stopped me from learning to swim. When I say fear, I am really saying terror that prevented me from doing many things normal people do so easily. I would love to go now and learn to swim, but the chemicals in pool water make me really sick, so I cannot tackle this fear.

I also, on the world trip, could not go up in the cable car to the Swiss Alps because of fear of heights. The seventh chapter in this book tells how this was overcome during a trip to Mizoram, in India, in 2010. Also a terrifying experience in Kolkata during this same trip, that overcame many different fears. I hope you are hearing in all this that, when the Lord undertakes to heal us, every experience is used. During the world trip, on a journey around Britain where I drove for twelve days with my shy friend, we counted every night the blessings of the day. And every day there were blessings to count. He went with us everywhere. Then, after a bus trip on the continent, where our comfort was challenged daily, but where we were looked after all the way, we spent two days in New York. On the day we were leaving, we went down to reception to order a taxi to the airport, as we had done in Britain.

“We don't do that here,” we were told.

“You have to go out on the street and hail one.”

How were we going to do that? We stood back against the wall of the Inn and contemplated the situation. Both of us were overwhelmed by the thought of what we had to do. Just then, a taxi dropped two ladies and their luggage outside the Inn.

“Do you ladies want to go to the airport?” the driver asked.

We didn't even have to ask. Our God is so good. His reward for having the courage to go on such a journey.

I had an experience just a few weeks ago I'd like to tell you about. In the village where I live, they were installing insulation batts in our ceilings. We had received a note on the Tuesday that the trucks would be there at 8am the following morning. I woke up at 7.45am, quickly dressed and raced out to shift my car. Too late. One truck was already pulling in. A man was outside the truck, directing the driver. I called out to him and asked him how many trucks would be coming because I was worried about not being able to get my car out. He asked which was my car, and when I told him, he told me I would be okay. I thanked him and went back inside. I had just closed the door when I burst into tears and sobbed and sobbed. The words I spoke as I sobbed were,

“Only You and I know how free I am. I couldn't have done that even a year ago. I wouldn't have been able to talk to him so easily. I would have hesitated and tried to get the courage to speak. I am so grateful to you for where You have brought me to.”

Again I say, there is no freedom like the freedom of someone, me, who has spent a whole lifetime of not being able to do the simplest things that other people can do.

My shy friend and I, outside the Inn in New York, were in danger of missing our plane because we just could not walk out and hail a cab. We couldn't even ask the driver after he had pulled in right in front of us. We had to wait for him to ask us.

And all because of irrational, crippling fear. Today I would have no trouble doing it. Praise God.

“Perfect love casts out all fear.”
1 John Chapter 4, verse 18.

I have found this scripture for me means my strong faith and trust in Him, in knowing who He is, and how much He loves me. Everything that happens to me is under His control.

One day, when I was still in Canberra, a group of us were driving to a Grow conference in Vision Valley west of Sydney. It was a hot day and we were driving into the morning sun. I was in the front passenger seat. I reached up and pulled the sun visor of the other person's car down. I was stunned. I could not believe I had protected myself so easily, and without asking permission. I hadn't even hesitated. I couldn't believe I had done something so normally, without being afraid of someone yelling at me. I couldn't believe I hadn't been afraid of rejection. This fear would normally have stopped me from asking for anything, much less do it without asking if I could, and in someone else's vehicle. This tiny action of protecting myself was huge. I had never protected myself from anything. I would go through any amount of discomfort and even physical pain, and not ask for anything to help myself. This was in 1979. I could suddenly see there was a chance I could get well. Maybe one day, I would be able to do many normal things, just as ordinary people did every day, without fear. I became aware I had made progress, and I felt hope.

Can you, the reader, imagine what it would be like to live with such fear that it stopped you from doing almost anything. Yet this is how I lived. No exaggeration at all. I was totally crippled emotionally, by fear. I often say to God.

“Only you and I know what my life was like, how far I have come, how much freedom I have, how hard it was. How could anyone possibly understand?”

Returning to the early days of my healing in Canberra, one of the hardest things I had to overcome was suicidal thoughts. They were with me daily. I had made a small attempt at suicide when I was pregnant with Renee but, thankfully, I stopped after about five pills. I went to bed and slept for thirty-six hours. I left my other two children to fend for themselves for this time. There was no negative effects on Renee when she was born. This was one of the many times my first husband was on a weekend drinking binge. I knew he would not be home. I do believe I was never serious about taking my own life, but the thoughts were there every day. At times, I even had a plan. Mostly it was the sheer hopelessness of the situation I was living in. It was a cry for help, but I could not communicate it, not even to doctors. I know a number of doctors, before the one in Canberra, did see I had more problems than were obvious. Mostly the help they gave was to tell me to pull myself together without telling me how, or to offer me pills. A couple of times I was sent to psychiatrists but, as I couldn't tell them my problems, they weren't able to help me. They were also unable to draw me out, to see if they could find a problem.

I told my first husband about this suicide attempt a few years after we had separated. He was astounded. He had no idea I had made the attempt, or even that I had such thoughts.

The pills I had taken on that one occasion were prescribed by a psychiatrist on the Gold Coast. The dosage was four a day. Nathan, my son, was about six months old when they were prescribed for me. Because of my mother's addiction to prescription pills, I was very hesitant about taking drugs. I halved the dose recommended, but I was still too doped up to look after my baby son. I only took about four days of the half dosage, then I stopped. I never again accepted prescription drugs for depression. Yet I carried the remainder of the pills with me for the four years until my one suicide attempt. Shades of my mother carrying with her the pills she found on the wall of the garage all those years before.

I believe it was my refusal to dull the pain with pills or alcohol, [I have never been a drinker], and the lack of anyone to share the pain with, that caused the nerves in my legs to finally break down.

Next, the Lord took me into what I consider the essential step we must all take if we are to be made like Him, to be healed and made whole, to mature in Christ.

This is taking responsibility for our own behaviour.

My husband was an alcoholic, a binge drinker who would go away for days at a time drinking, once for ten days. I never knew where he was or if he was even still alive. He was also verbally and emotionally abusive. I went through things in the marriage that no wife should have to go through. But the Lord said to me,

“It doesn't matter who he is or what he does, if you want to get well you need to look only at what you are doing wrong, who you are, and how you need to change.”

He had let me talk it all out about my childhood and my marriage, but that was not going to get me well. Only taking responsibility for who I really was, would heal me and set me free. This is about removing the log from our own eye, before we can see clearly the splinter in our brother's eye. Matthew Chapter 7, verses 4 and 5. I needed to focus completely on the log in my own eye, and how to remove it. Even though my husband had lots of dysfunction, what I contributed to the marriage in my crying, depression, inability to communicate, unable to function as a normal person, physical weakness, would destroy any marriage. When I talk to people today, after I let them get all their garbage out, I always bring them back to,

“What are you doing to contribute to the marital dysfunction?”

I do not let them talk about the other person. That will not help them. I am walking proof today that this principle works, not in fixing marriages, although this can happen, but in achieving healing and wholeness for ourselves. I find people who are completely unable to do this. They can only talk about what the other person is

doing wrong. This goes back to the Garden of Eden. Biblical principles for this are in Chapter five, Building the Bride. If anyone wants to read a book full of Godly principles, read Lauren Cunningham's book, "Making Jesus Lord." It is the best book I have read.

So, what does it mean to take responsibility for our own behaviour?

As He showed it to me, it was no blame ever on anyone else for my problems. Yes, I'd had a rotten childhood and a lousy marriage but, if I wanted to get well, I needed to look at who I was, how I behaved, and how my actions, feelings and thoughts, kept me where I was; in bondage. There was to be no justifying of why I was like I was, just acceptance that I had immense problems, and that I, and I alone, was responsible if I stayed like that.

If no one spoke to me when I was at a gathering, I was responsible because I was pushing people away by my cloak of invisibility, and by my inability to hold a conversation. I had missed twenty years of socialisation skills. I now had to start where a normal fourteen year old started, and begin to learn the skills I needed to become mature. Only I wasn't starting as a normal fourteen year old, but as an extremely dysfunctional 14 year old. The process was simple. Go out, do things, make mistakes, have severe feelings of failure, learn from the mistakes, deal with the feelings, grow in confidence a hair's breadth every time, don't get discouraged, keep going, never give up. Sounds easy, but even for a normal teenager, the process quite often isn't easy. For me it became a life's journey, a long journey, but a very exciting journey, a way of life that has bought me better mental health than any person I have met. It has taken me thirty-four years but I value every step of the way. No, I don't do it perfectly every time. I am still human. But I have found out who I am, and more importantly, who I can still become in Him if I choose.

One excellent thing I learnt from always taking responsibility for myself was it helped me to see others more clearly. This comes from the scripture,

*"When you take the log from your own eye,
then you will be able to see clearly
the splinter in your brother's eye."
Matthew Chapter 7, verses 4 and 5.*

We cannot see our brother's problems clearly, until we have worked with the Holy Spirit to see our own problems. It is impossible to see another's problems until we have seen our own. I love scripture where God gives us a "when" and a "then" or an "if" and a "then." See how many you can find. This is where God is really speaking and wants us to listen very intently. A truly important one is Second Chronicles 7, verses 13 and 14. You often hear verse 14 quoted, but rarely verse 13.

Many years later, when He gave me insight into taking responsibility through Genesis 3, verses 1 to 14, he also gave me insight into our need to justify. This was the next thing He took me into. To justify is to make excuses for; i.e. I did that

because I have been so deeply hurt. Well, no. I did that because of who I am. Justifying would keep me dysfunctional. It was a simple yes, this is who I am, this is what my behaviour is. No excuses. Another benefit from this was learning I had a choice. I could choose what behaviour I kept and what I didn't. This applied also to thoughts and feelings. I had never had a choice, and now I did. I could choose whether I let someone affect me or not. I could choose to put a negative on someone else's behaviour, and suffer mental anguish. Or I could choose to put a positive on that person's behaviour and have mental health. The perfect example is when I thought people were talking about me or laughing at me. To allow myself to believe they were talking about me would lead me into stinking thinking, and so into bad mental health. To choose to give myself a positive reason, i.e. no, they are just enjoying a joke together, it has nothing to do with me, and to believe that, was good mental health. Nine times out of ten, I would be right. They would not be talking about me. On the tenth time, when they really might be, it was still better for me to believe they weren't, to protect myself from coming in on their dysfunction.

My thought patterns, or stinking thinking, as they call it in AA, was the next thing the Lord decided it was time for me to deal with. This was the major part of my healing and has a chapter of its own, as He has shown me, unless we get down to the deepest level of who we are inside, we can never be fully healed. Sure we can make significant changes and improvements, change our behaviour, achieve a degree of healthy function. But this is about the abundant life Jesus promises us. True release from bondage. Set free. It is based on,

“Know the truth and the truth will set you free”,
John chapter 8, verse 32 and
“As a man thinks in his heart, so he is.”
and Proverbs 23, verse 7.

I had always lived in my feelings or so I thought, and very painfully. I was to learn I was really living in my mind, my thoughts; satan's playground. I had to learn to change my thoughts if I was going to get well. I was always thinking people were talking about me, laughing at me. No, not just thinking they were, I was convinced they were. This is how self centred we can become. We can believe we are so important, or so noticeable, that everyone is talking about us. I thought everyone was looking at me. They weren't. No, I didn't have paranoia, I just had stinking thinking, a maladjustment to life. It is very hard in the beginning, to become aware of your thought patterns. We are so used to living in our feelings that to catch the thoughts needs practice. The equation the Lord gave me was,

*“Thoughts can trigger our feelings which then take control of us
and bring about our actions, reactions or behaviour.”*

So to learn to catch my thoughts was essential, because it was the thoughts I needed to deal with, not the feelings or the behaviour, if I was to heal at the deepest level. It was the dealing with the thought patterns that led me to discover all the lies I was believing about myself. This in turn opened up what the Lord called “the

Original Lie” planted deep inside me. This was the last step in setting myself free, knowing the truth about what I really believed about myself, finding out how it got there, and waging war against it.

As I was still very sick when the Lord took me through this, I would not have been able to write about it. But the Lord gave me the teaching just two years ago, after I started writing this book. What He gave me is the next chapter.

While I was in Canberra, the Reverend Alan Walker was at the Uniting church near the Catholic one where the Holy Spirit met me. He and the priest became friends. They decided to hold a healing seminar between them. It was every Friday night for about eight weeks, then a weekend. It was amazing. The one thing I remember was Rev. Walker doing a closed eyes visualisation. He took us through a lot of different events that could be needing healing, where our feelings could be triggered. He didn't say to take Jesus with us. But, as he started, I said to myself,

“There is no way I am going into this without Jesus beside me.”

So, throughout the whole exercise, I visualised Jesus beside me. When we had finished I, of course, had not had any emotional reactions. Then the Rev. Walker took every one through with Jesus by their side. I had already done this. What I got from the exercise was,

“How do we manage to go through this life without Jesus with us? He makes all the difference!”

When I say “with us,” I mean in the depth of relationship I had with Him, even in those early days.

Food for thought.

Chapter Three

The Original Lie

What is the Original Lie?

One day early in 2009, I was attending a seminar on healing emotions. The lady facilitating was doing a great job. People were being touched and their emotions being released. There were people all over the floor, crying and sobbing, some walking around angry. I was sitting there and I was not being touched. I started thanking God that my emotions were healed. He began to speak to me. He told me emotions could not be healed unless the Original Lie was healed. Emotions could be released, but could never be healed while ever the Lie was still there, as every time the Lie was triggered by a thought or an incident, the emotions would rise up again.

I knew about the Lie. I had walked through the Original Lie with Him, but I had never processed what I was learning. I had been much too sick to do this. I could not have explained the Lie to you, nor how I had been healed from it. I had just been obedient and done what He told me to. All that follows came from Jesus.

He told me, as God has a plan for our lives, satan also has a plan. His plan is to stop each individual from finding out what God says about them, and who they are in Him, and to stop them from ever reaching their full potential in Him. This He calls the Original Lie. It is planted by satan at a time where we are facing the biggest changes of our lives, in our early teens. Its purpose is to control, kill, rob and destroy in every area of our lives.

Children have many negative, hurtful words spoken to them, and over them in their formative years. Quite often, the same words are spoken over and over, i.e. you are stupid, ugly, lazy, useless. They also have actions from significant others come against them, i.e. lack of affection, sexual abuse, neglect, basic needs not met, responsibilities put on them that are too heavy for a child to carry. So many things too numerous to mention. The child begins to be filled up with a lot of negative stuff.

There comes a time when the child themselves takes all the negative experiences, all the smaller lies they are told or shown about themselves, and makes a decision about who they are. This happens at the most vulnerable time of our life, at puberty, somewhere between twelve and fifteen years of age. It can be younger or older, depending on each child's maturing process. It usually goes in by a traumatic event during these years. It is the time of passing from child to adult, and finding out who we are.

This lie they decide for themselves becomes the Original Lie. While all the other lies dwell in the area of the soul, the Original Lie, once it is fully formed, lodges in the spirit/heart of the child.

“As a man thinks in his heart, so he is.”

Proverbs 23, verse 7

This is why it is so hard to realise its existence, and to find it. We can uncover the smaller and not so small other lies by listening to our self talk. But the Original Lie in our spirit is very hard to expose. The mind is satan's playground. The formula is,

“Thoughts can trigger our feelings which then take control of us and bring about our actions, reactions, behaviour.”

By controlling our thoughts, he can control our feelings and actions. But, in fact, once the Original Lie is in place, he doesn't have to do anything. Life itself will do the watering and harvesting in the negative.

No child comes out of childhood without an Original Lie in place. There are no parents who do the job perfectly, as parents have their own Lie controlling them. Satan has a plan for all of us. That is why there is no condemnation on parents. This is the good thing about the process of the Original Lie as a tool for setting the captives free: there is no need to go back into childhood issues to understand what happened to you. Every thing can be done by looking at our actions and reactions today, to situations that trigger us to have feelings. We work backwards from there to our thoughts. Once our thoughts are revealed and we are aware of them and overcoming them as soon as they appear, we are free. Satan loves it if he can instead keep us trying to free ourselves by focusing on past issues as the solution.

It also means the actual process can be short because, once you have found your Original Lie, it is then a matter of fighting it and overcoming it. This becomes a way of life, as I don't think satan ever gives up. In fact, as we become free, he tries even harder to trap us, but with less and less success.

One thing to realise is that it doesn't take major abuse to come out of childhood with an Original Lie. Ordinary circumstances of living as a child, and growing up in this world, can be all it takes. The many ways the Lie can be planted are as diverse and numerous as we are different from each other.

How does the Original Lie get there?

Where did that thought come from originally? What happened originally to cause you to think that way? The word originally is very important and why the lie that does all the damage is called the Original Lie. It always has its roots in childhood. It is only in childhood the Lie can cause such confusion and lodge so deeply. A child does not see things the way an adult would see the same thing. A child comes into the world expecting to be loved, protected, cared for, treated gently. It is when these

basic needs are not met that the ground is fertile for the Lie to be planted. The less the needs are met, the more fertile the ground, the deeper the Lie is able to take root. It is also in childhood the child is learning who they are. So if their basic experiences are not loving, they will form negative thoughts about themselves. A child will always take the blame for the conditions of their life, especially where emotional abuse is happening. As I explained with my mother, even though she was abusing me, I, as a child, could not blame her. I blamed myself.

So what exactly is emotional abuse? To me it is anything that prevents a child from growing and maturing in the way God ordained for us to learn who we are in Him. Scripture tells us the words of our mouth are very important, in fact, have the power of life and death. Proverbs 18, verse 21.

My Lie did not come solely from my mothers specific abuse, but from the daily input of negative words and experiences. It is this that we all go through just by having to live in this world.

“You are so thin, what is wrong with you? I am so afraid you are going to die.”

Even though she knew about the mercury poisoning, she did not realise it would affect my health for the rest of my life. Because of her own lie, she did not have the skills to search out the truth. She thought the vomiting was something else wrong. She always voiced the fear of leukaemia over me. My mother also had immense fear in her life.

“Your hair is so straight, I can't do anything with it.”

I have pictures of myself at two and a half years and at six years, where she has tried to curl my hair so it wouldn't “look so bad.” From twelve years of age, she kept it permed, because straight hair was not acceptable. When I say permed, I do not mean the beautiful creations we can have today. It was short tight curls that were done at home. She was always trying to improve my appearance so I wouldn't look so bad. After I met the Lord, He encouraged me to let my hair grow long and straight, to accept myself as He had made me, and to love myself exactly as I was. It took quite a while for me to come to terms with straight hair, as the long curly perms were in fashion then, and they really suited me. But I hated the chemicals so I persevered. Now, I have come to accept myself so fully as He has made me that I wouldn't be any other way.

Parents, teach your children, both male and female, that they are beautiful just as they are.

“Turn your feet out.” “Straighten your shoulders.”

This was shouted out in front of the neighbours as I crossed the road to go to school.

The turned in feet were from the gas mask abuse when I was a baby. She was never able to take responsibility for this. I also have a scoliosis between my shoulder blades which has caused me a lot of pain my whole life. Scoliosis was an hereditary birth defect in our family, but it wasn't recognised I had it until I was an adult and went looking for the reason for the pain. My mother did not have the condition. One of her sisters did, and my younger daughter has.

The first physical healing I had was when the Lord straightened my back, not the scoliosis but the deformity caused by drawing myself in to make myself invisible. I was in a Christian meditation group. We would close our eyes while someone read a scripture story, and we would visualise ourselves as one of the people in the story, and see what the Lord did for us. This day it was the story of the woman washing the feet of Jesus with her tears, and drying them with her hair. Then tipping the alabaster jar of ointment over them. I did not get to meditate as the Lord started to move my neck around my shoulders. Again I experienced something I could not go against, like Him drawing me to the church before I got saved. It lasted the whole of the meditation time. When I arrived home after the group, the woman next door called over the fence,

“What has happened to your back? It is straight.”

And it was. This is how crooked I was in the spine, she could immediately see the difference.

More negative statements.

“Why are you so quiet? You are so selfish.”

Of course, all the things she complained about in me were the behaviours that had come from her abuse. She did not ever seem to consider this. There was just such a lot wrong with me that it was all my fault. Where each person does not live a life of accepting responsibility for their behaviour, dysfunction follows.

“Why do you always play by yourself? Why don't you play with your sister?”

In the years where she included my sister in the “watching me cry,” she had caused a barrier to come between us. I did not play with her. I had built a fantasy world that had let me escape from the family I lived in. I had my own family of tiny dolls. I made them a house from wooden fruit boxes. Fruit didn't come in cardboard boxes in those days, but in neat little wooden boxes. My uncle had a fruit shop, so we had access to the boxes. Recycling wasn't in either. I had made a three storied house which I furnished with everything needed from match boxes and other small containers. Yes, my family of dolls were so tiny, they could use a match box as a double bed. They cost a half penny each in Woolworths. I sewed by hand, bedding and clothing, floor rugs and curtains for them and their house. I would never let my sister touch them. They were my family. I would spend hours playing with them,

making up a whole life story about them. I took my family in a biscuit tin with me everywhere.

One day, we were at the tennis courts. There was a couple there with a handicapped child. She became fascinated with my dolls. My mother gave my entire family of dolls, with beds, bedding, clothes, everything, to the girl. I was shattered. She had given away my whole real family. But I didn't object. I was twelve years old, but I had already learnt not to argue with my mother. I had no rights to anything. She owned everything. She told the other mother I didn't care. I could always get some more dolls. I did care. I didn't ever replace them. It would never have been the same family. This was during the time she was in AA and sober for two years. But the leprechaun [demon] was still in control of her. I believe she did not realise what she had done to me.

What I have come to see from writing this is that I was very creative. My sister was not able to build her own doll's house, and furniture, and hand sew clothes and bedding. I have spent my life as a frustrated house designer and builder. I had such imagination. To see the potential in some old boxes and matchboxes. To keep myself amused with the stories I told myself of the lives my dolls lived. But as the years moved on, my creativity disappeared deeper inside me.

This incident also taught me I had no rights. I learnt not to count on anything being forever. It could be taken away from me at any time, for any reason. The lie that I had no rights was strengthened further. I had an aunt, my mother's sister, who had no children. She was excellent at needle work, embroidery, crochet, knitting. Each Christmas and birthday, we would receive a piece of her handiwork for our glory box. We were never allowed to keep ours. My mother always took it and gave it away to others for their birthdays.

This aunt taught me to crochet by showing me a small doily she had made, and starting me on the first basic stitches and rows. I took it home and worked out the next rows, until I had completed it. I bought her back the finished product the next weekend. After only one lesson. More lost potential.

One Christmas, my youngest grandson, whose parents were separated, and who was spending three and a half days per week with each parent, put in a request to Santa. He really wanted a DS. I don't know what DS stands for, but it is a small electronic gadget on which you can play games. You can take it anywhere and it is good to use in the car to keep a child amused. He got one at daddy's house, but when he was to go back to mummy's for his three and a half days, he was not allowed to take his DS with him. He had received lots of toys at mummy's but not a DS. He is a child who smiles and is happy all the time. But suddenly, all the smiles were gone, his shoulders slumped and he dragged his feet for days. Eventually he told me what his problem was. He was experiencing having no rights, and powerlessness. I went straight out and bought him a DS to have at mummy's. A good solution? No! Not

one I would ordinarily have chosen. But in this case, it was more important to destroy a potential Lie than to consider a parent who would not put the needs of their son first.

Parents, care givers, watch your child's behaviour. You can do so much to stop Lies from going into them, by speaking forth the truth, or changing a situation as I did, not letting them make a decision about their value based on what has happened to them.

Emotional abuse robs a child of all potential.

I remember at twelve, writing a story that impressed my teacher. She encouraged me to think about writing as a career. I took my story home for my mother to read. She laughed at it and said it was stupid. I never wrote again until a few years ago, about fifty years later. More lost potential. Encouragement to a child is so important to help them find out who they are. They are moulded by our positive input.

When Nathan, my son, was about ten, he had a male teacher and for that whole year, he thrived. To walk inside the classroom was like walking into a cave with lots of interesting things hanging from the ceiling. Their desks were at odd angles around the room instead of lined up in rows. Everything seemed disorganised. I asked the teacher at parent interview time what he felt Nathan would become as he grew up.

“Don't worry about him,” he said, “He will be a comedian.”

It fit perfectly. Nathan had an incredible, natural wit. He was a very happy boy. Yet within two years, when his Lie would have been in control, he had lost it all, and was angry, unhappy, aggressive. This was before I had achieved any degree of healing, so I didn't know how to help him.

As I said earlier, the Original Lie will rob a child in every area of their lives.

“You are so slow.”

“You are so stupid.”

“You can never do anything right.”

When I was in my first year at school, a quaintly named Humpy Bong State School, in the bay side suburb of Redcliffe, there was a boy and myself who would vie for first place in every exam. The teacher was always interested to see who would beat whom. Sometimes he was first, and sometimes it was me. More lost potential. By grade eight, at fourteen, I was only in the middle of the class, and in danger of being put down because I was struggling at mathematics. I thank God for two teachers during this final year of primary school, Mr. Ross and Mr. Millard, who believed in me. Especially Mr. Millard, who was not my class teacher. They gave me extra tuition, and helped me to pass. Mr. Millard lived just a few houses away

from where we lived, and I'm sure he knew what our home life was like. Everyone did. More shame. Of course, the Humpy Bong school experience was just before the reading of the Koala story abuse. Also, as I learnt to read well, I found my life long addiction, reading novels. I would read all the way through class while I was supposed to be listening. It was another way to escape the life I was living at home. I can read a novel a day even now, if something has upset me and I need to escape. Only a few months ago I read eight books in ten days before I felt ready to come back into the real world again. Of course, when I was reading during class instead of listening, I wasn't learning.

So, the Original Lie does not come only from specific emotional abuse, as I had suffered. In fact you don't have to have any emotional abuse, or any other abuse at all for the Lie to form. Just the ordinary living life as a child brings lies into your soul. I had so many lesser lies that had come in from ordinary childhood experiences. I had to deal with these before I could even get to the totally soul destroying Original Lie. In ordinary life, these are enough for the child to decide an Original Lie from.

There was another area of trauma in my sister's and my life that I haven't written about yet. Because both my parents were dysfunctional, they were involved in a pattern of living that involved fighting, rarely physical, but verbally abusive, manipulative, and emotionally blackmailing. These fights would always result in my father going into one of his "sulks." They would almost always start of a Friday night. My father's sulks would take over very quickly and he would go to bed and stay there for days, not bathing or eating or working or talking. Just lying there with his arms folded. My mother would be in the bedroom with him, begging him to stop sulking, to answer her, to have sex with her, anything to stop the fight. When he had decided he had sulked enough, maybe two or three days later, they would have sex and everything would be okay again.

What did my sister and I do during this time? We had no contact with either parent. We fed ourselves as best we could. We put ourselves to bed. I can remember during these fights being hungry. We were not allowed to use the stove. Once we ate uncooked rolled oats with water on them, as there was nothing else in the house to eat. But the worst part for me was lying awake at night listening to my mother beg and beg and receive no answer. These fights happened every month or two for the whole of our lives. My mother said the first time it happened was on their honeymoon. The first one I can remember was before I was school age. If a fight happened at a time when our birthday occurred, they would still continue their pattern, but with the added begging that it was one of our birthdays, and please stop sulking so we could be given our present. Sometimes he didn't. We got our present on whatever day he decided to stop. It may not have been on our actual birthday. I can remember reading something as an adult, one part of which said,

"Can you still get up in the morning, when all hope is gone and everything seems pointless, and care for the children?"

My parents couldn't but, except for the one occasion already mentioned, I made sure I did when my husband was away on drinking binges.

One weekend, my parents started to fight on the Saturday morning. I was supposed to go for a piano lesson. For the first time ever, my father did not go into one of his sulks. He even made my mother a cup of tea. He took me to my lesson. The next morning, my mother and father were having sexual intercourse in the bathroom when he dropped dead of a heart attack. The doctor came and resuscitated him three times, but he did not live. I was so angry with him for many years after this. I never understood why, or where the anger was coming from. Then just last year, the Lord showed me that my anger was,

“Why did you leave it till the day before you died to change and stop your bad behaviour?”

Let me say here, I have learnt about co-dependency, and enmeshment and so many other things that were wrong between them. But my only purpose in writing this book is to tell how my upbringing affected my life, and how Jesus healed it. My parents were not responsible for what they did to me. Their parents were not responsible for what they did to them. And so on for numerous generations. Until someone meets Jesus and breaks the cycle, the dysfunction goes on and on. When I say meets Jesus, I do not mean going to church. Many of my forebears were church goers. I mean really coming into intimate relationship and totally accepting Him as Lord of their lives, so healing can take place.

The experience of my parents fighting put some of the deepest lies in me.

“You have no value because your parents neglect you. They don't care if you are hungry, cold, frightened. You are not worth protecting.”

So I learnt not to protect myself. I let everything happen to me. I had no boundaries at all. They did a test on me in the psyche hospital, where they asked a man to walk towards me, and for me to tell him when to stop. He almost bumped noses with me. The therapist had to yell for him to stop. I was not able to tell him to. Unfortunately the therapist did not explain what had happened, what the test showed nor did she give me any help with the problem. It took me about twenty years to realise it was a test to see if I had any boundaries.

The Lord has shown me He was in control then too. He never taught me to set boundaries. One day, I asked Him why. He said that the only way to set boundaries is when it comes from a healed person protecting themselves because they have come to know how valuable they are, how much He loves them, and they will no longer let things happen to them. For me to have tried to change my behaviour in order to protect myself would not have led to the healing I have achieved, as changing behaviour would not have changed the thoughts. And to be healed, you need to change the thoughts. I can now set healthy boundaries.

Another way lies can be implanted into the soul of a child is the actions or lack of actions of a parent. I can never remember my father saying a negative word to me. I can never remember him saying a positive word to me. I can never remember him ever saying anything to me.

This can't be true, of course, he must have spoken to me. I think it was just he never spoke anything personal to me, positive or negative. I can never remember him taking an interest in any thing I did, or asking me any questions about what I was doing, or what I was interested in. This was except for when I learnt to play the piano, being the only thing in which he was interested.

Because he didn't protect me from my mother's abuse, not the specific emotional abuse, nor the words, the beltings, the fights, the addictions, I came to believe I wasn't worth protecting. There was never any attempt to try to undo the damage she was doing by letting us know he was there for us.

I can never remember him reaching out, touching me, hugging me. I can remember my mother saying to my sister and I,

“Go and give your father a kiss goodnight.”

He would offer us his cheek to kiss. He would not even look up from whatever he was doing. He never reached out his arms, or smiled at us. He just offered us his cheek to kiss. He didn't speak. There was no “Have a good night's sleep,” or “Sweet dreams.”

I believe my father's lack of relationship with me caused as many lies as my mother's abuse. How did this happen? I came to see myself as having little worth or value. My father's lack of interest compounded the lie planted by my mother's specific abuse. When I first met Jesus, He was the only one I could relate to in the Trinity. It took many years before I could relate to the concept of a Heavenly Father.

My father always called us by boy's names. I was Sam, and my sister was Dinny, Irish for Dennis. Maybe if he had had sons he would have been different.

Quite often, when I talk to people, they tell me they have had a happy childhood. As I talk to them more fully, I hear examples of emotional abuse. They have not even seen it as such. There are two reasons for this. The first is because children do not see things as an adult sees them. So they are not able to classify what is happening to them as abuse. The incident does not lodge in the child's memory as abusive. So they are unable to understand or express what has happened to them. This is in relation to emotional abuse only. They will remember beltings, sexual abuse possibly. But emotional abuse is such a hidden, insidious thing, it is very hard to come to realise exactly what it is. Some examples of this can be teasing of a child about something they have done or something a bit different in the way they look, excess tickling, excess holding against their will even as a hug, laughing at anything that is embarrassing, especially during puberty, telling mistakes they have made in a

humorous manner over and over to outsiders. There would be hundreds of instances, seemingly harmless, that can become abuse to the child. A lot of instances would be entirely innocent and not meant to harm the child. But again, children do not see as an adult sees, which is why we have to be careful and watch our children's behaviour. Try to make up a list from your own childhood. Secondly, as previously stated, children usually take the blame, believing it is something wrong with them.

Only Jesus could reveal to me that the instances from chapter one, My Story, were instances of emotional abuse. The chasing me as a one year old with a gas mask covering her face, and the retelling of the story, to me and to others, the forcing me to read the Koala story over and over, while she laughed at me, making me laugh at her cruelty to cats, were emotional abuse, but I did not see them as such. And these were extreme cases. There are many experiences, some seemingly innocent, that happen to us as a child that need the Holy Spirit to reveal and clarify for us.

How Does the Lie Control Our Lives?

Say you have a Lie whose basis is, “ I am unlovable.” This Lie will manipulate you to try to prove it is wrong. If you meet a guy, or alternatively a girl, and he/she seems to be sweet, gentle, affectionate, and attracted to you, and you find yourself attracted to him/her, before you know it, you are both “in love”. You will think you have chosen her and she will think she has chosen you. The truth is neither of you are free to choose. While ever the Original Lie is not dealt with, it is in control. It is highly likely her Lie is also about a worth, or value, or lovableness issue. So your two Lies link up together trying to prove to each of you that you are not who your Lie says you are. I am using a very simple illustration here. The truth is Lies are very complex, and the reason we are drawn to each other is complex. But it is always about proving that our Lies are incorrect. Unfortunately, what you both end up doing is proving to each other that your Lies are true. Now you might separate and go off and find someone else whose Lie hooks into yours, and repeat the cycle over and over. You may also get married, and stay married for fifty two years, but continue in dysfunction to a small degree or to a high degree, spending most of your lives trying to prove your Lies are incorrect, until you both settle for what reality is, and stop trying to prove your Lies are incorrect. You adjust to a pattern of behaviour that allows you to accept who you are inside your Lies, and never prove it to be wrong. You can just get it to stop affecting your behaviour enough to allow you to live a reasonable life, without ever reaching anywhere near your potential. Neither of you will achieve true intimacy with each other. So the marriage will never be successful. Oh, it may seem to the world's standards to be successful. The truth is, each will have a very strong need for intimacy that has never been fulfilled. This may only come out when one partner dies, and the games and connecting that made the marriage seem to be successful are gone. The surviving partner is left with a huge hole inside, the unmet need.

Remember in all this, until you realise the Lie is there, and how it affects your life, you are completely unaware of it. It is hidden in your subconscious mind. It can take

a number of lesser lies to get through before the Original Lie is felt. But your spirit will confirm it when you have reached it.

It is highly likely you will never experience intimacy with God either. For this is the real purpose of the Lie, to stop you from reaching true intimacy with God. It is in reaching this true intimacy that true anointing comes. I am not talking about anointing to be a pastor, teacher or prophet, although, to fulfil one of these roles, you need true intimacy with God to be successful by His standards. I mean the true anointing to impact others, in your family, neighbourhood, work place, to be able to love fully yourself and others, for it is by our love that the world will be changed. Also to carry the joy and the peace the world cannot give, out into a world that so desperately needs it. The anointing to love one another as He has loved us, the anointing to live in this world as His disciples.

You may compromise and think you have achieved everything, especially if you are successful by the world's standards. You may deceive yourself and think you have everything you need. Scripture says,

“The heart is deceitful above all things.”
Jeremiah Chapter 12, verse 9.

But there will come a time in your life where you will feel the loss. The life God has planned for us is the abundant life Jesus promises us. I don't think we comprehend how wonderful it would be to live in that place. I don't think we even realise what abundant life really is. To me it is not what some churches teach, having a care free life. Just the opposite. I believe it is being able to trust God no matter what comes our way. Knowing always that He has our best interests in His hand, that He always sees the big picture. Have I come to this place? I am very close and I keep running the race, and striving towards the goal.

I find it very hard to watch a father playing with his children. I will experience a loss, a grieving deep inside. On rare occasions also, when I see an older couple, married for an incredible number of years, who still have true intimacy between them. Yes, some very blessed people do manage to find this together, but they are very few. You can see it in the way they look at each other, have a special, secret smile between them that says, “I know you and I love you.” A smile that speaks of shared experiences, good and bad, that they have grown through and continued to love through. A couple whose body language is together, and who are gentle and kind with each other, especially when talking to other people and their partner is not there. Couples who enjoy talking to each other, and who enjoy each other's company still. Unfortunately, they are very few, but they do exist. I look for them, for it is a sadness in my life to have not had this.

I met a man once who said to me,

“You would understand how important it is to just have someone's hand to hold as you get older.”

I said I did know, and gave him a hug. We were at a church dinner. He asked if he could sit with us. I was with a male friend of his age group. Yes, he was married, and his wife was at a table with her friends. She hadn't saved a place for him.

It is the Lie in each of us, the realisation we are not going to meet the need to prove our Lie is wrong, that robs us of this intimacy as we get older. We compromise and settle for what we can have, and lose hope for anything better.

I am so blessed that, because I have dealt with my Lie, I can have intimacy with God and with friends and family. I repeat here again, while ever you have the Lie inside you, you can never be free to reach your full potential in God, or be truly happy. There is only one way to achieve this, by finding out what your Lie says about you, to be very honest with yourself, to accept your need to change, and to transform your mind by the process to be described.

With my first husband, his Lie was based on, "I have no value unless I can help someone." He thought he would find his value in me because I was so sick physically and inadequate emotionally. I fitted his need to prove his Lie was incorrect. I thought he would love me enough to prove to myself that I was lovable.

The way life treated both of us, my losing our first two babies, having to go to bed for seven months to have our first child, being badly damaged physically by a long and difficult labour, and a doctor who had been in the Yacht Club all Sunday afternoon, {Samantha was born at 8pm Sunday night} and who, in terms of another doctor, "butchered me." His Lie was not able to be disproved because these events caused problems too big for him to handle. So, as I failed to meet his need, he became verbally abusive of me, therefore proving to me that my Lie of being unlovable was also correct. We lived in severe dysfunction for over fifteen years.

I praise God though that, except for the one occasion where I took the pills and Wes was on a drinking binge, we were able between us, to make sure the children were looked after. They didn't grow up with the dysfunction I grew up with. Yes, they do have Lies, but those Lies haven't been able to stop them from living reasonable lives, and raising children.

Your Lie might be based on,

"I will never amount to anything."

This Lie will stop you from achieving in any area of your life, especially work or business. But it can be as bad as never allowing you to lose weight, fight depression, develop your natural gifts and talents. I have watched someone who is so good looking, so talented musically, very intelligent, yet he struggles in everything he tries to do, because of just these few words. There is so much in scripture about the power of words, and you will see, as you work through your Lie, just how real it is.

Many years ago, I worked with a lady, a beautiful gentle soul, but her husband was being unfaithful to her with another woman. This of course, brings up all our negative words and thoughts about ourselves. It is soul destroying. Then he left her for the other woman. She seemed to be ok. She had three children of whom she kept custody. But the marital home had to be sold. She bought a three bedroom unit and she and the children moved in there. But look at the massive loss she was going through. If we do not deal with the Lie, at times like this, it can actually physically destroy us. This lady was in her early forties, and with a matronly figure. All of a sudden she started to lose weight. She was slimming down beautifully without trying. But she had bowel cancer. I believe the stress of the unexpressed pain of her circumstances and the power of the unhealed Lie, caused her to develop this disease. She was given six months to live. She had a nine year old son and two daughters, one thirteen and one fifteen years old. She was a Christian. She asked God to let her live three years, so the children would be older and the girls could look after the boy when she was no longer there. He granted her this. But she suffered incredible pain and other consequences of the disease. Then, she met a man she had known many years before and who had always loved her. The cancer went into remission. They were going to get married, but he died of a heart attack before this could happen. Immediately, the cancer came back. She only lived a few months more and died a horrible death. This is the ultimate power of the Lie. I did not know enough at this time to help her. I could only pray for her.

What is the Structure of the Lie?

The Original Lie is always a very powerful “I” statement, usually contains absolutes like never, always, must, and will quite often contain powerful words that are not usually used in ordinary conversation. Words like radically, evil, stigma, waste of space, trash. I have never heard two Lies that are exactly the same. They all seem to be unique to each of us. So, unless you get down to this strong “I” statement, you haven't got there. My full Lie was,

“There must be something radically wrong with me but I am too stupid to know it. Even my own mother cannot love me. Therefore I am unlovable. No one will ever be able to love me.”

It contains all three elements.

The “I” statement; “I am unlovable.”

Powerful words; radically, even.

Absolutes; too, cannot, will ever, no one.

How to Find Your Lie

The way to find your lie is to watch your self talk, especially in times of stress or disappointment. Also watch your reactions. It is quite often hard for people to catch their thoughts, or to be aware of their words about themselves. We are not used to doing this. But ask them to describe a recent reaction they have had to a person, or an incidence, and they will be able to find the words more easily. The equation is,

“Thoughts bring up feelings which then cause actions/reactions/ behaviour.”

To aid in finding your Lie, work the equation backwards. Your reaction may be to cry if someone puts you down. The feeling will possibly be hurt, the thought,

“Everyone is always picking on me, I can never do anything right.”

To get to the answers, ask yourself,

“What feeling caused that reaction?” then,

“What thought could possibly have released that feeling?”

We are much more able to relate to feelings than to thoughts about ourselves. For example take the statement

“I was abandoned.”

It sounds like a lie as it is an “I” statement, but actually it is more a feeling. It isn't a fact either. To make it into a Lie, we need to seek out the thought behind it. It may be something like this;

“I was such a horrible child that my parents abandoned me[emotionally]. Therefore I must be unacceptable. No-one will ever be able to accept me. I deserve to be abandoned.”

Take everything to the Holy Spirit, and He will lead you to the Original Lie in all it's fullness.

Once you have found your Lie and exposed it to the light, it is then a matter of renewing the mind, subconscious, of course.

Many books recommend affirmations or positive self talk. But we are dealing here with truth. The Lie can only be dealt with by absolute, unchanging truth. Just any affirmation, no matter how beautiful it is, will not undo the Lie. It must specifically target the exact words of your Lie. i.e. Not “I am the most beautiful person in the world,” but “I am a very beautiful person.”

The equation for dealing with the Lie is:

Tell it it is a lie.

Tell it the truth.

Tell it God's word, either from the bible, or from a word He has said to you, either directly from Him to you, or through another person.

For my Lie, it was;

“It is a lie that there is something radically wrong with me. Just because my mother cannot love me does not mean that I am unlovable or that no one will ever be able to love me. The truth is my mother was severely dysfunctional and unable to love me. There are many people who love me, and there have been many people all my life who have loved me. Therefore I am not unlovable. And God's personal word says I am sweetness and light. His word says I am perfectly and wonderfully made and He has ordained my life. He has a plan and a future for me.”

To explain why we need to go through this process, you need to understand how the subconscious mind works. It is the subconscious mind we have to change, as everything we have ever learnt, or had happen to us, or that has gone on around us, is still in there. It stores everything, but filters through to the conscious mind what it needs to know. The subconscious mind takes everything in through the senses; taste, touch, hearing, sight, smell. So, in order to change it, we need to take new information in through the senses, in particular, through sight and hearing. So we need to write out the answer to our Lie, and read it regularly. Or we need to speak the answer aloud so we take it in through our hearing. I cannot stress enough how important self talk is. The more time you spend on self talk means the faster you will be free. It is a matter of filling the subconscious mind with the answer to your Lie so that it realises, “This is important!” and it feeds it into the conscious mind quickly and constantly, thereby disabling the Lie.

In the beginning it is best to write it out and put it up in a number of places where we can see it every day. On the fridge, inside your wardrobe door, on the sun visor of your car, make yourself a book mark, on your bedside table where you can read it every morning when you first wake up, and every evening before you go to sleep. Where possible speak it aloud as you read it because what you are aiming for is that it will become so strong in you that, every time you find yourself thinking negatively, you will automatically speak forth the answer.

The only way to get the truth into the conscious mind is to implant it into the subconscious mind, through the senses, so it will filter it through to the conscious mind. Just thinking the answer in your conscious mind will not change anything. It must go into the subconscious through the senses of hearing or sight. This is very important.

When I first started, I was constantly speaking the answer aloud everywhere and all the time. I didn't care who heard me, or what they thought of me. I was going to get well. If people who talk to themselves have a problem, then I had a massive problem. I continually caught my thoughts, and told the words I spoke about myself that they were lies, and then told them the truth. I still do. Every day. One of the lies I fight constantly is telling myself I am stupid when I do something wrong. I immediately speak aloud,

“No, excuse me, you are not stupid. You might have just done one stupid thing, but that does not make you stupid.”

Be aware, we all have many lies inside us such as the “I am stupid.” There are many lies in us that do not form part of the Original Lie. The Original Lie lies under many other lesser lies. It sounds like a massive undertaking to change all this, but it is much simpler than dealing with the emotional and behavioural areas. And it is a permanent change. This is because it is based on the scripture,

“Know the truth and the truth WILL set you free.”

Every time you speak truth over the Lie, you achieve healing over it. Healing that lasts. Once you become aware of what your Lie says, and how it has been manipulating your life, you will begin to see its effects everywhere. Then it is a matter of overcoming.

One of the saddest things I go through is to see the Lie operating in the lives of people I know, close friends, even family. Yet they are not open to hearing and putting the equation into operation. They don't understand it really works. For those who listen and work on it, they are amazed how effective it is and how quickly they can feel the difference in their emotions and reactions.

So Let Us Look at the Battle.

While I was talking to a lady about the Lie one day, the Lord told me to line up the fighting of the Lie with the taking of the promised land by Joshua and Caleb. Numbers Chapter 13. Joshua and Caleb saw the positives of the land, the milk and honey, huge bunches of grapes. They saw the rewards of fighting the giants in the land. The other scouts saw the giants in the land and let them block out the view of the rewards the land contained. They only saw negatives. We need to be like Joshua and Caleb, keeping our eyes on the rewards promised to us, the abundant life Jesus told us we could have. Sadly, many do not see the value of the battle, spending their lives wandering in the wilderness, never tasting the grapes, nor the milk and honey, just as a generation of Hebrews did, all who were twenty one and over. For it is a fight, indeed a battle, to win over the damage the Original Lie has done in our lives before we are aware of its existence.

There are two other lessons to learn from Joshua's battle to win the promised land. Joshua Chapter 6.

When God told Joshua how to win Jericho, he could have wondered if it had any way of working. March silently around thick stone walls once a day for six days, then seven times on the seventh day. Then shout. Doesn't sound feasible, does it? But we all know the story. It worked and the walls of Jericho fell down. With the Lie, it is the same principle, doing exactly as the Lord said, repeating the same words over and over until the walls [Lie] fall down. The exercise is, of course, repeating the same words regularly every day, even when we can see no improvement, and could really wonder if something so simple would defeat Lies that have had control of us for such a long time. My experience has been to see the walls come down, and the evidence of entering and enjoying the promised land. So, obedience to the Lord is critical to winning the battle.

Remember Ai also; Joshua Chapter 8. Joshua and his mighty men thought they could defeat Ai without the help of God, because it wasn't very big or strong. They didn't seek God to see if they would be successful. They were defeated. The overcoming of the Lie is really an exercise in becoming totally dependent on God, in building a unique intimacy with Him, in learning to trust who you come to know He is, and in whom He has ordained you to be.

Remember satan's purpose in planting the Lie in us is to stop us from finding out who we are in God. We need intimacy with God to enable us to defeat satan, because that is what we are doing in defeating the Lie: defeating satan!

The other lesson we have to learn from the Hebrews taking the promised land is that they didn't take all God told them to take. They became complacent. So with us and the Lie. We can overcome enough for us to live happily and freely, and have a "good" relationship with God. But abundant life means making the principles of God a lifestyle, and never ceasing to keep fighting, and building, for our capacity for intimacy goes on and on, becoming stronger and deeper. This is real abundant life. It is a place we can come to where our joy doesn't depend on everything going well, but where we can praise God and grow in our intimacy and trust when things do not go well, in fact where things go horribly wrong. Yet we grow stronger and stronger in our experience of God loving us, and in our trusting Him completely that He has our lives in His hands, and our best interests in His heart. I write more about how this happened for me in Chapter 6, called "An Intercessory Burden."

There may be many people reading this who will say they had a happy childhood, have a happy relationship, are successful, and they are right to a degree. One Sunday night, the church I was attending held a fun night based on the movie "Chocolat." We were to watch a small part of the movie, then talk about a set of ten questions that would lead us into a deeper relationship with Jesus. The man leading our group was a good looking man, with a beautiful wife and family, successful in his work, happy in his marriage, grown up in the church, by any one's standards, a success. Yet, as I answered the questions, he said,

"I didn't know you could have an intimate relationship with Jesus.
I didn't know you could hear Him speak to you."

It is the Lie that prevents even the most beautiful person from the fulfilment of having a truly intimate relationship with Jesus. In his case the Lie would have led him to believe that he was doing really well and had everything he needed. Again, I state, this is satan's plan. We were made to walk with God in the cool of the evening, to know His involvement in our lives, to talk with and hear clearly from Him, to rejoice in His love for us. This is His heart's desire for us, and He longs for each one to come into this place in Him.

You do not need someone to work through the Original Lie with you. It is based on,

“Know the truth and the truth will set you free.”

Becoming aware of the truth and using the principles of getting free is the key. Then, like with me, the Holy Spirit can do what He does best; lead us into all truth. Your spirit will witness when you have found your Lie in all its depth. Just remember the equation, “Powerful “I” statements, unusual words, absolutes.”

Sorting out your Lie is an incredible way of establishing intimacy with God, of learning to hear His voice, of finding out who He is, and who He says you are. Believe what you hear. It is a deception from satan to keep us doubting we can or do hear God's voice. Scripture says,

“My sheep know my voice and they will follow no other.”
John Chapter 10, verses 16 and 27.

There is just one more area I want to go into. This is hidden agendas. Hidden agendas come from a desperate need within us. They are having a motive deep within us, usually not realised nor admitted to, which controls our behaviour and causes us to act in a way that will hurt us and others. They can be us again trying to prove to ourselves that our Lie is not correct. Imagine a young woman with a Lie that says she is unlovable. She meets a young man, and falls in love with him. Her words to him, and what she truly believes, may be,

“I really love you and I would like to spend the rest
of my life with you, growing in love for you.”

However the hidden agenda will be,

“If you will just love me enough to prove to me my Lie
is incorrect, I will love you so amazingly, I will give you
everything of myself. Can you love me enough?”

The answer to this is no. She will never be able to love him as much as she believes she can because, even if he can love her amazingly, while ever her Lie is in place it will never be enough for her. She will always need more than he can give. It

is only from God that we can get the love we need to set us free, and allow us to love at all.

The Lie that comes from satan is very deceptive and will cause us to believe so many things that are not true. Even about our motives.

How Many Types of Lie Are There?

In the beginning when I talked to people about the Lie, I thought there was only one type, the one I had. This is the negative, depressed, suicidal, crippling, destructive one that stops people from achieving anything. Where every day is a battle.

Then the Lord put me with an incredible young woman, powerful in the gifts of God, able to speak life into people's spirits. Yet, as I got to know her, I found another type of Lie, one I call "the positive persona." She was able to do amazing things, yet inside she suffered as badly as I had with all my dysfunction. Her Lie was actually the same as mine, negative, but she had created this "positive persona" to cover up the real state of her personality. She knew her potential in God, but she was not able to fulfil it. Even with all the people she reached in such an incredible way, she knew she was not reaching her potential in God. She was amazing, but the amazing was controlled by her Lie, just as my severe dysfunction was controlled by mine. Even though she could do amazing things, she was still living a dysfunctional life.

As we began to work together, I was able to hear the true Lie inside her. There are two things to look at here. It is much harder for someone with a "positive persona" to accept they have a Lie, because they are amazing in themselves and can do amazing things. It is much easier for those who are obviously dysfunctional to accept they have a Lie. We can't hide it. The second thing is, as Jesus has shown it to me, the potential inside each of us is as much into the positive side as the Lie has taken us into the negative. So, if your Lie has robbed you of the right to live a normal functional life, your potential once you are free is phenomenal. My Lie had made me invisible and not heard. He has told me I will become visible and heard, and it is happening.

With the "positive persona", even though they can be amazing inside their Lie, once they are free from it, their amazing will be so much more than their amazing inside the Lie could ever be. She could have continued to do amazing things inside her Lie, and she would have helped to set many people free. But she would have suffered inside herself always, and she would never have been as amazing as she will be when she is free. Now she is getting free, very quickly. Watch out satan, she will be a power for God to be reckoned with.

For us with the destructive Lie, once we are free, our potential in God is as much into the positive side as our dysfunction was into the negative.

I believe that each person falls somewhere on a line between powerfully amazing to severely dysfunctional. My young friend was powerfully amazing in her Lie, while I was severely dysfunctional. We were at the far opposite ends to each other. But each person falls somewhere along the line. Why do I believe that? Simple. It goes back to the original statement. God has a plan for every one of our lives and so does Satan. He isn't going to leave any one out either. God does not will that any are lost but Satan wants to destroy as many as possible. No, I am not saying you will be lost if you do not find your Lie and fight it. But Satan is very happy if you don't, as he is at least damaging God's plan for you to have intimacy with Him.

There is a third type of Lie I have come across. This is one where the person has no knowledge or realisation that they have a problem. Will not accept it. Do not see any dysfunctional behaviour in themselves, even though to me it is obvious. I don't know what this is. I have only met one, and I had to stop talking to them as I could not make a breakthrough, so I cannot write about it.

Some additional information about the Lie is that, as we come out of operating from our negative or positive personas, the Lie will try to recreate itself as the opposite persona. In particular, the negative persona will try to become a positive persona. It can be the opposite also, that the positive persona will try to become a negative one. Anything so Satan can still be in control. You need to be aware of this and guard against it. Humility is the key. I found I was talking too much about how well I could help people. None of us should boast of anything except how AWESOME Jesus is. In ourselves, all of us, we are nothing compared to Him. As John the Baptist said,

"I am not fit to carry His shoe."
Matthew Chapter 3, verse 11.

What I have written here about the Original Lie is just a tiny example of what could be written about it. I am not capable of writing it. The more I talk to people, the more I realise it is so complex and there is so much to learn. However I can state very strongly that working this principle in my life has set this captive free. I have also spoken to a number of people who have consequently been set free by putting these principles into practice. Some have been freed in a very short time. Others who have been more severely affected by it have taken longer. But all who have listened and put in the work, have been helped greatly. It works. So, even though this is just a beginning, I pray you will listen and seek the Holy Spirit's help to free yourself.

He is all we need.

The One Good Thing About the Lie.

Every one has one. This means there is no condemnation for any one, especially parents. Each of us does and lives the best we can inside our Lie until, and if, we find out about it, and are able to do something about it. Therefore there is no need to go

back into the past and look at what has damaged us. As shown by God, when He said all who were twenty and under were not responsible for the sins of the nation that caused Israel to wander for forty years in the wilderness, once we turn twenty one we need to take responsibility for who we are, totally. There is no blaming. We are adult and responsible for our behaviour, feelings, reactions, and thoughts. No exceptions. As shown in chapter two, His story, no matter what my parents had done, or my first husband, or anyone else, if I wanted to get well, I accepted responsibility for who I was fully. I could choose to stay as I was, or seek the path of healing and wholeness. The way to go with the Lie, by looking at our reactions, and working these back through feelings to our thoughts, we focus completely on the present. We overcome in the present. We do as Adam and Eve should have done. We blame no one. This is not about blame but about responsibility. We have the power in God to become healed and whole. It is our responsibility to do so.

As I go on with my story and my experiences, I want you to understand one thing very clearly, it is still and will always be His story. When He began to teach me how to get well, He had an empty slate on which to write whatever He chose. Withdrawing at fourteen meant I completely missed three important growth stages. 14 to 21, 21 to 28, 28 to 35. I had no personality at all, no social skills, no opinions or beliefs that were my own. But I had one very important thing. I knew it was Jesus who had come into my life. I knew He was trustworthy. I knew He had saved me miraculously. I knew if He hadn't saved me, I would have taken my own life, sooner or later, because I just could not continue to live in the hell I had been living in. So my decision, my very first freely made decision was that my life was His to do with as He willed. I didn't know any scriptures to hold onto. I only had a person called Jesus. So, everything that happened to me from that time on was orchestrated by Him for His purposes. How strong this was in me will unfold.

Scriptures I use to confirm the Original Lie biblically are;

Proverbs 23 v 7 “For as a man thinks in his heart, so he is.”

Romans 12 v 2 “ And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.”

John 8 v 32 “ And you shall know the truth and the truth shall make you free.”

2nd Corinthians 10 v 5b “bringing every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ.”

Matthew 7 v 3 to 5 “When you have removed the log from you own eye, then you will see clearly to remove the splinter from your brother's eye.”

Chapter Four

Learning Obedience

A Life Lived With Him

So, where did obedience start, or should I say learning who God is, how He protects us, and how true He is to His word?

The first was learning to obey His word. With my second husband, I had let myself fall into fornication before we married. I didn't even know what the word meant. I had to look it up in the dictionary. But my saving grace was my relationship with Jesus and how He had saved me. I knew beyond a shadow of a doubt that He was the creator of the universe and He was real. This brought about in me an awe and reverence whereby it was unquestionable to not obey Him. I stopped the fornication. However my partner did not agree, and it caused a lot of problems. We did eventually marry. The marriage lasted one year. Within one week of the wedding, he was struck down with rheumatoid arthritis, and crippled by it.

He was a plasterer, working in Brisbane and travelling up and down every day from the Gold Coast. He was no longer able to work at all as his hands, elbows, knees, and feet were immediately crippled. I was working at Centrelink and already renting a house, so we managed. However, I had this deep knowing in my spirit that the rheumatoid arthritis was spiritual, not physical. The arthritis specialist called me a cold, hard woman, but I knew my God and what He was showing me. The truth would ultimately be revealed.

The marriage was very verbally and emotionally violent. I do not blame my husband for this. He had a traumatic childhood in Germany during the last few years of World War Two and on into post war Germany. Horrendous story of the circumstances of his conception and the cruelty he was forced to grow up with. The product of rape of his mother by a Russian soldier while her husband was away fighting. The husband coming home and finding a child that wasn't his, a child he could not love. There were his own children, a son and a daughter, born before the war began. Unfortunately his son died of malnutrition in post war Germany, but the Russian's bastard lived. You can imagine the damage done to this innocent child, product of the evils of war.

The second world war did a lot of damage, worldwide, not just in the destruction of lives and property, but also to the emotional health of wives left without husbands, children left fatherless, men returning from war changed forever by what they had experienced. I have spoken to a lot of people my age and a little older who have struggled their whole lives with lies they were left with due to

circumstances beyond their control. Of course every war leaves the same consequences. We see the physical loss and damage, but it is much harder to see, understand, and help the psychological damage, which is just as great, in fact, to me, far greater. Even though the returning soldiers came home as heroes from the two world wars, there was little understanding for the deep scars with which they still had to cope. Even less for the wives and children, whether the men returned or not. At the time we were married, I did not have enough knowledge of the Original Lie to be able to help him or myself. I was still walking through the effects of my Lie. It was many years later that the Original Lie concept fell into place.

Samantha had gone to Sydney to live during this marriage. Nathan was the receiver of this husband's physical violence when he tried to stop me from being verbally and emotionally abused. I left the marriage immediately. My husband, at police insistence, left the home and never bothered me again. I thank him for that. Also, he could have seriously hurt Nathan physically but he didn't.

This is the sad part of life for me because he was a good man at heart, but the Lie was so strong it controlled everything he did. This is why I do not blame him. Neither of us was strong enough to defeat satan in our lives at that time.

After my second marriage failed so dismally, I was determined to stay on my own and just learn from, and grow closer to, my Lord Jesus. I had not yet totally surrendered my whole life to Him.

A lovely couple who were alternative medical practitioners, took Renee and I under their wings and began to nurture us. Samantha had settled in Sydney and Nathan was floating around, sometimes with his father or me, and sometimes in other boarding situations. My mother and stepfather had built a small granny flat behind their house, and Renee and I had settled in there. Renee was learning gymnastics, something she had always wanted to do. She went to level nine before an injury forced her to stop the sport. The gymnastics club had asked a chiropractor to come out and access the girls for any problems. He had found a scoliosis in Renee below the waistline, which he said he could fix by slowly turning the discs into the correct position. I could not afford the treatment. This couple said they would do it for just what I could pay.

They were in a different church to the one Renee and I attended. One Saturday in October they took me to their church for "A Walk Through The Old Testament". It was during the lunch break and I was talking to the husband, when a man walked up. As we were introduced, a booming voice came saying,

"This is the man I have chosen for you."

I was very upset. I answered back, silently, of course,

"Who gave you permission? I didn't. I don't want to get married again."

I had only been out of my second marriage nine weeks, I definitely wasn't ready to hear this. I promptly forgot all about the man.

I did not see him again for three months, which was then Christmas Eve. The same church was having a get together. The man God had spoken to me about was there. He was playing guitar and singing. I made no effort to speak to him, nor go near him. As it was almost time to leave, he sought me out and we talked for a short while. I found out he was separated, a four years sober alcoholic. I was definitely not interested, especially in the alcoholic part.

However, when I went home, I acknowledged to the Lord that I wanted my life to be in submission to Him, so I would put out a fleece and, if He bought it to pass, I would be obedient to Him. The fleece I put out, I did not expect Him to be able to fulfil. I thought I was quite safe. I had yet to learn how all knowing, how all powerful He is.

I told God that His word said I could not remarry as I had left my second marriage, but not for adultery. I told Him if He wanted me to marry Tim as He had asked me to, He had to set me free from my second marriage, which had been to a Christian man. I then forgot all about it as I could not see the fleece being fulfilled.

Putting out a fleece comes from Judges Chapter 6, verses 36 to 40, and the story of Gideon. An angel had appeared to Gideon, called him a mighty man of valour, and told him he had been chosen to win some battles for God. Because Gideon saw himself in a very negative light, the least son of the least family in the least tribe, certainly not a mighty man of valour, in fact at that very time, hiding, trembling in fear of the Midianites, he needed to get proof from God that an angel had really spoken to him on behalf of God. Gideon puts out a fleece [a sheepskin] overnight and asks God to make the ground wet and the fleece dry. The next morning it is as he has asked. But Gideon needs to be really sure. To be asked by God to do something for Him, something really big, doesn't happen every day. So he puts the fleece out again the next night, but asks God for the fleece to be wet and the ground dry, an even more unlikely result. The next morning it is as he has asked again. So he knows God has really spoken to him, and he agrees to do as he has been asked.

Please be aware here, putting out a fleece should only be used to confirm a word you have already been given by God. Something really big and life changing. It should not be used to get a yes or no answer from God on something we want to do. I really believe we have to be really careful how we handle God's word.

Shortly after this, my mother went to a prophetic church meeting where there was a guest speaker. She told me that my second husband had been there and, even though the guest speaker had called and called for a man with anger to come up for prayer, he had not gone up. The next day my second husband had rung me at Centrelink, and asked me to meet him for lunch. He said he had something to tell me. I agreed to meet him. He told me about the meeting the night before and that he had gone up for prayer after everyone else had left. The guest speaker told him he

had lied to two people, and he needed to go to those two people and tell them the truth. I was one of the two people. He told me that the week before our wedding, he had made arrangements with a woman in Brisbane to have an ongoing affair. As soon as he had finished speaking, the Lord said,

“You are free.”

He had lied in his marriage vows. Even though the rheumatoid arthritis had prevented him from doing as he had purposed to do, he had committed adultery in his heart. My husband had expected that, in telling me the truth, our marriage would be healed. Instead, all the things that had puzzled me fell into place. I realised the Lord had protected me from him being able to be unfaithful to me. Because he worked in Brisbane and we lived on the Gold Coast, he was unable to meet up with her at all. He was unable to drive a car. Just as an aside, he had been miraculously healed of the arthritis about two months before this, just before we separated.

So now I was free to either be obedient or disobedient. I would not have lost my salvation by being disobedient, and I am sure I would have had a fulfilled Christian life. What I didn't know at this time was that Jesus was asking me to fully lay down my life and all its desires, hopes, and visions, to allow Him to use my life as He choose. I agreed with Him to marry Tim and in doing so, gave my life to my Lord to use in any way He decided. I didn't at this time see the big picture. He was really taking me into a life of spiritual warfare for His purposes, a hard life filled with pain and daily choosing to live by His commands, no matter what happened. Yet definitely, looking back from twenty five years on, a life far more fulfilled than any I could have had in not choosing obedience. Were I able to go back to make the same choice today, knowing all I would go through, I would again choose obedience.

I told God I would agree to marry Tim, but I would not do anything to help Him bring this about. It was up to Him to achieve His purposes. I did not see Tim again until Easter, three months later. We were both invited, separately, to a BBQ. He was playing his guitar and singing chorus' when I arrived. He later came over to talk. He told me about songs he had written about his recovery from alcoholism. He played them for me. They were very good, country gospel style, yet he never played them for people.

Tim had been born during the years of World War II also. His father had been away fighting when he was born and Tim was three years old when the war ended and he came home. It was a big adjustment for him to find a man he didn't know come into his life and expect to be accepted as his father. I don't think he ever really adjusted. His father was a farmer, but a poor one, always working other people's property. Tim's older siblings said he came home from the war a changed man, full of anger that wasn't there before. All Tim experienced was the changed man. Tim grew up wandering free in the country, but always alone. He, like me, but to a lesser degree, grew up with a maladjustment to life. When I met him, he was still very nervous and lacking in self esteem. He was living in a caravan, and, while in a big church where he had friends, was still living a lonely life. He had all these beautiful

songs he had written, but he never played them for anyone. He was playing his guitar in the church band, but not reaching his full potential in God. He was a beautiful guitarist.

Some weeks after the BBQ, Tim rang and asked me out. We married in the December of that year, 1986. Tim moved into the flat behind my parents house, and Renee moved into a bedroom in the house. She was fourteen.

Tim had a vision to buy a camper van and travel into outback areas, especially into Aboriginal communities. He wanted to go as soon as possible, but I would not leave Renee with my mother who was still addicted to prescription drugs and my stepfather. Their marriage was not happy. The Lord told me I would know when the time to go was right. That turned out to be six and a half years later, when Renee was twenty, and could stay with her brother and his girlfriend and their baby son.

During these years, Tim and I had a reasonably happy and successful marriage. We began to play music in the church together, and our ministry was anointed. I had learnt piano as a child and played in a dance band as a teenager. I had not played for many years, but I bought a keyboard and soon picked it up again. Tim became song and music leader in the church. The Lord gave us a very sweet worship ministry for many years.

I encouraged Tim in his music, in playing his songs for people. We were asked to join a prison ministry team, going into Numinbah Prison Farm every Sunday night, and doing occasional Saturday night concerts in all the other prisons in south east QLD. His testimony songs made an impact on the prisoners and we were very fulfilled in doing this for three years.

We were asked to set up and run a youth home for the church we were in. As we made enquiries on how to go about this, we were told it was a thankless job, that the young people wouldn't stay, and that we should consider seriously whether to take it on. However, we went ahead and targeted teenagers in high school who were in danger of being made homeless. The church provided an eight bedroom house, which meant we could take in six young people at a time. We found most of them stayed with us until they finished year twelve, which was our goal; to help them so they could get through high school. It was successful and very fulfilling for us.

Also during this time, Tim continued to run an Alcoholics Victorious group through Drug Arm in Brisbane. Only one man found Jesus and sobriety during this time. His life was committed and he was an amazing witness. He would ride his push bike every Monday night to the meeting, about 15 klms, even if it was pouring rain, which it quite often was. Tim used to pick up all the other group members, and take them home, ring them every week, yet they never found a walk with Jesus. Then, one day, the man on the push bike had a major crisis in his life, a crisis big enough to cause him to pick up a drink. He had a motor bike by this time. He got on his bike and rode; over two thousand five hundred kilometres. Outside a pub in Charters Towers he had an accident. He fell off the bike in front of the men drinking on the verandah

of the pub, watching him. He got up, walked into the pub, and ordered a Coke. What a witness. We saw him many years later, working in a church shop. He was still sober and still following Jesus.

Tim and I also somehow came to do house cleansing of demonic presences in inanimate objects. We had some amazing experiences in this. I hadn't realised demons could be put into inanimate objects, but we found quite a few. The one that impacted me the most was a tea towel. One particular lady said she could feel a presence in her house. She had asked many people to get rid of it, but no one could find what or where it was. I agreed to go. I had walked through every room of the house, but could not find anything. The only room left was the toilet. I thought I had better check there also, although I didn't expect to find anything in that room. As soon as I went in and closed the door, the hairs on the back of my neck literally stood up. It was one of the strongest manifestations I had ever felt. On the back of the toilet door was a tea towel that had been purchased in London, and featured old English ruins of churches and abbeys. Right in the centre, at the top, was satan's symbol, the goat's head. We took it out and burnt it.

Another time, we were called by a lady who had just moved into a flat and could feel a strong disturbance. We went there and Tim's attention was drawn to a wooden coat hanger hanging on a wall. It had two brass nail heads appearing as two eyes in the middle of the hanger. Tim took it down and turned it around. The entire back was filled with demonic carvings. We put it in an outside bin. The presence left the unit.

A third incident was again a single lady. She said she was unable to sleep in her bedroom. She was spending every night trying to sleep on the lounge. We checked the bedroom but could find nothing. As we came back into the lounge room there it was, a very large, carved, wooden war horse. Tim asked her if she wanted it shifted into the garage and she said yes. He went over and put a hand on it's neck. He was thrown across the room. He had to cover it with a heavy blanket in order to be able to move it out to the garage. We realised it wasn't that the woman couldn't sleep in the bedroom, but that the demon in the horse wanted her to sleep with it in the lounge room. We wanted her to burn the horse, but she had paid a lot of money for it. She sold it but warned the people who bought it that there was a demon in it. I don't think they believed her.

I write about this so you, the reader, will know demons can inhabit inanimate objects. But don't go overboard with this. We can come to a place of imagining demons in everything. It is a good place to develop a gift of discerning of spirits, by listening to the Holy Spirit in each case, and to be taught by Him.

There was another experience I had during these years with demonic presences. I went on a ladies camp to South Stradbroke Island. There were about fourteen of us. We went from Friday afternoon till Sunday afternoon. We had to go to the island by ferry boat. When the boatman dropped us on the island, we arranged for him to pick us up again mid Sunday afternoon. We had an uneventful weekend until lunchtime

Sunday. There was a young girl, about eighteen, with one of the women. She was not a member of the church, but someone the woman was trying to help. As we were starting to pack up the tents, this girl manifested. I mean really manifested. It was like the demoniac in the gospel of Matthew Chapter 17, verses 14 to 18. The thing took over her body. She was not conscious. It rolled her into tree trunks very fast. It rolled her into the fire. We managed to control it to the extent that we commanded it to be still, and it did. It lay on the ground. Every now and again, it would raise its {her} head and look at each one of us with pure hatred in its eyes. Seven of us stood in a line and prayed in tongues the whole time. The other seven had fled into the water in fear and swum out to a boat to escape.

Then the Vietnamese boatman returned. He just sat on the edge of his boat and watched in amazement. We were really wondering what we were going to do, as it had been going on for about two hours, when the ranger for the island came up to us. The demon immediately appeared to leave the young woman, and she began to behave normally. We were able to finish packing up and catch the boat back to the mainland. We then travelled back to the church for the evening service, a total trip of about one and a half hours. The young woman behaved normally all the way. She asked me if I would sit on the front steps of the church while she had a cigarette. I did, and we were talking when she shook all over. She looked at me and asked,

“Where am I?”

The demon had been in control the whole time.

I learnt a great lesson from this experience. I have never been deceived about true demonic possession. I do not go along with a lot of the “demons” Christians “cast” out of people. I believed they are mostly things to be overcome, i.e. spirit of anger, alcoholism, fear, the list is endless. The Lord taught me to become an overcomer even though a lot of the problems I had were things the church would have tried to “deliver” me from.

During the first six years of my marriage to Tim, I was able to put into practice skills the Lord had taught me for being a good help meet, as Eve was meant to be, Genesis Chapter 3, and as all wives are meant to be. More fullness of this in Chapter 5.

One day, we were driving to church with another lady in the back seat. While Tim was out of the car, she said to me:

“Tim has improved immensely as a person, he is no longer nervous and is happy. I know you have made this difference in his life.”

This meant a lot to me as I knew the lady didn't like me very much. I experienced this again years later when I had a marriage called off on me. Months later, a man who had known my ex fiancée for many, many years, said to me,

“I do not understand why the marriage was called off as I have never seen that man so happy.”

I write about this in Chapter 6.

While we were in the youth home, God began preparing us for Tim's vision of travelling into Western QLD. One day a friend who was a commercial traveller came past and told us about a 1963 International truck in Ipswich. It had been converted into a camper van by someone cutting down a fifteen foot six inch caravan, fitting a queen size bed over the roof of the truck, and the rest along the flat tray bed on the back. The price was six thousand five hundred dollars. We talked about it but we didn't have enough money so we did nothing about it. A couple of months later the same man came and told us the truck was still there and the price was now four thousand five hundred dollars. This we could afford. We went to Ipswich to inspect the vehicle. It was exactly what we wanted. We asked the proprietor of the car yard why he had dropped the price. He told us the truck was just over two ton, and you needed a truck/bus licence to drive it. Tim was a bus driver and had the licence. We bought it.

This was the beginning of the Lord preparing us to do as Tim believed He had asked him to do. It also showed me that it was His plan for us to go. We had many small trips away in this vehicle and it bought us so much joy for many years.

After that the Lord began adding to the things we needed for the trip. I say the Lord did it because most things came without us going looking for them. Have you experienced this from Him? He is so amazing. A friend of Renee's told us of a Suzuki Stockman at Tweed Heads that had a damaged gear box for only one thousand dollars. He told us the street it was in and said we would find it parked outside the owner's home. It was a long street and we did pass a Stockman utility in front of one house, but it appeared in very good condition for only that much money. Besides, we were not told it was a utility. So we went past it believing we would not get it for one thousand dollars. We couldn't find another one in the street so we returned and spoke to the young man who owned it. He said he had gone over a stump in the bush and wrecked the gear box and he could not afford to get it fixed. We bought it for the one thousand dollars knowing my stepfather, who was a mechanic, would help Tim fix it. We towed it home. When the gear box housing was pulled off, the gear box was not damaged at all. It was just the housing and we were able to fix it for a very small amount of money and very easily. So we had our four wheel drive to take us into the places the International would not go.

We had another provision with this little vehicle. My stepfather had a wire cage in his back yard that fitted the utility back perfectly, but our belongings would still be open to the weather. There was a Council dump across the road from the youth home we were managing. Council dumps in QLD recycle everything usable. You can buy from their “shop”. Tim had been over at the dump, just wandering, when he suddenly raced home to get a tape measure. He had found a piece of canvas, seemingly unused, with eyelets all around it, for only four dollars. He needed to see if it would

fit the wire cage. It did, perfectly. So we saved, or at least Jesus saved us, the hundreds of dollars it would have cost us to have one especially made. In fact, we probably would not have been able to have one made and would have just bought a blue plastic tarp. But our God provided well for us.

Does it sound as if we were quite short of money and everything was very basic? Yes, that is right. The camper van was very old and very simple yet very strong and well made. Being so high up from the ground, it made me feel very safe when we slept out, which was most of our trip. But we were simple people, satisfied with simple things. I believe our delight in everything He provided for us, and our heart attitude to be satisfied with simple things, blessed His heart. I can see the Father sitting up there watching when Tim found that piece of canvas, and feel how blessed his heart would have been by Tim's delight. Many of the Christian wives we mixed with at this time thought I was a fool to settle for so little, but the time we were away was one of the most precious times of my life. I believed God gave Tim a blessing in giving me to him as a wife. Many would not have gone with him but I loved it. It made it very hard for me to understand the way our lives eventually went.

The Lord providing for us so incredibly enabled me to make Tim's vision mine also.

There was still one more provision to come. We needed a trailer on which to tow the Suzuki. A man we knew who took alcoholics into his home and helped them, a very special man, had built himself a trailer. But he had measured wrongly and the trailer was too narrow for the vehicle he had made it for. So he was stuck with it. Surprise! Surprise! It fitted the Suzuki perfectly, and gave us a few extra feet of precious storage space as it was longer than the vehicle.

So we were ready to go, we just needed a date. Renee was twenty and had just started to date Zac, the man she would marry. Nathan and Lisa, and their toddler Ethan had to move from where they were living, so they and Renee rented a house together for six months. We were free to begin our journey.

We had planned to go to Tim's family in North QLD for a holiday then start our journey from there. But the Lord had another plan. We were in a fellowship meeting a few weeks before we were to leave. A lady we had never met before started to talk about Blackbutt. Did we know where it was? She said Jesus was telling her we were to start our trip from there. Blackbutt was a very tiny, not very impressive town on the mountain range behind the Sunshine Coast. We were both committed to being obedient by this time. We had been married about six and a half years, and were in one accord with God's plans and requirements. So we rearranged our holiday plans. We decided to go to a friend on the Sunshine Coast for a couple of weeks, and then over the range to Blackbutt. We would go to North QLD later in the trip. I should say here, very importantly, this was in August, 1993. Australia had been in drought for many years. We had provided ourselves with two ten gallon drums of drinking water, which had to supply all our water needs. The drought was to play a tiny part in

our journey. So we set off late in August, 1993. From the Gold Coast, through Brisbane, to the Sunshine Coast.

All of a sudden we realised we were not where we should have been. We were heading into the bay side suburbs of Brisbane. We had taken a wrong turn. We had only been on the road for an hour. What a laugh. Here we were setting off on the big adventure and we couldn't even get through Brisbane successfully. Does everyone know God can use anyone for His purposes?

I'm not going to take you through the whole trip bit by bit. I'm just going to tell you important things that happened during the fifteen weeks we travelled.

Tim and I had chosen not to have a television when we married, and so no video recorder. On our two weeks holiday in Noosaville, it was a treat for us to watch Christian teaching on videos. We had spent two weeks with the same friend a few years earlier, and watched a number of videos by Benny Hinn. He was a young man then, and his teaching impacted us. Yet, as we watched, the Lord said to me, "Pray for this man for he is going to go astray." On this second visit, we again sought videos by him to watch. The videos were about nine Gods in Heaven. It did not witness to our spirit.

I have never read or watched anything by him since, and I pray God will have him fulfil the incredible call he had on his life in the early days. Psalm 89, verses 30 to 34. Does everyone know that we are to always believe in a man who has an obvious call of God on his life. It is not for us to criticise anyone, but to lift them up in prayer and believe that the plans God has for all our lives, He will bring to fruition, as He is the author and finisher of our faith. Hebrews Chapter 12, verse 2. This is a right heart attitude and helps build the Bride and to make ourselves ready.

When we had finished our holiday, we went to Blackbutt as directed by the Lord. It was a very ugly place spiritually. As we walked around the town the first afternoon, we both felt the darkness. Tim vomited by the side of the road, he was so affected by it. We learnt many things as we talked to people there. About murders committed, but never brought to notice, because the whole town covered them up. About child incest and abuse, and domestic violence, which we were told was a huge percentage in comparison to the size of the town. Then one night [we stayed there for about ten days,] the demonic activity outside our van was intense. Neither of us slept all night. The demonic presence in the town was not happy about us being there. We also felt we had been there long enough so we left the next morning.

I looked back after our return to the Gold Coast, to the worst places we had been, Blackbutt, Blackwater, Blackall. Is there something in a name? Not significant you wouldn't think. Yet two of these towns really lived up to the Black in their names.

From Blackbutt, we went out through Kingaroy and spent the night at Wondai, another very small town. The Baptist pastor and his wife gave us a meal and let us park on the spare ground beside their house overnight. I had a dream that night, so

different to the nightmares we had experienced in Blackbutt. I saw the little Baptist church and it was surrounded by masses and masses of the most beautiful flowers, in every variety and colour imaginable, and from under the church flowed a beautiful stream of water. I had not as yet learned to be social or speak out, so I could not tell the reverend there what I saw. He was a very gentle, beautiful man and I believe God had a special plan for him and his church.

We then drove into Murgon. We met some beautiful Christians there, part Aboriginal, and a young, single man who was holding services in the no longer used gaol at Cherbourg, the Aboriginal community. Cherbourg is a dry [no alcohol allowed on the grounds or sold there] community. All the houses in the front part of the land were run down, damaged, painted bright colours, grass overgrown, and there were dogs everywhere. We also saw a few horses. The back of the land had numbers of brick homes, with lovely streets, gardens, parks, all well maintained and cared for, such as you would see in any prosperous town anywhere. They also had an emu farm at the back, a working, viable, job providing farm. Being a dry community did not stop anyone who wanted to drink from going into Murgon, which was sad for the children playing outside the hotels while their parents were inside.

For any Aboriginal reading this, please realise anything to do with alcohol and children for me is sad because of my childhood and my mother's alcoholism. It is not a criticism of Aboriginal parents but of all parents who subject their children to the damage of being raised with alcohol. I believe the white people who introduced alcohol to the Aboriginal people have a lot to answer for. Also one of the experiences I had as a child, because of my dark skin and huge dark brown eyes, was an Aboriginal family in Southport where I grew up, who would stop and look at me when they saw me in the main street. My mother would tease me and say they were wondering what an Aboriginal child was doing in a white family. It was another of her abuses that was meant to harm me. Instead I learnt how it must have felt to be Aboriginal in those days, in the 1950's. It has given me a very great love and respect for our indigenous people, and proud that one of their families thought I could have been one of them. It has also meant that I can relate to some Aboriginal women, something I really value. Because of never knowing who my mother's real father was, and because of her black curly hair, and dark skin and eyes, I have wondered if there may have been Aboriginal blood there, but I have not ever pursued it. I am happy to identify with them, even if it is not real. When my mother was in the nursing home for the last thirteen years of her life, the nurses wondered if she was Aboriginal.

The young pastor in Cherbourg was doing a tremendous work. They would take a bus around the community and pick people up for meetings. They did this a number of times every week. Because of his guitar playing and singing, Tim fitted in immediately. I was still too shy but I enjoyed every minute. We stayed ten days and kept contact for some years. The young pastor has since married and has two children. He still works with the Aboriginal people.

The next place we came to that impacted us was Springsure. We arrived there at the time of the Country Music Festival, quite a huge event for a small town. Tim was able to perform a couple of his songs on stage. But the main reason we were impacted was the AOG pastor and his wife. I don't remember how we met them, but they invited us to park our camper van on the spare ground beside their house. We stayed about five days. The pastor worked six days a week, hard work, like restumping old houses. On Friday night, he came home, had a shower, ate his meal, then we were down to the church for a prayer meeting. They sang a couple of choruses, his wife playing the keyboard, then straight into the strongest prayer I have ever heard. There were only eight people in the church, six of them were their family. Tim and I that weekend made ten. Yet, on the Sunday morning, he preached an excellent sermon on Jesus being Lord of our lives and exactly what that meant. It was real meat of the word. The zeal for God and His ways in these people was mind blowing. Simple living and real loving and caring. Nothing hidden. Just real Christian living as I had never found it before. We left knowing we had met some very special people.

A short way out of Springsure, we pulled into a picnic area to fill our water drums from a rain water tank. Tim was so overcome by the beauty of the people we had just left, he put his head on his hands, sitting at the wooden table, and sobbed and sobbed. All through our travels, we met pastor after pastor, caring for very small churches, yet preaching sermons that were incredibly good, and all living simple lives. The Lord said to me that He was showing me part of the seven thousand who had not bowed their knee to Baal. The other miracle for me was that I was embraced everywhere. They accepted me for who I was, a fellow believer and worshipper. There was no condemnation for my shyness, my inability to communicate well. I was just accepted. I had not found this in the churches in the cities, or on the Gold Coast.

As we travelled on, Tim decided we would do a music walk through the main streets of the towns ahead of us. As I could not carry my keyboard through the streets, I decided to make a banner based on 2nd Chronicles Chapter 7, verses 13 and 14. QLD was still in severe drought. Many times when we made a toilet stop in public parks, there were no heads on the taps so we could not wash our hands. It was becoming harder to find places to fill our water drums. At Rollingsstone, the ramp into the river from which to launch small boats was fifty foot [sixteen metres] in the air with just a small amount of water way below. Numbers of birds were gathered there, including pelicans. Kimba, our Blue Heeler, went down to the water to drink. She was sick for the next few days. We found the only water we had access to was garden taps in church grounds.

I made my banner of calico and coloured textas. Our walks were not very well received. Only in Clermont, north of Emerald, did we have a positive comment. This was our first march. In Roma, on a Saturday morning, once we'd reached the end of the street and turned around to go back down, there was not a person in sight. We still sang and played our way down the empty street. As we passed each shop, we saw people hiding inside, watching us go past. It was the first time we realised how a principality could affect the behaviour of a whole town.

While on the Gold Coast, I had been very harsh on a young man who was now living in Middlemount, a mining town in the centre of QLD. I felt I needed to go and see him to make peace. He had been living there for about three years. To go to Middlemount was a long detour. Normally we would have gone straight to Clermont from Emerald. Now we went from Emerald through Blackwater, to Dingo, turned right, travelled four hours, turned right again, then into Middlemount. We stayed overnight in Blackwater. Because of the drought there was no grass anywhere. Blackwater was covered in milk coffee coloured prickles. They were very large and very sharp if you walked on them. As I walked across the park to go to the toilet, my joggers were filled with them. When I pulled my shorts up again, somehow the prickles had transferred to my shorts. It was a very uncomfortable experience. I spent hours pulling out every little piece of prickle.

That night, sleeping beside the park, there was a knock at the camper van door. It was a policeman. He told us someone had rung him and complained that we were there. He asked us what we were doing. He was a Christian also and we had a great talk over a cup of tea. As he left, he told us to stay as long as we liked.

Lunchtime the next day we were in Dingo. There was a tiny railway station right in the middle of the town. Actually the town was the railway station, and a general store, post office, takeaway food store all in one. We asked the stationmaster if we could have some water from his rainwater tank. He gave us permission to fill one drum. We stowed the water on the trailer then decided to treat ourselves to a pie across the road for lunch. We had very little money and were living very frugally, so it really was a treat. We had just walked into the shop when it started to rain, not huge amounts, but enough to get wet if you stood in it. Everyone was astounded. They had not seen one drop of rain for years. It continued to rain for about an hour. Was God blessing the little town for the water it gave us? Would your God do this? Mine would. We didn't pray for things. Scripture says He knows our needs before we do, and provides. We experienced the fulfilment of this scripture. We were going in His name and He provided for us before we knew our need.

We made our right hand turn and travelled down to Middlemount. We had the evening meal with the young man that night, then went out to the edge of town to a park to sleep. Tim believed the Lord had given him a word from the book of Joel to give to every pastor, in every church, in every town we went into. Where we could not find a pastor, we would slip it under church doors. I had written out dozens of sheets of paper with the word written on it for him.

We set out the next day to give out our notices. At the first church, an AOG, the pastor was there watering his garden. He accepted our word and we had a talk with him. As we were leaving, he told us of another Pentecostal church in the town, and where to find the pastor. We found the house and knocked on the door. The pastor and his wife were both there with a lady from their congregation. They were discussing a meeting they had had the night before. They had invited a pastor up from Maroochydore to come and minister to them. They'd had a wonderful time and he was speaking to them again that night. The lady parishioner invited us to put our

van on her front lawn, have the evening meal with her family and come to the meeting. We weren't keen to come to the meeting and were considering whether the Lord wanted us to go on, when the pastor's wife said: "I don't think they should stay, I think they are meant to go on today". She said it three times while we were talking. I felt a movement in my spirit. I said we would love to stay and Tim agreed.

That night we found out the pastor from Maroochydore was bringing the laughing revival into Middlemount. Tim and I had first heard of this phenomenon in a Uniting Church in Brown's Plains in Brisbane. Some ladies from a CCC church in the area would come across to the Uniting church for the afternoon service because the teaching was so good. One morning, the laughing had hit their service. They brought it across to us that afternoon saying, "Here catch it" and holding out their hands. However the Uniting Church congregation, as a body, drew back from catching it. The Lord said to Tim and I to stay away from it. He didn't say there was anything wrong with it. He just said for us to stay away from it. I hope everyone realises He treats everyone of us as an unique individual, and His reasons for telling us to stay away were to do with the walk He had called us to. I have heard a number of people talk about their experience at this time and how blessed they were.

In this meeting at Middlemount, after the visiting pastor had taught and was asking people to come up and be prayed for to receive the laughter, Tim and I joined hands and prayed a simple prayer.

"Lord do not let anything that is not from your Holy Spirit come into this room tonight."

Only the lady at whose house we had stayed, and the male pastor of the Middlemount church, received the laughter. Instead the Lord brought in a spirit of repentance. People were on their knees weeping. It was a mighty move of God. The pastor who'd been brought in to bring the laughter to the congregation ended the evening by berating them, saying some people will never be ready to receive anything from God. He went away not realising that God had moved and the people had received what He had wanted them to receive. We must always be prepared for God to do what He wants, regardless of what we want. He is Sovereign and He always knows what each of us needs at any given time. This is still not saying there was anything wrong with the laughter.

It was the first time I had experienced how God can use those who choose to walk closely with Him. The pastor's wife who had tried to get us to leave and not come to the meeting, knew in her spirit who we were, that God could use us, so she didn't want us there. I am a listener, in the natural and in the spiritual. Watchman Nee calls it three fold listening, being able to hear what really is being said, being able to hear what isn't being said, and being able to hear what the Spirit is saying. I had heard that morning what she wasn't saying, i.e. I want you to leave because I know if you are here, our meeting will not achieve what we want it to achieve. I also heard what the Holy Spirit was saying, i.e. I want you here. For the first time I saw the power of two in agreement, Tim and I. One can put to flight one thousand but

two can put to flight ten thousand. It was many years before I would realise that we can carry the presence of God on us when our lives are fully submitted to Him.

This same power was on us again when we returned to the Gold Coast. We went to the wedding of a friend. The bride was late. While the church waited, the band played some Christian music. Some people started to roll around the floor and laugh. Tim and I again joined hands and prayed the same simple prayer. The laughing stopped and those who were on the floor rested in the Spirit until the bride arrived.

We left Middlemount the next morning and came to another mining town, Tieri. Let me explain mining towns and their difference to other towns. They are built specifically for men who work in the mines and their families and other support workers who are necessary for the running of the town. People who live there are not like the diversity of people who live in ordinary towns. They are all there for the same purpose, the functioning of the mine. They do not have to save up a deposit to buy a house of their choice. They live in the houses provided by the mines and owned by the mines. It can be a soul destroying way to live, especially for teenagers. Yet, in Tieri, we met more of the seven thousand. The Reverend and his wife were beautiful, loving and accepting. This man made such an impact on my life. I was still struggling with meeting people, and talking. I felt very uncomfortable most of the time. To carry a banner around the streets with Tim, singing and playing was very confronting. Yet I did it. The acceptance of this beautiful man was a major building block to me finding out who I was in God.

Numbers of people wanted us to stay there in Tieri, but we knew we still had a purpose in God to fulfil. One of the things we did in each town, besides putting Tim's word under church doors, and our music walk through the main streets, was to walk around the smaller streets praying. The Lord had us praying outside Masonic Lodges. We noticed that, in towns where the churches were closing down, the Masonic Lodges looked prosperous and well cared for. In towns where the churches were strong, the Lodges looked neglected. As we drove into each town, we would look for church spires, and make our way to each one to put our pieces of paper under the doors. In a number of places, the church was no longer a church, but a Masonic lodge.

The next town we came to was a tiny town called Capella, on the highway between Emerald and Clermont. We were now in the semi precious stones mining areas. It was very hot, too hot to travel during the day. We pulled up beside the only tree we could find. It was right beside the main highway. We spread a blanket under the tree and put out my camping chair and prepared to spend the greater part of the day. Tim went to sleep on the blanket. I was doing some needlework. When he woke up, he was lying on his back looking up into the branches of the tree.

“There's a little bird sitting in the tree,” he said. “Lord, I wonder what you could show us through that little bird?”

Suddenly the bird fell to the ground beside him. She couldn't fly. When we examined her, we found a hole on the right side of her head and another in her right wing. It seemed like a larger bird had caught her, and somehow she had managed to get away. There was no birdseed to be found in Capella so we fed her Milk Arrowroot biscuits, moistened with water. I thought as they were okay for babies, they may be okay for injured birds. I bought an eye dropper from the chemist and dropped cold water inside her beak. She put up with my ministrations to her without struggle. We got a tiny cage from the AOG pastor's wife. So Nee Nee joined our trip. She survived her ordeal with the larger bird and thrived travelling with us. She loved it. Even her tiny home was appreciated. When we got to Mossman on the far north coast, we left the camper van, and went up over Cape tribulation, across the Bloomfield River, up to Cooktown in the tiny Suzuki and a tent. There was just enough room between the front seats to put the bird cage. Every now and again, Nee Nee would reach through the bars of the cage and pull the hairs on Tim's arm. She became so comfortable with us in a very short time. Amazing for a wild bird. She would put her head down for a scratch. Nee Nee was a cockateil.

So what was the answer to Tim's question to God? What did He teach us from this little bird? We learnt that we should trust Him just as this little bird trusted us. She had been out in the world and found it a very hard place. She knew that she would have died if we hadn't picked her up. She knew the safe place she had come into and she appreciated it so much. She never wanted to venture out again. I can compare my story to hers. I would have died if Jesus hadn't found me. He has bought me into a safe place and I am so grateful to Him. I never want to leave His presence.

From Capella, we went to Clermont where we did our first street march and I carried the banner for the first time. It was there we had our only positive comment for the whole trip. One lady came up to us and said,

“I believe every word on that banner. Good on you for what you are doing.”

Her appreciation gave me the courage to do it again, over and over, despite no further encouragement.

What I didn't realise while it was happening was that the marches were not to witness to people. They were spiritual warfare over the towns we marched through. I believe they helped the drought to finally come to an end.

Our trip for the next few days was uneventful. Our truck was not four wheel drive, so we were advised not to go straight up to Charters Towers. It was a very rough road, mostly dirt. So we headed out to the coast, to Rockhampton. Then up the coast to Tim's family at Mission Beach. After a few days, it was up to Mossman, north of Cairns. A man we had known on the Gold Coast lived there and we had a blessed time visiting him. He introduced us to a beautiful man who was also a musician. The three of them played music together for days. When we went back to visit this man, many years later, the first thing he did was pick up his guitar and play one of Tim's

songs. Tim was also able to play his testimony songs in a pub in Port Douglas during this time. His songs were well received, even though they were against drinking.

We left our camper van in Mossman and travelled in the Suzuki, up over the Daintree river, a beautiful time. Over the Bloomfield, which we caught at low tide. I wonder if God organised that, as it is normally hard to catch. You usually have to wait. But we went straight across without any information about tide times. Then up to Cooktown, where we put up our tent, and stayed a few days. The first thing we had to do was to throw Kimba, our blue heeler, into the water. She had been in the back of the utility all the way and all we could see of her were her eyes. She was covered in red dust. Cooktown was uneventful.

We went from there out through the Lynd Junction, back to Mossman to pick up the camper van, through Mount Morgan to the Atherton Tablelands, where we stayed a few days in Kuranda, out through Mount Garnett at the back of the tablelands, and down the back road to Charters Towers. There was no special work to do in any of these areas. It seemed we were only used in the outback towns. In the area between Mount Garnett and Charters Towers, we saw the ravages of the drought. It hadn't broken yet despite the rain in Dingo. There were starving and dying cattle everywhere.

In Charters Towers, we introduced ourselves to the managers of a drug and alcohol rehabilitation live in centre. It was doing incredible work. We both gave our testimonies to the men there, Tim as an eleven year sober alcoholic and me from the side of growing up with an alcoholic mother. They were going to open another rehab in the town, and offered us the job of live in managers. But we both knew it was not God's plan for our lives, tempting as the work would have been. In fact, Charters Towers was the place where "it" almost became too much for me. I contemplated getting on a bus and going home. What was "it"? I think missing my family must have been a part of it, but also the really frugal lifestyle we were living, the heat, [it was now into October and, in that part of Australia, getting quite hot] even though in Emerald He gave us a scripture saying that the man whose feet are grounded in Him need not fear the heat. Isaiah 49, verse 10. Who knows that there is a scripture for everything? He kept His word and I travelled across the gulf and down through Longreach without major stress. Mostly though, it was the ants. Does that sound ridiculous? Believe me, ants are a huge problem in Western QLD. It was impossible to sit outside on a chair, and have your feet on the ground. Kimba, our blue heeler, could not walk or lie on the ground without getting bitten. Thankfully we had bought a mini trampoline with us as her bed. She was safe from them on it. But the ants made living very restrictive. The camper van was small, and it was hotter inside than outside. So we needed to be outside for a lot of the day. The ants made this difficult. I need to say here, the travelling, being in each other's company twenty four hours a day, under very simple conditions, no bath or shower, just a bucket, the drought, dry, prickles or dirt, very little grass, ants, very restricted budget, camping out which I sometimes found a bit frightening, were enough to test the best relationship. Yet Tim and I got on so well during this time. It made events that happened after we arrived home very hard to understand.

So, in Charters Towers, I nearly went home. When we did get back to the Gold Coast, the Reverend of the church we were in said he had felt I was in crisis at this time and he got everyone praying. There is power in prayer, especially when we ask for a brother or sister. I, of course, got over it and kept travelling.

Going across the Flinders highway, all the little towns, Hughenden, Julia Creek, across to Cloncurry, was very uneventful, in that we did what we had been doing in each town, but did not meet anyone special or have any special experiences. We stopped in Cloncurry for a few days, because we had met a beautiful, older, Christian Aboriginal lady in Cherbourg, and she had invited us to come visit and meet her family when we got to Cloncurry. We'd also decided to go into a caravan park for the first time. We found the aboriginal lady and met her husband of whom she had spoken so fondly, and all her family. We had a wonderful time of fellowship.

Back in the caravan park that night, I began to experience unrest in my spirit. We were parked next door to a contingent of workers from a construction firm. They were building in the area. They had a number of large caravans, and their wives and children were with them. They had a social circle right beside our van, where they sat together and drank after work. They were very noisy. I asked Tim if I could bring Kimba into the van to sleep for the night. She normally slept in the front of the truck. He said no. I tried to sleep, but the unrest in my spirit became so strong, I got up, took my pillow and went into the front of the truck to sleep with Kimba. I didn't know what the unrest was, I just knew I had to be with her. The men started to talk loudly saying,

“I wonder what it would be like to f--- a blue heeler? How about we go and see?”

I don't think they knew I was there with her. The door out of our caravan was on the opposite side to where they were sitting. Tim heard the noise and what they were saying, found I was missing, and came out to get us. He yelled at me,

“What are you doing, you stupid woman? Get the dog in the truck.”

I want to talk about this issue because it has a number of elements this book is about. Firstly, Tim and I had always been in unity spiritually. This was the first time he had not listened to me when I had something from God in our seven years together. So, something unusual was going on. I believe his Lie was triggered. I didn't know anything about how the Original Lie worked in those days. But now I know it manipulates our behaviour. We don't know or understand what is happening, we just react. I don't know what Tim's Lie is. Only each person can fully know their Lie. Perhaps his Lie was triggered by the men, their drinking, I don't know what. There is no condemnation when we are reacting because of the Lie. However, he did react in accordance with Genesis 3 verse 1 to 14. He did not take responsibility for his own behaviour. He did as Adam did and blamed me, and dumped on me {stupid woman}. He also did not take the role of wise spiritual authority and let Kimba sleep in the van in the beginning. This incident, I believe, led to his decision, when it was

time to go on, instead of going across to Mount Isa and then to Halls Creek in Western Australia, to turn towards home through Winton and Longreach. I did not have enough wisdom and maturity in those days to say we should go on as planned. I now believe, had we gone on to Western Australia, our relationship with God and our trust in Him and His provision, would have grown incredibly. All the things that happened when we returned to the Gold Coast may not have taken place as they did. But the decision was made. God did show me later that disobedience, [Tim knew God wanted us travelling,] opens us up to consequences. We still had money, so there was no reason to turn home.

We left for Winton very early the next morning, trying to not travel in the heat of the day. But we defeated our purpose as there were literally hundreds, if not thousands of kangaroos on the road, and we had to go slowly to avoid hitting them. Tim had to kill one huge kangaroo left injured on the side of the road with a broken leg and who would have died of thirst, a horrible death.

On that day also, we came across two men on the side of the road, with the bonnet of their utility in the air. Tim stopped to see if they needed help, even though I asked him not to. For the second time he did not trust my discernment. While he was talking to one of the men, the other man came around to the passenger side of our truck. He was looking into our large side mirrors as he came. He saw our blue heeler sitting next to the door, and turned around and went back. I believe, if not for Kimba sitting there, he would have attacked me, and the other man would have attacked Tim. But the blue heeler was too much to take on. Little did they realise that she only had three legs and would have been easier to overcome than a normal bluey. Also that she was the most placid blue heeler ever. Tim decided we couldn't help them and we drove on.

A funny story goes with this. Our international truck had a long front bench seat, and the three of us, Tim, Kimba and I, fitted along it with plenty of room to spare. But if I tried to sit next to the passenger window, Kimba would not sit in the middle. She would lean on me so heavily, I would let her have the window seat all the way. Her little trick could have saved our lives that day. My vet used to say about Kimba that she was the most beautiful natured cattle dog he had ever met, and, even as she got older and could be expected to get grumpy, she just got nicer and nicer.

We travelled without incident, through Winton and down to Longreach. When we arrived there, it was getting very hot, late November. We again pulled into a caravan park for the night. Tim was sleeping but it was too hot in the van for me, so I was sitting outside enjoying the night sky and sounds. A snake, I believe it was a brown snake, came slithering over the ground. I didn't move a muscle. It went right over my bare feet and into the swimming pool. The owner of the caravan park told us the next morning, the brown snakes quite often did this at night.

Our next call was Barcaldine, a beautiful little town, then on to Blackall for the night. We parked at a truck stop in the middle of town. About 2am, noise erupted all

around us, bottles smashing, women screaming. It was so bad and lasted so long, we got into the front of the truck, still in our pyjamas, and left. We went to the police station to report it, but there was a sign on the door saying no police on duty all weekend. We then went to a rest area just outside town to spend the remainder of the night. A short time later, there was a knock on the door and Tim got up to answer it. He yelled

“Start praying.”

He grabbed each side of the doorway as if something was trying to pull him out of the caravan. He struggled for a minute, all the time calling on the name of Jesus. Then he stumbled back and he was free. He told me there had been two female demons, all dressed up, trying to pull him out of the caravan.

It wasn't the first time Tim had been attacked by demons. Yes, Tim could see demonic presences. One time on the Gold Coast, he had prayed for a man with a spirit of lust, after the Sunday evening service. It left the man but followed Tim home. About three am, I was woken up by Tim yelling,

“Get out of here in the name of Jesus.”

The demon was on top of him in the bed, making sexual movements. Tim knew it was a male and dressed in a pin stripe suit. To those of you who are inclined not to believe this, I can only say, there are many things going on around us, in the spiritual realm, both angelic and demonic, that we are unaware of. Witness Elisha asking God to open his servant's spiritual eyes so he could see the angelic army around them. 2 Kings Chapter 6, verse 17. Tim had a gift to see them.. I was in the bed also but I neither saw nor felt it. But I knew it was real. I would love to see an angel, but God hasn't given me this blessing. I have to be content with hearing His voice clearly, and I am.

The next morning was Sunday. We went back into Blackall to a Uniting Church service. There we were told we had come into town on the night of the mines Christmas party. That is why there were no police on duty. The mine workers are given free reign and it is a night all the towns people stay indoors.

From Blackall, we went onto Charleville. It was there that the drought finally broke and it started to rain, quite heavily for some days. Our path was then through Mitchell, Chinchilla, Roma, Dalby. Chinchilla was beautiful and we had quite a lot of fellowship with Christians there. Most of the towns were beautiful but very different. We went to one tiny town and the darkness we could feel there caused us to move on very quickly. Then, just twenty kilometres further, we stopped in Yuletide, so pleasant and so friendly. We became very aware of principalities over towns and the effect they can have on the people living there. I have already written about Roma and the mocking spirit. The amazing revelation I had from Roma was that a principality over a town drew people with like minds into it. Everyone in Roma that

Saturday morning behaved the same. Please note, God did not tell us to try to fight the principalities. He just gave us information.

We were continuing to put our sheets of paper under church doors, to pray outside Masonic Lodges, to meet Christians wherever the Lord led us to them, and to play music and walk through the main streets of towns. We met lovely people and most towns were friendly and with beautiful spirits to them.

It was again Sunday morning when we came into Dalby. We found a Church and went in to worship. There was a strong word given that morning, by an older man in the congregation, about repentance. The word witnessed with our spirits, but the pastor came against it. It was not a mainline church.

From Dalby, we went home, arriving back about the tenth of December. The Lord had given me a word on the last day travelling, that one of the two pastors of the mainline church we had been in for years, would be gone when we returned. This was true and the Church had changed, in just the fifteen weeks we were away. He gave me another word about a week after our return, and told me He was going to remove the candlestick from this Church. It was a Church that had been given many words over the years, about loving. I had given a word a few years before saying that the fire of revival was in the church but, if it did not find enough fuel to keep it burning, then the fire would go out. And the fuel needed was love. Again, an “if” and a “then.” It works in prophesy also. I was told this exact word was given for a second time while we were away. The pastor had taught for months about loving the unlovely. He had been one of the few in my whole Christian walk who had valued me. But the church didn't learn to love. It no longer exists. The Lord did remove its candlestick.

We were in this church one Sunday night, when a true prophet/intercessor came to give a word. His walk was to spend time with God, then go and give words to Churches as the Lord sent him. The pastor knew that when this man came to a service, it was because he had a word to give, so he called him up the front. The man was sitting in the back row and, as he walked up to the front, his body began to twist and become misshapen. Also his face began to contort. By the time he reached the front, he looked exactly as if he was suffering from cerebral palsy. Two men came to help him to stand, and to be able to speak into the microphone so he could give his message. His words were very distorted, but we could hear what they were.

“My Church is handicapped. The words from the head, Jesus, are not getting through to the body.”

Of course, this is what happens in cerebral palsy. The messages from a person's brain do not get through to the rest of their body. He carried a visible prophesy in his body for all the Church to see.

Some of the most important words in the bible are,

*“He who has an ear to hear,
let him hear what the Spirit is saying to the Churches.”*

Revelation Chapter 2, verses 7, 11, 17, 29, Chapter 3, verses 6, 13, 22.

During the years I was in this church, God gave me an intercessory burden for Australia as a nation. I need to explain here, I am not an intercessor in the sense that someone asks me to pray for someone or something and I intercede for that request. I am God's intercessor, as the man who came into the church and manifested the cerebral palsy in his body, as Hosea was God's intercessor. My gift started when I was first walking with the Lord, and I was still very withdrawn. No one would have asked me to pray for anything. I was still invisible to almost every one, and would be for many years to come. But God began to ask me to pray for people and things that were on His heart. My gift started small, just faces of people I knew to pray for, or words to pray. Mostly I never knew what the outcome was.

When I was working for Centrelink in Southport, God asked me to pray for a young man and his wife, a man I was working with but did not know well, to have a baby. I discretely asked another staff member if the man and his wife had any children. She told me they had been married for ten years and had been trying to have a baby for many of these years. So I started to pray for the Lord's request. Twelve months later, they had a baby girl. They never knew I prayed. I didn't tell anyone what God was asking me to do.

You see, I knew I would not be alive if He hadn't found me and set me free. So I owed my whole life to Him.. I gave Him permission to do with it as he willed. This wasn't an instantaneous giving fully. It was a growing deeper relationship year by year. As He healed me and set me more free, I came to know Him better and to commit to Him more deeply. The first full intercessory burden for the nation of Australia took at least ten years of walking with Him more fully, before He told me it was accomplished.

One of the astounding revelations I have had over the years is that all Christians didn't hear from Him as I did. Because it took more than twenty years for me to communicate, I didn't talk about what was happening between me and my Heavenly Father, so I thought others heard as I did. I thought my experiences were normal. I was to find out otherwise.

My burden for Australia started at a Church camp on Mount Tamborine in about 1989. We were having a prayer meeting when someone produced an Australian flag. A number of people gathered around it to pray, myself being one of them. I don't know how long I sat there. I seemed to go into a weeping trance. When I came out of it, everyone else was having lunch, and I was still sitting on the floor holding the flag, still weeping. It was the first time the Lord had given me an intercessory burden to pray for, and it lasted until 2001.

Over the years, the Lord has spoken to me about our beginnings as a nation. About boat loads containing a few English army officers and their wives, numbers of soldiers, and many male convicts, landing on the shores of Sydney Cove, having survived months at sea, coming from a land cool and green, fertile soil, a soft land of great beauty. They could not have imagined how different Australia was, compared to what they had known all their lives. What they found here was a hard dry land, of poorer soil, different vegetation, with a red desert heart, a land of hot temperatures, not suited to their style of dress or their customs. The Lord showed me that what the early settlers went through set up principalities over our nation, principalities that are still over us today, even though we have developed into a strong and mighty land.

I was asked to explain what a principality is. When God threw Satan out of heaven he took one third of the angels with him. As I read scripture, there were three types of angels in heaven; arch angels, seraphims, and cherubims. Ephesians Chapter 6, Verse 12, tells us there are four types of demons; principalities, powers, rulers of darkness, spiritual hosts of wickedness. Satan is called the prince of power of the air. I may be wrong about this, it is just my understanding, but I believe each demon has a different job to do, just as each angel has a different work for God. Daniel Chapter 10, verses 13 and 14 tells the story of the Prince of Persia holding up a reply for Daniel from God. As he was a spiritual being, I believe he was a principality. God has shown me that we allow a principality to be set up when we act against His law of love. In the settling of Australia, we went against God's Law of Love many times, very disastrously.

The land they struggled to conquer was a tough land, one that didn't allow for gentleness. It was a land that was to be taken by the sweat of their brows, and the blisters on their hands. A land of inequality. Convicts labouring hard, away from loved ones for a crime, in a lot of cases, carried out in sheer desperation. For stealing a loaf of bread to ease the hunger and feed their families, they were exiled against their will, rejected by the very society that caused their desperation.

Soldiers, again quite possibly against their will, with every vestige of life as they had known it taken away, and replaced with an uncertain future, no women, just the company of men. This is why "mateship" is so important today. It was born in Australia's formative years, where you had to trust your mates. You were all in it together, and needed each other for your very survival. Mateship has been a principality over Australian men for 200 years. It is a principality in that it robs family life and relationship between husband and wife, and between father and children. It is finally beginning to be broken down now, in this generation. But I am speaking about the generations in Australia from the first fleet to about 2001.

Then the first boatload of women convicts arrived, two years into Sydney colony's beginnings. There was rape, and children born of these rapes. Children whom neither their fathers nor even their mothers wanted them. This again set up principalities between the men, and the women and children of our nation. It set up the principality of what the Lord calls the hard hearts of the Australian men towards women and children. This hard heart has been in control of Australian men for many

generations. It is the major principality over Australia. It was compounded by all the circumstances with which the men in our foundation had to deal. It was this principality the Lord had me praying about for many years and its fulfilment is in Chapter six.

The Lord explained to me how principalities were set up over our nation by the atrocities that happened in the early settlement. How the rape of the first women convicts set up hard hearts from the men to their womenfolk. How the neglect of the children born from these rapes set up a principality of neglect of children in our nation, and lack of value for children.

A different set of problems were experienced by the officers and their wives trying to recreate a life they had left behind. One can only imagine how they felt. Their fears, their dismay, even their hopelessness at times.

It wasn't just the convicts, the ordinary soldiers suffered greatly also. Harsh treatment by officers, and hard living conditions.

The generations since the first fleet have not known about principalities or how they affect behaviour of all living under them. Australia has had a different set of principalities set up over it than other nations. Our beginnings were unique. Even though many nations have gone through many horrific circumstances, ours here were very different. We have not known what was happening to us, which is satan's plan. We have just lived under them and done the best we could. I believe it is the uniqueness of our beginnings that have made us the special people we are today. If we honestly look back over the years from the first fleet to 2001, it is easy to see how these principalities have controlled our relationships.

The Lord took Tim and I to Port Macquarie once, and we were able to go inside the large Anglican manse there, and the church itself. These are unique. I thank and praise God that they have been left in their original condition so future generations could experience what it was like to live in the early days. The church has a few pews in the front, but the main body is made up of boxes containing the required number of seats for a family, with walls high enough so no one could see who was sitting inside. At the back was a large standing area. Families would come in first and be seated in their boxes, before the convicts came in to stand at the back. The boxes were to stop the convicts from being able to see the families. They were hidden from sight. After the service, the convicts were marched out and away before the families left their boxes. One can only imagine the feelings these men experienced.

The church itself was built of hand made bricks and the mortar was crushed sea shells. The manse, when we went inside, had a trapdoor in the dining room floor. We went down the ladder to find the kitchen set up in the clay, twelve or fifteen feet below. There were niches cut into the clay where the convicts slept. Can you imagine what it would have been like to live in those conditions? I'm guessing they were allowed up for church on Sundays, and maybe at other times during the week.

But they lived and slept most of the time below ground, no fresh air, no sunlight, smoke from the wood burning stoves being constantly breathed in. Incredible heat.

We also went to the cemetery in Port Macquarie. It is a very well preserved place, a monument to the early settlers, the gravestones readable, and shocking. Child after child dying early, and almost no one living a long life. One gravestone I have never forgotten. It showed eight children's deaths, the first six named, the last two just written in as "unnamed". One can only imagine the hopelessness of the mother and father who buried these children.

The other place the Lord took us to that showed early life in Australia was Cooktown. There is a convent there that has been turned into a museum. Upstairs where the nuns slept, there are narrow slits in the brickwork to let the breeze in, no windows. There are photographs of the nuns in their heavy dark habits, full length, heads covered, in Cooktown in the extreme heat. Most of the nuns were young Irish girls. The convent was run as a boarding school for graziers daughters. The records showed the nuns didn't live very long, dying in their early twenties. Anyone who has been to Cooktown in the summer would know why.

Then there were the free settlers who came in the late 1800's, to be given a free four acres of land to farm, and to populate this new nation. They came to many areas of Australia, but I'd like to tell you of my ancestors. Both sides of my parent's grandparents came from Ireland as free settlers to the Darling Downs in Queensland. The grandfather on my mother's side had done some work for a man but had not been paid for it. He went to see the man to ask for his pay. The man refused to give it to him and, instead, pushed him down the stairs. As a result, my ancestor's shoulder was broken. There were no doctors in Toowoomba at this time, nor any in Australia who could operate on the injured shoulder. He was put on a ship to London to have the operation there. When he finally got medical help, they opened him up and found gangrene. He died on the operating table. His family sent my great grandmother a treadle sewing machine with the message,

“Support yourself”

This she did, herself and her six children. I am blown away by the courage she had.

The role of an intercessor is to be able to hear and feel God's heart in the situation, so as to be able to pray effectively. If you have never done so before, let yourself go into these early Australian beginnings and feel God's heart for the people of our nation. I believe we have a very special place in His heart because of the men and women who fought and suffered to lay down our foundations. The Lord showed me that, as the sins of the fathers go on to the fourth and fifth generations, so the sins of our beginnings would go on for generations, affecting everyone born here. Then He ended my intercession for Australia in the following way.

It was Easter 2001. I was working in a crisis accommodation on the Gold Coast. It was Easter Monday, no phones ringing, no one waiting to talk, no crisis to handle, a rare experience in our working day. I was sitting having a cup of tea. I glanced up at a pamphlet on the notice board which I had been meaning to read for weeks but hadn't had time. It was about two trips to Uluru, Ayers Rock as it is also known. One trip was on then, at Easter, and the second one was at Pentecost, seven weeks away. I knew God wanted me on that trip. I immediately rang and made a booking. There was to be a bus going from Brisbane. This did not eventuate as the numbers were too few. In fact, only four of us were to go from Queensland. I was later to realise this was in God's plan for the intercession. He needed me to go on the bus from Sydney. The tour arranged for us to join a bus picking up twenty three indigenous teenagers from a high school in the western suburbs of Sydney. There were seven other Christians from NSW and two teachers on the bus as well. Because the bus contained the indigenous young people, we went to places which focused on what was done to the Aboriginal people in the early days of Australia. We went to Broken Hill, Cobar, Port Augusta, spent a night underground at Coober Pedy, up to Alice Springs and King's canyon. Then back to Uluru where we spent three days, and, of course, we were there on Pentecost Sunday. During the trip, we visited some museums and other places where we learnt more about the inhumane treatment of the Aboriginal people in early Australia.

A few hundred Christian people came from all over Australia to be there for the Pentecost weekend. On the Saturday night, the young people from our bus did a water ceremony with everyone on the camp. It was very moving. We then had a prayer meeting, 12am till dawn, on the top of a hill behind Uluru. Jesus had told me Australia, as a nation, was under the generational sin spiritual law. As an ancestor sinning could put his family under a curse to the fourth and fifth generations, so the sin of the founding fathers of our nation had brought the generations of Australians under the curse. God had not been able to work while ever this was in place. It was during this prayer meeting the Lord told me that the curse over the generations of Australians was over. He could now work and changes would follow.

Kevin Rudd and the “sorry” to the Aboriginals was a very important one of these changes, but the most important change is the spiritual awakening of Australia. We have waited for it to happen for a long time, and the door is now open for the Lord to bring revival to our nation.

When Tim and I returned to the Gold Coast, we rented a yucky, cheap house for six months because we believed we would be going back to a town called Murgon, near the Aboriginal community of Cherbourg. We both felt very strongly the call of God to the Aboriginal people. We were going to rent a shop with a small living quarters behind, support ourselves in an opportunity shop, and continue the music ministry at the gaol with the young pastor we had met there. We had sponsorship from an organisation that set up opportunity shops as a way for people to support themselves while doing ministry.

One night, a few weeks after our return, Tim woke me in the early hours of the morning and asked me to ring an ambulance. He said he was having a queer turn and felt he was going to die. As we waited for the ambulance to come, he said to me,

“Thanks very much, you have been a good wife, but I am going home to the Father.”

His exact words. They were not negative or bad. Yet I felt, in the spiritual, as if I had been hit really hard in the stomach with a cricket bat. I didn't understand what had happened to me. But the consequences were that I was not able to love Tim any more. I am talking about loving him with God's love, to the best of my ability. Or be the good wife I had been for six years. The next five years were not good years. Spiritually, the gap between us grew wider and wider. Our music ministry suffered. I literally could not play with him any more. I could not go to church with him, as to see him raising his hands and worshipping God, brought up incredible anger in me. My spirit was in constant turmoil. We got to the condition of taking separate vehicles to church as inevitably, I would not be able to stay beside him, and would walk out and go home.

Then, one Sunday, I knew I had to have an answer from God. I told Tim I was staying home to seek God as to what was happening between us. I took my bible and a chair out into the backyard of our home, and sat under the beautiful Pepperina tree. I heard the Lord say very clearly,

“There has been sexual immorality in your marriage.”

I knew it wasn't me. When Tim came home from church, I told him what the Lord had said to me.

His answer was, “Yes, it was me.”

He then told me who it was with and exactly what had happened. It was while we were in the Youth Home. There was no responsibility for the state our marriage had come to, no repentance. I did not have any unforgiveness towards him. I never even mentioned it to him again. I went back to my walk with God and loving as best I could. Then one night we were having intimate relations when he told me I was putting on weight. I weighed sixty kilos. I did not handle this and left our bedroom. After three months of him just expecting me to get over it, Tim left our marriage. God had given him a dream that showed him very clearly that he was to blame. The dream even told him who to go to for help. We had both talked to the man who was in the dream, and he agreed that was what the dream was saying. Tim didn't listen. He took it as a word that the marriage would be healed miraculously within a week or he was to leave. I was going to my six year old grandson's birthday on the Sunday afternoon. Tim asked if I minded if he did not go. I said I didn't mind. I was away for about four hours. When I returned, Tim and everything he owned was gone. He had it all planned. No communication, no effort to talk it out, no taking responsibility for what he had done.

I was shattered. I was still suffering two years later. I was having panic attacks again, as I had had in the years when I was so ill. I was also having suicidal thoughts and making plans. I still didn't understand what had happened. Then one day in a supermarket, I met a man who was a pastor, a friend of Tim's and mine. He was a different kind of pastor, one who really understood the spiritual world, one I knew I could trust. I told him the story of the night Tim thought he was dying. This man explained to me that Tim had divorced me in the spiritual by his words. He had taken no responsibility for me as his wife. This is what I had felt in the spiritual that night. This was why I had suffered so much in the years after. We were no longer one flesh. We had been put together by God, and we had a spiritual marriage. We were really two who could have put to flight ten thousand and, with Jesus, been a three cord strand not easily broken. The Lord then showed me that Tim's decision to come home from Cloncurry was disobedience, a major spiritual problem. See King David and Bathsheba. 2nd Samuel, Chapter 11, verse 1.

David's first sin that led to all the rest was disobedience, in being home when it was the time for all the Kings to be at war. His men were at war but he wasn't with them, leading them. God wanted Tim to go on. He had given us everything for the trip, and provided amazingly, so Tim's faith was built up to keep going, to trust in the provision he had been given, and in the God who had provided it all. But he failed to have a heart ready to trust his God. Why do I say Tim failed to trust? I was there too. But he was the authority person before God.

When Tim left me, he left the church we had been going to as well. But right from the first morning I went on my own, the whole church stopped talking to me, except for the pastor's wife and one other lady. I really mean they didn't even say hello to me. I was completely ignored. I stayed there for six months, but as it didn't improve, I finally left.

Then one night I was taking a bus load of clients from the crisis accommodation to a seminar on childhood sexual abuse. As I came in the door, a woman from the old church, as soon as she saw me, yelled across the room,

“Why aren't you with your husband?”

She had never come to me to ask me how I was or what the problem really was; In fact no-one ever came and asked me how I was. She just yelled it out in front of everyone. We had been very close for a long time, but I had not seen her since we had gone to the new church. I walked across the room to talk to her, but she refused to say any more.

The Lord eventually revealed to me that Tim had gone around to every one and criticised me about many things. I didn't do this to him. No one knew he had committed sexual immorality, or any other detail of our married life. This is about not revealing another's nakedness before others. More about this in Chapter five, The Building of the Bride. Whenever I saw this lady in the future, her husband would speak to me and give me a hug. She never ever did, even though she was with him.

Many others had stopped speaking to me also, besides those in the church. One husband dragged his wife away when he saw me approaching them in the shopping centre, so she could not speak to me. She looked across at me and shrugged. I gave her a wave to say I understood.

Why have I gone into this so fully? Because this is how words can damage. Because this is not how we are to treat each other. I had so much stuff to walk through after this marriage broke up. But I have learnt over the years that I cannot blame the people involved. It has all been about me making myself ready as the Bride, and about Him giving me instances to share about in this book. It does not make what they did right. But I learnt incredible insights into how God wants us to walk, and to make sure I did my best to always love, by not allowing feelings of resentment to develop and by praying, in a positive loving manner, for the people who hurt me. I have since learnt that Tim's Lie was responsible so I could not hold any thing against him either, but it is each person's responsibility to walk by the principles in the next chapter, to remove the log from their own eye, instead of judging and criticising. The Lord's way is for us to believe in each other. Matthew Chapter 7, verses 3 to 5.

There was a spiritual learning Tim and I shared during our time together. When I was first saved in Canberra, long before I met Tim, I was invited to the Catholic church in Belconnon, to hear a priest called Father Luke, from Edgecliffe in Sydney, speak. Father Luke had a healing gift that was well known in the 1970's. The woman next door to us was having an operation the next morning, and she wanted to go and have prayer from him. Another friend and I went with her. The church was crowded, with a few hundred people in attendance. After the message, Father Luke commenced to pray for people. The other lady and I had decided not to go for prayer, as Father Luke was eighty three at this time, and neither of us had any specific prayer needs. He prayed for everyone in the room, and my neighbour was the last one waiting. It was now about one thirty in the morning.

He prayed for her, then turned to myself and the other lady. I said I had not come for prayer, but he insisted. He prayed in tongues and interpreted. The word he gave me was,

“You are like the disciple John, with his head leaning on the chest of Jesus. He is going to tell you things he will not tell anyone else.”

He then sent me away to receive a message from Jesus, and return the next night and tell him what it was. I did get a message, but I was not free enough to tell him the next night. What I received was amazing, and the Lord showed me a scripture to confirm it. The word Father Luke gave me has been fulfilled incredibly all my life. It was a true word from God. He has told me things He has not necessarily told others.

But as I went on with my Christian walk, and found many people in many churches giving many words, personal prophesy, I began to see that most of the words did not come true.

Tim and I had three friends marry during the time surrounding our marriage. At each of the weddings, every one was given incredible words about how God would use them in their new spiritual union. Tim and I did not get one word. But twelve months later, not one of those three marriages was still together. In fact they all lasted only a very short time. Tim and I were married for eleven years, and did amazing things for God in that time.

We were in a church one Sunday night, where Tim's son was in a Christian play. We were sitting in the second row, holding hands. The Lord spoke to me, and said.

“This pastor is going to try to pray for you tonight. Do not let him.”

I told Tim and he agreed. The pastor called every call he could think of to get us to come up for prayer. His last one was,

“I want everyone here who is married or intending to marry to come up right now for a blessing.”

We did not go up.

I do not say this pastor was going to pray anything wrong. But I believe we have to be careful about seeking or giving personal prophesy. It takes us away from learning the trust we need to have in God, to enable us to come into deep intimacy with Him. We need to know He holds our future in His hands, and will reveal it to us at the appointed time; yes, through a word from His chosen one or, even better, straight from Him to us. For us it was also a confirmation of walking a walk of only doing what the Father told us to do, as Jesus did.

I talk about another word I received from an anointed servant some years later, which was a true word. I have been given numbers of words over the years and, yes, a few were correct and encouraging. However the one from Father Luke and the one many years later that I talk about further on, were the only words that God used to point me in the direction He wanted me to go.

In a few places in this book you will read that Tim and I, and afterwards, just me, have been led in a different way to the way the church seemed to be going at the time. This is how the Lord explained it to me.

At the end of each gospel, there is a word from Jesus to the ones He was talking to at the time. In Matthew, spoken to the eleven disciples, it is,

“All authority has been given to me in Heaven and on earth. Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptising them in the name of the Father, and of the

Son, and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you, and, lo, I am with you always, even to the ends of the age.”

Chapter 28, verses 17 to 20.

The command here is to make disciples, teaching them everything He has taught us. It is a command to those He has chosen to walk closely to Him.

At the end of Mark, spoken to the eleven, it is,

“Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature. He who believes and is baptised will be saved, but he who does not believe will be condemned. And these signs will follow those who believe. In my name they will cast out demons; they will speak in new tongues; they will take up serpents; and if they drink anything deadly, it will by no means hurt them; they will lay hands on the sick and they will recover.”

Chapter 16 verses 15 to 18.

This is a command to believers.

In the end of Luke, spoken to the eleven and all who were with them, it is,

“Thus it is written, and thus it was necessary for the Christ to suffer and to rise from the dead the third day, and that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in His name to all nations, beginning at Jerusalem. And you are the witnesses of these things. Behold, I send the Promise of my Father upon you; but tarry in the city of Jerusalem until you are endued with power from on high.”

Chapter 28, verses 46 to 49.

These are called witnesses, no longer commanded to do, but to be.

Then in the end of John's gospel it is totally different, words just between Peter and His Lord. But they tie the other three commands together.

“If I will that he [John] remain till I come, what is that to you? YOU FOLLOW ME.”

Chapter 21, verse 22.

What He showed me through this is that the differences are there for a purpose. It is not a mistake. In the church there are three different followers; disciples, believers, and witnesses. It doesn't mean one denomination is believers, another witnesses, and yet another disciples. There can and probably is a selection of each in every church, each with a different job to do for Him.

The important message is in John. Peter wanted to know why John was given a different walk to what He was given. Jesus told him it was not his business. He, Peter, was to concentrate on what the Lord had given him to do.

This is an important message for the church today. We think like Peter. What we need to do is realise we can have different walks, but we are all to follow Him. Each walk, whether disciple, believer or witness, is extremely necessary for the Lord to use to build His church. We must believe in, value and encourage each other in our different walks. This is His commandment to all of us, love each other. Only in this way can we help Him build His church.

Now it was the time to begin the journey of making myself ready as a tiny part of the Bride of Christ. Will you come with me?

Chapter Five

Building The Bride

One day more than two thousand years ago, a man died on a cross on a hill outside the walls of Jerusalem. Three days later, He rose from the dead and made Himself known to those who had been His followers during His time on earth.

*He had told them He was going to build a church
that the gates of hell would not prevail against.*
Matthew Chapter 16, verse 18.

When He died, His followers believed that all His promises for the future died with Him, so they huddled together in fear and confusion.

But He rose. He sent His Holy Spirit to endow His followers with power and authority from on high. He sent them out to help build His church for Him.

The man was Jesus Christ of Nazareth, and He is still building His church today through those who will dare to follow Him fully, who will dare to die to self, those who will love not their lives unto death. Revelation Chapter 12, verse 11.

Revelation chapter 19 verse 7 tells us
“*And His Bride has made herself ready.*”

These three things, dying to self, making ourselves ready, helping Him build His church, cannot be separated from each other. They go hand in hand.

How are we doing at these things?

This is the question the Lord is asking us today.

How are we doing church? Selah.

The answers He has given to me, as I walked through the process of making myself ready to be part of the Bride, will be my own personal experiences. They may only be a part of the whole teachings He has to give. I'm sure He has many others out there with more and even deeper things to tell. But He asked me if He could personally use my life to show these particular principles of His in action. In walking through issues in the way He required, I would gain ground in the spiritual world for Him. Sounds weird, I know, but this is what He showed me. One of the greatest memories I have of allowing Him to use my life for His purposes was in a church on the Northern beaches of Sydney. There was a soup kitchen operating from there on a

Saturday night. A prayer meeting was held in the front of the church, after the soup kitchen closed. I attended the prayer meeting. One night, a man who served at the soup kitchen and then came to the prayer meeting said to me,

“I have just seen the biggest sword I have ever seen, in your arms.
You are carrying it, but I don't know how you are,
because it is huge and heavy.”

This was about fifteen years after my giving the Lord permission to use my life. He showed me through this that walking as He was asking me to, built a sword in the spiritual realm for Him to use through me.

Thank you Tony, for being a spiritual man, able to see into the spiritual world so easily. Thank you also for telling me what you saw. It has been a great comfort for me to have this knowledge during those things the Lord has called me to walk through for Him. It has been a hard number of years, but I have been able to meditate on what you saw, and go on. Does every one know the Lord is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him. Hebrews Chapter 11, verse 6.

So, what does it mean for the Bride to make herself ready? Well, it all started with Adam and Eve.

One morning I was standing in my kitchen mixing a fruit cake. I was facing the window. Suddenly there appeared before me verses of scripture written on the glass.

“Genesis Chapter 3, verses 1 to 7.”

I had been spirit filled for ten years and, while I had heard audibly the voice of God and been an intercessor for Him, I had never before had a vision. I am not a vision person but learn audibly. Yet this was definitely a vision. The words were very clearly readable, just as if written in a bible, with the correct heading, as written in the Word of God. I heard a voice telling me to read. I was surprised by this as, like many or all Christians, I knew these verses quite well. But I did as directed and read.

Chapter Three

verse one

*Now the serpent was more cunning than any beast
of the field which the Lord God had made. And
he said to the woman, “Has God said you
shall not eat of every tree of the garden?”*

verse two

And the woman said unto the serpent, " We may eat of the fruit of the trees of the garden,

verse three

but of the fruit of the tree in the midst of the garden, God has said "You shall not eat of it, nor shall you touch it, lest ye die."

verse four

And the serpent said unto the woman "You shall not surely die.

verse five

For God knows that in the day you eat of it, your eyes will be opened and you will be like God, knowing good from evil."

verse six

So when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree desirable to make one wise, she took of its fruit, and ate. She also gave to her husband with her, and he ate.

verse seven

then the eyes of both of them were opened.

When I read the last eight words, the question was in my mind,

“Weren't Eve's eyes opened when she ate and, if not, why not?”

I said to the Lord, “Does it really say that? Were their eyes opened together? Why haven't I seen this before?”

He told me to go to my bible and read, and there it was. It does say that their eyes were opened together. Of course it makes sense. If Eve's eyes were opened when she ate, she would have never given the fruit to Adam to eat, considering the consequences when both their eyes were opened together.

The first principle God showed me from Genesis Chapter 3, verses 1-7, is the spiritual responsibility of the male for the female. God set everything up perfectly. Male in authority under God, and female as his helpmeet. Most importantly, Adam was responsible for Eve. Her eyes would have been opened when she ate if this were not so. The male under God's authority is responsible for the female. When Adam chose to eat the apple Eve gave him, he didn't just hand his authority to Satan, he also reversed God's role for the male and the female, as He had ordained it. He allowed Eve to take his role as the authority and responsibility figure, and Eve very happily usurped his position. I'm not an expert on these things, but it seems to me that the roles are still reversed. And look at all the problems in the world today because of it. Does this sound too simple? I have found God's ways are simple, and so they work. I know that a lot of women could now be contemplating not reading any further, but please read on and listen.

Tim was right when he told me I had been a good wife. I was because God had taught me His way in the beginning of my walk. Let me give you some examples. When Tim was getting his divorce from his first wife, he believed that when he was free, it would be okay for us to have a sexual relationship outside of marriage. As stated in my writing about my second husband, God had shown me it was not okay. I didn't tell Tim no. I didn't try to teach him, or convince him. I just went before God and told Him I did not agree with Tim, and could He, God, please fix it. It was not my role to tell Tim anything. He was the one responsible for both of us before God. I would not take his role, even when I knew he was wrong. I was not the one responsible for decisions.

In a very short time, Tim came in very upset. He said we could not have a sexual relationship outside of marriage. God had made it very clear to him.

I didn't say, "I know, I had to pray to get you to do the right thing."

I just said, "I agree," and silently thanked God.

After we were married, God said to me,

"I want you and Tim to tithe to A----," a pastor we knew.

We were not in a church and so not tithing anywhere. This pastor was a man Tim didn't really like. I said to God, "It is not my role to tell Tim anything. It is my role to encourage him, pray for him, be obedient to him. If you want Tim to tithe to this man, You tell him, and I will agree with it, and encourage him, even though he doesn't like the man."

That afternoon, Tim came home from work and said he believed he had heard God tell him to tithe to A----, but he was very hesitant about doing it. I was able to say I felt he had heard from God and should do as He had said. I did not tell Him I had already heard. I did not make the decision for him. Tim decided to tithe to A-----,

and, in doing so, they became good friends. He came to value A----'s unique ministry to hurt and damaged people.

I hope you can hear in this the power of a three cord strand which is not easily broken. Ecclesiastes Chapter 4, verse 12. When a wife walks the way of God's authority, He works all things for good. When Tim and I were getting ready to travel, a number of Christian women gossiped about our mode of travel, i.e. our campervan. It was very basic, absolutely no luxury at all, bathing in a small round plastic bowl, no refrigeration except a small plastic box that plugged into the cigarette lighter in the front of the truck, and held only a small amount of perishables. We had very limited money, which meant we could not go into caravan parks, but had to camp out. These women felt I was a fool for doing what Tim wanted without complaint. But I knew God's ways. I was being the Eve God wanted for Tim. The fruit of our travel was good. It is very hard to travel in a confined space, in basic conditions and very little money. But we travelled so well together. I know God will use our prayers and the witnessing we did. The women who criticised and said they would not let their husbands do that to them, did not know that, to live as Eve was created to live is so freeing, and spiritually, incredibly growth filled. It builds character in the soul areas, and strength and authority in the spiritual. It also builds unshakable trust in God and intimacy with Him.

“Obedience is better than sacrifice.”

The thing Eve does today, and also Adam, that really breaks God's heart is to speak against each other, especially pastors putting their wives down and pastors wives putting their husbands down. There was one wife who, every Sunday after her husband's sermon, would say to numbers of his congregation,

“Poor old -----, he really doesn't have it, does he?”

My spirit would cringe every time I heard her. Yet she is just one of many, many, many who do this. Not just pastors and their wives, but husbands and wives everywhere. I cringe when I hear men do it, but more so when I hear women do it. To me it is very simple, we were deceived, we offered Adam the apple, we led him astray, even though it was his responsibility to eat or not to eat. We have the power to lead him back. It is an awesome privilege to be part of God's original plan, by being the Eve that Eve wasn't.

I wonder how we, as Christians and one would assume bible readers, still speak words of condemnation and criticism over, to, or about each other. Words create, church. Let us create good. I admit I do not get this right every time, but I am determined to overcome.

One day in the music team of a church, the pianist said to me,

“Look at that. She is wearing a red cardigan with a yellow dress. Wouldn't you think she would know red and yellow don't go together?”

I looked where she was pointing, and saw one of the singers dressed that way. She was a lady who was also in the small intercessors group from the church. The next week when I knocked on her door, ready for prayer, she told me she had a strange headache and didn't know if she would be able to pray. I heard the Lord say to tell her the comment about her clothes on the previous Sunday. I did this and her headache went almost immediately.

This was a strong lesson for me about how powerful our words are, and how they can affect the person they are being spoken about, even when the person doesn't hear them. Just as an aside, the pianist was married to a wealthy man and could buy anything she wanted. The lady spoken about was on her own, doing a great job of raising her son who was about nine, and balancing a limited amount of money very well.

I heard a visiting pastor once preach on “Only joking.” In God's eyes, there is no such thing. We will be judged for every word we speak. We cannot justify our hurtful words with the statement, “I was only joking.” In every instance someone says this, there is a truth hidden inside.

Please be aware I do not do it perfectly. Nowhere near every time. But God has shown me it is the right heart attitude, the willingness to try to do it that blesses His heart, as well as the awareness of our unclean heart, and the willingness to ask Him to change it.

The Lord then took me to the verses eight to thirteen, of Genesis 3.

Verse 8

*And they heard the sound of the Lord God
walking in the garden in the cool of the day,
And Adam and his wife hid themselves from
the presence of the Lord among the trees of the garden.*

verse 9

*Then the Lord God called to Adam and said
to him, “Where are you?”*

verse 10

*So he said, “I heard your voice and I was
afraid because I was naked, and I hid myself.”*

verse 11

*And He said, “ Who told you that you were naked?
Have you eaten from the tree of which I
commanded you that you should not eat?”*

verse 12

*Then the man said, “The woman whom you gave to
be with me, she gave me of the tree.
And I ate.”*

verse 13

*And the Lord said to the woman,
“ What is this you have done?”
The woman said,
“ The serpent deceived me, and I ate.”*

The second principle He showed me was about the initial consequence of their disobedience. They were unable to take responsibility for their own behaviour.

Adam blamed Eve, then God.

“The woman You gave me.”

This is what I call dumping, very destructive to any relationship and yet you will find many, many do this. It is one way we cover our refusal to take responsibility for our own behaviour. The first book I was going to write was to be called, “ No Dumping Allowed.” It was not something I did, so I did not have to overcome it. It was something that was done to me from childhood. Ever since I was shown what it was, I have hated it. It stops us from coming into truth with each other. It is a lie.

Eve blamed the serpent.

“The serpent deceived me.”

Our “only joking” statement of “the devil made me do it.”

This is what the Lord showed me He calls justifying This was something I did do, and had to overcome. It is the second way we cover our refusal to take responsibility. We give a reason or an excuse for our behaviour. Yet no matter how good our excuse, it is a lie and we need to simply take responsibility and say “yes, I did it.”

Both these things, dumping and justifying are our way of refusing to accept responsibility for our own behaviour, the first consequence of sin.

This consequence is still with us today, in every person. It is the most important principle we will ever learn, i.e. to take responsibility. Sadly so many never learn it. So many of those who name Jesus as their Lord have never learnt it. I was in a meeting in a large pentecostal church in Sydney one Sunday night. Joyce Meyer was preaching. She stopped in the middle of her sermon and said,

“God has a message for the Church. The problem with the Church is, Christians are not taking responsibility for their own behaviour.”

She didn't say “this church.” She said “The Church.”

There were a number of Amens from the people gathered there that night, more than I expected, but nowhere near the huge Amen there should have been.

The correct response in the garden would have been Adam saying,

“I have done wrong. Even though Eve offered me the fruit to eat, it is my responsibility that I ate. I am sorry.”

Eve's response should have been,

“Even though the serpent offered me the fruit, and spoke beguiling words to convince me, it was my responsibility that I ate.”

The Lord has shown me very clearly that, until we learn to accept responsibility for all our behaviour, and never blame anyone else for it, we cannot even begin to mature in Christ. Oh, yes, we can have gifts and we can operate in them but, as I have shown in the previous chapter with Tim and the incident of Kimba in the Cloncurry Caravan park, it doesn't mean we are maturing in Christ. Tim had many gifts; music, song writing, boldness, a zeal for God and to see His people saved, an affinity with Aboriginal people, ability to see and deal with demons. He had a beautiful heart. But he could not mature spiritually until he learned not to blame Eve [me] for his behaviour. In Cloncurry that night, he needed to have said,

“I should have listened to you. Bring Kimba inside quickly.”

There is no condemnation for Tim here. To mature in Christ is a very hard decision, and a hard road to walk. It is as Jesus says, “a narrow way and few are those who find it.” But it is the only way to life. Matthew Chapter 7, verses 13 and 14.

When Tim decided to leave me, he acted in the way of Adam. He had obviously planned it for weeks, yet he never talked to me at all about what he planned to do or suggested any solutions to our problem. His note on the table told me that he had interpreted his dream as God saying he should leave. There was never any repentance. If he had taken responsibility for his behaviour, and sought God for a

solution, the outcome could have been very different. Taking responsibility for every scrap of our behaviour is the first step in maturing in Christ.

Until we do this, we cannot move forward.

He divorced me two years later. Unfortunately, in this nation, you do not need a reason to divorce someone. You just need to be separated for a year. I wrote on the divorce papers that I would not sign them as I did not agree with the divorce. They still let him divorce me. My heart for the two years had been for us to reconcile. Tim was given a second dream during this time that told him clearly that he was the one who had the problem and showed him who to go to for help. But he was not obedient. He did not follow it up. Obedience again. It is critically important.

Again, as in my second marriage, God protected me. He has never let Tim remarry even though he has made plans to do so a number of times to more than one woman. Then, in December 2009, nearly twelve years after Tim left our marriage, God asked me if I would marry him again if He, God, asked me to. I said no. Then, a few weeks later, on the first of January 2010, I was at a meeting where I met up with a pastor from QLD who I had not seen for many years. He didn't know Tim had left me. We were talking, catching up, when he stopped and ask me if I would marry Tim again if God asked me to. I told him God had already asked me that a few weeks previously and I had said no. God revealed to me over the next week that He was asking my permission to set Tim free and let him marry again if he wanted to. Does God do things like that? He does with me.

There was also a second reason for Him asking this question. Through a beautiful young man I was telling the story to one night, the Lord revealed that He had wanted me to say no, as this was the beginning of protecting myself. When He tells me specifically to do something, I am always obedient. But on this occasion, he asked me. I had the right to say no.

There is incredible freedom in taking responsibility for our own behaviour, to be able to say I did do that and I am sorry. These are very freeing words giving us and the other person the ability to grow. It also stops anger effectively, particularly our own anger.

If you are a Christian reading this, you would know that our words are powerful. The Lord God created everything by the spoken word. The letter in the bible, 1 John, tells us the tongue is very hard to control and can start a forest fire. The words we speak about each other, to each other, can heal or hurt, even destroy. The scripture I try to follow is Proverbs six, verses sixteen onwards. The six things God hates, yea the seventh is an abomination in His eyes. Most of these are about words.

A proud look,
A lying tongue,
Hands that shed innocent blood,
A heart that devises wicked plans,
Feet that are swift in running to evil,
A false witness who speaks lies,
And one who sows discord among the brethren.

We focus more on sins of the flesh, and yes, they are very wrong. But these seven things are from God's heart.

I want to give you here just one example of perfect communication, and the taking of responsibility for his own behaviour. It came from a seven year old boy, my grandson, Joshua. Josh's parents are divorced so he has had to leave his home, a four bedroom house in a family suburb of Sydney, lots of children to play with and a backyard. He now lives in two, two bedroom units, spending three and a half days every week with each parent. No children or outdoor area. It was decided we needed to find ways for him to mix with other children. I knew a mother who had a son eighteen months older than Josh, and who went into after school care. I asked if I could pick her son up one afternoon a week so that he and Josh could play together. We did this for about eight weeks, but I was aware it was not working out very well. I talked to the mother about it and we had decided to give it a bit more time to work out. Then, one afternoon after I had picked Josh up and we were driving to his mother's unit, he said to me,

“Grandma, I don't want you to pick J---- up any more on Thursdays.”

“Why not, Josh” I asked.

“Well, he doesn't want to play with me, and that makes me frustrated. So then I get angry, and I deliberately annoy him to try to get him to play with me. And I don't want to be like that.”

I was blown away. I'm going to elaborate on why this communication was so amazing. It would have been amazing from an adult, so much more so from a seven year old.

I need to state here, this is not a teaching book. That is not my purpose. I am not skilled to write in that way. It is an account of my experiences with the Lord. So it is a book to learn from, yes, but only for you to discover who Jesus is and who He

wants you to be, and for each one to seek intimacy with Him, allowing Him to teach you.

So, back to Josh and his comment.

“I don't want you to pick J---- up any more.”

He knew he had a need and he knew I could help him with it. There were no hidden agendas, no game playing, no running J---- down, no fear or hesitancy. Just his own need clearly stated in a mature I statement.

“He doesn't want to play with me.”

A straight fact, no exaggeration. But think of the processing that bought him to see J----'s behaviour clearly. No blame on J----, no diminishing of him as a person, in fact, acknowledging J----'s right to his own feelings and behaviour. No insecurity or stinking thinking about himself. No lie from satan that there must be something wrong with him if J---- doesn't want to play with him.

“That makes me feel frustrated.”

I remember when I started to sort out feelings, giving a name to the particular one I was experiencing. It was very hard. Yet Josh knew clearly that he was experiencing frustration, and understood that this led to him being angry.

“So then I get angry.”

He was able to follow the progression from frustration to anger and differentiate between the two.

Then came the really mind blowing part of Josh's communication.

“And I deliberately annoy him.”

Being able to know at seven that feelings led to behaviour. Remember the equation in Chapter three; thoughts produce feelings which cause behaviour. Again an “I” statement taking total responsibility for his own behaviour. No dumping or justifying, just knowing and understanding the reason behind what he was doing.

“To try to get him to play with me.” He understood what he hoped to achieve.

Then the incredible ending,

“And I don't want to be like that.”

At seven he knows who he wants to be in God and he is going there.

The next story I'd like to tell you goes back to Miriam and Aaron murmuring about Moses, and believing they should have been used by God instead. It is from the book of Numbers, Chapter 12, verses 1 to 16. The following is a true story and is a modern day testimony of what can happen when we murmur against someone God has put in authority. It is a very frightening story. Let me say here, everything I write about is what God has done or shown me in my life. If you come against it, you are in danger of blaspheming the Holy Spirit. It is all truth. Also, if you think you recognise yourself in anything I have written, rejoice and ask God to show you which way He wants you to go. He has given me these experiences and had me write them down, so His Church could be built. And if you are one who has come across my path, and you think you appear in my book, it is because God is passionately involved in your life and He wants you to be part of His Bride.

One year, a long time ago, Renee and I were in a church which was having a camp. We decided to go. The assistant pastor of the church and one of the elders, plus about twenty other people also went. We travelled for six hours on the Friday night after work. It was held in a camping ground beside a river, a truly beautiful spot. The pastor who was the guest speaker was from a long way away, about two thousand kilometres. On the Saturday afternoon, he had been teaching us warfare prayer. There were about eight hundred people in the room, and the atmosphere was incredible.

The pastor asked for the recording tape to be turned off. This was in the days before CDs and DVDs. He told us an incredible tale. He said there was a demon in his home church and it was trying to kill him. He had been having crippling headaches for which there could not be found a reason. He said he believed that, with the incredible power there that afternoon, if we all prayed in agreement, the demon could be cast out. We all went into warfare prayer, waving our spiritual swords and praying in tongues. After about half an hour, the pastor said he felt it had been accomplished.

I didn't hear whether the demon had gone when he returned home.

On the trip back to our church, it was suggested by the assistant pastor and the elder that we continue to meet as a group so as not to lose what we had found at the camp. A meeting was arranged for the next Wednesday night. It was at this meeting I discovered it was not about keeping what we had gained on the camp. It was really about supporting the assistant pastor and the elder to be allowed by the senior pastor to establish an outreach from the home church. It seemed they may have thought they could do better in their own church. They had apparently been discussing this together while on the camp. The senior pastor was an exceptional teacher, well respected all over Australia.

Some of the people attending agreed, others did not. One particular man disagreed very strongly. I had a very bad feeling about it but I was not strong enough at that time to state my opinion. It was agreed that night for the elder and the assistant pastor to see the senior pastor to put the idea forward to him. An appointment was

made for the following Thursday. On the Thursday night, I rang the elders wife to see how the senior pastor had taken it. I was assured that he was fine with the idea.

When I got to Church the next Sunday morning, I knew straight away that they had not been correct. The senior pastor had lost something from his spirit. I felt devastated. I did not know, at this time, the Lord was developing in me a gift of discerning of spirits. I did not know that no one else could see in him what I could see. Some two months later, the outreach was opened. At the home Church, the senior pastor preached an 8.30 am and a 10 am service. The outreach was to have a 9 am service. At 9 am at the home Church, on the first Sunday of the outreach, the senior pastor collapsed at the podium. He was raced to hospital and, despite massive prayer and petition, he died two days later of a brain aneurysm.

On the Sunday night, while the Church was in prayer, a friend saw a demonic presence over the pulpit, and it was gloating. I then came to believe that the demon from the camp had followed us home. It had a right of entry into our Church because of murmuring. Words of our mouth can be so powerful, far more so than I had realised. And, of course, the heart attitude behind the words is in fact far more powerful, and is the real sin.

In time, the Church elected a new pastor, and there was no more demonic disturbances. About a year later, this man was promoted to a bigger Church in the capital city. Again, an exceptional teacher was elected to be senior pastor in the Church. Tim and I had known this man for some years and knew his dedication to preaching the truth. After a year or so, we heard that the pastor was sick. Then the Lord led me to hear that this pastor was also being murmured against, this time by another elder in his Church. I wrote out the things I knew about the camp and the subsequent events, not using any names, and sent it to him. He asked me to come and speak to him. At this meeting he told me he was having excruciating headaches, and had lost a lot of weight. The doctors could not find a physical cause for his symptoms. He also told me he had shown my letter to the widow of the senior pastor who had died, and she believed it was possible this is what could have happened to her husband. He asked me only for the names of the man who had spoken strongly at the first meeting after the camp, and for the lady who had seen the demon over the podium on the Sunday night of the senior pastor's collapse. He did not ask me for the name of the elder murmuring against him. There is gold in the way he behaved, in learning the principles of being in the Bride and the heart attitudes we need to have. He complimented me on the letter I had written, in that I had mentioned no names and slandered no one. I had just written straight facts; i.e. truth. He also told me he was calling a meeting of the whole church for corporate repentance and prayer. This he did but, unfortunately, the demon did not leave. The pastor continued to suffer, and, in time, had to leave the church and even Australia, to return to the land of his birth, to save his life. The next pastor who came into the Church has been there for many years now with apparently no problems.

What did the Lord teach me out of this experience? The extreme power that is in the words of our mouth; in fact, the power of life and death. More importantly, when

we don't love, we can be led into sin. It reinforced to me we had to follow Jesus' example so closely. His public ministry was only for three and a half years, yet He left His disciples His way to follow. He also taught me that few could see as I could see. It has been my prayer for many years now for the true gift of the discerning of spirits to be poured out on the Church. We need it so desperately.

The other principle He showed me is that, if you are really His disciple, living and preaching the truth, satan is after you. The pastor who came to preach at the camp, the senior pastor of our church who died, and the pastor who had to leave Australia to survive, were all exceptional teachers of the word, bold men not afraid to preach the whole truth. What does it say about the ones who were not attacked? Please be aware, I'm just asking a question. You can find your own answer. Scripture does say "If they hated me, they will hate you also." Who is the "you?" The true disciples who are hated for their strong walk in Him. Are you, the reader, hated for your walk in Him. If so, rejoice! If not, then again I ask, why aren't you hated? Maybe you are one of those who murmur, judge, criticise, slander, gossip about, yes even hate the ones who walk strongly in Him. It happens. I am not going to write specific incidences about it in this book, because I will not murmur against pastors or churches. This book is not about criticising but following the way Jesus shows us.

But I have been hated many times.

I want to continue my story now based on being hated. Is hatred too strong a word? God uses the word a lot. Many times I have felt hated. Sometimes it comes through people who are closely involved in our lives but who are unable to love us. This is how the Lord spoke to me about it one day. His words were,

"I am going to remove all the people from your life who do not love you."

He didn't tell me how many this would be.

At the time when He told me this, I was married to Tim, working in a crisis accommodation on the Gold Coast. My mother was in a nursing home and I was her power of attorney. Renee and Zac were married, Nathan and Lisa were married and had my first grandchild, Ethan, and Lisa was about to have Kira, my first granddaughter. My stepfather was living in the flat he had built for Renee and I, and Tim and I were living in the house in front. My beautiful Aunt Jo had died and left me her little cottage in Southport. Renee and Zac had been living there, but it was very old, with gaps in the floor and walls that mice and spiders could get through. Renee was about to have their first baby, and the cottage was not a good place for a new born baby. So they were moving to a rented house, and Tim and I were moving to the cottage.

One day I went to the bank to get a cheque to pay my mother's nursing home fees. I was told at the bank that my mother's power of attorney had been cancelled. My stepfather had taken a solicitor to my mother in the nursing home and had her reverse my power of attorney, giving it to him. My mother had been in a nursing home for

about eight years at this time, and had not understood anything for some time. My stepfather had also been able to get her to sign a new will, leaving everything to him to do with as he liked. This meant my sister and I received nothing for his intention was to leave everything to his nephews. He had not had a child of his own. I knew he had convinced her to sign a new will. He rang my sister and told her she would get nothing from our mother's estate. This was stupid, as my sister and her husband were very wealthy and didn't need the small amount of money they would have received.

This was a time for me to walk in trust in God. I would not go to court against him while ever he lived. I would not hold unforgiveness against him. I would not allow resentment or anger or any stronger emotion to dwell in me. My stepfather was a valued member of his church and believed in Jesus. 1 John 4 tells us we are not to hate our brother. Both I and other members of my family fully expected my mother to die before my stepfather. He was a year younger than her, very active and in good health. I did not expect to ever receive anything from my stepfather and I held no bitterness. For me, it was a unique opportunity to trust my Heavenly Father for my provision and blessing.

I did however find his hatred towards me hard to understand, as I had put my mother in the nursing home when he was not coping with her but could not put her in himself. I had also agreed with him that he should go back to Holland for a rest as soon as she was settled, and use her savings to pay for the trip. He was very run down from a number of years of caring for her. He was unable to go to visit her for the first six months she was in the home, as it was too upsetting for him. I never criticised him for this; I just took over all the visiting, going about four times a week. The one thing I find so hard to understand about hatred is that it is so irrational. Quite often it is from those you have loved the most, or helped a lot, that the hatred comes.

I had no contact with my stepfather for years. Then one day he came to my front door and handed me a cheque for ten thousand dollars. I needed this amount quite desperately. I had put the total cost of my world trip on my master card. My daughter Sammy, had offered to get me a Ford Laser, the last model they would make, at a substantial discount. She worked for Ford. I had never had a new car and it made sense to get one at this time and pay it off before I retired. Unfortunately, due to extreme stress at work, and another hatred situation I will write about later, I had dropped back to four days a week. I was struggling to pay the master card back. My Heavenly Father knew this and arranged for me to get a small part of an inheritance I was not expecting to receive. I accepted the cheque and made an effort to be friends with my stepfather. He was a man highly motivated by the love of money. I have never been motivated by the love of money.

In January, 2006, a word from God to His people came into CCC Oxford Falls in Sydney. I was told about this. The words were:

“Stand and be amazed at what I, your Lord, will do.”

I looked up the scripture. It was in Exodus. God had told Moses to bring His people out of Egypt into a promised land, a land of milk and honey, a land where they could settle and be happy. Everything was going great until they came to a body of water that blocked their path; the Red Sea. The Egyptian soldiers and chariots were close behind them and there was nowhere for them to go. The Hebrews began to murmur and curse Moses for not leaving them in slavery; at least they had some safety there. But Moses went before God seeking His answer. And it came through these words;

“Stand and be amazed at what I, the Lord your God will do.”

Exodus Chapter 14, verse 13.

Then He opened the Red Sea and two million Hebrews passed over safely. But God closed the water back before the soldiers, horses and chariots could cross over.

I then decided to put the words on my fridge so I could read them a number of times every day, and to believe that God could work again to use them in my life. I did not ask for anything specific. I did not have any idea how He could work the scripture for me, or even if He would. I did not think of my mother's will. I had long given this up.

One Sunday morning, during the year of the message, my stepfather had a funny turn as he was about to leave church to drive home. He insisted on getting into his car and driving. Two caring women from the church followed him home and managed to convince him to let them take him to hospital. He did not come home again but died two weeks later. Because the new will my mother signed left everything to him, with no provision of what would happen if he died first, the will was invalid as she outlived him by a year. The public trustee very nicely divided the estate between my sister and me. Thus the scripture came true. I was amazed at what God had done. One of the greatest blessings of my life has been to walk very strongly in trust of my God. He is infinitely trustworthy.

I will now continue with those God told me He would remove from my life because they did not love me. The next one, of course, was Tim, my third husband. I was totally shattered by the break up of this marriage. But I had to believe God had spoken truthfully to me, and that Tim had not loved me. When he left me, I signed land over to Tim that he and I had bought together, without asking for any money from it. I had always worked during my marriage to Tim, while he, for some years, worked part time. I always earned more than he did, yet it never bothered me. It was not something I mentioned to him. When he left me, I had my little cottage, so I was happy to sign the five acre block we had bought together over to him. It was land he had chosen and done a lot of work on, and he lived on it for some time after he retired. Two years later, when he divorced me, he came and told me he was entitled to half my cottage, and he was going to take it from me. God didn't allow him to do this.

Scripture says you cannot serve God and mammon [money], for you will love one

and hate the other. Matthew Chapter 6 verse 24. I know hate is a strong word, but it is God's word. To Him, if we as Christians love money, then we do hate Him. Why? Because when we love money, we hurt other people; His people. That is one reason He says we hate Him if we love money. We only love God to the extent we love His people. This is a key principle in our relationship with Him.

One of the things God loves us to be is a cheerful giver. He wants us to have generous hearts. Yet I have found among Christians in Australia, many do not have a generous heart.

One day, Josh, my grandson, who was about four, and I were visiting a man I had hoped to marry. Josh is a very curious child, and he found two, two dollar coins under the lounge cushions. He handed them to the man who immediately put them in his pocket. He didn't think how special it would have been for Josh to be told he could have the coins. A generous giver is something we spontaneously are, we don't have to think about it. When I talked to the man about it later, he immediately gave me \$4 to give to Josh. It really hadn't occurred to him to do this. He was not a natural giver.

During the time I was with this man, he almost always gave me things he didn't want. Sometimes he would ask to borrow back something he had given me. I always told him he could have the object back to keep if he needed it. He never once said "No, it is yours, I am only borrowing it, I will give it back to you." Having a generous heart is part of our character. Does every one know that character is what we are building in our time here on earth? A likeness to Jesus. For that is what we take into Heaven. Not money, not things, not achievements, not any earthly treasure, but only character.

Christians, be like the widow and her two mites. If it doesn't cost you to give, then you really haven't given.

The last time I spoke to this man, he told me I could have a book he had lent me until I had finished reading it. I told him he had never given me anything that had meant something to him, and that I was asking him to let me keep this particular book. He agreed and gave me the book. This was a huge thing for him to do as we had been to an Aboriginal dinner a few weeks earlier, where the guest speaker mentioned this book, stating it was the best book ever written on how Aboriginal people thought. So this man was very pleased he had something so special to offer. I prayed this small breakthrough would start him thinking in a different way.

Let me say here that there is no condemnation on this man for anything he did. He was controlled by a very powerful Lie in which the accumulation of things, important things, was a large part of trying to overcome his Lie. There is only one way to defeat a Lie; see Chapter Three. Nothing we do in our own wisdom will ever work.

Later he rang me again saying he had tried everywhere to buy the book, but no one had it. He then said to me he may need to borrow it back to read up on some things,

as he was soon to go out into Aboriginal areas again. I told him he knew if I lent the book to him, I would give it back to him as I had done many times previously. Therefore I was not prepared to lend it to him. He laughed as he knew this was the truth. He rang again the next day and told me he had found a copy of the book in the public library nearest his home. He could borrow it whenever necessary.

I had told him that to keep trying to buy the book was not breaking the hold things had on his life, and he should stop doing this. For if he could let this one book go completely, and not allow his Lie to manipulate him to replace it, he would open himself up to God and the work He wanted to do in his life.

Isn't God good? I wonder how many years before had He known that this book would be needed for this person, and organised from Heaven for it to be purchased, by this library, as part of this man's breakthrough.

Before I go on, I'd like to tell you another short story about a generous heart.

When I had my little workers' cottage on the Gold Coast, I let a woman come and stay for a while in my front bedroom. I was working for the crisis centre accommodation at the time. One of my clients was moving out and needed a pillow. I told her I would bring her one from my home. The lady staying with me at the time saw me going through all the pillows in the house to find the best looking, most comfortable one, to take to the client. She was astounded that I would do this and not just give her any pillow.

But I had learnt a valuable lesson from a very special lady who designed and supervised the building of the crisis centre where I worked. The buildings were beautiful and tastefully furnished. Her heart attitude was that homeless people deserved nice surroundings. It was hard enough for them just to come to a place in their life where they were homeless. To then put them into shabby surroundings because of this, was not going to say much to them about God's love. But to bring them into special surroundings would speak volumes. Jacqui, you made a huge impact on my life. Thank you for being who you are.

Can you imagine being in a situation where you could not afford to buy your own pillow, but had to accept a second hand one from someone? I don't know about you but I am pretty fussy about my pillow. I would find that very difficult indeed.

Please note here that I am not boasting in the fact that I gave the client the best pillow I had. I needed to tell the story in order to show one lady with a right heart attitude, for she made such a difference, by her vision and her compassion, to hundreds of homeless women who have stayed at the centre. I also wanted to show how we, with the right heart attitude, can do even a fraction of what she has done to make someone's life a little brighter. You see, I will never boast about myself for, without Him, I am nothing. Everything I am comes from Him.

A lady who is now a special friend came to work in the crisis centre while I was there. She told me how greatly she was impacted by the love I had for the women at the centre. I didn't see it. And I praise God I didn't see it! I only saw how much I was failing to love women who needed it so desperately.

One lady who came from a squat house, and was now at the end of her twelve weeks, was to leave the next morning. She had nowhere to go but back onto the streets. She had loved being with us so much, she could not face looking for other accommodation. She just wanted to stay forever, but we couldn't keep her. I went in after breakfast to see how her packing was going. I found her slumped over the bed, unable to speak properly. I thought she had taken an overdose to try to get us to keep her there. My anger rose up at the extra work she was putting us through. I did not help her back onto the bed but raced out to ring for an ambulance and to get someone to help me. Another worker got her back into bed while I searched for evidence of what she had taken to give to the ambulance men when they arrived. I could not find any evidence of an overdose in the room. The ambulance came and took her to hospital. They phoned us just after lunch and told us she had died. An aneurysm had burst in her brain. She had not taken any drugs. At her funeral, her older son said to me that his mum took her own life even though she had not taken any drugs. I knew exactly what he meant. It was no coincidence that the aneurysm killed her on the day she was to leave. A few days later, one of the other workers told me how much this dear lady had loved me. I felt terrible. I had believed the worst of her. But I praise God for my reaction to her as it will always keep me humble. For I know who I really am deep inside. Without Him I am nothing. Even with Him, sometimes I am still nothing. I will never forget her as this incident keeps me reminded of how quickly I judged.

I believe the lady went straight home to our Heavenly Father. She deserved it so much.

On to the next people God removed from my life because they didn't love me.

After Tim left, I was going to my son and daughter-in-law's and my grandchildren every Wednesday night for the evening meal. One mother's day, they took me out for a special lunch, with my daughter-in-law's family and other members of both our families. It was a lovely day, something they had not done for me before. Yet, during the day, I felt unease in my spirit. I was picking up a lie somewhere. Jesus is the truth and His true followers love the truth. As such, I pick up lies very easily. My daughter-in-law was acting very strangely.

A couple of nights later, my son rang me up. He was yelling at me, telling me I had favoured his younger sister over him. He then told me I would never see my grandchildren again. He kept his word. I have not seen any of them for eleven years, except at my mother's funeral. As soon as he had hung up the phone, I went on my knees and asked God not to punish him for anything he had done to me, and particularly to not let anything happen that would affect the children.

I then realised Nathan had planned to do this since before the Mother's Day lunch the previous Sunday. This was the unease and the lie I had felt that day. Nathan had borrowed eleven hundred dollars from me three years earlier. It was money from my mother which I had put aside for Samantha for when she decided to get married. She was engaged, but it was to be an eight year engagement. I had given a number of amounts of money this size to both Renee and Nathan as they were living close to me. Samantha was in Sydney and never asked for anything. I had told Nathan he had to pay it back when Samantha finally decided to get married and needed it. She had decided to marry in the December of that year. Nathan had had the money for three years and had made no attempt to pay it back. So I asked Nathan for the money to be repaid by December. As I was in the middle of renovating my old Queenslander, I offered to pay him \$285 per day for four Saturdays, one per month to help him pay it back before the event took place. At this time, in 1999, that was good money for a day's work. I came to believe that the real reason for his phone call was because he didn't want to pay the money back. I had given him a way to pay it back easily, thinking I was helping. Instead I damaged myself by causing him to have no other way to not pay the money back than to abuse me and break our relationship.

I tried twice over the years to give my grandchildren Christmas presents, and once to give Ethan a birthday present when he turned seventeen, but I was not allowed. Nathan carried out his threat. My daughter-in-law said she would keep contact with me, but she didn't. She had Ethan ring me for my birthday in July, two and a half months after the Mothers' Day, but she got the day wrong. I had sat the day before, which was my birthday, in the deepest pain I have ever experienced. I was nice to Ethan on the phone, but then I told him I had to go, as I could not stop crying. My daughter-in-law rang me back and asked me why I had hung up on Ethan, which I didn't do, so I was unable to be nice to her. The walking through the loss of my grandchildren has been the most painful thing I have ever experienced. I always suffer on Mothers' Day, as well as birthdays, Christmas and Easter. It has become easier now that I live in Sydney, and I don't have to acknowledge that Renee, Zane and Kate are mixing with them at these special times.

Even though I have refused to hold any unforgiveness, resentment or bitterness in my heart, I have always experienced the loss caused to both my grandchildren and myself over a miserable \$1100. It just hasn't seemed right. But I realise people never give the real reason for doing something like Nathan did, because they don't know themselves, nor recognise their own feelings or behaviours. If they did understand these things, they would become healed. Nathan gave me the reason of "you preferred Renee to me," which was how he saw it in his unhealedness. I saw his jealousy of his older sister in not wanting her to have the money. By the way, Samantha was given double the amount of money, through gifts from my stepfather and myself, so she didn't miss out.

Then, on Monday the nineteenth of July, eleven years later, I was in Queensland for my birthday, sitting on a friend's side verandah in the winter sunshine, when the Lord dropped a forgotten memory into my mind. It was from a time a few months

before Nathan's phone call. I was at their house for the evening meal. Afterwards, Ethan aged seven and Kira at two years old, and I began to play. We were having a wonderful time crawling around the floor, chasing each other. We were laughing hilariously. I looked over at Nathan and Lisa. They were sitting side by side on the lounge watching. They were both very stiff in their posture, not a hint of a smile, much less laughter. In fact the word for the look on their faces was stricken. I had noticed this stiffness in them both before, when they were supposed to be helping Ethan with his "behavioural problems," by reading with him each night. They were unable to sit with him, to read the story with him, or relate happily with him about what they had read. Again, they sat on the lounge together, not interacting with him at all, just listening. He read the book, sitting on his own in another chair. That night I also sat with Ethan, my arm around him as we read, encouraging him, talking with him about the story. I didn't realise though that they were having so much difficulty, and that it was going to come against me. At this time over eleven years ago, I did not understand what was happening to them. I was still walking through my own stuff, and grieving the breakup of my marriage to Tim. But I have learnt a lot over these past years. So the Lord was able to give me just one sentence which changed my whole view of what happened between Nathan and me. The Lord said,

"They could not handle your capacity for intimacy with their children."

I immediately understood. I had not been able to have this intimacy with Nathan, even though he was the child I loved the most. I had still been controlled by my lie, and so I failed both my older children. Renee was younger and I was able to have intimacy with her as I learnt, and grew. I have always blamed Nathan's behaviour on the money he owed me, and his jealousy of Samantha, so I have been hurt all these years. Just one sentence from the Lord, and the understanding that followed has set me free. I can accept his not being able to handle my intimacy with his children. I could never accept the reason being money. Of course, Nathan did not understand his real reason. We never do until we are able to trust God enough to ask Him to do as King David did, to ask Him to search us and see if there be any wicked way in us, and to create a clean heart in us. Psalm 51, verse 10, and Psalm 139, verse 23.

Satan robbed Nathan that day of learning intimacy. I don't know if he could have got down on the floor and played with us. I doubt it. Nathan's childhood left him with horrendous lies. I didn't have the knowledge or capacity to say to them both,

"Come on you two, come down and join us."

I wish I had seen the real problem then, but I didn't. I don't know why God has chosen to wait eleven years to show it to me. I just know He knows what He is doing, and "the why" of everything He does, for He always has our, yes, not just mine but Nathan's, best interests at heart. I have never been able to ask God for reconciliation between Nathan and I. God may have had to wait for changes in me to take place before He could reveal it.

Intimacy is the greatest lesson we have to learn, both intimacy with Him and with each other. And it has been during this year, 2010, that I have finally come to realise it is the most important thing to God. The account of Adam and Eve in the garden is all about such intimacy. Oh, yes, I have always known it, but now the knowledge has become part of my being, something I could not live without. I would die of a broken heart if I could not have intimacy with Him, and with others.

When Tim and I returned from travelling and he got a job with the Alzheimer's Foundation, I also had to find myself work. Renee and Nathan were both getting married that year, Renee in May and Nathan in November. God didn't find me full time work till late October. I had time, but not much money, to enjoy helping Renee plan her wedding. It was Polynesian style, because Zac is from a Maori heritage. I learnt ceramics and made cherubs, both for the bridal table and for the one used to sign the register. The theme was gold. I collected sea shells and painted them gold and attached tiny bags of almonds to them. I turned a wedding card into a heritage book for the bridal table. I cross stitched a pillow with the date and their names on it, to carry the wedding rings. I made cherubs and a string of white satin hearts for the ends of the pews. I had a lovely, creative time. I did do some house cleaning for other people, which helped with our finances.

Zac and Renee chose to have no alcohol at their wedding, and it was a very enjoyable event. They had Zac's relatives singing and dancing, as they are a very musically talented people. Zac's uncle played The Hawaiian Wedding Song and Zac sang as Renee came out of the car and walked down the aisle on her brother's arm. As she appeared at the beginning of the aisle, and Zac had his first glimpse of her, his voice broke and he could not sing for a few seconds. They were obviously so much in love and still are sixteen years later. There were lots of relatives at the reception who had been estranged from each other for various periods of time. Yet, for that one day, they were friendly and happy to see each other.

Yet for me, there was a problem. Zac had not accepted me when Renee had first bought him home. I had known Zac's mother for many years, and knew Zac as a teenager. Yet there was tension and lack of relationship between us for many years after they were married. It was a very hard thing to watch my very special, strongly Christian daughter with whom I had a very deep relationship, marry a man who seemed to not like me. I would have loved to have had a close relationship with him also, as he was and is a very special person. People thought because of my close relationship with Renee that I would have a problem letting her go. But I did not have any problem at all. I was mature in Him. But when you really give your life to Jesus, He continues to work for good, in your life and in the lives of those you love. He had no intention of allowing me to not walk in the way He required me.

One morning, in spring, about eight years ago, I was standing on the front verandah of my little cottage, enjoying God's creation of the sunshine and the birds and flowers. My cottage was an eighty-eight year old workers' cottage in Queensland. It had been left to me by a very dear aunt who had died a few years before. There was such a beautiful feeling to that cottage. It was steeped in peace. I

loved it so much. Into the peace that day the Lord's voice spoke to me, yes audibly. He said,

“Zac is my son, and he is a man of God.”

Jesus didn't say to me,

“He is being unfair to you, but you must forgive him.”

God didn't say to me,

“There, there, I know you are hurting but things will be better if you give me the burden.”

The voice said,

“Zac is my son, and he is a man of God.”

So began an exciting journey for me, that of learning to love His people.

I was at the time working in a women's crisis accommodation on the Gold Coast. I felt I was doing a fair job of loving His people. I guess, to the extent a person can, I was. But I was about to be taken to a new level of loving.

Zac and I had never really bonded even though we were both strong Christians and I knew Renee was happy with him. There were a lot of things about him I did not like. I had complained about him to many people on a number of occasions. I did not feel condemned this particular morning when I heard the Lord's words. But I knew instantly He was chastising me, and it brought me to my knees.

Zac's real name is Anzac, a truly powerful name in the spiritual for our nation. It was the eight hundred Anzacs, Australian and New Zealand Army Corp Light Horsemen, who set Jerusalem free during the first world war, after nearly two thousand years of enemy occupation, and numerous attempts to free her.

From that time on, my attitude to Zac changed. I asked the Lord to show me his heart. I knew my daughter loved him very much, and that he made her happy. Zac is a very moral and righteous man, and I knew he loved her and would never be unfaithful to her. There was a specialness between them when they were together that was truly beautiful. I began to focus on the good in him and not the bad. In time I was able to say to him in total honesty and appreciation,

“Thank you for making my daughter happy.”

Today, I can say I love him and am so happy he and Renee are married.

I began to look then at other people I could not love, to whom I could apply this same principle. Having come through a long illness of wrong thinking, one of the keys I had learnt was that, if you have a bad feeling about someone, it is most likely a problem within you.

I had come into a new church and a new bible study. There were three people there, one woman and two men, who rubbed me up the wrong way. The two men took over the bible study, were always talking and arguing about obscure theological ideas, instead of sharing. As I saw it, disrupting the bible study. I was feeling very angry with them. I found the woman to be abrupt and discourteous and I felt she did not respect my boundaries. I did not want to get to know her. I asked the Lord to show me their hearts, to show me how he saw them.

My first change came in the bible study one night. There was one of God's precious ones there, who had problems, and whom most of the Church saw as dysfunctional. However God had shown her to me as a beautiful spirit locked inside those problems. A couple were praying for the precious one, praying prayers for her that many of us have prayed for others; heal her, set her free. Then, after the prayers, the woman who was rubbing me up the wrong way, said to the precious one,

“I wish I had the love of scripture that you have.”

I saw straight away that she did not see a person with problems, but a precious one, as I did. My attitude changed towards her immediately. God had shown me her heart. She sees people, especially problem ones, as God sees them. She really has a heart that cares for them. I now want to be in her company and can value her. She hasn't changed, she is still abrupt. But now I can love her regardless.

The same thing happened with one of the men. The Lord let me see in him a true servant heart which is so valuable to Him. One night there was a large gathering at the church, for dinner and entertainment. After the meal, while the entertainment was on, I was cleaning up the kitchen. This man came in and started to dispose of the rubbish, mountains of it. My heart has softened to him ever since. He saw a need and was willing to help, without anyone requesting him to, even though it was disposing of the rubbish and at a time the entertainment was held. What's more, the entertainment he was missing was very good.

Will you dare to look at the people in your life who rub you up the wrong way, and let the Holy Spirit show you their heart, to see them as their Father God sees them?

Will you dare to put your attitudes aside, and allow your heart to be changed, to accept that you may be wrong in your attitudes?

Will you dare to be a true disciple, one upon whom the world can look and see how you love?

Will you dare to begin to make yourself ready as the Bride of Christ, to begin to help the Lord Jesus Christ build His Church?

The Lord has shown me, through this principle of asking Him to show us the heart of any we are struggling with, that love it is the greatest spiritual warfare weapon we have. It can defeat satan and his plans. Making love our goal builds spiritual strength for those who are determined to practice it, and establishes our authority in the heavenlies. Jesus' whole essence is love and we who would desire to be like Him must seek to love as our highest ideal.

We have all read 1 Corinthians Chapter 13 many times. It is used worldwide as a model for love. Even non Christians have it read at their weddings as it so beautifully describes love.

But has what Paul said really dropped into our spirits and changed our hearts? Do we really believe that, even if we speak in the most heavenly language, knew all the mysteries of the future, could move mountains by our gift of faith, gave everything we owned to the poor, but had no love, we would have no value for God's work?

Paul means it. Without LOVE for each other, we haven't even begun to help the Lord build His Church, or made ourselves ready as His Bride.

I was in TAFE college, doing a course in Human and Community Services. We were given an assignment to do; a five minute talk on a welfare subject. Our presentation would be assessed and given a mark by each of our classmates. One young woman did her talk on the Gay Mardi Gras march in Sydney. It included a video of a male couple having simulated sex on a bed on top of a float. I gave her a zero mark as I did not agree that the march itself was a welfare issue. Had she done the presentation on homosexuality, aids, or any other issue that was a true welfare area, I would have marked her appropriately. Suddenly I found I was in big trouble and called to the principals office to explain. Because the whole college knew my Christian walk, it was assumed I was homophobic, which I wasn't. I told the principal that even if the couple had been heterosexual and in a different march, I would have given her a zero if the presentation had not been on a welfare issue. My explanation was accepted.

A few days later a young homosexual who was in the class, and who was there for the presentation, came and asked if he could speak to me. He looked at me almost desperately and said,

“Does God love me?”

I assured him that God did love him very much.

I didn't qualify it with, “But He doesn't approve of your behaviour.” I didn't try to take him to Church so he could be saved and delivered. At that moment I was just a channel for God's love and met the young man with the answer he needed to know to

the question he had asked. Yes, God loves you. When his spirit realises God does love him, enough to send His son to die for him, then the Holy Spirit will deal with his behaviour. It is His job, not mine. My job is to be a dispenser of God's love to those who have not experienced it.

There is another principle I have learnt from Him that is very important in becoming part of the Bride. When I worked in the crisis accommodation, the managers would change every few years. The overseeing body were not very good at matching managers to positions. One year, a married couple who had never worked in crisis accommodation before, came in as managers. For some reason, he did not like me and wanted me removed. I use the words did not like, but I really felt hate from him. He succeeded in having my co-ordinator's position taken from me. There was an incident that happened where he overheard another worker and I talking about the cleaner, also employed at the centre. He assumed the person we were talking about was the handyman/gardener. He told this man what I had supposedly said about him, i.e. that he was a gossip. The manager had already judged the gardener as being a gossip. The gardener stopped speaking to me. This made the working situation very difficult. It went on for months. Then the manager decided the gardener and I were to have mediation to sort it out. I refused.

God had shown me many years before the importance of the story of Noah's drunkenness. Genesis Chapter 9 verses 18 to 23. One son, Ham, came in and saw his father naked and drunk, and laughed. He called his brothers to come and laugh also. They didn't. Instead they walked in backwards with a blanket and covered their father's nakedness. This is an extremely important principle for building the Bride. We must not uncover our brother's nakedness. The way we uncover it, of course, is by slander, gossip, enjoying their discomfort, only joking statements, nastiness, especially in front of others, some of the seven things God hates in Proverbs 6 verse 16. I knew if I had mediation with the gardener, it would come out that the manager had not heard correctly who I was talking about, and had passed on words that were not the truth. This could have caused more trouble and the gardener may have quit. He was a very valuable employee. I kept refusing mediation and taking the consequences. The managers said they were going to be there for four years at least. God moved them on after eighteen months. The day after they left, I started speaking to the gardener and he started answering me. I do not believe the manager ever knew he had not heard correctly. I did not have to uncover his nakedness. But it was hard for me to stand up under the thoughts the other employees and higher managers in the organisation had about me. God honoured me when He moved them on.

There is another powerful lesson to learn from the story of Noah and Ham. Even though Ham had sinned, Noah put the curse on his son Canaan. So, even though we seem to get away with our bad behaviour, we need to realise our sons and grandsons can be the ones to suffer the consequences. Genesis Chapter 9, verses 24 to 25

I worked in the crisis centre for nine years. It was a blessing to be allowed to work in such a place. We had a lot of freedom to love people and help them. While

working there I met some of the most beautiful women and saw miracles through changed lives. Three of the four staff were Christians.

We had a glass fronted office positioned so we could see the accommodation block, and watch the comings and goings. We could also view the seventeen steps leading to the area for women seeking accommodation. Every now and then, a woman coming down the steps would pause at the bottom, and look around her with a puzzled look on her face. She would come into the office and say,

“What can I feel?”

It was the presence of God she could feel. It was very strongly on that place. One of the Christians was made redundant in September 2003, three months before my retirement date. When I left, I was replaced by a non Christian. There was a strong Christian man who came occasionally to replace one of our night workers when they were ill. We had no relief night workers. He had come a number of times before I left, and enjoyed the work. A friend told me, after I left he came in to do two nights. He did the work, but told them he would not work there again. The reason he gave was that whatever had been there to make the job pleasant was gone and he did not want to work there again. Of course, what had gone was the presence of God!

The Lord has spoken to me many times about the presence of God since this experience. The people who carry it are not aware of what they are carrying or of how powerfully it can affect people around them. Humility is an essential quality required for the person on whom it rests so, even when they see the effect on others, they do not realise that it is what they are carrying. I didn't realise it was there because the three Christians who worked in the crisis centre carried it. I thought it was there because we prayed on the premises every morning, and because it was a Christian organisation. It is only in the last few years He has shown me the presence is carried by the people who walk closely with Him.

He told me it was the actual presence of God on Peter in Acts that caused his shadow to heal people, as he passed by them. He may not even have known someone was healed. He was just walking by. His presence rests on those who have intimacy with Him, who seek Him and Him only, with all their hearts. People who are prepared to pay the price to be a disciple. Acts Chapter 5, verse 10.

He has told me the shadows of such followers will again heal as they pass by sick and demon possessed people. And the followers may not even know it is happening.

Another of the qualities that being a disciple brings is the love of the truth. Jesus is the truth, and His disciples can do no less than love the truth if they love Him who is the very essence of truth. I have found, over the latter years of my walk with Him, two things; it is very hard to be untruthful in any way, and I recognise when someone is not being truthful.

One day when I was still with Tim, I had a very strange experience. A friend of ours had married, and he and his wife invited us for an evening meal. During our time there, she asked me if I was going to a women's meeting the next day, as she would like to go but did not have a car. We went to the meeting together. As she was getting out of the car, when I dropped her home, she said she and her husband had enjoyed our company the night before, and would invite us again soon. As she spoke these words, I knew in my spirit she was lying. I answered her without revealing what I was feeling. As I drove away, I said to the Lord, "Why would she need to lie about such a thing? I don't care if she never invites us back." He said to me the reason I had picked it up as a lie was because she had decided to leave her husband and knew she would not be there to invite us again. I told Tim when he got home and we both waited to see what would happen. A week later the husband rang and told us she had left. It astounded me that I could hear something so hidden, so easily. Listening has always been the skill I have. But this kind of listening can only come from the Holy Spirit.

One day, years ago, a nineteen year old boy in Perth heard God speak to him. The boy's mother lived on the Gold coast and she was a friend of mine. When she told me what her son had heard, I believed immediately that it was from God. I wrote it down in excitement. I did not, at this time, realise how important these few words would become in my own walk with God. I did not realise that, twenty years later, I would still be talking about them, and passing them on to others, to help them in their Christian walk. The words were; "God needs us to:

1. Know the Word,
2. Have no kinks in our armour,
3. Be unshakable."

Doesn't sound too hard, does it? For a number of years, this is what I thought. The words stayed with me as important words, but not impossible to achieve. I praise God that He is the author and finisher of His work in my life, Hebrews Chapter 12, verse 12, because I was about to find out differently, to find out the depth contained in these words, especially the command, "Be Unshakable."

I am by birth a Queenslander and, except for the ages between twenty seven and thirty seven of my adult life, I have resided on the Gold Coast. One night, I was praying with another intercessor, when we both received a message simultaneously; "Samantha will have one child and you are to go to Sydney at this time." Samantha is my oldest daughter and had always said she would never get married or have a child. When her brother's first child was born, she could not nurse him comfortably, she held him at arm's length.

The morning after receiving this message, I rang Samantha and told her what God had said.

Her reply was, "Yeah Mum, well you know that isn't going to happen."

I then forgot about it.

A year later, at the end of year 2001, while I was working in the crisis centre, I wrote December 2003 on a piece of paper and pinned it to the notice board. It was to be my retirement date. I would turn sixty in July 2003.

Early in 2002, I had a call from Samantha.

“Did you mean what you said last year?” she asked.

“Goodness,” I replied. “What did I say last year?”

“You said you would come to Sydney if I had a child,” she said.

“No,” I replied. “GOD said I was to come to Sydney WHEN you had a child.”

“Well,” she said, “I have decided to have a child. Gavin and I are going to get married, buy a house and a family car, then I will go off the pill and have a child.”

“Then I will come to Sydney,” I replied.

So it was that, in October 2003, Joshua was born, and I then retired on the 2nd of January, 2004 and came to Sydney, just as my retirement date paper stated.

We bought a unit in Dee Why, between us. I planned to return to Queensland at the end of three years, when I felt it would be reasonable for Joshua to be in full time child care. However, during my third year, some ladies in a writer's group I was attending expressed concern about my leaving Joshua completely, after spending so much time with him. He would be affected by my leaving, and I knew I would miss him very much. One of the women lived in a Uniting Church village in a Northern Beaches suburb. The units were at a price I could afford after selling the Dee Why unit, but I did not want to go into a retirement village. I felt I was too young for such a place. I very reluctantly drove up to the village to see her unit. As soon as I got out of the car, I could feel the peace of God that passes all understanding descend on me powerfully, and I knew I was to come there to live. God always knows. I moved in on the 3rd of December 2006.

I want to digress a little for a moment, to say that not only are there some of the nicest ladies I have ever met living here, but also some of the most courageous. A lot of them live with crippling pain and debilitating illnesses, yet they get up every day and blow dry their hair, put on their make up, dress nicely, and go out to get the most enjoyment they can from the day. They are an inspiration. I am very happy living among them. One of God's purposes in bringing me to this village will unfold in Chapter six.

I am going to write now about the early years in Sydney. God needs me to do this as it is only in speaking it out fully that the reader can come to see how spiritual

authority is given to someone. By spiritual authority I mean here, the ability to speak forth a word from God and have it come to pass. It is not prophesy or the role of a prophet. It is different. I will be writing about a church on the Northern Beaches and also about a healing ministry in the same area. So if you think you are one of the people I am writing about, rejoice, for God wants to be seriously involved in your lives. He has a plan to reward you for all the years you have invested into the lives of His people. Humble yourselves and pray; seek His face and He will be true to His word.

The early years in Sydney were very hard. Joshua was three months old when I started minding him five days a week. I had to support myself for the first year from my savings. I could not claim a benefit for twelve months, so money was very short. I could not afford to go out even for a coffee and cake. I felt physically challenged for I didn't realise the lifting of one baby could be so tiring. I found a nice church and made some friends, and that helped. Unfortunately, as the pastors got to know me, they did not understand my walk with Jesus. I had to leave after two years.

When Joshua was first walking, I was making our lunch in the kitchen one day. I didn't hear him come up behind me quietly. I turned and knocked him backwards. I have very quick reflexes, and was able to get both my hands under his head to prevent him from hitting it on the hard floor. But we continued to fall, and I came down on my elbows on the tiles.

Then came two weeks of the most incredible physical pain I have ever known. But it was early in December, and I had a ticket to fly to the Gold Coast for Christmas, where I could rest. So I just kept on struggling and praying my way through the pain. Because of all the pain from the mercury poisoning damage to my body, I lived in the attitude of,

“Well, it is only pain. No one will be able to heal it any way. So I will just keep praying my way through it.”

After three weeks of rest and sunshine on my body, I came back to mind Josh with no pain. But the first day it came back as badly as at the beginning. I again prayed my way through the week. But on the Friday night, after Samantha picked Josh up, I went on my knees before the Lord; I was desperate. I told Him if He didn't take the pain away, I was going home.

I woke up on the Saturday morning with no pain and I didn't suffer from it again. It took me a year to find out I had three hairline fractures of the vertebrae between my shoulder blades. One nurse told me I should not have been walking, much less minding a fourteen month old baby. It has left me with a weakness in this area, and periodic pain.

One would think, if God asks you to do something, you have a right to expect Him to look after you while you are doing it.

Isn't that how God works?

Well, no, it has not been my experience. I had been taught in the abuse of my childhood that I had no rights, and that was a bad thing. Then Jesus taught me I had rights, and that was a good thing. Then, when I obeyed Him and married Tim, I lay down all my rights, gave them to Him, and that was an even better thing. The only right I have now is to know, whatever happens, He will bring good out of it.

A couple of years after I married Tim, I was diagnosed with breast cancer. I went into hospital for a lumpectomy. I was to have a mammogram before the operation, and tubes with tiny hooks attached were to be put into my breast and around each lump, three in all, so the surgeon could find them easily, as they were very small. All this without anaesthetic. They told me it wouldn't hurt. They were wrong. They now use anaesthetic in this procedure.

I waited in the mammogram room for about fifteen minutes. I was scheduled for the first operation the surgeon had that morning. A nurse came and said the person who was an expert in the procedure had rung in. He had a flat tyre on his push bike and was going to be late for work. As the surgeon was already there, they decided to get someone else to do the procedure. He came and tried, but he could not get the tubes and hooks around the lumps properly. They decided to leave the three he had put in the wrong place, and wait for the expert to arrive. I had been standing in the machine for at least half an hour, by this time. One of the consequences of the mercury poisoning was that I couldn't stand in one place for any length of time. I had to be careful of standing in queues for more than a few minutes or I would black out. One of my miscarriages happened because I got caught in a queue at the bank. I was still in the mammogram machine so could not sit down. The nurses had to wrap me in cold, wet sheets and hold me up to stop me from losing consciousness.

The expert finally came and did the procedure quickly and perfectly. The surgeon performed the operation. I did not have cancer. Again, because of the mercury poisoning, I did not heal well and was in hospital longer than expected.

When I came home from hospital, Tim took me to a Baptist camping ground in Northern New South Wales to recuperate. On the Sunday morning, we went to the Church service in the complex. There was a beautiful cross on the wall. I had been struggling internally with the Lord saying,

“If I'm your child, why did I have to go through all that? Why did his bike get a puncture on that morning? He said he had not had a puncture in the nine years he has been riding to work. Why did it happen the one morning I am there?”

The Lord spoke to me very clearly and said,

“If my cross is not the most important thing in your life, I can never use you for my purposes.”

I immediately stopped grumbling.

I gave a testimony to this at the church we were attending. In fact the pastor asked me to come back and give it again at the evening service, for those who were not at the morning service. A number in the congregation were in tears. The husband of one of my friends said to her,

“I didn't enjoy hearing that message.”

But he listened. I saw changes in him almost immediately. I had not been able to relate to him, but now I could.

The Church at which this message was given was the same Church that later had their candle stick removed. It was also the same Church who had the prophet turn cerebral palsied when he was giving a prophesy one night.

From this time on, my walk has been based on the following scripture:

Habakkuk Chapter 3, verse 17 to 19.

*“Though the fig tree may not blossom,
Nor fruit be on the vines;
Though the labour of the olive may fail,
And the fields yield no food;
Though the flock may be cut off from the fold,
And there be no herd in the stalls;*

*Yet will I rejoice in the Lord,
I will joy in the God of my salvation.*

*The Lord God is my strength;
He will make my feet like deer's feet,
And He will make me walk on my high hills.”*

It has carried me through my marriage break-up with Tim, my son's breaking our relationship, and many, many other incidents where I could have asked, “why me?” but didn't.

The fractured vertebrae was yet another area this scripture carried me through.

It opened the way for developing spiritual authority.

I want to talk about another quality we need to have, crucial for being part of the Bride. It is a story that also will illustrate how Jesus speaks to me. One day I was walking. I try to do 40 minutes a day for 6 days a week, and it is one of my times to commune with God. This morning He reminded me of the story of the ten lepers He

healed. Luke Chapter 17, verses 12 to 19. Only one came back to thank Him and to praise God. He said to me this morning,

“Do you think I needed him to come back to thank me.”

“No Lord I don't,” I replied.

What it was about, He said, was that, in the one man coming back, a grateful heart was developed. I knew that he would go away and continue to be healed. He needed to come back and thank me and praise God. This opened the way for more healing and wholeness, and relationship with me. In the other nine, because they did not come back, they would not develop a grateful heart. Oh, yes, they would have been grateful for being healed of the Leprosy, but unless they came back and gave God the glory, they would not have developed a grateful heart. Thus they may not ever be able to grow from then on. A grateful heart is a quality God appreciates, because He knows the fruit it will bring into our lives.

I had spent the first two years in Sydney in a pentecostal church. I was still not secure in driving further than the suburb I lived in, to find a church. But I had been forced to leave that church as the pastors did not understand my walk with God.

Just before I left, an American evangelist came and ministered to every one in a Friday night meeting. She gave me this message.

“Healing in another capacity for you, not only because God desires to see the fullness of healing manifest, but He wants you to start praying for some people around you. You have a real unique circle of people around you, and you reach a lot of people others don't reach. And He just wants to take that to another level.”

The Sunday after I was forced to leave that church, I went to a mainline church on the Northern Beaches. An independent healing ministry used the church premises and I was asked to join. I was still minding Josh so I couldn't help in the day time, but I was able to go on Thursday nights, to pray for the following day. I began to do that, feeling it was the fulfilment of the message I had been given.

In the last couple of years before I left Queensland, I had met a lady who was an intercessor. We became friends and prayed together, about once a month. Two months before I left for Sydney, we were praying at her house, when her husband came to join us. He had never done that before. The Lord told me he had unforgiveness in his heart. I told him what I had heard, and asked him if it was true. His wife, my friend, answered really quickly for him.

“He's a Christian man, of course he does not have unforgiveness in his heart.”

I did not say any more, but I knew I had heard correctly.

I did not see them again until one week before I left the Gold Coast. They had

moved house and were doing a lot of renovations. As soon as I saw the husband that night, I heard the Lord say he had cancer and was going to die. I had to leave for Sydney knowing this, but not saying anything.

My friend rang me about a month after I was in Sydney, and told me the doctors had said her husband had cancer and was going to die. He lived only four months. I could not pray for healing for him because of the message the Lord had given me: I could only pray for peace and release from pain. It came out during the four months, he did have unforgiveness in his heart.

Two years later, my friend moved to Sydney to live, and came into the healing ministry. She was a godly woman, with an incredible gift of hearing from God in visions, and words. But she was still grieving and very angry with God. I tried to help her with her anger but it seemed to come out against me also. I believe she had sensed I had not been able to pray for her husband's healing. I had gone to a female elder in the church and tried to get help for myself in dealing with her anger, but the elder told me she was sure I could cope with it.

I woke up one morning thinking about the day ahead, which involved picking up my friend for bible study that night, when I was overcome by a severe panic attack, and I knew I could not handle my friend's anger any more. I could not even go near her. I had suffered panic attacks for years when I was really sick, so I recognised what was happening to me. I knew I could not see her again. While her anger was against God, I could just cope. But now it was directed against me, I couldn't. I had to ring her and tell her I could not take her to the bible study. The Lord did reveal to me, as the weeks went on, there were much deeper things happening between us than I had realised, and I could not physically be in her company any more. Because of my breaking the friendship with her, I was put out of the healing ministry by one of the directors, the one I had gone to for help and who had told me I could cope.

Then came my walking in forgiveness for both of them. The letting go of the ministry, even though I believed God wanted me there. The praying for good things for these two women. The walking as Jesus showed us to walk in His three and a half years of ministry. No, I did not reconcile with either of them. It is the attitude of heart that brings forgiveness. I could not be her friend again.

So what did I learn from this experience? Because it is what we learn about ourselves that is so important for the building of the Bride. The gospel of Matthew, Chapter 7, verse 4, says we cannot remove the splinter from our brother's eye until we have removed the log from our own eye. The Bride makes herself ready by learning from her own mistakes, and understanding why we behave as we do. And, of course, the first step to this is taking responsibility for our own behaviour, thoughts, feelings, heart attitudes. So if we can each learn about ourselves first and foremost as our tiny piece of His bride, then she will be ready to be presented without spot or wrinkle.

The first thing I learnt about myself in this situation, was that I had let circumstances between my friend and me go too far and too deep. I should have tried to communicate to her that there was a problem much earlier, and not given up until we both understood. Scripture says, “If you bring your gift to the altar but know your brother has something against you, leave your gift and go first and be reconciled to your brother.” Matthew Chapter 5, verses 23 to 25. In another scripture it says “if you have something against your brother.” Mark Chapter 11, verse 25. So, in any instance where there is friction between people, both are responsible to sort it out before it goes too far.

My fear of rejection and my fear of man had not yet been healed, so I was unable to go to her. I didn't get this healing until later as shown in Chapter 6. I did nothing until she was so nasty to me that I had the panic attack. I lost her as a friend. This in no way lessens her responsibility. She had the anger problem. She sat and waited for me to apologise to her and, when I didn't, she went back to Queensland. I only know this because I was told, third-hand, she was waiting for me to apologise. I believe she did not have wise counsel at this time. Our counsellor should be the Lord Jesus and the Word of God.

This experience enabled me to learn many valuable lessons. A number of people thought I had done the wrong thing and judged me, but I have never been one to complain about others. They did not know the full story. I was being bullied and put down by her, but no one knew anything about it. She had made a really nasty remark about one of my daughters, which upset me very much as I believe words spoken by a Christian are powerful. Those who judged me had not walked in my shoes with her.

The saddest thing to come out of this situation was the behaviour of the pastor of the church we both attended. I had gone to him the next Sunday, to tell him what had happened from my side. He yelled at me and told me my friend was not angry with me. She was. He didn't know the history of my knowing her husband was going to die. He didn't know my strong walk in the spirit or my intimacy with Him. She had always believed she was stronger spiritually than I was. I believe this was part of her anger. He did not let me say one word about what I had experienced from her. He just yelled at me and walked off. I immediately withdrew.

I did nothing about this. The one thing I could not handle was being yelled at. I knew the pastor had been taken in by my friend, as it was obvious during the bible study that he valued her input. On the other hand I was quiet and only contributed now and again. He did not see my struggle to love her, to help her, nor her anger or bullying tactics. Yet he judged she was worthwhile, and I was not. And it was not until I left the church some four years later, that I learnt he was involved in the decision to put me out of the healing rooms. Hence he offered no support when I went to him that Sunday morning. He already knew all about it. He judged me without even listening to me or asking to speak to me about what may have been happening to me, to see if I was okay.

Unfortunately, people who can perform may be better thought of than those who can't. They can take others in even though they may not be speaking the truth. This lady could perform and I couldn't. One point of interest here, I had been given a beautiful word many years before this by a godly older man. He said that I had no guile. He was right. When God began moulding me, He didn't teach me a lot of things I would have learnt had I gone through the fourteen to twenty one years growth stage as a normal teenager. He didn't teach me how to perform.

Later on, in a different situation that is written about in Chapter six, this pastor breached my confidentiality, and spoke wrongly about me to the son of a man I had hoped to marry. He was not honest about this either.

How does a pastor get it so wrong, and behave in such a judgemental way? He used to say he was responsible for my pastoral care, but the only time he did this was to see what church I was going to go to when I finally left his church. I did go and speak to him a couple of times after the breach of confidentiality, but at no time did he tell me he had contributed to the decision to put me out of the healing ministry or admit to the things he had said against me.

Then one day, I was forced into another situation where I had to resign from the healing rooms and the church. Again, this pastor sided with the other person, without asking for my story. He is the only person I have ever held anything against. I believe if you put yourself in the position of pastoring people, then God holds you responsible for those sheep in your fold, and you need to have better skills and less judgement than this man had. After about nine months, the Lord told me I was not to hold anything against him any more, so I stopped. I knew God couldn't work in his life while ever I held anything against him.

One day, another lady from the same church yelled at me for at least an hour over the issue of the lady who could perform. She felt I had done the wrong thing, and I should apologise and continue to help her as there was no one else available to pick her up for church or bible study. I just let her yell at me and did not answer her back. She was a lady of whom I had thought very highly. As I drove away from her house, the Lord showed me how important it was to not change my mind about her. He told me I needed to see her exactly as I had always seen her, that of a godly woman, with a gift of wisdom and His call on her life. He told me I was never to change my opinion of any one upon whom I had seen the call of God, just because they seemed to change their opinion of me. He led me to see that, if I changed my mind about who she was, I would be changing who I was. I choose to be someone who trusts God totally to bring His plan for each of us to fulfilment.

This same lady also made a judgement that I had broken the man's heart whom I write about in Chapter six, by calling off the wedding. Yet he was the one who ended the engagement. When I very gently told her the truth, she just said "Oh," and walked away. She did not apologise for her wrong judgement, nor her nasty words.

I have found many times people will credit me with doing things which are not true and, more importantly, being someone I am not, with nasty qualities I do not have. I believe this is because the Lord says if we really follow Him, we will be hated as He was hated. John Chapter 15, verse 18.

Remember, this book is only about how the Lord has dealt with me, and how He has called me to walk in order to be part of His Bride. There are many, many things I could have said, actual truth, that would make my stories even sadder, but to do this, I would be expressing opinions and judgements about others that I am not prepared to make. It does not help me to grow, or allow God to work in the other person's life, if I talk about them, even if it is the truth. Thus I leave you, the reader, to discern in the Spirit the depth of my experiences, by the things He has taught me from them, and the amazing healing I have received.

As an incredible example of how God works when we have been wronged, one day the wife of the director of the healing ministry and I were parked in, and could not get our cars out to leave the church. She came over to me and asked me how the healing rooms were going. I told her I had been put out some months before. She said her husband did not know this. I said he must know. But it turned out the female director who put me out, and the pastor, had kept it hidden. When his wife told him, he immediately had me reinstated. I ministered there very happily for three and a half years. God definitely wanted me back in the Healing rooms. He organised it completely.

As another example of how we must walk correctly by scripture, there was another man who got unbelievably angry with me at this time. He asked me to pray for a trip he was making overseas. I did this and received a word for him. I am really careful about giving words to people as I believe it takes away from their intimacy with God. So, when I get a word for someone, I have a number of ways for God to confirm that He wants me to give the word. I did this with the word I received for this man, and believed I was to give it to him. He went away happy, but I didn't realise, at the stage of maturity I was at during this time, that he had heard the message in line with his own agenda, not as God gave in line with His agendas. He came home so angry with me, he could not even speak normally to me. Yet, he did not do as scripture requires. He did not come to me to express his anger. If he had, he would have found the Lord had confirmed the word He gave to me, as his plane left Australia. The Lord explained that the man had misinterpreted the message, and told me how he had seen it as opposed to how God had meant it. When he came back so angry, the Lord gave me a scripture that explained the heart attitude of the man perfectly. I took it to three people who knew him well and each said yes, it was a correct word.

There is another learning from this. This man expected his results instead of God's results. But Acts Chapter 2, verse 47, says God added to their number daily. He is happiest with a heart that acts in obedience, and is satisfied with the increase He gives, than one who has expectations which, when seemingly do not get fulfilled, gets angry or beats himself up and thinks he is a failure, or doesn't have enough faith. The faith we need to have is the faith in knowing who God is, and trusting Him that

He will bring about the results He wants, out of our obedience. Again, obedience is the most important word. What the Lord told me with this man was that what he had expected in his time, would come to pass in God's time.

Just think how much progress we would have made in building the Bride, if he had been able to come to me and talk about it, or if I had been able to overcome my fear of his anger by going to talk to him. Not only would we each have grown as our individual part of the Bride, but we would have also built a stronger Body of Christ in our church. Unfortunately, he changed his opinion of who God had shown him I was, and still feels the same today. I held to my belief though, in who I had seen him to be, a man who works tirelessly for God's people, and who has a heart God loves.

The very saddest thing in all this is, Jesus came and walked in a way He wants each one of us to walk. For three and a half years, He gave us examples of who he wants us to be as His Bride. But we do not follow the example. For He said,

“If you love me, you will keep my commandments.”
John Chapter 14, verse 15.

The Church in Australia focuses on so many things that are not the core issues of God's heart. His heart is one of relationship, firstly with Him, and then with each other. The Gospels contain everything we need to do as He invited us.

“Come follow Me.”

He chose twelve men to specifically train in following Him, twelve men all very different from each other. Twelve men who would be a type of each one of us. Twelve men, each uniquely individual, who together would then represent His body, His Bride, to a world going to hell. They formed a perfect example of the Bride He was building, even though they were not perfect men, just as today He doesn't have perfect men and women with whom to work. But He knows, if we truly follow Him, we can do it, be part of His Bride and help Him build His Church.

Just think what we could do in His name if we had a church that really made a decision to love, whatever the cost, and to believe in each other as God's workmanship.

Sometime, during my healing years, I heard the sentence, “It is only the love you give away that you keep.” This went deeply into my spirit and became part of my healing. With my Lie, if I focused on the love, affirmations, encouragement others gave me, while lovely to have and essential to building community and relationships, it was a shaky foundation on which to build who I am, one satan could topple any time he chose.

If I focused on what I gave away, whether it be love, acts of service, encouragement, I found out who I was in God. If I didn't give, I didn't keep the good feelings I received. But when I gave to others, I kept the good feelings. Slowly, I

built a stable foundation by focusing on the love I could give away, and yet, at the same time, keep.

No, this is not prideful; in fact it is just the opposite. It is where God takes us when we have had the courage to look at, and accept, who we really are, good and bad. There is no pride after that, as we always have within us the bad we have acknowledged to keep us humble. But to keep things in balance, we also need to accept the good in us. This is one of the ways of becoming unshakable.

So, how do we build the Bride?

I believe the way Jesus walked in His three and a half years on this earth is the example He left us to follow in making ourselves ready as His Bride. Yes, we need to follow every word He taught. But it is more than that. It is walking as He walked. He has shown me that everything contained in the gospels is spiritual warfare. He didn't just defeat satan on the cross. He was defeating him every day he walked among us, by every action and every word. He started with His obedience to be baptised by John, even though He didn't need to be. Then, from the forty days in the wilderness and the temptations from satan at the end of His fast. Every day, every word, every action, was the true spiritual warfare, defeating satan.

He showed me that every time I was hurt yet refused to repay evil for evil, every time I forgave, always looked for the best in people, walked through extreme pain yet refused to hate, and many more things I have written about, I was defeating satan in my life, and building spiritual power for God to use. This was the spiritual sword Tony saw in my arms. And every step of the way, I was making myself ready as the Bride. I am unable to write eloquently about this. I believe God wants each of you who read this book, to water the seed I have planted, harvest your own fruits of intimacy with Him, and make yourselves ready as the Bride.

There is one more important issue we need to deal with in making ourselves ready to be His Bride. This goes back to Gideon, after he has put out the fleece and believed God did have something for him to do. God asks him to gather together an army. Gideon assembles together 27,000 men. God then tells him to send home all who are frightened. 24,000 go home. Next God tells Gideon to send the 3,000 who are left down to the water to drink. He then tells him to send home all who bent down to the water to drink, and to only keep the ones who lifted the water in their cupped hands up to their mouths, keeping their weapons ready. There were only 300 left in his army. There are two important issues from this exercise.

Firstly, we need to be aware of our surroundings at all times, and aware of our own behaviour. God can only use those who are aware. We also need to keep our weapons ready to fight. Secondly, we need to have the humility to be able to let God have all the glory always. It is hard to claim any glory when you win a battle with only 300 men. You have to know God did it.

There is a scripture here God asked me to include before I close this chapter. Ephesians Chapter 5, verses 25b to 27 tells us of Jesus' plan for His church;

*“and gave Himself for her,
that He might sanctify and cleanse her
with the washing of water by the word,
that He might present her to Himself a glorious church,
not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing,
but that she should be holy and without blemish.”*

He means these words. This is how He wants us to be. Really strong words. Are you, the reader, prepared to allow Him to do this in your life? He deserves nothing less. This is the Bride for which He died.

The Lord had ended my intercession for Australia on Pentecost Sunday in June 2001, on a hill behind Uluru, as I waited for the sun to rise. He then gave me the intercession for His church in the Pope's private chapel, in the Vatican, in Rome in August 2002. He had ended this intercession when it was no longer necessary for me to be with Joshua five days a week. He was about to take the intercession for the hard hearts of Australian men, and the intercession for building the Bride, and combine these two into one. He wanted me to walk an intercessory burden for Him out in my own life. He didn't tell me what He was going to do.

Chapter Six

An Intercessory Burden

In December, 2006, I moved to a uniting church retirement village in a Northern Beaches suburb of Sydney. One of the residents attended a combined churches prayer breakfast on the last Saturday of the month, and I started to go with her. At the August prayer breakfast, a man came and sat opposite me while we ate, and we talked a little. The lady who was sitting at the head of the table did most of the talking as she knew Samuel Priest very well. I took very little notice of the man as, being committed to the single life and to the work the Lord had for me to do, was my priority at this time. I had been on my own for ten years. I was very happy and fulfilled, and to be in a male/female relationship was not something I even thought about.

After breakfast, we moved into prayer time. Sam shared about forty days he and a lady from his church had just completed, a time of travelling deep in the Australian outback, and of having two hours of listening prayer each night. He really got my attention. I remember thinking, “Wow, a man who would want to do such a thing! He must be very special.” I then took in his appearance, beard and longer than normal hair, twinkling blue eyes, and a constant smile on his face. I remember thinking, “He has just the kind of looks I like, too. I wish I had met him thirty years ago.” However, there was definitely no interest on my part, in seeing him as a potential husband. I was deeply committed to my Lord and to what I believed was His will for me, to be on my own for the rest of my life. I have written about this in one of the short stories called a “Christmas present from God,” in Chapter 7 called “Just to tell you who He is.” I did try to speak to Sam after the meeting ended, but as he was very well known, everyone wanted to talk to him. So I went home and promptly forgot about him.

About ten weeks later, a few people from our village were going to a concert on the Sunday night at a local church. I was invited, but I wasn't keen as I rarely went out on a Sunday night. However, I decided to go. Sam was there and we introduced ourselves to each other again. Then, after the concert, during supper, we talked. He told me about a trip he was about to make to Wilcannia to visit the Aboriginal Community, and about his love for, and involvement with, the Aboriginal people. I told him about the travelling my ex-husband and I had done some years before, into outback Queensland and Aboriginal communities. I also told him of my hope to buy a VW Trakka in 2009, to head off on my own to see what the Lord may have for me in a prayer ministry in the outback. I was in a healing prayer ministry already, but my heart was always with the Aboriginal people. I did mention to him that maybe we could travel together sometime. He wrote down my details, then we both went off to

talk to other people. My thoughts at this time were still only on a prayer partner ministry. I did not want to give up my singleness.

Sometime later in the evening, I was sitting talking to one of the others from my village when Sam came over and sat in the empty chair on the other side of me. He talked to both of us, in particular about an eightieth birthday party that friends in America had thrown for him earlier that year, in February. I remember thinking,

“I feel like he is making sure I know how old he is. Why would he do that?”

As we continued to talk, the three of us, Sam kept reaching for my hand and squeezing it. Then, just before we left, he leaned across and kissed me on the lips, and said,

“You are very special.”

I remember saying,

“You are very special too.”

Apart from that, I held myself together until I got into the back of the car we had come in. Then began three nights and two days of dialogue with God. I felt like Jacob wrestling with the angel. I have described this time as utter devastation. But there was a definite element of excitement in it also. The things I sorted out with Him were,

“Is this your plan?”

“Are you really giving me someone special to be in my life, as opposed to just someone to travel with, and pray with?”

“Are you really asking me to give up my life, a life I love and enjoy with You, and to covenant with you to love him as a wife?”

By the time I woke up on Wednesday morning, I knew that the Lord was involved, that it was His plan, He did want me in marriage with Sam, based on the scripture,

“One can put to flight 1,000, but two can put to flight 10,000”

[and] *“A three strand cord is not easily broken.”*

Ecclesiastes Chapter 4, verse 12.

I then entered a covenant with God that He could bring about His plan, and I was willing to be obedient to His will for my life. I then went on with my life, not thinking about this new plan. Once I had agreed to be obedient to the Lord's will, I was peaceful and unconcerned.

I had rung Renee after the concert, on the Sunday night and told her what had happened. I told her of the turmoil I was experiencing, wondering if the Lord was doing something, and feeling He was, but not sure. I trusted her spiritual walk to hear clearly. Her words were,

“Mum, God is going to make up to you through this man, for every rotten thing that has happened to you. Go for it.”

The Sunday after the concert where it all began, I went off to my church quite happily. During the worship, I heard the Lord's voice say,

“You are to go and lay yourself at his feet, as Ruth did with Boas.”
Ruth Chapter 3 verses 3 and 4.

No, the sermon was not on Ruth. I went home and read the Book of Ruth. Another scripture leaped out at me, one I had never been aware of, even though I had read the Book of Ruth many times. It was Chapter 3, verse 10.

“Blessed are you of the Lord, my daughter! For you have shown more kindness at the end than at the beginning, in that you follow not after young men, whether rich or poor.”

I knew He was talking directly to me, as I had refused marriage to two men during the ten years since my marriage ended, both of them younger than me, one considerably younger. Yet the fact that Sam was eighty [I was sixty four] did not even enter the picture. So, again He confirmed to me that this was His plan.

As I prayed about Ruth Chapter 3, verses 3 and 4, I found the first decision the Lord required was for me to leave the church I was in, and go to Sam's church in another suburb. Other decisions were to come from these two verses of scripture. In fact, they were to become the foundation of my commitment to be Sam's wife.

The next Sunday, I knew Sam would be in Wilcannia, so I went to his church to see if I would like it. I liked it very much, and decided to go there, even if nothing further happened between him and me. Parking near the church I had been attending on a Sunday was very difficult to find, and I had been leaving the car on the top of a very steep hill, and walking down. This was okay and good exercise, but it was early November, and walking back up was becoming hot and tiring. Also, as written in Chapter 5, the pastor in the church I was attending did not accept me. I had thought of leaving a number of times. The next Sunday came and I was faced with one of the hardest decisions of my life. I knew if I went to Sam's church and he was there, I could be starting something that would change my life forever. Sam had not used the details I had given him to ring or come to visit, so I was not at all sure he would be responsive to the Lord's plan. I so much wanted not to go, but there was also the excitement of what the Lord may be doing. So I went and he was there. He came and sat in the pew in front of where I was sitting with two Village residents. He reached over and took my hand and squeezed it and he did look pleased to see me.

After the service was over we talked, mostly about his trip to Wilcannia. During this talk, the pastor came over and gave me a hug of welcome. She said to Sam, “ This lady is very special.” He said, “ I know.” Then I walked back to the village with the other two villagers.

There was going to be a Christmas concert that night, involving the Sunday school children. The two other residents were going to the concert, so I walked up with them. As we went through the shopping centre, Sam was also walking to the concert. He came across and joined me. Then, as we went into the concert hall, he sat beside me. There were a number of smiles exchanged between us. During a cup of tea afterwards, he produced a pink envelope with my name written on it, and asked me for my phone number. He had lost the original. Again I walked home with the villagers. We did not stay for the sausage sizzle that followed the concert. I am not one to seek out a man and make my interest known. I did not even have the ability to flirt. Having missed the fourteen to twenty one years' social growth period, due to my withdrawal, I had never learnt the skill. Except for my obedience, I could not give God any help in bringing His purposes to pass.

Sam rang me on the Monday night and invited me to come to his home for a meal on the next night, and to watch a video. I knew he quite often did this, have people over to watch a video in his home theatre. I said yes. The next morning, the Lord gave me another meaning for laying myself at Sam's feet. He told me I was to leave all decisions to Sam. I agreed to this, not knowing what I may be letting myself in for. I could not have realised though, even in my wildest imaginations, the decisions he would make during our four meetings in five days that I would placidly agree to. Absolutely mind blowing! So began the most beautiful encounter I have ever experienced, and it led to an incredible love relationship, put together by the Lord Jesus. Not so we could have such a beautiful love at this late time in our lives, but that the love He had given us for each other would be the foundation for a ministry of prayer and healing He wanted us to do. Sounds wonderful, doesn't it, and I believed it was. We were so suited to each other. Real soul mates. We laughed so much. I was blissfully unaware of the wall of hatred already building against me, even in those first few weeks.

Sam proposed after our fourth night of seeing each other. This was in the beginning of December, 2007. We planned an engagement announcement early in the New Year, and a wedding in the Spring. So we began to get to know each other and plan our future together. I was still committed to Joshua, my grandson, during 2008 up until the end of January 2009. Sam and I then planned to buy a camper van together and travel full time into the outback and Aboriginal communities.

While on the outback prayer journey in July, 2007, Sam had prayed for God to use him to combat the sex with Aboriginal children scandal that had just surfaced. He had read about it in the Territorial newspaper in Alice Springs. In the very same edition was a full page colour advertisement for pornographic DVD's available in The Alice and Darwin. Because the Northern Territory is not a state, and therefore not under state laws, but under Canberra's jurisdiction, they can openly advertise

pornography. The advertisement he saw was for five outlets in Darwin and Alice Springs, with thousands of titles available and new ones being released every week.

Sam has worked in Christian film making all his life, and he asked God to use him to get Christian DVD's out into the Aboriginal communities. When he arrived in Cunnamulla on the return trip, there was a young couple playing and singing Christian songs in the park. Two Aboriginal women were also listening to the music. Sam went over and introduced himself and started talking to them. He discovered they were both on the Aboriginal Council in Cunnamulla, and that they had a vision to bring Christian DVD's into their community. Before Sam left, they all prayed and covenanted to work together to achieve this vision.

Accordingly, our first plan was to travel to Cunnamulla in March 2008, when I could get two weeks off from minding Joshua. It would show how we travelled together, and what the Lord wanted us to do. I had been in a prayer meeting some six months earlier when Dave Garrett arrived from New Zealand. He said he had a message from God, that he was to come to Australia and place the sword of Gideon into the hands of Aboriginal leaders, and that revival would start among the Aboriginal people. I believed the word he spoke, and wondered if God would give me the opportunity to pray for, and place the sword into the hand of, an Aboriginal leader.

The trip to Cunnamulla went extremely well. We enjoyed each other's company and worked together to put up the tent at our overnight stay at Narromine. There is one occurrence I want to comment on. We pulled into a small, very small, just a couple of buildings, town called Coolibah for lunch on the second day of travelling. We had finished our meal, and I had started to pack our lunch things away, when I turned around to find a large Golden Retriever lying very quietly behind me. He was in very poor condition, very thin, coat matted. He did not look at all like the beautiful dog he could have been with love, care and attention. I had not seen or heard him come into the picnic shelter. I had a loaf of wholemeal bread with me, so I broke it into pieces and slowly fed it to him. When we left the shelter, he had gone back towards the buildings, and two little girls were talking to him and patting him.

As I was driving away, tears flowed down my cheeks and I started to sob. I could not stop. I came to realise that what I was feeling was not ordinary sadness for the dog, but an intercessory burden for the Lord. He then began to give me words. He said the dog was representative of His special people. He said there were many in the churches, that they were all sitting quietly, not recognised, not even noticed by their fellow church goers. They had been waiting so long, they felt like the dog looked; hungry, uncared for, not presentable, unnoticed. But their time was coming, and soon. I had felt exactly as He said. Since then, I have found this word has come to pass in my life. It is God's plan in the time of the end, to do as He did with Gideon, to use the least son or daughter, of the least family, of the least tribe. Gideon Chapter 6, verse 15.

We came into Cunnamulla and met up with the beautiful Aboriginal woman Sam had befriended. On our first full day, Sam was able to show a Christian DVD through the school system, with only a few hours notice. There were about ten mothers and forty children and teenagers at the first showing. The next day the teenagers were still talking about it. That was when I caught the vision of how powerful a DVD could be as a tool in an outback area. He showed a second film before we left seven days later.

As soon as we arrived, the ladies had asked us for a prayer meeting. On the Saturday night, we organised one. There were three Aboriginal women; Sally, Molly, and a beautiful tiny grandmother called Evie. During this prayer, I asked Sally,

“What do you want Jesus to do for you?”

“I want to be a leader of my people,” she replied.

I then took her through a visionary experience of receiving the sword of Gideon in the spirit. It was real. She could feel the sword placed into her hand. She then went into a deep place, under the power of the Holy Spirit, and we could not awaken her. She was sitting on a kitchen chair, slumped over. As time went on, we decided we needed to shift her into a lounge chair. This was about eleven pm. For four very much older and quite smaller people, we didn't know how we were going to do this. I'm sure we had supernatural help as she floated across so easily. However, the movement caused her to wake up a little, and she began to talk about seeing gates and a road with people on it moving towards the gates. After a time of talking about this, she prophesied to each of us. She told Sam he had to go and look after the children. She said it two or three times. When he did not answer, she said, very sharply,

“Sam! Are you listening to me? You must go and look after the children!”

The children she was talking about were those children from a place called Boggabilla, a truck stop where news was just breaking that truck drivers were having sex with Aboriginal children.

Her word to me was that I was to talk to the women, and show them the way to go as I knew the way.

Our next trip was in August that same year. We arranged to go to Boggabilla after Cunnamulla. Sally gave us the name of a woman Aboriginal elder in the town. So, after another successful time in Cunnamulla, we set off to find her. We pulled into Goondiwindi in the most spectacular electrical storm I have ever seen. Boggabilla was seven kilometres over the NSW border. While Sam filled the Landcruiser with diesel, I went into the service centre to find out what I could about the town. I needed to know if we would find food and accommodation there. It was about five pm and, because of the storm, very dark. The young woman behind the counter was horrified. She told me there was nothing available there, that it wasn't a safe place to go to, and we should stay in Goondiwindi for the night. When we got back into the

vehicle, Sam and I looked at each other, then headed off to Boggabilla! We weren't going to let fear stop us. We found good quality accommodation at a reasonable price, and enjoyed a home cooked meal from the owners of the motel.

The next morning, we found the elder we were told about. After we explained our purpose to her, she sent us to a female evangelist named Helen. Sam and I, when we travel, are very country looking, dressed in old felt hats and jeans, and Sam with his beard, and both of us with long hair and at our ages, we didn't look very presentable. Helen was on the phone when we arrived in her office. We waited about ten minutes for her to ring off. I'm sure as she came out to us, she was wondering what we could possibly want. We explained our hope of showing a movie there that night, and the purpose behind our visit. She organised an email to the school to advise the children and parents of the movie to be shown. She also organised the use of the community hall for the night. She told us she had too much to do that night and would not be able to go. Then, as we were leaving, she asked us to pray for her. She was touched by the Spirit and wept. She said she had never felt the presence of God as strongly before. She told Sam she had been praying for someone to come along to film her conferences for her. She also wanted to learn to edit the film and put it on DVD's so she could send it to Aboriginal communities where there were no pastors. She asked us if we would be able to meet her in places where she was speaking, and for Sam to film the conferences. Sam had all the skills necessary for this. We agreed to do it. We knew then that Boggabilla was the place where the Lord had planned for us to go. Cunnamulla is a very clean, trendy, highly integrated town, but Boggabilla is a very dark place.

Sam and I made a commitment to go to Boggabilla for four days every month, as soon as we possibly could. We would drive there on the Saturday, go to church on the Sunday with the community, show a movie on Sunday night, then spend a couple of days in the town to see what happened. Sam had a vision for more than showing the DVD's. He wanted to find a small number of teenagers in Boggabilla, and train them in the art of film making, as well as editing and making their own DVD's. They would then be able to help Helen with her conferences, but even more importantly, they would learn to write and film their own stories. He had approached a couple of organisations for funding, and this seemed as if it would happen. Sam's desire was to pass on his skills while he was still able to do this.

But the wall of hatred around me was about to explode and we would never go to the Aboriginal people together again. Sam took his daughter with him on another trip to both Cunnamulla and Boggabilla. On his return, he said the trip was so different from when he and I went. The presence of the Lord was not there. One of the aboriginal women later told me that his daughter could not relate to them at all, not like I had been able to, and they were unable to relate to her.

One Friday, a few weeks after our return from Boggabilla, Sam and I had gone out, bought wedding rings, a new queen size mattress for his bed, and booked a honeymoon to Norfolk Island. Afterwards, I dropped him at the local shopping centre for a luncheon with male friends.

I came to his home that night to cook an evening meal for the two of us. We were seated and had said Grace when Sam, with his head lowered, said he had made an appointment with a solicitor for Monday afternoon. He said it was to make a new will. I knew in my spirit immediately what the appointment was really for. We had both talked about the necessity of making new wills as soon as we were married in eight weeks time. We had agreed to make our wills exactly as they were. I had told Sam that I would not sign a prenuptial agreement, as my word in God was trustworthy. If he could not trust me, then there could not be a true marriage. I knew who I was and how trust worthy I was. I had told this to him within the first few days of our relationship. Sam wasn't a rich man; he only had a house, and a modest one at that. I believed the fear of my taking any or all of his house from his family was the real reason for the appointment. This was proven to be true because they [Sam's son went with him] asked the solicitor how much I could take if Sam became ill and I had to look after him. Many had judged I must have been after money because of the age difference. But we can only judge others by what we subconsciously know we would do in the same situation. I was doing what my Heavenly Father had asked me to do. The fruit of my being with Sam was in the success of our travelling and in our happiness. These were the only rewards I wanted. Also, all those who judged failed to discern my walk in God. I told Sam if he did die and I had given up my unit to marry him, my faith and trust in God was so strong, I knew He would already have the provision for me.

So I left without eating my meal, telling Sam I needed to seek God for what was happening. I then went and sat on the beach and talked to Him about the problem. About an hour later, I rang Sam and asked him if we could talk about it after his appointment on Monday. He agreed. The next morning, Saturday, he rang me and told me he could not marry me. This was in September, eight weeks before the wedding date. He did not give me a reason.

But of course, money, fear of losing his house, a prenuptial agreement were not Sam's real reason for not being able to marry me. The reason we give for why we do things is our justifying. Remember Eve in the Garden. Our real reason is the subconscious stress of our Original Lie manipulating us.

On the Sunday before, Sam and I had met a man, a friend of his, at the local shops after church. I had not met this man before. His first words to me were,

“Hi, I'm ----. I'm a bit of a rogue as I've been married three times.”

I replied, “Don't worry, so have I.”

This triggered Sam's Lie that he needed an unblemished reputation to counteract who his Original Lie told him he was. My goose was cooked. How could he marry a lady who was so open about her life? He didn't know it was because I had dealt with my Lie and was deeply secure in how much my Heavenly Father loved me. I had nothing to hide from anybody, as God knew every thing about me, and loved me still.

In Matthew Chapter 19, verses 16 to 22, a rich young man comes to Jesus. He says to Him,

“I keep all the commandments. What else do I need to do to become one of your followers?”

Jesus tells him,

“Go and sell all you have, give the money to the poor, and come follow me.”

The rich young man turned sadly and went away. His heart's desire was to follow Jesus. But he had a power and a principality operating over his life that was too strong. Scripture says we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities and powers in heavenly places. Ephesians Chapter 6, verse 12. Jesus had called that rich young man to wrestle against the power and principality in his life. Scripture doesn't tell us any more about this young man. I choose to believe that he did go away, and wrestle. Did he overcome? I don't believe that the overcoming is the only important issue. I believe it is in the wrestling that we can still grow and be more like Jesus. i.e. follow Him. I don't believe selling every thing we have and giving it to the poor is what Jesus would have us all do. This was a specific word to this young man, so he could wrestle against the specific principality [Lie] over his life. Jesus still calls each one of us today to wrestle against the specific principalities and powers in our lives in order for us to become more like Him.

After Sam broke his agreement to marry me, the Lord showed me many things, but this was a gradual process as I grew and healed. It took twelve months to receive all that the Lord wanted me to know. The full truth He showed me was that, when Sam dedicated two hours of listening prayer every night in the outback, asking God for a soul mate, and committing his life to the Lord to help him fight against pornography in Australia, his heart was right. This was Sam's true self. He truly desired a deeper, more intimate walk with His Lord. He didn't know what it would cost him. The Lord answered his prayers. However, God's main plan for all our lives is for us to become like Jesus; sons and daughters. Having a happy marriage and ministering to the Aboriginals would not have made either of us more like Jesus. Only struggling and following truth can do this. Sam had a principality over his life. He needed the wrestling against this, in order to achieve God's greatest desire for him, to become a son.

Sam had a worldwide reputation that he had carefully built. An esteemed film maker, fifty two years of successful marriage, forty two years in the same church, a lay preacher, holding a bible study for twenty five years in his home, a tireless worker for building God's kingdom, being well liked, and loved by the many he had helped. Jesus knew Sam had a principality of reputation in his life, something he himself had built and could count on, instead of building the qualities on which Jesus wanted him to count. Jesus was asking Sam to lay down his reputation in order to follow Him.

But the soul mate Jesus had given him had a major flaw. She did not care for reputation because she had suffered an extremely dysfunctional childhood which led to her going through a serious emotional illness. Part of the consequences of this was her being married and divorced three times. The worst part was she went around telling every one. You see, it was important to her to be completely open and honest. To give her testimony of what Jesus had done to turn her life around was what she believed her Lord wanted her to do.

“They overcame satan by the blood of the Lamb and the word of their testimony.”

Revelation Chapter 12, verse 11.

I, of course, was the woman. God gave us an incredible love for each other, such laughter, and true soul mates in our desire to help our indigenous people.

So, for Sam, the wrestling began. How could he marry a woman who would tear down his reputation? Yet how could he go against the love that was so beautiful? He couldn't lay down his reputation. He had to turn away sadly and leave. Did he wrestle against the principality? I believe he did, but it is hard to overcome so many years of living under the principality.

For myself, I praise God He put Sam and I together. The love we shared, the happiness, the laughter, finally dispelled the Lie in me, that no one would ever be able to love me.

God's plans for us are always perfect. He knows what we need to do to become more like Jesus, to fulfil our desires and His desires. His ways are very different from ours, and it is hard for us to understand them in our limited human condition. He calls many today to wrestle with the principalities in their lives, whatever they may be.

He has told me to tell anyone who reads this book and feels they are the person I am talking about, REJOICE! He is calling you to overcome, to wrestle, to become more like Jesus. What a privilege to have God, the Creator of the universe, so involved in your lives. I pray that you follow Him and allow Him to mould you in His ways.

Since Sam broke our wedding plans in September, 2008, I have walked through some of the hardest stuff I have ever experienced. I was shattered. It was totally unexpected. I did not see the signs. It is now the beginning of March, 2009. Since last year, we have had a few attempts for an ongoing friendship/relationship, whatever we could salvage from the wreckage. But this has led to a number of relationship breakdowns, and further rejections for me.

So, where was I when I met Sam, emotionally, mentally, spiritually? And where am I now? When I first went out with Sam in December, 2007, I was still struggling with the social aspect of my life. I could not feel comfortable mixing with people.

Nor could I go up to people and start a conversation. I was still very introverted, and people felt my insecurity. Yes, I had a number of spiritual gifts, but no one knew they were there. I had tried to use my gifts in healing rooms in 2006, but I was so totally rejected that I pulled back and stopped using them. All except the gift of intercession, which was between God and me, and did not need to involve other people. I was still a misfit, maladjusted to social life. Sam was, and is, such a social person. When I was with him, I had to go to places and into situations that really challenged me. I did it all, and, in most cases, “managed” quite well.

Since September, I have had a miracle. Every rejection has made me stronger. My spiritual gifts have increased and become more powerful. But my social skills have increased dramatically. I am no longer fearful of going up to people and starting a conversation, even with people I do not know. The biggest miracle is I am no longer afraid of rejection. I feel confident and able to control situations. I even confronted someone this week, very gently, but with authority. For me, who has let everything happen to her, who has never protected herself in a healthy way, nor been able to set mature boundaries, this was a first. A male was trying to take away my authority as a team leader, and I was able to take my authority back without anger or guilt, just simply take it back. I am amazed how much I have changed in six months. If all the social outings and excitement and planning a wedding could only bring me to “manage” quite well, how did all the rejection, humiliation, embarrassment and pain cause me to grow so dramatically?

To me, it is one of God's miracles!

It is through tribulation and suffering, and how we handle it, that He is able to heal and grow us emotionally. I have finally come to the place I believe God needs us to be in for these times. Unshakableness. I have come to the place the young nineteen year old said we needed to be if God was going to be able to use us. Of course, we still need to always be obedient. Obedience is the most necessary requirement. Moses was not allowed to enter the promised land because of disobedience. Just a simple thing in that he struck the rock instead of speaking to it. Read the story of this first in Exodus Chapter 6, verse 6, then in Numbers Chapter 20, verses 8 to 12.

There were many people who did not think I was suitable for Sam, mainly because of my quietness, but also other things I do not know of. They judged, gossiped, even slandered. This came through many of Sam's family, friends, people in his church, and in his bible study. It also came through a couple of pastors who knew me and people I had been with in other churches. I can honestly say, except for one pastor, I bear them no resentment, or unforgiveness. The healing God planned for me through a happy marriage to a lovely man, He still accomplished. I praise Him for the freedom He has brought about for me, despite massive opposition. I also know God's plans in the spiritual are being fulfilled. There were three hearts desires in God's plan for Sam and me to be together. God's desires, Sam's desires, and my desires. Even without the marriage taking place, I believe God's desires have come to pass; I have become so much more healed and set free; Sam seems to have changed and, I pray, is beginning his own journey with God to wholeness. Most important of all, spiritual

changes are taking place. His word is always true. He took something that was meant for evil, the hatred against me, and against Sam and me being together, and He brought amazing good from it. Romans chapter 8, verse 28. He is definitely “a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him.” Hebrews Chapter 11, verse 6. The best thing for me is that God is faithful. The word He gave Renee has come true. He has made up to me for every rotten thing that was ever done to me.

Do you, the reader, believe what scripture says?

Do you believe that “*Jesus is the same, yesterday, today and forever?*” Hebrews Chapter 13, verse 8.

One of the ways God builds faith in us is to put us in situations where He can prove to us that His word is true, that He is indeed “a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him.”

When Sam broke our wedding plans, I had never been so totally shattered. I had believed that the plans God had for my life were to give me “a future and a hope.” I had believed that, even at our ages, He was not only giving us the happiness we had, something I had never experienced before, but He was also going to bless us with a ministry both our hearts desired, to be out with Australia's original owners, our precious Aboriginal people.

Now it was all gone. The hardest pain for me to handle was, I was not given a reason. I couldn't believe it nor understand it. We had travelled so well together, had the blessing of being used by God in our two trips to the Aboriginal areas. We had fun and laughed all the time. What was happening? I asked the Lord to only let me grieve for seven days. On the morning of the seventh day, I woke up and I was no longer crying all the time. My mind was no longer going in circles of why? Why? WHY? I was in a place where I could hear the Lord give me revelation. It took Sam over three years to truthfully give me his reason for breaking the wedding plans, but then only in part.

On the Saturday night, a week after the broken dreams, I attended the healing rooms' prayer night. The Lord spoke to me about what had happened.

The first thing he told me was that the pain I was feeling was the same pain He felt in the way the church treated Him. He began to speak to me about the book of Hosea. He told me that He hadn't been able to tell me the full reason He had asked me to be with Sam because, if I had known, I may not have committed myself as fully to him and so not have suffered the pain at the break up so completely. He told me that, right from the beginning, His reason for me to be with Sam was a prophetic intercessory walk to demonstrate the walk of the church with Him. I was representing Him and Sam was representing the church. He told me He had put me with the man with the hardest heart He could find. This was a fulfilment of intercessory prayer He had called me to about the principalities governing the nation of Australia. See Chapter five. It was a spiritual battle. Depending on how both Sam

and I behaved, spiritual ground could be won. Of course, “the hardest heart He could find” needs to be explained. Many, many men in Australia have hard hearts, just as already stated in the principalities over our nation. God could have picked one of a hundred other men. But he needed to find a man with the qualities I could fall in love with. Sam was the only one who had every good quality that would cause me to do this.

Sam had told me, after the breaking of our plans, that so many of his friends, church members, and bible study members, were very pleased he was not going to marry me. I had known for some time that members of his family had not wanted us together. This was where most of the hatred I experienced came from.

As an example of how the church treats him, Jesus showed me two major issues from the reaction they all had to me. The first was my intimacy with Him. The gospel of Matthew 7, verse 21 explains this. Intimacy with Him is when He knows us, as well as us knowing Him. It is not us just believing in Him. It is a relationship of deep communication between Him and us, where we tell Him everything about ourselves, even though He already knows it. It is our willingness to be completely open with Him. It is also about our enjoying Him, and His enjoying us, of having Him with us every moment of the day, and including Him in every area of our lives. It is about knowing He has all the answers, and trusting Him so fully that we go to Him for the answers, instead of leaning on our own understanding. Proverbs 3, verse 5. Even though almost every one I met through Sam was a Christian, it would appear that no one had the intimacy with God to go to Him to find out how He saw our being together. There would have been a different outcome if they had been able to do this. A year after the breakup, at a seminar, a friend of Sam's said to me he was very sorry we had not married, as he had never seen Sam so happy. Even though Sam's family saw he was happy, they still did not accept me. I was so overcome by this man speaking so nicely to me, I kissed him on the cheek and gave him a hug. His wife was with him. I had never met her before. I hope I did not offend her with my actions. It was so overwhelming for me to find one person who saw things clearly, I acted in gratitude for his kindness in speaking it forth.

I feel to say here that Sam gave me permission to use his name, as long as I did not denigrate him. I found I was not able to use his name so I have used a false name. I knew his Lie was not healed at all, and he would not have been able to handle my using his real name. But there is no condemnation for Sam, as he is in Christ Jesus. Romans Chapter 8, verse 1. He has struggled his whole life with a Lie planted when he was only 14.

Ezekiel says if I see a brother's sin, and I do not tell him, then his blood is on my hands. This book is much more than that. It is the Lord Jesus saying to His church, through me as an intercessor, there are some things you are not doing right. He has used my life for His purposes because He knew I would willingly do anything He asked me to do. Every day my words to Jesus are,

“There is not one person anywhere in the world who has more to be grateful to you for than me. I owe you everything.”

I also want to talk to you about Sam. Everyone has two children inside them, one beautiful and one not so beautiful. Sam's beautiful child is just that, so beautiful. He is loving, gentle, has a servant heart. He gave me ten months of love as I have never experienced love before. I will always be grateful for that. He was my soul mate. We laughed every day. The healing I have received from this experience was partly due to the love Sam gave me. Unfortunately, his other child is the stronger, and Sam was not able to overcome seventy years of lifestyle choices. Sam played a major part in God's plan but, unlike me, he had far less choice in his participation. He had not dedicated his life to God to use in any way He chose, as I had. I believe God knew Sam could have succeeded, despite his age, to overcome the Lie of reputation and for us to marry and travel to Aboriginal areas. The ability to relate to the Aboriginal people as we both could, and the spiritual strength of two in agreement as we demonstrated in praying together, was something few carry. We are all so special and valuable to God, I believe He weeps as Jesus wept over Jerusalem [Luke Chapter 19, verse 41], when we are not able to walk as He wants us to, as He knows will set us free and give us abundant life. He is slow to anger, and He never gives up on us. The first night Sam and I talked at the concert, he saw me as a tall woman. I'm not. He realised, as he came to know me, God had let him see me spiritually. Combined with the unbelievable love He gave us, this was to help Sam to overcome. But it wasn't enough.

Many times during our ten months, Sam expressed his heart for a spiritual awakening in his church, bible study, friends, all the different organisations to which he belonged. Sam's heart was real. Somewhere he had tasted a deeper revelation of God. He knew what it was he had experienced, and he wanted more for himself and for everyone he knew.

Lastly, if you think you recognise yourself in this book, then God is speaking to you. Please listen. The one thing in my relationship with Jesus that leaves me awe struck, is that He is so deeply concerned with all our lives. He is continually working to bring each and every one of us to our full potential in Him, to give us the abundant life He promised us. His whole life was lived to show us a better way, the way of love. Where would we be without His love?

Through Sam's breaking our engagement, I experienced two examples of Jesus loving me through people. It was the Saturday morning for our Christian writer's group to meet when Sam told me. I had been attending this group for about 2 years, working on this book. I could not go to the meeting. I spoke to the leader of the group's father and briefly told him the story. That afternoon, he and his wife came knocking on my door, with an invitation to go out with them. They showed such real love and caring. We had been in the same church for two years, and I have found them to be the most loving family I have ever met. When I was first in the church, each one in the family,[father, mother, son and daughter,] looked beyond my quietness and the barriers I had put around me for protection, to encourage, befriend,

love and accept me, so that I could heal. I had just come out of a church where I had been judged and forced to leave and I needed to heal. The wife called our church, "The Motley Crew," and so we were. But it is a church where people who are different can be helped by the congregation to feel accepted.

The other person who helped me at this time was a reverend from a neighbouring church. He had come to know me at a monthly prayer breakfast. I wrote to him, expressing my hurt at the way I had been judged, and my pain at the break up. He responded very quickly. He helped me to see that, because of my illness many years before, I still had a barrier in place which people sensed. As a consequence they kept their distance, for I was not easy to talk to. I could understand what he was saying and agreed with him. I tried hard, but it was still difficult for me to feel comfortable and fit in. This man gave me so much time and so much caring over the next three years.

No one else, except for the beautiful women in my village, reached out to me at this time. Later, a number would say to me they had been meaning to ring me to see if I was alright, but they hadn't had time. One even said she didn't contact me because she felt it was better to leave me alone to sort myself out. I didn't find either of these responses loving.

In the gospel of John, Chapter 17, verses 1 to 26, the Lord prays the prayer of His heart for us, that we would love one another as He had loved us. By this would all men know that we are His disciples. Even though I was quiet and put up barriers, it was still up to each person I met through Sam, to accept me, to not judge me, and to love me as Christ loved the church. I do not have any of the negative qualities many of them attributed to me. I was just quiet.

On the 29th of July, 2009, it was my birthday. Sam and I had arranged to go into the city to buy a birthday present he had promised me earlier, but hadn't yet been able to buy. He had a doctor's appointment early, then he was going to ring me and we would go into Sydney by bus. By this time, we knew there would never be any relationship between us except brother and sister in Christ. We would not even travel to the outback together. The Lord had given me the ministry of the Original Lie and I was finding teaching people about this very valuable and fulfilling.

The phone call I received was very different to the expected one. Sam had something wrong with his heart. I had to take him to emergency immediately. Two days later he had a pacemaker fitted. At his check up, after the operation, the doctor found the pacemaker was not functioning properly. So, back to hospital to have the operation done again. He went to stay with his daughter on the south coast to recuperate. He was given a book, "More," by Simon Ponsenby. God visited Sam through this book. He showed him that the purpose for him in the beautiful intimacy we had experienced during the twenty one months we had known each other, was to show Sam who He, God, was, and how to have intimacy with Him. It was never about marriage, ministry, or helping him stay healthy longer so he could continue to

travel to his beloved outback. It was all about showing Sam what he could experience with his Heavenly Father.

At the same time as this was happening, a young man had come into the edges of my life. The second time I saw him, the Lord let me see into his soul, to the deep hurt buried there. When God allows you the privilege of seeing this in someone, it causes you to love them unconditionally. It also let me know God has a special plan for his life. I had known him for about ten months through talking after church and a few lunches together in a group. It was his birthday and I had asked him if I could buy him an evening meal in celebration. He agreed and, on the Sunday night, we went to a popular hotel on The Corso in Manly. Firstly he talked, very gently about some issues in his life, and in particular one where he felt I had let him down. I listened, agreed, and apologised. I was then able to lead him to see a different perspective, one where everything in our lives is in God's hands, for there is never anything He is not involved in, bringing good out of things we cannot understand.

*“And we know that all things work together for good
to those who love God and are called according to His purpose.”*
Romans Chapter 8, verse 28.

After that we relaxed, enjoyed the meal, he drank some wine. We were sitting on a curved leather seat which went around two thirds of the table. We snuggled down into the seat, sitting close together, talking deeply. At one stage I felt it was getting late and I should go home. When I voiced this, he said it was still early, could we stay a while longer. So we ordered a cup of tea and settled back. We toasted each other and pledged to be friends for the rest of our lives. When it was time to go, and we were walking back to our cars, I linked arms with him and, as we walked further, it became arms around each other's waist. What is so remarkable about this? I was sixty six, he was forty seven. Yet we could be comfortable together and share a very special intimacy. After a hug, we went our separate ways home.

The next morning, the Lord spoke to me and said this was how He wanted to be with each of us, and for us to be with Him. He wanted us to know His provision for us; I had bought the meal and the wine. The relationship He wanted was for each one to be able to speak to Him fully, even when we think He isn't doing the right thing. To be able to then have Him teach us and gently lead us in His ways. To be able to walk through the journey with our arms around His waist, and His arms around our shoulders. To laugh with Him, and feel close and comfortable with Him. To not worry how late it is, but to want to stay in His company. To know He wants us for His friend. To have a hug at the end of each day. This is true intimacy with Him.

And now back to Sam. What finally happened? We had not seen each other for many months and rarely spoke on the phone. I had reason to call him one day. I don't know why, but I started to explain to him about the Original Lie, and how it came into our lives at about twelve to fifteen years of age. He told me of an incident that happened between his father and himself, when he was fourteen. He said it had left him with a stigma that had been with him all his life. Suddenly, I had full

understanding of what had happened to him. I saw very clearly from this disclosure how he had needed to make a great reputation for himself to try to undo this. But no matter how much he built, he could not overcome the stigma felt by the fourteen year old he had once been. Note here the word “stigma,” a very powerful word, the kind of really strong word that tells you it is part of an Original Lie. I felt such compassion for him, for he had spent seventy years trying to undo a Lie, which he was unable to do no matter how much he achieved.

I then knew it was this incident at fourteen years of age that had prevented him from marrying me. All my hurt and anger disappeared. This was the thing the Lord had been showing me. Once you know what has happened to someone at that age, it is so much easier to accept and love them. We have all been damaged and prevented from becoming who we are meant to be in God. If we could just realise the fight is not against flesh and blood, but against principalities and powers, we would cease to hate each other, and bear each other unforgiveness and resentment. We would turn our anger against the prince of the power of the air, where it belongs. Ephesians Chapter 2, verse 2.

At this point I would like to write more about God using Sam as a representative of the church. He was raised in the church with generations before him as pillars of the faith, even to the beginnings of Sydney Cove and long before. All his life he has been a dedicated church goer, forty two years in the church he is in now, a lay preacher, volunteer nursing home chaplain, running a bible study in his home for twenty five years, and on the board of a number of Christian organisations. With a heart desire to be used of God and to have a deeper walk with Him, he is truly a good representative for the church, and my role has been to represent Jesus, as one whose only qualification is that of a disciple who loves Him with her whole heart. So, what did God show me from this intercession that He wants His people to know?

Please remember here that the Lie makes us not nice people. When I talk about what happened while Sam and I were engaged, Sam was totally under the influence of his Lie. He was not the person God made him to be, nor the person he was with me, the one I fell in love with. I had given my life to Jesus to do as He willed with, but Sam had not. He didn't even understand the concept. Yet God used Sam's life in this intercession. He knew Sam would fall in love, and that he would struggle because of this. So, God both had, and has, a plan for Sam's life. He always knew Sam's heart, who he really was inside his Lie; a beautiful person.

I am about to go into one of the most important parts of this book, certainly very important to God. There are actually sixteen messages about which the Lord Jesus wants me to write. He had given them to me straight after Sam had broken our engagement. I had written them down somewhere, but then forgotten all about them. This is how He reminded me of their existence.

Last weekend, Sarah moved from her parents home to shared accommodation. Her bedroom was not spacious and she was looking for a very small bookcase. I had one for which I had been trying to find a different place, but I had no room to put it

anywhere else. The spot where I had it was very crowded and it always looked untidy, so I offered it to her, and she accepted it. Last night when I could not sleep, I tidied the place where the bookcase had been. In the process of doing this, I came across a journal which I hadn't seen for two years or more. In it I found I had written the messages the Lord had given me. I knew I had written them somewhere, but I certainly did not expect to find them in this journal.

The most amazing part is, this week I had planned to start the part of the book where I needed this information. As you can see, God had it all organised. Isn't He incredible!

The first thing He showed me was that “*the church craves excitement.*” Yes, “craves” is the word He used. He has shown me this is the open door that allows them to be deceived by the lying signs and wonders of end times, and to be deceived by the ones who will come saying they are Jesus. Matthew Chapter 24 verse 4. An adulterous generation seeks a sign. Sam was so excited to have me on his arm, to have my company at the numerous dinners and functions we attended. He used to say to me, “You are such a fun girl.” I brought excitement into his life. I took him places he had never been before, such as prayer meetings. I also introduced him to people who were different to those with whom he normally mixed. The Lord showed me the reason the church craves excitement is because it does not have true intimacy with Him. For not even the greatest excitement in the world can compare with true intimacy. Tim and I loved the words, “Do not be like the Hebrews who knew God's laws, but be like Moses who knew God's ways.” Psalm 103, verse 7. Let me describe to you the excitement of true intimacy, just one incident in hundreds, of knowing God's ways.

In 2011, Bill Johnson, from healing rooms in America, was holding a week long seminar in a church in the western suburbs of Sydney. I did not know he was in Australia until my young friend Sarah, an amazing woman of God, rang me and asked me to go on the Sunday morning, the last day he was speaking. Sarah had been to one night time meeting. I felt to say yes. I am not one to go to speakers, or watch teachers on TV. I don't know how to bring up podcasts or anything else on computer. I only use word processing. I rarely go to teaching seminars. Also, I hope you will have heard through what I have written so far, I do not endorse any speakers. I mention a couple of books that I have enjoyed, and that God has used to talk to me from. But my endorsement is only ever for Jesus and the Holy Spirit. I do not read many christian books, as I want my mind to be free of other's opinions, so I can not be influenced by anything but God's voice. As an intercessor, this is crucial.

As Bill came up to the podium, he said,

“I am going to preach a message this morning that I have been wanting to preach all week, but God wouldn't let me until today.”

I looked at Sarah and she looked at me, and we smiled. We knew God had held the message up because He wanted us to be there together to hear it. No, I don't believe

we were the only two He did this for on that particular morning. I believe there were others that Sunday who experienced the same thing. I certainly pray there were.

There is a story in the Gospel of Luke Chapter 24, verses 13 to 32, about two men travelling to Emmaus, when a man comes alongside them and talks to them. They eventually realise it is the risen Lord Jesus who walked beside them.

“Didn't our hearts burn inside us?” they said.

This is the excitement of true intimacy, only it is far, far more than excitement.

That Sunday morning my heart burned within me as Bill unfolded his message. It was something God had already started speaking to me about earlier that week, a totally new concept for me. But the message that morning gave me full understanding of the new teaching He was bringing. It wasn't in what Bill said, in fact except for the first word, Pure, Bill's message was different and I didn't really hear it clearly. For me, the real message was in what the Spirit was filling in for me as Bill spoke.

How can the excitement of the world, or the excitement of the false signs of the end times, ever compare to having your heart burn within you when Jesus comes alongside and talks to you. If you, the reader, do not have this intimacy with Him, I beg you to not be satisfied with anything until you experience this.

The second learning for the church is as follows.

One day while I was driving, [I find the Lord speaks to me a lot when I am driving] I heard Him speaking forth a list of things. It covered things I had given to Sam as well as things I had done for him in his house. I said to the Lord,

“You know I don't care about those things. Why are you listing them off for me?”

His answer was, “What did you get?”

I answered, “Very little, but again I am not like that. You know me. I am a giver, and a doer. You know I don't care about anything I give or do. I don't expect equal in return. The Lord began to speak to me about His church “*not having a generous heart.*” He gives bountifully into a lot of our lives; yet, we do not give bountifully back. In fact, it is quite often hard to give a full tithe of our income, let alone fulfil the weightier matters.

When Sam broke our engagement, I returned to him everything he had given me except a Christmas present of a cross, and one CD I loved. Most of the things were from his house, not anything he had bought. He accepted everything back. He did not offer to return anything I had given him, not even the engagement present he had bought me which we had been using in his house, nor the one engagement present we

had been given by a resident in my village, a painting she had especially done for us. He did try to pay me for a suit I bought for him for the wedding, but I refused to take the money. He did not own a suit when I met him, and he had used it many times before the planned date of the wedding. It had given me joy to be able to buy it for him and to see him wearing it. Sam did give me money though for everything I had spent on the wedding and the honeymoon for which the insurance company refused to pay. Yet I did not feel this was from a generous heart, but from the guilt of knowing he had misled me about a wedding taking place.

Why am I dwelling so fully on this aspect of our time together? It is very important to the Lord that we be generous givers. Even when we tithe, we can find the weightier matters hard. The story about this is in Matthew chapter 23 verse 23. Sam tithed but found the weightier matters hard. In fact, I don't think he even saw them. As Jesus said to the Pharisees, you do tithe, but you use that as an excuse to not do a lot of other more important things. A generous heart finds the weightier matters easy to do, it just gives without thinking.

Let me explain how I received all these things from Jesus. There are sixteen of them. They didn't come one by one as I walked through them. They came one morning as I sat with Him, all together, sixteen of them. I jotted them down, but then, I didn't look at them again until a few weeks ago, when I found the journal I had written them down in, two and a half years after I had written them there. These are not my words, they are His. When I read what I have written in the journal, I do not know how to explain them except for the first two, as written above. I am waiting on Him daily to explain the others. If I do not get an explanation from Him, I will not write them in my own understanding.

This morning, it was, “ *they do not put me first.* ”

When I went with Sam into Christian places like his church and bible study, the Lord showed me I didn't speak their language. I didn't know how to talk about much, as all my talk was about Him. It wasn't a case of them excluding me, or my not wanting to communicate with them. It really was that we didn't speak the same language. It was as if I was in a foreign country, and I was unable to communicate effectively.

When I am with people who speak my language, I can be a chatterbox. I understand and can speak the language. We often say that, if we were speaking to other Christians, they wouldn't know what we were talking about. Those who put Jesus first in their lives speak a different language. Yesterday, I had lunch with one whose focus is Jesus. We spoke for two hours; no, not specifically about Him but, because He is the focus of both our lives, our talk is always tinged with Him. When we talk about our families, our work, our pleasures, our worries, He is involved, and even if we don't mention Him by name, we both understand that He is intricately woven into every part of our lives. It is our culture, as surely as anyone from any other culture, and we are different from each other.

How can you speak with someone when you don't speak their language, or understand their culture because it is different from your own?

How can you speak to Jesus when you don't speak His language?

In Acts, the people knew that the disciples had been with Jesus by the way they spoke.

I had found it very hard, in the time I was with Sam, standing alone a lot after church, and not saying anything in the cup of tea time after the bible study. I didn't speak their language. I spoke His. I didn't have their interests. I had His. Of course, after twenty years of silence, when I met Him, He taught me His language.

The language we speak shows which country we come from, and where we live. Our language shows we live with Him; He is first in our lives. There is no mistaking it. He can't be first in our lives if we do not speak His language.

I will not soften any of the sixteen things He showed me from the intercession Sam and I walked through with Him. It was for this time He prepared me. I will write truth, for only truth will set men free. These are His words. If you don't believe them, or don't understand them, go to Him and ask Him about them.

His next word was, *“they have no accountability and no responsibility.”*

When I first met Sam, he had apparently had a hidden agenda for many years. He was getting older and was afraid of having to go into a nursing home. He was looking for a wife who could help him to be able to stay in his home for a longer time. This was very understandable and perfectly acceptable. He could have married a woman financially secure and this could have happened. But he met me and fell in love. He didn't expect this.

I had told Sam within the first couple of days after he proposed marriage, that I would never sign a prenuptial agreement. I knew I was trustworthy, and I had promised him I would not take anything from his estate if he died first. I knew God wanted me to be with Sam; therefore I could trust Him to look after me if anything happened to Sam.

I had also had a word from God one day driving home after picking Renee up from school, when she was only nine. A voice filled the car saying,

“You and Renee will never know what it is like to die.”

I knew it was God's voice, but I did not know what He was talking about, having just come out of the Catholic church where such things were not mentioned. The next night, I went to a bible study with the AOG church. The pastor's opening words were,

“There are some people in this room tonight who will never know what it is like to die.”

I subsequently found out all about the rapture and the meaning of God's word to me. I have believed ever since that I will be alive when the rapture occurs. Therefore, I could believe that Sam may be alive also, and we would not have to worry about anything.

Had Sam and I married, I would have had to give up my unit in the Village. But I believed God already had a plan to look after me, if Sam were to die first.

Because Sam and I had a genuine love for each other, to sign a prenuptial agreement would have spiritually destroyed the one flesh we had, and needed to have, to go and do the things in the Aboriginal areas the Lord planned for us to do. He needed us both to walk completely trusting Him. He had showed me this in the travelling with Tim.

However, Sam had to walk in a way that was spiritually correct, in line with his being the spiritual head over me after we were married, as explained in the account of Adam and Eve. It did not matter how well I walked in God, and my trust in Him, Sam had to have a heart which was to be responsible for me after we were married. He was accountable, and responsible for me from the time we became one flesh. God said to me that morning that the church was not accountable or responsible. What did He mean? I believe it was meant in the physical, in how we deal with our wives, whether they be first or second.

But God showed me it has a much deeper meaning to Him. I believe it is our accountability and responsibility for our walk in Him, and the spiritual work He has left us to do. Jesus died on the cross for our sins and to defeat satan. I believe we are accountable for everything He did for us, all He went through, the pain, the suffering, the humiliation. It was our sin that put Him there. Sins past, present and future. We cannot say we have never sinned, for scripture says,

“All have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God.”

Romans Chapter 3, verse 23.

We cannot say we do not sin now we are Christians. Scripture says we fool ourselves if we believe this. So, everything He did, He did for us and still does for us. We are accountable to Him, and responsible to Him, for what we do with the incredible victory He won for us that day 2000 years ago. The Lord told me I would be able to line up everything I went through with Sam, to what the church does to Him today. We are accountable, church, for what we do with the victory He won for us, and entrusted to us. The whole of the intercessory walk Sam and I went through had nothing to do with who Sam was; it was totally to do with who the church is today, and what we do daily to Jesus. Sam just had a heart God could use.

When I was seeking from Him the exact meaning of accountability and responsibility, He gave me the scripture,

“Greater things shall you do, because I go to the Father.”
John Chapter 14, verse 12.

What does He mean by this? He has shown me that it is the extent to which we allow ourselves to be used by Him that becomes the greater things we shall do. He wants us to come to a place where He can work through us anything He wants to do. When He walked on the earth, only He did the work. Once He was no longer here, He sent His Holy Spirit to come into any who chose to walk as He decreed, so He could continue to work His works through them. This necessitates a complete dying to self, where we are wholly available to Him. The next thing He gave me follows on from this.

The church *“lets itself be controlled, in fact ,prefers to be controlled.”*

If we are being controlled by church doctrine, a pastor, the beliefs of a worldwide evangelist, anyone at all, we do not have to be accountable or responsible. They do it for us. It makes life easier. But to follow the Holy spirit fully, to commit ourselves to having an intimate relationship with our Heavenly Father, so we can hear from Him which way we are to go, that is how He wants us to be. We are to be controlled by Him only, to do as Jesus did, to only do and say as His Heavenly Father told Him to do and say. When I prayed for people in the healing rooms, I would tell them quite often,

“I will only speak to you what the Holy Spirit tells me to speak. If I do not hear anything, I will not pray anything.”

I have experienced, in these meetings, how one small sentence from the Holy Spirit can set someone free. One morning, for a lady seeking prayer, it was three words,

“She is delightful.”

Just three words from her Heavenly Father and she went home believing she is delightful. No words or wisdom I spoke to her from myself could have achieved this.

The word this morning was, *“they despise my beginnings.”*

One day, when we had been engaged a few weeks, Sam asked me to write out my testimony for his family, as they were having trouble understanding my mental illness and my three marriages. I did this for him but before long it came back covered in red pen slashes and heavy underlining. I was shocked. They disliked me even more. They had not looked at the miracle I had received through the Lord saving me in such an extraordinary way, or the healing of my life and my walk with Him.

The Lord showed me this was the same thing they did to Him when He went to Nazareth to heal and perform miracles. They did not look at who He was now and what He could do. They murmured and said,

“Isn't this the son of Joseph?” John Chapter 6, verse 42.

They despised His beginnings. They could not see past the fact that He had grown up amongst them as an ordinary man. He was unable to do any miracles in their town because of their unbelief.

So many people, besides Sam's family, could not look past my beginnings and see the incredible miracle He has done in my life. They could only see the dysfunctional childhood, and the mistakes I had made before I met Him.

But you see, it is not me they aren't believing in; it is still Jesus! They are unable to see that Jesus can still work the miracles today He did while He walked on the earth. For I am His walking miracle.

*“Is God hand shortened that it cannot save,” that it cannot do today
everything He did 2000 years ago?
Isaiah Chapter 50, verse 2.*

Jesus came to set the captives free, to heal blinded eyes, to bind up the broken hearted, to set at liberty those who are oppressed, to preach the gospel to the poor. Luke Chapter 4, verse 18.

Is He not able to still do this today? You see, I was all these things, yet He came and did it for me. None of the professionals I went to could help me. Would He leave me as I was just because no one could help me? Definitely not! He is still doing all the things He did when He lived among us, only He does it through His Holy Spirit. He doesn't need a man to do it. He just uses them to preach a message He can work through, like the priest God used that morning to show me Jesus was alive and loved me.

*“Not by might, not by power, but by My Spirit, says the Lord.”
Zechariah Chapter 4, verse 6.*

Just as they didn't understand me, they do not understand Him today, who He is, or how He works through His Holy Spirit. He says He came for people like me. Why does the church not believe in His love for us? It is Him they are despising, not me. They are still seeing the Jesus who died on the cross. They are not seeing the risen “King of Kings and Lord of Lords. The one with the flaming eyes and the two edged sword coming out of His mouth, with the voice like many waters, with seven stars in His right hand, and His face like the strength of the sun shining.” Revelation Chapter 1, verses 13 to 16.

The next thing the Lord showed me carries on from the above, in that the church “*does not value the true spiritual walk.*”

Sam and I had travelled to the Aboriginal areas. We had ministered to Sally in Cunnamulla, and to Helen in Boggabilla. These were certainly mind blowing experiences for me. Whereas I had ministered in the healing rooms quite strongly in the Spirit, seen many people set free just by the power of God through the team members, these two experiences were even greater than anything I had previously done. Yet when Sam and I were not able to travel to these places any more because of the broken wedding plans, both he and his family thought they could go and do what we had done. But they couldn't. They hadn't seen that the power God was able to use through Sam and me was the power given to us in the one flesh He had bestowed on us. It was no ordinary thing. They did not realise God had put us together for His purposes, and that no-one else would be able to do the same things. They did not value what God had done by His spirit in these places. For it wasn't Sam and me. We were only the vessels He had chosen to use. We were nothing special, but God chose to use us, together, and no-one else could take our place. Remember when God chose Moses. He tried to get God to use Aaron instead because he could speak more eloquently. But God had made His choice. Exodus Chapter 4.

Please note that I am not speaking here about Sam and me. I am speaking about the inability of the church to recognise God's plan and the true authority He chooses to place on certain people. No, it doesn't always make sense. We wouldn't have chosen those whom He sometimes chooses. But His ways are not our ways. Why do we not recognise it when God's true authority rests on someone? Why do we not recognise the true spiritual walk instead of the counterfeit we are so often offered? Satan is the master counterfeiter. It is said the counterfeit is so close to the original. No, it isn't. When you learn to recognise the true spiritual walk and work, it is nothing like the counterfeit. Satan isn't that clever. His only achievement is to deceive human beings.

This morning at 6am the next point was “*addicted to things.*”

When I first met Sam, he told me about his pet hate, which was Christians being addicted to things. I had never heard of this before, and I did not know that such a thing existed. As I came to know Sam and his family, I found they were also addicted to things. Sam couldn't see this, but to me it was very clear. Isn't it strange that the thing we dislike in others is often the thing that we subconsciously know is wrong in us?

When the Lord first gave me the list of the things He had against the church, I was amazed to find “*addicted to things* was on it.” I did not think it would be so important, and it has been one of the things on the list which I have found difficult to explain. Yet, this morning, the Lord has made it very clear. This is what He said.

He reminded me of the time I forced Sam to give me the book, “ Why Warriors Lie Down and Die,” by telling him he had never given me anything he really wanted, and I was asking him to not lend me the book, but to give it to me. He had laughed and agreed. Then he had tried to replace the book and couldn't. He had asked me if he would be able to borrow it back when he needed it, and I had said no because he knew that I would give it back to him if I thought he needed it. I wasn't prepared to do this. He then went to the library and found out they actually had the book which he could borrow any time. God had made this provision for him because He wanted him to break his addiction to things. However, Sam kept looking for the book, and ultimately found a copy in Darwin which he bought. He simply had to own it.

So, why is this addiction to things so important to God? He explained to me firstly with Sam, it is about provision. He has had me walk in the way that I am satisfied with whatever He gives me. I am not to provide for myself. For one year, many years ago, He told me I was not to buy anything for myself for a whole year, except underwear, and see what He provided for me. It was an amazing experience and one I thoroughly enjoyed. I did not go without anything. I received everything I needed at just the right time, and some things I really loved. It was about His provision for me. He wants us all to know His provision for us. God wanted Sam to know He will provide for him anything he needs. Sam has robbed himself of this very special experience. Tim went through it when the Lord provided so magnificently for our trip into western QLD, but he didn't learn from it.

Spiritually speaking, it is to our detriment in Australia that most of us can provide anything we need for ourselves. Consequently, we miss out on discovering a large part of who God is.

Then He reminded me of how the Israelites made for themselves a golden calf and worshipped it while Moses was on the mountain talking to God. This was again about provision. The Israelites greatest fear, as shown by their complaining as soon as they crossed the Red sea, was about provision.

Obviously, in these days, we cannot make a golden calf to worship; that would be really extreme. But we do it by showing how well we can provide for ourselves. We store up the best, the newest, the latest. Sure, God does want us to have good things, but only the things He knows will contribute to our growing more like Jesus, to our being one of the many sons. He knows the addiction we have to things, and that the delighting in our own provision of these is stopping our growth in Him. He is not happy with our addiction to things. What are you going to do about this, church? Because it is also about our responsibility and accountability for the blessings He gives us, in living in such a country as we do. How much could we help others who do not have what we have materially, if we were more satisfied with less and gave away more? Oh, yes, I know we all give to children overseas and many other worthy things, but we could multiply this by ten times if we were not so “addicted to things.”

This morning, I was in the kitchen, preparing breakfast, when the Lord began speaking to me. After a few sentences, I knew it was important, so I got my notebook

to write down all the Lord was saying to me. I opened the journal, looking for a place I could write so it would be easy to find it again. I came to a page where there was only one of the sixteen things the Lord had given me, just one short sentence written at the top. I started to write what I was hearing. After filling half the page, I realised He was actually giving me the words for the short sentence written eighteen months earlier. This was the hardest of the sixteen things for me to understand, and I had no idea either what I would write, or where to start writing about it. For I didn't remember what had happened to me during the time I was with Sam, in a way that could possibly illustrate what this sentence meant. Yet, here the Lord was giving it to me.

Why am I telling you this? Because this book is written by the Lord Jesus, through me and my life, for His purposes. You need to believe this.

And the word for this morning; *“The Pharisees are our enemies.”*

When Jesus walked His three and a half years among the Hebrews, working His miracles, the Pharisees were His enemy. They were constantly trying to trick Him. They did not believe He came from the Father, even though He taught with authority, and He could do things they had not seen before. They did not accept who He said He was. He had twelve men who walked with Him, but these disciples were not a threat to the Pharisees. Even when Jesus breathed on them and sent them out to do miracles, they did not persecute them. Then the Pharisees had Jesus crucified. They thought they had rid themselves of Him. It certainly seemed so when His disciples hid in fear. Then He came and walked with them again for a number of days before He rose to be with His heavenly Father. His work on earth was done. He could now send The Holy Spirit to be with His people. Suddenly the Pharisees became aware of something different in the eleven men. Now they spoke with authority. Now they did the things He had done, and even greater things. The Pharisees realised they had not rid themselves of Jesus at all. He had left His authority on many more people, and the number was growing every day. How did they know they were followers of Jesus? It was easy to recognise. Now these men carried something they had not had previously.

You see, you really have to have been with Jesus for the Pharisees and the world to know that it is so. You cannot fake it. You either have been with Him, or you haven't. Even though Jesus breathed on them before He sent them out [Matthew Chapter 10, verse 1] before He died, and though they performed miracles in His name, the Pharisees did not realise the full implication of what it meant to be with Jesus until after Pentecost. Then the change was unmistakable. Then the Pharisees could not deny it! The signs were too many, especially the authority. But while the world believed and rejoiced, the Pharisees persecuted the disciples, they stoned Stephen [Acts Chapter 7, verse 57 to 60.] and they still do it today. Paul is the perfect example of the “before and after” of the Pharisees.

Yes, the religious are still here today, in the churches as they were in the days of Jesus. And today, they are still the enemies of those who have been with Jesus, of those who choose to walk spiritually as true disciples.

Today, driving home from church, it was *“they break their promises.”*

You are probably asking,

“When did we make a promise to You that we have broken?”

Many years ago, on a Sunday night in a church on the Gold Coast, during the time Tim and I were in the youth home we ran, I heard something in the music I had not heard before. They were singing a song, an old chorus, in which the words of the last line should have been “Jesus Christ the Lord.” This was how the music was written. But the words on the overhead projector were “Christ the Lord.” In order to fit the music properly, they were singing a really long drawn out “Christ”. I had been playing this song for many years on my keyboard and knew the correct wording. I asked the Lord why the words had been changed on the transparency. He began to talk to me about the name of Jesus being taken out of the music, and how this was Satan's plan because he knew the power that was released every time the name of Jesus was lifted up. [John 12 v32.] Satan wanted to destroy this.

The next weekend, Tim and I went to a different church for the morning service. There was a guest speaker there that morning. The music team did not play one song using the name of Jesus. As the speaker came up to the podium, he said to the music team,

“Could you please play just one song with the name of Jesus in it, before I preach.”

The Lord was confirming to me the message He had given me the previous Sunday night. I took note after that of every service I went to. I began to very quickly realise that, where the name of Jesus was lifted up, the anointing fell straight away. Where there were no songs containing the name of Jesus, there was no anointing. I had always been able to discern true anointing. In the meetings where the name of Jesus was not lifted up, they had soul power instead. As I watched over the years, I found the whole emphasis of the music changed from Jesus to “I,” “me,” “my.” It was soul power. There was also worship of the Holy Spirit. He is not meant to be worshipped. Almost no-one could tell the difference between soul power and true anointing. But I say to you, it is only when the name of Jesus is lifted up that the Holy Spirit is there, or will ever be there.

So, how did He relate this to the church breaking its promises to Him. Scripture says,

“God inhabits the praises of His people.” Psalm 22, verse 3.

The words we sing in songs to God are our praises to Him. Yet, Sunday after Sunday, we sing songs that contain promises to Him that we don't even think about, or realise. He is waiting for us to actually start living. Words of songs that pledge ourselves wholly to Him and His ways. Yet we don't even realise we are singing both praises and promises to Him that we soon go out and forget.

I now pray, every time I am in church and the words of the song are a promise from the people to God, that they will be brought to a place where they will carry out the words they sing to Him.

Just in case you are not understanding what I am saying, look at the hymn, "I Surrender All." Do we surrender all to Him, every day, in every way? Of course we don't! But we need to clearly realise these are our promises made in our worship to Him, and He takes it very seriously. Does He need us to go out and fulfil every promise in order to please Him? No. But He does require us to have a new heart regarding the words of the songs we sing, as well as a new awareness of the words we are pledging to Him. He also looks for a humbler attitude, and a desire to at least be aware of wanting to fulfil the words we sing to Him. If we don't have the right attitude about the words we sing to Him in worship, we are breaking our promises to Him.

As I said in the beginning of writing these things He gave me, I just start to write what happened between Sam and me, then the Lord takes over enlarging it to how it is relevant to the church.

Also, as I have already stated a few times now to those whom I have mentioned in the stories I have told, I speak here only truth. Jesus is the truth. If we confess Him as Saviour and Lord, we must love the truth however painful it is, because He is the truth. We love Him; we have to love the truth.

I have now written about ten of the things the Lord gave me. There are actually six more still to be included. I believe four of these six will be covered in the telling of just one story. I had not wanted to write some things in this book but, as I have come to certain places in it, I realise there is no other way. I can only say to those who were involved with me during this time that Sam is an example. He is a beautiful person who was triggered and manipulated by the Original Lie Satan planted inside him, a lie he had lived for 68 years and which caused him to behave in a not so nice manner towards me. But I believe God is setting him free. I have seen changes. But the most important thing is what the Lord wanted to achieve by putting us together. It was for the breaking of the principality of hard hearts of the men in Australia. I believe this will still be achieved.

Therefore others who were also involved during this time were part of God's plan. In this, the Lord knows that the Lie was triggered in each of them and as a result they behaved in ways through having been manipulated by their Lie. He does not look at this behaviour, and neither do I. He has taught me to look at the real person behind the behaviour; there is no condemnation for anyone. He is intimately caring for all

and wants each one as free as Sam can now become. It is his choice as to how free he wants to become.

When I first met Sam's son, his Lie was triggered and he would not accept me. He went to people he knew who also knew me, for he was looking to discredit me. He found two pastors as well as an elder of two different churches, who were willing to breach my confidentiality and talk to him about me. They did not tell him the truth, but they told him things from their perspective which did seem to discredit me. The Lord knew this would happen. And they did treat me very badly through their triggered Lie. But it was God's plan because, if they hadn't reacted, these words from Him would not have come to pass. Everything that happened was orchestrated by Him for His purposes.

So, the next thing to write about that was relevant to the church was, "*they do not love the truth.*"

Sam's son went looking for anything to discredit me with and believed it. As I said a few sentences ago, Jesus is the truth, and those who follow Him love the truth. In fact, my experience has been that I recognise the truth when I hear it, and recognise a lie when I hear one. Where we have a wrong motive, as we have when triggered by the Lie, we will only hear the words that are in line with what we want to hear. We will not hear the truth. And we will not know we are not hearing the truth. During this whole time of my being judged by Sam, his family, friends, church, and bible study, no-one heard the truth. Why? Because they had not learnt to love the truth!

On one occasion, I was yelled at for causing dissension in Sam's family. I was not the one causing dissension. I came only to be obedient to the desires of my Heavenly Father. I came only to love Sam. I came to give, not to take anything.

So, the next thing on the Lord's list was, "*they cause dissension.*"

This is a huge issue in the church. Sometimes we do not recognise it as dissension, and, no, I do not always get it right. It is the thing I take the most before the Lord to guard me from doing. The Lord God made man, and when He was finished, He said, "*It is good.*"

But the fall came and sin entered. Sure, Adam and Eve caused it, but we were, and are, all responsible. Yet we judge and criticise, talking about others of God's creation as if we get it right and they don't. This is dissension and it causes division. Each little word smashes the unity He prayed for us to have, and the love we are to show for each other.

The third thing is, "*doesn't believe God's word.*"

I am not going to write any further on this. If we really believed God's word and put it into practice, we would not do the things we do. This world would be a different place. We would be building the Bride, instead of causing dissension.

Also, going back to the word given by the nineteen year old in Perth, I find many Christians do not “know God's word.” They listen to the reading in church and the sermon every Sunday, but they do not read The Word for themselves and allow the Holy Spirit to teach them.

The last of the four is, “*the church has no witness.*”

Again, there is nothing further to add beyond what this book contains already. For if we are not doing our part regarding the other issues the Lord has listed here, there is no way we can witness to who He is. And, of course, that is the only witness needed. To who He is in our lives, to what He has done in our lives, to how wonderful He is. Nothing that contains the word “I”. Of course, it needs to be the truth from someone who knows God and is known by Him. We make a fool of Him if we witness to things that He isn't really in, like getting us a car park. No, I am not saying He cannot get us a car park when it is really desperately needed. He does that for me. But we need to witness to the world about the really big things He does for us, to make it authentic. Things that can only be attributed to Him. Does He do big things for you that you can witness to. He does for me regularly. Like I wrote about on my World trip with my shy friend, every day we had something to write about that He had done for us. The one thing about the world is that it does recognise the truth about what Jesus does. It is the Church that is warned not to be deceived. Matthew Chapter 24 verses 4, 5, 11, 24,

The next thing on the List was, “*they do not trust God.*”

This came from the need for a prenuptial. According to the Lord, we are a peculiar people. 1 Peter Chapter 2, verse 9. We are not to walk as the world walks. He calls us to be in the world but not of it. John Chapter 15, verse 19. We are a people called to show forth His manifold wisdom and love to the world, illustrated by the way we live our lives. Needing the prenuptial is just the symptom. The Lord God is calling us to trust Him completely in every situation, to not lean on our own understanding, Proverbs 3, verse 5, to be witnesses of His great love and provision. No one was able to believe God for a good outcome from my being in Sam's life. If they had trusted God instead of leaning on their own understanding, they would have been able to wish us well, confident in the love we obviously had for each other and the happiness I had brought into Sam's life.

One of the residents from the village I live in, someone who has known Sam a long time, gave me a message a few days after the broken plans. She said,

“God knows you would have looked after Sam for as long as he had lived, and done it as unto your Heavenly Father, not expecting a thing.”

It is such a blessing when someone speaks a word like this to you, especially when you are hurting as I was. At such times, we have a need to hear it from some one else's lips even though we know it ourselves. Thank you, Joy.

The last of the sixteen points is one I did not want to write about, and I do not wish to do so specifically in connection with Sam. Yet it was the one that was the most used by him. He took everything I gave without even once realising how it was affecting me. This, to me, is the essence of opportunism; not being able to care about the other person involved. I am going to use another example from many years before, because this is the only other one I have known about.

It is, *“is opportunist.”*

This is so hard to explain. I had a friend who came to stay with me for a few months while I still lived in QLD. I already had another woman staying in my little house. This first lady would use any opportunity to get either of us to do things for her. If I said I was going somewhere, she would immediately say, “So you will be able to drive me to wherever,” even though wherever may be in the opposite direction to where I was going, even though I may have had an appointment made and did not have the time to take her to where she wanted to go, and even though there was a bus stop across the road with a good bus service. She never asked if we could do something for her, just assumed that we would. I was working five days a week at this time, so my friend who was also living with me copped most of the requests because she had a car. One day I came home and she put her head on her hands and cried. She said she could not take any more of the other woman's opportunism.

When the lady eventually left to go home, she wrote to me and told me she was still willing to be my friend, even though she now knew what a horrible person I was. I wrote back and told her I was not prepared to be her friend any more.

I do not know how this lines up with what the church does to Jesus today. Perhaps it is too painful to write about, having been the area I most suffered in my time with Sam after he broke our wedding plans. Maybe it is a good learning experience for any one reading this, to go before God and find out how He sees it. I do know I have spoken to many people lately about opportunism, and almost everyone knows about it and has experienced it from someone else.

There is one more thing I had written down from the first day He gave me the sixteen things to write. It is as follows.

The Lord Jesus never stops loving His Church. But His way of love is sometimes a way of conviction and chastisement, like His word to me about Zac on that morning on my front verandah in Queensland. He had me walk this intercession with Sam because of love, His love. He wants every one in His Bride. So He had me walk through four years of His will so this book could be written, according to His desires and purposes, thereby saying to His church,

“This is the way, walk ye in it.”
1 Corinthians Chapter 12, verse 13.

One night when I was on the phone to Sam, three years and two months after he had broken our engagement and not given me a reason, he told me part of the truth about why he had made the decision to not marry me. He said he had hardened his heart against me and could not love me. This was confirmation of the intercessory walk the Lord was talking to me about, in putting me with the man with the hardest heart He could find. He did not admit as to why he hardened his heart. The Lord had previously told me it was about the three divorces and the mental illness, and I believe this. However it didn't matter what Sam's reason was. It was clear that, in order to harden his heart against me, he would have had to judge me. I continued to forgive him and to be his friend. Then one day I found I could no longer see Sam as a person with any good qualities at all. I asked Jesus why this was happening to me. My walk is always, "If I have a feeling, I have a problem." It wasn't because Sam didn't have any good qualities. I just couldn't see any in him. The reply He opened up for me was as follows;

*Scripture says, "Judge not, that you be not judged.
For with what judgement you judge, you will be judged;
and with the measure you use, it will be measured back to you."
Matthew Chapter 7, verses 1 and 2.*

Jesus told me Sam had brought judgement down on himself, because he had judged me. Then the amazing revelation; He told me Sam would not have been judged if I had not forgiven him. If I had held unforgiveness after Sam had finally revealed the truth to me, I would have blocked God's spiritual law from being fulfilled. It was about three months of me walking in forgiveness for him, before I experienced not being able to love him even as a brother in Christ. I had always known forgiveness was a mighty spiritual warfare weapon, and that we can stop God working in our life and the other person's life if we do not forgive, but I had not seen it could block God's spiritual laws from coming to pass. I hope everyone realises the importance of this teaching from Jesus. I am still not able to see any good thing in Sam, so I can no longer be friends with him.

This is the first time I have experienced God's spiritual laws working, almost against my wishes. I do not chose ever to not love, yet it is impossible for me to love Sam. He has judged me, and now he is judged with the same measure he meted out to me. He judged me as unworthy to be his wife, now I judge him as being unworthy to be my friend.

I have been truly blessed by this whole experience of meeting Sam and everything we went through; blessed in healing, wholeness, deeper intimacy with God, every good thing. I believe Sam has also gained from the experience. I believe the Sam I loved through this time was the Sam God created. The reason I am no longer able to see anything good in him is due to God's spiritual law being loosed. I will always love the man I saw, the one I know God sees. But Sam has to walk through the consequences of breaking God's laws, as we all have, especially where there has been no taking responsibility for our behaviour, therefore no repentance.

Walking through this intercession has been very painful, but I would not change one piece of it if I have been able to serve my Saviour in bringing His message to willing hearts. I can only pray every one who reads these words will choose His way.

Chapter Seven

Mizoram

An Incredible Experience

I thought my book was finished but the Lord had one more experience for me, and one more chapter to write.

In March 2010, three Healing Rooms' directors, myself included, were invited to go to a city called Aizawl, in the protected state of Mizoram in north east India. We were praying about whether God wanted us to go so we had asked,

“What is it you think we can do in Mizoram?”

“Just bring in the presence of God,” we were told.

“They don't have this there.”

We ministered very strongly in the presence of God in the Healing Rooms, so we felt we could do this, and we decided to go. Do you know when you go to do something for God, He always has a plan to do something for you? It is never a one way street. In fact I believe, through the Mizoram experience, we came home with far more than we left behind. But maybe that is just how I feel, for they said they received as much as we did.

To describe Mizoram as a place is almost impossible to put on paper. To describe what happened to us, even more impossible. How does one write about an experience like this? We have been home three days and today is Sunday, yet I could not go to church, neither this morning nor this evening. Writing this is my way of trying to sort out what I am feeling, why I am crying.

When we landed at the airport at Aizawl, it seemed just like any other country airport. [It did have soldiers with guns though, maybe ten or twelve of them, yet we never did find out why they were there. Nothing we saw over the fifteen days we were in their country gave any indication why they were there.] The trip into Aizawl, about forty five minutes long, began it all. The airport was in a valley surrounded by high mountains. As we left the airport, we crossed a river, then went through a village. Poor houses, but not the slums we had seen in Kolkata. From there we climbed to the top of the first mountain, then we started to descend. Suddenly we were ascending again, going around another high mountain. The road was basic, very narrow, with a long drop down the side. There were no guard rails, and lots and lots of S bends. I started to feel afraid as I had not yet overcome my very strong fear of heights and, even though we were travelling in four wheel drive vehicles, I was

still frightened. Then there were the houses, built over the edge of the road on very long stilts. They were so basic, made from wood, bamboo, and corrugated roofing iron. There were no verandahs or railings, nothing to ensure safety from the steep drop into the valley. The houses were built right beside the road. Children played happily alongside the road. Washing hung on lines, right beside the road. There was no yard anywhere. Everything happened right beside the road.

Then suddenly Aizawl opened up before us. We all felt the impact of the place. It was an eagle's nest. We had talked about eagles nests in the healing rooms for a number of years; how they were special places, kept hidden by God, for his purposes. The town was built around the peaks of four high mountains, some of the tops of which had been flattened, and the land built upon. One such area was being used as a football field, not a grass field as everything there was dirt. The roads went backwards and forwards around the tops of the ranges, in layers, with long drops in between. Aizawl appeared to be cocooned by God, up in the high places. When we met the people, we found they certainly were unique, with ninety-five percent confessing Christianity. You could feel the difference in the place. There were no hotels, clubs, or poker machines, nor any TAB or gambling. It was the most peaceful place I have ever known.

When we came to the Travel Lodge, it was as I feared. The drop from our room was an incredibly long drop down into the valley. Sarah and I had the room right at the end, with windows all around, jutting out into space. Yet I walked out onto one of the balconies, went up to the edge and looked down. I felt no fear. It was gone and I am still free of the fear of heights. The first night there was an incredible thunder storm, with lightening, and wind that rattled everything. Can you imagine going through a really powerful thunder storm, while trying to sleep in a room with lots of windows that were poorly fitted and did not close properly, banging and rattling, jutting out over a precipice, with the power out, and your room mate sleeping right through it all? That was me, yet I was not afraid. I even looked out the window, in fascination, at what a storm on top of a mountain really looked like. We were told us the next day it was very unusual to have a thunder storm at that time of year. Another powerful storm hit the night before we left, and it almost stopped us from leaving, as the plane may not have been able to land in the heavy rain.

Mizoram is a third world country, so there is very little infrastructure. Everything is done using man power or woman power. They build four and five story buildings without cement mixers. Even the gravel is pounded into small pieces by hand. The women in the Tourist Lodge clean the carpets with a banister brush. Parts of the hospital are run down and grotty; no other word would suffice. Thomas and I spent one morning in a Salvation Army Aids clinic, praying for aids patients and drug addicts. The people had never seen praying over one person at a time, as we do, or the giving of time for the Holy Spirit to work. At first they were very hesitant about coming into a room with us. But once one person had experienced it, the others were also eager to be prayed for. It was extremely special to experience this. We would have come back every morning and prayed for them had time allowed, but unfortunately we couldn't. The hygiene in the clinic was very poor, with non sterile

bandages left lying around in plastic shopping bags, and a rusty nail on the sink; it looked like it had been there for ages. Yet the aids patients get healed. I can only say it has to be God, and the love that is so evident everywhere. I do not say this as a criticism of their methods; rather I was impacted by the evidence that, when their faith in God is strong and their love is genuine, healing takes place regardless of the state of hygiene.

*“Seek ye first the Kingdom of God
and all these things will be added unto you.”*
Matthew Chapter 6 verse 33.

In the clinic, they have an hour of prayer every morning before starting their work. They showed us numerous photos of the various stages of aids wounds, where enormous holes in legs slowly closed over and healed. At this clinic and the Salvation Army Temple, we met some of the most beautiful people within a race of beautiful people. By this I mean beautiful spiritually. We were astounded at the fervency of the prayers everywhere we went. They would all pray together very loudly for an hour without a break. There was no hesitancy in their communication with God; they never ran out of words. I don't know if it was in tongues, or not. It seemed to be in their own language. We found this ability to pray loudly, for a long time, everywhere we went.

The first afternoon we were there, in the Healing Rooms premises, we met a young Salvation Army man. He had no intention of coming there, but was accompanying another young man who had to call in for a short while; it was a divine appointment. From that moment he came with us everywhere we went for the next four days. Then, on the Friday night, he invited us to his mother-in-law's home where, after a meal, we had the most anointed prayer meeting, and saw peoples' lives changed by the presence of God. The family had just had a wedding cancelled that day, the day before it was due to take place. The wedding was for the youngest son of the family, who had a baby daughter to the young woman he was to have married. This brought such a huge loss and there was a feeling of grief in the household. Also I discerned the other son and his wife were not happy. They had a boy about three years old, who may have had a slight disability. However the mother of the family was a godly widow. Her heavenly Father had a very special word for her. Before we left, the whole atmosphere of the home had changed. The family was closer, and every one was singing and happy.

The Salvation Army man told us the next day, when he had gone to bed that night, he had said to God,

“Thank you for these days; I have been so blessed, but tomorrow I need to get back to my normal life.”

When he woke up the next morning, the Lord said to him,

“You are to go and spend as much time with these people as you can, for as long as they are here.”

He was obedient, and we were so blessed by his company. A couple of days before we left, at the official opening of the Healing Room premises, he was sitting in the front row, when the presence of God hit him. He cried for about two hours. He would try to come out of it, and put a smile on his face because of where we were, but within minutes he was crying again. Thomas sat and cried with him. It is an experience never to be forgotten, to see two godly men crying together under the presence of God. We have heard from this man since we returned, and revival has again started in Aizawl. They have been changed. We all prayed while we were there that it would go worldwide, wherever the Salvation Army is.

Another day we were taken to a prison. It was a long trip over rough, narrow roads. I prayed all the way. Finally the trip ended and we were inside. There were about eight other men from different ministries also visiting. It was a good meeting and after we all talked or shared our testimonies, we gave an altar call. This was not for salvation, as they were all Christians, but for health and spiritual needs. I think every man must have come up for prayer. The other eight men who had come in also joined in praying for them all. There were a couple of men with whom Thomas got into really deep conversation. As we were leaving, these two walked up to the gate with us. Thomas asked them which way they were going. They told him they lived there, that they were not allowed to leave. We did not ask anyone why they were in prison.

We were to hold the Healing Rooms training on the second Friday and Saturday. There were sixteen Presbyterian evangelists coming to the sessions, but they were being paid to be there, they weren't coming because they wanted to. Towards the end of the first day, the leader said to us,

“What do you Australians think you have to teach us?
We know all about healing, and see people healed all the time!”

A huge disagreement erupted in the meeting between those who were for us and those who were against us. It seemed there were more against us than those for us. Thomas talked them into returning the next day, to give us another chance. Sarah immediately went into prayer.

The Lord showed her that He gives each nation one key to the kingdom of heaven and we need to share our keys with each other. This is unity. We had already experienced their key, an incredible zeal for God, and we knew our key was carrying the presence of God. Intimacy.

When I went to bed that night, the Lord spoke to me about why Australia's key was the presence of God. He reminded me of intercessory prayer he had taken me through for many years, about the beginnings of Australia and how our convict background, and the incidences that came as a result, had set up principalities over our

nation. He reminded me of the way the first boatload of women convicts were treated, both by the soldiers who had not seen a woman for two years, and by the male convicts. He reminded me of the children who had come from this, how neither their mothers nor their fathers wanted them, causing them to become orphans on the streets of Sydney. It was the Aboriginal people who took them in and looked after them. He also reminded me of the hard hearts of the first free settlers, both men and women because of what they had endured through the harshness of the land and the strenuous work needed to cultivate it. The result of all these things was we had become a nation of spiritual orphans, causing us to have a much deeper, desperate need for God, and to seek Him with all our hearts, to fill our lack of belonging, our need to feel cared for and loved. This was the key we had to give them, our intimacy with God, born out of being spiritual orphans.

He also told me I was to speak first tomorrow. I told Thomas this, and the Indian pastor who was running the training. Surprisingly, they both agreed. I went in the next morning, with nothing written down, and spoke for at least thirty minutes about everything He had told me. I was not the least nervous, nor did I get one word wrong. This was the first time I had preached a message from God. I had given my testimony many times, and I was quite comfortable with this, but I had never preached. By the way, Thomas had said to me on the plane going over that I would preach while we were away. My reply was,

“Definitely not!”

It is amazing what we can do when the Holy Spirit is with us. Theresa, the Indian pastor's wife, preached next on love, and then Sarah preached in her own unique way, also about love. We turned the meeting around. The leading Presbyterian then came over and apologised to Thomas. We finished the day singing and praising God together. We were blessed when the same Presbyterian man told us he was going home to start a healing room in his house.

Thomas and I were standing in the street one day looking down at a pretty little church below us. An Indian man with a huge smile came up and asked,

“Are you Thomas and Sandra?”

We said yes. He had heard we were in Aizawl and had been hoping to meet us. He was pastor Emmanuel, and he pastored two churches, one of which was the church we were looking down at. He proceeded to help us with what we had to do that day, taking us to the best place for printing the healing rooms manual. He looked after our every need. He offered us drinks, food, chairs, all day. Pastor Emmanuel asked Thomas to preach in his church the next Sunday. He did this and we again prayed for a number of people, soldiers and their wives from the one hundred Assam rifles, an army battalion in Mizoram. At the end of this chapter, I am going to print an extract from their tourist pamphlet, where it describes their Christian ethics. Servanthood is very high on the list. I am sure all the people who helped us had other things to do, when they met us by chance. Yet they were quite happy to set their plans aside for

us. This was one of the qualities that spoke to me the most, and which caused me to struggle when I came home, because of the way we are in Australia.

I have kept till last the incidences which personally impacted me the most, because I believe they are the ones that have effected a change in me.

Ever since I came home from Mizoram, I have been very fragile. I am breaking into tears easily, unable to go to church, and when I do go, I want to leave and never go back ever. I'm being irrational and I know it, but I literally cannot help it. The first Sunday I came home, I hid in bed until twelve pm, so I could truthfully say I didn't get up till then, because I couldn't walk into my church and talk about what I had experienced.

The Lord showed me this morning that I have come home with a broken heart. What am I going to do with it? I have spent fifteen days with the most beautiful Christian people I have ever met. They just walk in accordance with scripture. They don't have to strive to be, they just are. I have realised they are and live what my heart longs for, it's deepest desire, that of a community of loving, caring, giving, hospitable people, where the most asked question is,

“When can we have a prayer meeting?”

Where the worship meetings are unbelievable, and I could go on singing, and dancing, and praising God for hours.

My broken heart is knowing we could have this in Australia, if we just followed Jesus with all our hearts.

I want to tell you of the following experiences, because actions speak louder than words. We can be a living word into people's lives just as these people were into mine.

*“By this shall all men know that you are my disciples,
that you love one another as I have loved you.”*

John Chapter 13 verses 34 and 35.

One Sunday, we were taken to a concert with about twelve Baptist choirs performing. It was another incredible experience, and the first time we had seen and taken part in Mizoram dancing worship. During the lunch break, we were out in the yard, three thousand people. Suddenly this little man came up to me and began shaking my hand over and over, smiling, eyes sparkling. Then rubbing my lower arms. I knew it was recognition of the God in both of us, and I was not afraid. I have almost never experienced such instant recognition of God within me by another person, and I recognised he knew God too, really knew Him. It was a meeting of two members of the Body of Christ. The lady who had arranged for us to be in Mizoram yelled at him and told him to get away. She then told me he had a mental illness. I

told her I had realised that. She didn't see or feel what he and I had seen and felt. Mental illness or not, he knew Jesus, and he knew I did also. He knew the Bride of Christ.

Another day we went to a place that housed a rehabilitation centre, an orphanage, and a mental institution. This place was started five years ago by one man determined to make a difference. The orphans were the happiest children I have seen anywhere. The rehab. was amazing, people really finding their answers in Jesus. But I want to write about the mental institution. We went in through a small office section, into a large open yard with one side covered in, containing tables and benches. The place was as bad as you could imagine a third world institution could be. There were some very sad people inside just as there are in mental institutions all over the world. After we were there a while, I decided to go outside. The way out was through a long open dormitory at the far end of the complex. The guide showing us around was waiting at the far end. As I started to walk, I became aware of a man following me. I kept walking, but I could feel fear begin to rise in me. I had separated myself from the rest of the group, and the only way out seemed a long way away. As I finally came to the end where the guide was waiting, the man following me came around beside me. He held out his hand to me and said,

“Hilmer.”

I quickly recovered, smiled, held out my hand and took his, saying,

“Sandra.”

He went away happy.

When we gathered outside again, I went to pieces and sobbed. The conviction was,

“I don't even know how to love.”

The Lord was right. I didn't. All Hilmer wanted was to be normal, and act normally just for a moment, and to be accepted as such. I knew exactly how he felt. I'd suffered mental health problems that had made me feel different, and I knew the very real need to seem to be normal just for a moment. Yet I had almost failed him in my fear, my lack of love which casts out all fear, 1 John Chapter 4, verse 18, and by a lack of faith and trust in my God who I knew had taken us to Mizoram. I will never forget this man's name, nor the lesson I learnt that day. There were many experiences in Mizoram that impacted me in a life changing way, but this was the most profound.

When we were leaving the complex, we met a young man who worked in the mental institution. He used to be a patient there but he has been totally healed. The office person gave us a booklet to take with us. It stated that there had been 2040 mental health patients taken into the institution over the five years it had been active. 795 of them had been totally healed and were now back in the community

living normal lives. When we asked how they had been healed, we were told that it was by prayer.

In Mizoram, the footpaths were unbelievably bad, with the beginnings of very steep stair cases going down, jutting out into them. There were no guardrails, and I don't think they have heard of Occupation Health and Safety in Misoram. I had to quite often get off the footpath onto the road, to dodge the staircases. This was an experience all by itself, as there didn't seem to be any road rules. Or if there were, no-one seemed to take any notice of them. The traffic is considerable, as with all the mountains and hills, push bikes are impracticable as it is so steep and the staircases so many and long. You risk being hit by a car or a motor bike every time you have to leave the footpath. One day, I was walking on the road, when I became aware of an older Mizo woman walking right behind me. Every time a car came along, she would step up beside me and put her arm out along side me to stop the car from hitting me. She did this for as long as I walked on the road, which was quite a considerable time. I don't know what her plans for that time had been, but her priority became to make sure I was safe.

I had experienced this awareness of a need and the immediate stepping up to fill it, the first afternoon we were in Aizawl. We were taken to the new Healing Rooms premises which was undergoing renovations, hence it was very dusty. As soon as we appeared in the doorway, a young man started to clean chairs and put them in a circle for us. No one asked him to do this; he simply saw a need and met it. How amazing as he was only nineteen and the youngest in the group. The young girls left and came back with refreshments. We learnt this was part of their Christian beliefs, to provide refreshments for anyone who came. It didn't matter that they were not well off financially, they still gave. We found this principal of hospitality wherever we went.

On the day I was leaving, I had to go into the city to an ATM, to get money to pay my accommodation bill. A young woman shared her taxi into the city with three of us who were waiting at the taxi rank. Coming home, I was walking along the road, trying to get a taxi to stop for me without success. About eight empty taxis had passed me by when an old Mizo man walking ahead of me put up his hand and a taxi stopped. Straight away I thought,

“That's right, stop for him.”

But he lifted his hand and waved me over. He had seen my need and met it, for the taxi was for me. One of my favourite passages in scripture is Gideon and his mighty men, especially how God chose them because of their awareness as they drank from the stream. The Mizos have the same awareness, something God wants us all to have in these times.

You hear it said, when you go overseas that it changes you. I didn't experience this when I went on a world tour in 2002. But since I have come home from Mizoram, I have changed forever. There is a place deep inside me that will never be the same again. When I read this to the monthly writers' group, a young man said to me,

“What is the fruit of this change in your life?
Can you yet explain the outworkings of it?”

I told them I thought I could, and proceeded to tell them.

In order to explain it, I have to go back to our first night in India, in an Inn in Kolkata, formally Calcutta. We had arrived at lunchtime, and had the afternoon free to explore. We decided to walk so we would see more. We were heading to Mother Teresa's. We walked for about an hour. Sarah had bought a video camera in Bangkok, and she kept stopping to video the children. She had disappeared from our sight, and the team leader went to look for her. I stayed in the centre of the road and waited. Time went by and when they didn't come, I went back to a side alley I had seen Sarah disappear into, but they weren't there. I then realised they must have gone past me. I thought they would come back to find me when they realised they had missed me. I waited and waited. Finally I decided they were not coming back for me. I began to be afraid as it was getting dark. I didn't have my mobile phone with me nor did I have the address of the Inn where we were staying. I felt like sitting in the gutter and crying, but I knew that wasn't going to help me. To make matters worse the streets were crowded, and men kept trying to get me to hire their rickshaw, but none of them knew the address of the Inn or recognised its name. Yet I wasn't frightened of the men for I was fairly sure their belief systems would not let them hurt me. They really wanted to help, but didn't know where to take me. What did frighten me though was that I would not be able to find my way back to the Inn, and would have to spend the night on the streets. I tried to get the priest at a small church to help me but he turned his back on me. He was the only one I could find who spoke English.

Then my faith rose up. I believe everything that happens to me is allowed by God, and He will always use everything for my good, and His purposes, if I trust Him to do this. As previously written, I am His intercessor, and have given Him permission to use my life as He wills. I didn't as yet understand His purpose in this, but I knew He had one. So I stood up and started to walk. I prayed all the way. I recognised places we had passed, so I just kept walking and praying. By this time it was getting very dark. After I had walked for about forty minutes, I saw a roof line with tattered sails on top, one we had commented on not long after we left the Inn, so I knew I was getting close. I noticed a young white girl sitting on the ground, talking to some Indian women. I went over to ask her if she knew where the Peerless Inn was. She didn't, but one of the women knew a rickshaw driver she was sure would know. He did, and I climbed on board his rickshaw and was taken safely back to our accommodation.

I had calmed myself, made my way downstairs for an evening meal, and begun eating when Sarah and the team leader arrived. They were excited and talking about all they had seen and done. I realised they had not worried about me at all and, in fact, had not even looked for me. I asked them if they had looked for me. Sarah said no, they thought I would go back to the Inn. I was shattered, and totally

overwhelmed by feelings of not being cared for and being unsafe. I continued to eat for a few minutes, but the pain became intense. I needed to be by myself, and sort it out. I said to them,

“I have been through a terrifying experience, and I am shattered you left me there and did not look for me. I am too upset to eat any more. I am going upstairs.”

I spoke quietly and calmly. I was not angry. I went upstairs to the room Sarah and I were sharing. Some twenty minutes later, Sarah came up very upset and apologised. She was convicted of her lack of love. We talked and hugged. The next morning, the Lord reminded me that I had prayed before we left, that He would use this journey to bring the three of us into true unity, and real love for each other. Yesterday's experience was the beginning of this happening. I then felt release from the horror of it. A couple of days later, when I realised the team leader was still uncomfortable about what had happened, I went to him and told him of my prayer, and how everything that happened had been allowed by God and was in answer to that prayer. This set him free and led to our incredible experiences in Misoram. We needed to be in unity before we got there. Does God do things like this? Yes, He does. Unfortunately, the unity between the team leader and I did not last after we returned home, and I have since had to resign from the Healing Rooms.

So, back to Australia and my experiences after Mizoram. I guess the main point is that my expectations of what we came home with, both singularly and collectively, would change things back here. We had heard, after two months, that things had changed in Aizawl, after our visit. Yet nothing had changed here. Of course, my expectations were perfectly unreasonable. I had a deep yearning for the people in Australia to be like those I had met and fallen in love with. I couldn't handle the slightest hint of a lie, of any hidden agendas, or deception. I would explode, and did so at one church member. I love my country so much, and God had given me the burden for His Church, in the Pope's private chapel, all those years ago. I knew Mizoram was yet another intercessory experience for me in His plan for our nation. I just expected Him to do it straight away and supernaturally, but He didn't. The people were just the same; everything was just the same.

One Sunday morning, the beautiful older lady, [definitely one in every sense of the word,] who does the morning tea every Sunday, was going to be away the next weekend. She asked me to do her job for her, and I agreed. That particular Sunday was “round table”, where we sit out the back of the church, at tables in a rough circle, enjoying tea and coffee, with fruit and scones, while we discuss a lesson given by the pastor. I was cleaning up afterwards when another woman said to me in front of a group of other people,

“Are you being paid to do this?”

She knew I wasn't; she was just being nasty. She is a person who looks for opportunities to put me down. I answered her very gently, but I let the experience get to me. Combined with the lack of change I felt in other areas, I began to look at

leaving both the Healing Rooms and the church. I spoke to someone about it the next Wednesday morning, as a sounding board, to hear my thoughts clearly. On Thursday morning, the Lord spoke to me very clearly.

“You are not to look at what is and what isn't happening;
you are to go back in there and love.”

It was our lack of ability to really love that Sarah and I were convicted of on our trip. The Lord had taught me very clearly, during my years of walking with Him, that it only mattered what I did. I was His intercessor, how I dealt with things won ground for Him in the spiritual. So I knew exactly what I had to do. I changed my attitudes and went into the Healing Rooms the next morning, determined to love.

As we prayed for each other that morning, before we ministered to the people coming for prayer, we were gathered around one team member. She had her eyes closed and her hands held out ready to receive from God. I felt to go in front of her and place my hands under hers, and just focus on loving her. After about five minutes of doing this, I spoke forth a word the Lord had given me for her. I do not remember what I said.

The next morning, she sent me a text message, thanking me for the prayer, which impacted her. Then she said that, when I had come and placed my hands under hers, she did not know whose hands they were until I spoke. But she said she could feel incredible love pouring over her. She wanted to stand there forever and absorb it. It was proof to me that I had brought something back with me that He could use, one person at a time if necessary. The work was His, not mine. I really was changed. I can never be perfect in loving people; in fact, without Him I cannot love at all. But by walking as I had in Kolkata, I could be a vessel of honour for Him to work through. He had told me in Kolkata, He cannot use an empty vessel, only one who had allowed Him to make them a vessel of honour, to do with whatever He needs to do. Then all the glory goes to Him. The teaching for this is in the book of Jeremiah, Chapter 18, verses 3 and 4.

The writing from the tourist pamphlet for Mizoram states of its residents.

The Mizo code of ethics revolves around, “ It is everyone's part to be hospitable, kind, unselfish, and helpful to others.”

There is a compelling moral force there that finds expression in self sacrifice for the service of others.

The Mizos have been enchanted to their new found faith of Christianity with so much dedication and submission that their entire social life and thought process have been together transformed and guided by Christian principles, and their sense of values has also undergone a drastic change.

Mizos are a close knit society with no class distinction and no discrimination on grounds of sex.

The village exists like a big family. Birth of a child,

marriage in the village, death of a member of the village, and a community feast are important occasions in which the whole village is involved.

And from Faith ministries,

We firmly believe God has preserved and anointed this land

as a showpiece to the world for the end times.

I believe this very strongly. It was certainly my experience.

Chapter Eight

Just To Tell You Who He Is

Before I go on to the last chapter of my book, I want to include a selection of short stories to illustrate how involved Jesus is in our lives, and how we can have the abundant life He promises us. These are just some of the many ways He has blessed me over the years, and let me know how much He loves me and cares for me.

A Blue Heeler called Kimba.

After I married Tim, my third husband, he, Renee and I decided to get a dog. A friend who worked at the animal refuge told us about a blue heeler [Australian cattle dog] puppy that had been dumped. He said she was pure bred and would we give her a home. We went to see her and said yes. Her quality was confirmed one year when Tim and I went to the Tamworth Country Music Festival. We had Kimba on a lead as we walked around town. I noticed a man watching her. He came up to me and asked,

“Good working dog, is she?”

I replied that I didn't know as she lived in a backyard on the Gold Coast. He looked at me in disdain, and said,

“Bloody waste of a good dog.”

Renee was working in a child care centre when Kimba was two and a half years old. One weekend, a three year old boy from her class died of bacterial meningitis. Even though the entire child care centre, all the teachers and their families were given medication to fight the disease if they caught it, Renee bought the germ home. She was unwell for weeks but did not suffer the full disease. However, Kimba picked up the germ in all its severity. She had three operations in a week, the third to remove her back right leg completely. The infection had destroyed the vascular system to the leg and it had died. She was a very sick dog. Blood tests showed she had bacterial meningitis. The vet said not many people knew animals could pick up human diseases.

Ten weeks later, Kimba was a walking skeleton, with a huge distended stomach. The vet said she was dying, and he could do no more for her. Then he said,

“I suggest you take her to a naturopath.”

He was a relief vet filling in for our normal man who was on holidays. I went home and rang a naturopath, and asked him if he would treat an animal. He said he would; he didn't need to see her, just for me to describe to him her symptoms. He told me to go and get some Inner Health from a chemist, and some vegetable silica, and start her on both immediately. I was to then come out to him the next morning and pick up three bottles of mineral combinations. This was a Wednesday afternoon in mid July. I did as instructed and Kimba began passing the contents of her stomach within a few hours.

By Sunday she was completely better.

During the weeks Kimba was sick, a ten year old girl in the United Kingdom contracted bacterial meningitis, and had to have both her legs amputated. She did not come out of hospital until Christmas, and then she had to return after the festivities.

I believe God gave us the right vet at the right time, one who spoke to us the words we needed to hear, to save Kimba's life. She lived for fourteen and a half years, and was a blessing to me, especially as events unfolded in my marriage to Tim.

A Special Car.

Renee had always wanted to go to gymnastics, but in Canberra, it had not been possible for her. As soon as the children and I went home to the Gold Coast, I enrolled her into the Southport club. She was nine. The coach looked at her and said:

“No way! She is too thin, she won't be strong enough.”

However, he gave her a test, sent her over to the horizontal bars, told her to jump up, grab the bottom bar, and pull herself up to her chin. She did it very easily, which surprised me as she was the fussiest eater. She lived almost exclusively on Vegemite toast and fruit. The coach was impressed by her strength and enrolled her. She did quite well reaching level nine before a recurring ankle injury caused her to have to give it up. When she was about eleven years old, I moved her to Miami Gymnastics, as her coach had moved there. Miami was a half hour trip from where we lived.

One night, about 8pm, [it was dark] we were travelling along Sunshine Boulevard, on our way home. I had one other young girl in the car with me. None of us had fastened our seat belts. This was unusual, but proved to be one of the incredible God incidences where He is constantly protecting us without our knowing it. Ahead of me I saw two cars collide in the centre of the road, about twelve car lengths away. As the two girls in the back and I were talking, I was driving very slowly, about fifty klms, but I slowed down even further, and pulled over to the left, onto the grassy verge, which was quite wide, at the side of the road. I thought it would not be possible I could be hit as I was too far away from the site of the impact. Suddenly, a large utility came from behind the cars that had collided. He was travelling in the opposite direction to me. He obviously tried to do what I had done, pull away from the area of

the accident. Unfortunately he was much closer to the impact, and driving much faster. What happened next amazed me. He spun across the distance of four lanes of road and a distance of about twelve car lengths, at tremendous speed, and hit my car in the driver's door. He had lost control, and gone into a spin. I was driving an older Volvo, a very strong car with roll bars inside the doors and frame. The impact dented the whole car out on the passenger side. After hitting my door, he continued down the driver's side of my vehicle, smashing the windows, and demolishing it. My car was not repairable.

Because we did not have our seat belts on, we were all thrown away from the point of impact and so none of us were badly hurt. I had two bruised knees, the hugest I have ever seen, from coming up under the dash board. The thirteen year old behind me had tiny cuts on her face and arms from the flying glass. Renee bumped her nose on the seat in front of her and had a lump there for some weeks.

Our involvement in the accident should never have happened, and I have always considered it a demonic attack to try to take our lives. I am not one to see demons under every bush, but this accident was not normal. Let me say here, we were all dedicated seat belt wearers, but the one night we “forgot”, it saved us from serious injury and may have saved my life. We would have been held into the impact area. At the time of the accident, Renee and I were dancing in the Jewish/Christian festival held on the Gold Coast for many years. I continued to dance for the next two nights, but the pain in my knees became too severe and I missed the last night.

So, now I was left with no car. I was on my own with Renee at the time, and working at Centrelink. I had no savings. I applied to the Public Service Credit Union for a three thousand dollar loan to buy a second hand car. I had told God I could only afford to borrow this amount, and could He please find me another car, a Volvo if possible, in the best condition available for this money.

One week later, my stepfather came in with an advertisement from the local paper. It was for a 1972 Volvo, \$3200, from a deceased estate. It had been owned since new by an elderly gentleman from Toowoomba, and had only 48000 miles on the speedometer. It sounded just perfect, but I had another two weeks before the loan would be approved. I said to God, if this was His provision for me, could the car still be available in two weeks time? My stepfather kept pushing me to ring up, saying I would miss out, but I kept with my request to God, and did not ring. When the three thousand finally came through, I contacted the owner and asked if the vehicle was still available. It was. I made arrangements to test drive it. It was perfect and I agreed to pay the \$3200 he was asking for it. He looked at me astounded.

“Aren't you going to try to knock the price down?” he asked.

“No, the car is just what I want and I am prepared to pay the \$3200,” I replied.

He then told me he had bought the car at an auction in Brisbane for \$3000. He hadn't wanted the car, but it was just too good to leave there, and no one else wanted

it. He did not buy it to make money, and he refused to sell it to me for more than the \$3000 he had paid for it.

That is our God! Is something like this too small for him to be bothered with? Definitely not! We were created for His pleasure. He delights to show us how much He loves us when we trust Him.

*“Delight yourself in the Lord,
And He will give you the desires of your heart!”
Psalm 37, verse 4.*

A Special Christmas Present.

My most treasured possession is a print of a sea eagle, which was a Christmas gift from God. You may ask,

“How can God give someone a Christmas present?”

My experience is that nothing is beyond His bountiful giving and His incredible caring. He really is the most loving Father.

A lady I had become friends with in a Lifeline Transitions Group on the Gold Coast rang me one day in August. She said she had had a print on her wall for some time. It was a print of an eagle, but it had started to bother her. The eyes of the eagle seemed to follow her everywhere and it was making her uncomfortable. She had asked her son to take the print down, and to take it home to Brisbane with him. He had had the print in his possession for about a year, when he rang his mother and told her he would not be putting it on the wall. Did she know anyone who would like it? Apparently it was an expensive print and he didn't want to just throw it away.

This is when she asked me if I would like it. She didn't tell me it was an Australian Sea Eagle, just an eagle. I assumed it would be an American eagle. To me, any eagle could be from God, so I accepted it. The call came on Christmas morning saying the print had arrived and would I like to come over that afternoon and collect it.

When I arrived and was taken into her study, the print was facing the wall. I could only see the backing. As I put my hand out to turn it around, I heard the Lord say,

“Everything you see in this print is what I see in you.”

I pulled the print away from the wall, and there was the most beautiful Sea Eagle, all in shades of blue and grey and white. She was seated on a rocky outcrop, way up high. What did I see in her? I saw firstly strength, then fearlessness, confidence, resilience, power. She was alone on the outcrop. There wasn't room beside her for another eagle.

This was a powerful message. I believed the Lord was saying to me that I would never remarry, but I would become all the qualities I saw in her. This was very important as my third husband had left me three years earlier, and I had been totally shattered. I was still grieving. My future in God had died when he left me. I was none of the things I saw in the Sea Eagle. God was giving me a prophesy of my future in Him. A future which has been fulfilled, and in which I am becoming all the things I see in the print.

The Sea Eagle print is by Jeremy Boot. [Www.jeremyboot.com.au](http://www.jeremyboot.com.au)

A Bone China Cup and Saucer.

Sometimes, in amongst all the lessons, God does something special just to let you know who He is and how much He cares for you. I love it when He does this.

I was working in a women's crisis accommodation. We took in twenty single women and seven mothers with up to five children each. One day a lady came into the single accommodation. She was so beautiful in her inner being. I enjoyed talking to her. She was a free spirit. Her only possessions were what she could fit into her back pack. She wasn't young, somewhere in her fifties. One day, after she had left the crisis accommodation, we were having a cup of tea together in town. She told me one of the few things she missed in the lifestyle she had chosen, was to sit and enjoy a cup of tea from a bone china cup and saucer. I had a number of such cups and saucers. One in particular was a Royal Prince Albert, with the tiniest red roses on it and a blue rim. I found a sturdy box, just big enough for the cup and saucer, and I packed the Royal Prince Albert into it. I took it to where she was staying. I left it with her flatmate as she was not at home. I did not expect to hear from her again, and I didn't.

Then one afternoon, I had a call from a pensioner who would buy tea towels and towels, as and when she could afford them. She would collect a box full, then a male pensioner from her village would bring them to us, to be given to the women who were leaving to go into new accommodation. She said on this occasion the man who normally delivered them was sick, and could not do it. She asked if there would be someone who would be able to come and collect the box for her. I was finishing work within a half an hour, so I took down her address and told her I would come and collect it. I knocked on her front door and, when she saw me standing there, a strange expression came over her face.

“You must come in and have a cup of tea,” she said.

So I did. As we drank our tea and ate a biscuit, she told me she had been waiting for God to put me across her path. She told me He had told her she was to give me one of her cups and saucers, bone china of course. She insisted I pick whichever one I liked. I picked a plain pink one with a large pink rose inside the cup. Now I take my gift from God everywhere I go. I sit it in a prominent place in my kitchen. It reminds me, every time I look at it that, even though there are six billion people in

this world, He knows exactly what we are all up to, every minute of every day, and He is never too busy to make our day special.

An Eye Healing.

One Thursday afternoon, as I left work at the crisis centre, I kept seeing what looked like a spider on the passenger seat of the car. After looking over at it a number of times and not seeing anything, I realised what I was seeing was on the outer rim of my eye.

That night, while having a bath, I could see a ring of light around the outer edge of my left eye. The light in the bathroom was not working. My husband had pulled the wiring out a number of years before and had not fixed it. Therefore the bathroom itself was in darkness. The only light source was from the kitchen, through the open door. Had there been a light in the bathroom, I would not have been able to see the “halo” of light around my pupil.

I realised I had a problem and went to my doctor the next morning. He organised an emergency appointment with an eye specialist for late the next afternoon. The specialist told me I was in danger of the retina of my eye detaching itself. He gave me both his mobile and home phone numbers. He told me if the retina did detach over the weekend, to go immediately to emergency at Gold Coast hospital and get them to ring him. He would come straight in, even if it was early in the morning.

On Saturday night, I was in bed reading when I heard the Lord say,

“Get that book down from the book case.”

I had a two metre tall by one metre wide bookcase, filled with hundreds of books, on one bedroom wall. The book He led me to was *The Final Quest*, by Rick Joyner. It was one of my favourite books and I had read it a number of times. As I opened the book about two thirds of the way through, the words my eyes fell on were,

“And I say to you, I am going to give you new spiritual sight.”

Of course, the promise was to Rick Joyner, but I felt He was giving me the same promise. I thanked Him and went to sleep.

On Sunday morning, just before communion, the pastor stopped what he had been saying. He said God had told him there was someone there that morning who had developed a problem with their eyes during the week. If that person would come up after communion, God would heal their eyes.

I went up and he prayed for me. I went down in the Spirit and, as he knelt down to pray, he spoke the same words over me as were written in Rick Joyner's book.

“And I say to you, I am going to give you new spiritual sight.”

When I checked my halo of light in the dark bathroom that night, it was gone. The retina did not ever detach.

Did He give me new spiritual sight? Yes, He did.

Crystal Glasses.

When I was engaged to Sam, he being a very social person and knowing so many people, we were always going somewhere, quite often to someone's home for an evening meal. One night he took me to the home of an elderly couple, friends of his. While we were having our meal, I accidentally knocked my glass over and broke it. It was a very old crystal glass on a short stem. There were three of these on the table and one of a different kind. I was very upset at breaking it as it seemed to be very old, and not a full set of six as I would have expected. I asked the Lord to help me find a replacement. There were two opportunity shops in our local shopping centre. I looked in each of them every time I went into the area.

Then Sam broke our engagement. It came to light this couple were one of the ones who had not liked me and advised him not to marry me. I didn't let this stop me. I kept looking in the opportunity shops and trusting the Lord to find a glass for me. It was such a special and old glass that I knew it would not be an easy task.

Surprisingly one day, there they were. Two of them. They wouldn't sell them separately so I took them both. I gave them to Sam to take to the couple. Yes, they were quite expensive. But it only matters to me that I do the right thing. This I had learnt as a principle for making myself ready as part of the Bride. I got a lovely note from the lady thanking me and telling me how clever I was as they were very like the two she had.

No, I'm not clever. But He is. And He delights to bless His people.

Aunt Jo's House.

In order to go to Sydney when Joshua was born, I had to sell my beautiful little cottage on the Gold Coast. There are very few old houses left in Southport. They have all been pulled down, and three or four town houses built on each block of land. I did not want my cottage to be pulled down. There was a house on my right hand side that had been bought for this purpose. However they found my cottage was built too close to the boundary line. They could not get permission to build town houses on it. I asked The Lord to find a buyer who would love my cottage, want to keep it, continue to renovate it, and live in it.

The first day of open inspection, a young couple came and fell in love with it. They bought it and are slowly doing it up. They have even kept my colour scheme, two shades of pink and dark red. They are renovating it to look as it would have looked originally, or even better.

I rejoice every time I return to the Gold Coast and see it still there, eight years on.

God is faithful.

I pray everyone who reads these stories will seek God for a sign from Him of how much He loves each one. I am reminded daily as my eyes rest on my eagle print and my bone china cup and saucer. What He has given me He wants for all His people. Being given these special gifts has deepened my intimacy with Him.

Chapter Nine

God's Heart

When Jesus knew His hour had come, He went into the garden of Gethsemane to pray. He asked the disciples to watch with Him one hour. Then He went a little further away. When He returned, He found the disciples asleep.

“Could you not watch with me one hour?” He asked.

Matthew Chapter 26, verse 40.

He asks the same question of us today. Will you watch with me one hour? What exactly does He mean, to watch with Him one hour?

I believe He meant for them to allow to happen to them what I allowed Him to let happen to me when He took me into the Pope's private chapel in Rome to pray. He wanted them to be with Him in His greatest hour and allow themselves to feel the pain He was feeling. He knew what He was going to go through. He sweat blood through the pores of His skin, the knowing was so great. He wanted them to be there with Him as the realisation became reality for Him, to allow themselves to feel with Him the pain of what He was about to endure, to the extent that they were able. But they went to sleep.

Could you watch with Him one hour? Could you, for one hour, allow yourself to feel the burden He feels today, for the world He created, and for the beautiful Bride He gave His life for, and suffered such pain for? Could you sit for one hour, in silence, and allow Him to let you feel, just as much as you can bear, of His burden today?

This is what He wanted from the disciples, and He asks the same thing of us today.

Could you be the woman who risked her life to give Him a cup of water as He carried the Cross along the Via de la Rosa? She allowed herself to feel His pain, and to act on it. She placed herself in danger by doing so.

Could you be the one to help Him carry the Cross as the Roman soldiers asked the Syrian to do. He felt Jesus' pain even though he did not willingly offer.

Could you even be one who looks at His back and face marred by the Roman whip, and allow yourself to feel the pain?

Could you be with Mary His mother, Mary Magdelene, and the Disciple John at the foot of the Cross? Could you wait there until He died?

Everything He did that night and day was done in love for us. No-one understood that it was for love, the greatest love that has ever been. Greater love has no man than to lay down his life for his brother. John Chapter 15, verse 13.

I do not believe we can ever love as He wants us to love, unless we have sat at the foot of the Cross and watched Him die. Until we have watched one hour with him in the garden, until we have helped Him carry the Cross along the Via de la Rosa.

Are you, each one who reads this, prepared to allow Him to let you experience His pain so you can love as He loves, and so you can be an instrument for Him to use in building His Church?

In so many places in the gospels, it says,

“Jesus felt compassion, and He healed them.”
Matthew Chapter 20, verse 34, Mark Chapter 1, verse 41,
Mark Chapter 5, verse 19, Luke Chapter 7, verse 13,
and Luke Chapter 10, verse 33.

I believe this is why we do not have great success with physical healing when we pray for people. Unless we have allowed ourselves to feel His pain, we cannot have the compassion He has. If we haven't the compassion He has, we cannot heal as he does. Present tense, as He still heals today.

There is another aspect of this principle especially for Australians. It concerns our indigenous people. Can we let our hearts be touched by God to really feel how they feel, and how He feels about what was done to them in the settling of Australia? I once knew a woman, a very spiritual person, who was travelling in a campervan in Tasmania. The Lord asked her to stop her van and kneel on the ground beside it. He allowed her to hear the blood of the aboriginals massacred there, crying out from the ground, just as Abel's blood cried out when Cain slew him. He hears the blood of our original owners crying out from all over Australia. He wants the record set straight. This is His heart towards our original owners.

The following is what the Lord gave me to end this book, in order to show His heart of love for us.

One morning I was editing the chapter on the Original Lie. The Lord began to speak to me. He told me that, as written in that chapter, it was satan's plan for the Lie to be planted, using the frailty and human condition of parents, so that the children would be stopped from finding out who they are in Him, or from ever reaching their full potential in God. But He always has a plan to outdo satan's plan.

There are two stories in the bible that, for me, tell some of the most important words Jesus speaks. He tells firstly, in Matthew 7 verse 19, of a time when men will come to Him and say,

“Did we not do many miracles in your name, cast out demons, heal the sick?”

He will say to them, “Get away from me, I never knew you.”

The second story is the story of the five wise and five foolish virgins. Matthew Chapter 25, verses 1 to 12. The five foolish virgins do not bring enough oil for their lamps and, as the bridegroom tarries, they go away to get more. They return to find the door locked to them. They call out to Jesus to open the door and let them in.

He says to them, “Get away from me, I never knew you.”

How does He get to know us?

He told me it is the finding, acknowledging, accepting, and overcoming of the Original Lie, and the damage it has done, that is His way of us letting Him get to know us. Even in just the finding of the Lie, we are opening up to Him the deepest, darkest thoughts of our hearts. In order to find the Lie, we have to acknowledge to Him everything, otherwise we do not go deeply enough to uncover it. We need the unconditional love only He can give, for us to come to accept everything about ourselves, to learn to value ourselves and love ourselves as He values and loves us, and so overcome our Lie. In order to overcome it, we have to be totally truthful, trusting, sharing intimately with Him. This is how He comes to know us. He takes satan's plan, and turns it into something amazing for us.

Then the most awesome thing.

Our Lies have all come about by similar circumstances, yet each Lie is so uniquely individual. Even though each one's Lie is based on lack of value, worthlessness, unlovableness, being evil or bad, suffering from over responsibility, when we get down to the exact Lie, with the exact words, each Lie is uniquely different. Each Lie has the seal of God on it. Even with something as ugly as the Original Lie planted in us to destroy us, God is still totally in control. Wherever satan has a plan, God has a better plan. He has ordered the words that make up each Lie to be significantly different, so we can discover, in the working through it, how special He has made each one of us. When He showed me this, I was blown away yet again. How spectacular this is!

It really speaks of an incredible Heavenly Father who, even when satan has a plan, is still in control and shows His handiwork. He plants such a difference in every aspect of the Lie inside us, how it gets there, what it is etc, that He shows who He is, if we have eyes to see. I have spoken to many people about the Original Lie, yet have never heard one exactly the same. This is His perfect way of establishing intimacy with us. This is God's Heart.

One day when she was about nine years old, Renee coloured in for me, in children's church, Verse 4 of Psalm 37.

“Delight yourself in Me, and I will give you the desires of your heart.”

I put it up on my wall and it was there for many years. One day, the Lord spoke to me about these words. He told me that we needed to be absolutely certain what the desires of our hearts are. If we believe that, for example, our desire is for our husbands to be able to have a deep relationship in Christ with us, yet, because it is not happening and we grieve its absence, we talk about the lack, instead of delighting ourselves in Him and believing He can bring it to pass, then the real desire of our heart cannot be answered. We need to believe always that He is able and willing, and that this promise is true. He really wants to give us our true desires, but we need to believe in who He is, and in what He can do. This is a very important principle. He really wants to give us the desires of our heart.

Then He took it one step further. He told me that, in answer to the original Lie planted by Satan, He has planted in each of us a special desire of the heart for Him. We need to search to find what it is for each of us. Again as with the Lie, each desire He has planted is uniquely different for each person. His plan again to show us how much He loves us. Some of the desires I have heard are, “I want to fully follow God”, and “I want to be like Jesus”, also “I desire wholeness in Him”, and “I desire my heart to be a heart of mercy.”

It is Australia day, 2011. I am sitting quietly having breakfast when the Lord drops knowledge into my spirit. It goes back to a time when my father was still alive. I am a few weeks over eighteen. He and Mum have just started yet another argument, and he has gone into the bedroom to lie down. This means the start of another two day sulk, where he will not speak to my mother, eat, bathe, do anything except lie there and ignore her. A time where she will beg him over and over to please stop sulking and make up with her. I am supposed to go for a piano lesson, but I guess that won't be happening. They both ignore my sister and I for as long as it takes for him to make up with her. This goes on once a month and has done all their married life.

But today is different. They have come out of the bedroom after only a few minutes, and he is making her a cup of tea. And he is taking me to my piano lesson.

We have a normal Saturday. He stays happy all day and night. Then Sunday morning, he drops dead in the bathroom floor. The doctor comes and resuscitates him three times, but it is his third massive heart attack. The doctor is unable to keep his heart beating.

Remembering this, I feel words begin to rise up within me, and I yell them out.

“Why did you leave it until the day before you died to change?”

I had been aware of the anger for a long time but did not know what it was. Suddenly I was set free of the unforgiveness, resentment, the anger. Over the years, I had wondered if my father had gone to Heaven. He was a believer. But now God

has shown me an incredible thing. My father had overcome. He had forgiven. Sure, he had left it until the day before he died to do this, but he had done it. He had overcome a lifetime of bad choices.

For years, I wondered if he had experienced a premonition of his own death, and that was why he had changed. I came to not believe this. What I finally saw was that our God never gives up. He works right up until the time of our death to bring us to repentance and love. I believe my father now has eternal life with Him. I praise Him for being the kind of God He is, who loves so incredibly, He does not will that any are lost. This is His incredible Heart.

It was only after this experience that I was able to call my father “Dad” for the first time since he died.

There is another story from God in my relationship with Nathan, my son. Tim and I went to a lot of Barry Smith conferences when we were together. He taught a lot about end times, especially about the mark of the beast. Nathan, as a non believer would hear us talk about these things. One day he said,

“No one is ever going to put a mark on me.”

Revelation Chapter 13,verse 16.

God has shown me through this the spirit he has put inside the Aussie male. It is a spirit like no other. It is the spirit of the Anzacs at Gallipoli, of the eight hundred horsemen at Beersheba. I believe it was God's plan all along to put this spirit in the Aussie male. He knew His plan and where it would lead when he had a sea captain in the 1600's, plant a cross on the coast of Western Australia, and claim this newly discovered land for Jesus Christ. Not for England, or France, or Holland or Spain, or Portugal, but for Jesus Christ. Then he sailed away. I wonder if he ever knew the awesome part he played in God's plan for our nation. I like to believe he did.

Then Captain Cook discovered the East coast and claimed it for England. They turned it into a penal colony. Not a plan you would think would come from God when he had already had a sea captain claim it for Jesus. I have already written about the principalities the settling of Sydney Cove brought over Australia.

But where a plan is made that brings destruction to our spirits, God always has a better plan contained in the same circumstances. The same trials that caused the “mateship” and the hard hearts of Australian men, also caused a spirit that I call the Aussie spirit, because I do not have a word strong enough to describe it. It was the spirit that led the pioneers to keep fighting to conquer this land, even though many of them perished. It was the spirit that kept them fighting at Gallipoli, even though the cost in human life was horrendous. There was something deep inside them to keep fighting till they were over the top. The same spirit that caused them to say to the British army at Beersheba,

“We can do it; just give us a go, and we will show you.”

It is the same spirit that is in my son that causes him to say no-one is going to put a mark on him. He doesn't know what it is that makes him say that. It is planted deep within him by the generations before him who fought and died to make our nation what it is today. Nathan has a heart for the Light Horsemen, even though he doesn't understand the spiritual value of it. His great grandfather was in the eleventh light horse brigade. He caught meningitis in the trenches above Gallipoli and was shipped home. He died a year later. His name is on the War Memorial in Canberra.

This same spirit is in the women who worked, and suffered, and died alongside their men.

God always has a better plan. This Aussie spirit is far stronger than the hard hearts and mateship that has been so destructive in Australian families for numerous generations. And it is the spirit that will win in the end. When God pours His Holy Spirit out on our nation, the Aussie spirit will respond to the Spirit of God that created it. This is God's Heart for Australia.

God has another very special heart plan for Australia. It is His Heart for our indigenous people. One night I was having a meal with a young friend. We were talking about the time of the end, a favourite topic of conversation. She was telling me of a prophesy she had heard about, which said God was going to use all indigenous races in the world for His purposes in the end times. As she spoke, the Lord told me of His plan for our own indigenous people. He reminded me of the words He had given me to speak in Mizoram; the keys given to every nation, and our key of intimacy deriving from our being spiritual orphans. He spoke into my spirit,

“When the Christian white men took the Aboriginal children away from their mothers and extended families, and put them in group homes so that they could bring about their plans [satan's plans], they created spiritual orphans.” As satan had a very destructive plan for the Aboriginal race, God has a better plan for them. He heard every cry from the hearts of every Aboriginal woman, every mother, grandmother, auntie, sister, during the years when the children were taken away. He was there with every child as they cried in their confusion for their mothers. Those voices are still there with Him, crying out to Him. There was and is so much pain felt, and pain gets His attention. Psalm 58, verse 8, says

*“You number my wanderings; Put my tears in your bottle;
Are they not in your book?”*

Imagine the number of tears he has stored up for the Aboriginal people.

As he raises up a standard far higher than satan can, He is going to use that spiritual orphan curse, and turn it into a gift of intimacy with Him for our indigenous young people. He will raise them up. As happened in the original outpouring of the Spirit at Elcho Island, and at the outpouring in Wales, men and women will come

away from the alcohol and the drugs and, in an instant, their hearts will be set free and changed.

God has an incredibly strong heart towards the Aboriginal race because of what has been done to them. This is God's heart towards the Aboriginals, to use them mightily in the revival that is coming.

One Friday morning, while we were worshipping before the Healing Rooms started, God began to speak to me on Genesis 2 verse 8, and about intimacy with Him. It is clear in this verse that it was God's habit to come in the cool of the evening to talk with Adam. This was intimacy in its purest form. Adam was not afraid to meet with God. This was the desire of God's heart, to meet with man, to talk with him, to enjoy his company, and for Adam to do the same with God.

But on this evening, the intimacy was gone. Man was afraid. He now knew he was naked. He had tried to clothe himself because he knew he was not worthy to walk in intimacy with God. Lack of worth started way back there, and still destroys our fragile self esteem today. When talking to people in the Healing Rooms, I constantly find the one thing God wants for them today is to find out who they are in Him, to believe He loves them deeply, and to walk in intimacy with Him again. It hit me very strongly on that Friday morning, how much we minimise what we lost in the garden. We call it a fall from Grace, or just "the fall" and of course, this is what happened. But do we really understand the consequences? That of the total loss of intimacy. Can you, the reader, let yourself dwell on what we have lost? Dwell on it to a place where you allow yourself to fully experience the loss and grief there is in the heart of God? He has waited a long time to experience this intimacy with us again. He sent His son to walk as a man in the way of intimacy with Him, a living example, one for us to follow.

His heart is broken with the loss. We need to experience how broken His heart is, so we can come fully to the place of desiring intimacy with Him as the ultimate fulfilment for us. We need it. We cannot give Him anything that will please His heart, except to so desire intimacy with Him that we seek it with all our hearts.

God has also shown me it is the fact that we know we are naked that stops us from having intimacy with Him. We haven't changed at all since the Garden. We are still trying to cover our nakedness, with good works, successful lives, happy marriages and numerous other things, that we can deceive ourselves and pretend we fool God that we are no longer naked, and He is pleased with us.

We don't fool Him, and we don't please Him. There is only one thing He desires; true intimacy.

The nakedness may be called so many different things. Homosexual, liar, gossip, adulterer even if only in the heart, watcher of pornography, anger, unforgiveness, hurt, resentment, unbelief, low self esteem, pride, self righteousness. The list goes on

and on. You finish the list from what nakedness you have that stops you from being fully intimate with Him. You see, it is through intimacy with Him that we are healed and set free.

We still haven't realised fully that He accepts us exactly as we are, NAKED. The letter to the Laodicean church tells us that we do not realise we are naked, still. Revelation Chapter 3, verse 17. We are able to fool ourselves, but not God. Jesus really did pay the cost for us on the Cross. We need to believe it and accept it fully. There is nothing we can do to cover our own nakedness. God has done it, just as he did for Adam and Eve.

In the garden, God clothed Adam and Eve with animal skins because they couldn't handle their nakedness. They were then able to be with Him; no, not in intimacy, but to the communication depth you can have when you think your sin is hidden, and no-one knows who you really are. God knew He had to let us cover our nakedness and pretend He didn't know about it. That is where we are still today, hiding in our clothes [pride, self righteousness, good works, denial, the list is endless,] before God. But His perfect plan was for us to come back to Genesis 2 verse 8, but this time knowing we are naked yet being free of our human coverings so we can have true intimacy with Him. This is the ultimate defeat of satan. To come back to God in the garden, naked, and walk with Him again in the cool of the evening.

Of course, Adam and Eve were naked in the garden before the fall. It was the not knowing that allowed them to be in God's presence. But the propensity to sin was already there. God wanted Adam and Eve to choose to be obedient to Him and not eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. He has always wanted us to be free to choose Him. Nothing else would do or will do. He had already made the perfect plan for mankind, to walk with Him every night and talk with Him about everything they had done. The intimacy they had was the answer to everything. But they had to be free to choose it. It wouldn't work any other way. This is still the deepest desire of God's heart, that we come to the place of being naked, but able to have intimacy with Him, just as it was in the beginning. This is God's heart for each of us.

I need to add something here the Lord showed me a long time ago, regarding intimacy. In the churches, with a new convert, we lead them through what we call the sinner's prayer. Sometimes they are asked to come up the front. But in many places, we ask them to put up their hands if they want to make a commitment to Christ, but tell the congregation to close their eyes so no-one will see who has their hands up. At other times we get the whole congregation to recite the prayer, so the new converts won't be embarrassed. What He showed me is that, in doing it this way, we are robbing the new convert of their first touch of intimacy with their Heavenly Father. By taking away the initial experience of God, we make it harder, and seemingly not necessary, for them to seek real intimacy with God themselves.

New converts need to be encouraged to speak their own words to God at this special time. To allow Him to touch them in His way, so He can establish His

relationship with them immediately. They need to know, just as we all need to know, that a relationship with Jesus costs, and that anything as worthwhile as intimacy with Him is worth any price we may be asked to pay. It will never be as high a cost as His death on the cross to save us was for Him, and His Father. It doesn't matter if they only say a few words, as the thief on the cross beside Jesus did; "remember me, Lord." But they need the words to be their own words, so as to establish the initial beginning of intimacy with Him.

There is another question that needs to be asked here. Are you born of the spirit of God when someone prays for you at the time of your conversion. The disciples travelled with Jesus for three and a half years. They heard His teaching and saw the miracles and deliverance He performed. Yet they did not have the boldness they had after Pentecost. They did not have the total change of life that could be seen by everyone they met. I believe this was because, even though they saw what He could do, they still didn't know fully who He was; the Son of God. It was only after He died and rose again, and made Himself known to them that they were able to believe. I believe for us, we need to come into a complete experience of Him, risen and alive, before we receive what the disciples received in Acts. I believe we again rob new converts by not encouraging them to fully seek God for their own Pentecost. This gives us the faith to leave the results up to Him. When I met Jesus, no prayer up the front or anywhere else, or raising my hands, or speaking the sinners prayer ever, it was Jesus giving me the fullness of experiencing Him, alive and risen, that allowed me to be healed.

"Go ye into all the world and make disciples."

How do we do this? It is not by words, or trying to convict. It is not by teaching as in speaking it, although some teaching is involved. It is by being a disciple ourselves. Actions. Children learn by example. People learn by example. I need to be shown something before I can do it. Jesus was the Servant King. Even though He taught, it is His life, how He lived it, how He dealt with people, how He loved them; this is our true lesson. It is our criteria for being a disciple today. True disciples birth other true disciples. Church goers birth other church goers, although every now and again, a church goer will birth a true disciple by God's grace and the calling on a life.

Today we talk about the presence, and we want the presence on our lives. Constantly we seek it. But the presence God wants us to have is the presence of Him on our lives so strongly, yet we are unaware of it. This is humility. We just go on doing our best to live as Jesus showed us how to. We don't seek the presence. But by our focus of trying to follow Jesus as best we can, God gives us His true presence on our lives. Our being aware of His presence on our lives all the time can bring pride. But when the focus of our lives is just to be like Him, it brings humility. The presence is really there to be felt by others, so they will know Jesus lives. It is for a witness to Him. The deeds that come from carrying the presence should be easily attributed to Jesus, not to us. The Sermon on the Mount, Matthew Chapters 5 to 7, was something I strove for, long before I came to meet Jesus. I had read it in a book

somewhere. I knew it was from the Bible, but I had no idea which part. I didn't even know it was Jesus' teaching. Until I started going to the catholic church, I didn't even know who Jesus was, but I knew there was life in the Sermon on the Mount. This is God's Heart for us.

I always wanted to finish my book with Sam still in my life. I thought the fulfilment of a happy marriage would be my ending. But that wasn't God's ending. Then I thought it would be my intercession for Him by walking through all my pain after the broken plans. But that wasn't God's ending either. I thought the breaking of the principalities over Australia could only happen by Sam marrying me, or by my walking in forgiveness of him. But that wasn't God's ending either. I struggled for three years after the breaking of our engagement, to stay friends with him, because he wouldn't give up. He knew what we had, and he didn't want to let it go.

When Sam told me the story of the stigma put on him at fourteen, and revealed his Lie to me, he was able to tell me things that he was, that he had been all his life, that he had done to me. He uncovered his nakedness before both God and me. He could now come before God and seek the intimacy his heart had always desired. And in uncovering his nakedness, he gained massive spiritual ground for his Heavenly Father. God had asked Sam, at eighty one years of age, to walk through pain and embarrassment, and to become honest and real, to pay the cost of breaking the principalities of the hard hearts of men over this nation.

Seeing Sam's Original Lie clearly and knowing the battle he had fought to try to disprove it, by building his reputation, is the blueprint God has for each of us to see each other, the final step in becoming loving. I can now see Sam, not by his behaviour, but as a man who has struggled for seventy one years with a huge Lie that has made him into someone he is not. I can no longer be his friend as he has chosen to keep fighting the Lie his way, but I will always love and pray for the fourteen year old who battled so hard and so long.

This is how God wants us to see each other, not by the person the Original Lie has made us, but by the person He has called us to be. This is God's Heart.

This is truly loving.

And when we can do this, the world WILL be amazed by the love we have for each other. We will have made ourselves ready as the beautiful Bride Jesus gave His life for, and for whom He is waiting to join Him at the marriage supper of the Lamb in Heaven. Selah!

Wow! Who am I to think God wanted my wishy washy ending for His book. Yesterday, I put down my "pen" and sighed a huge sigh. I had finished. Now, today, I could copy it and format it. Then I was woken up this morning to the loudest voice God, the Creator of the universe, has ever spoken to me in. He yelled it! I am so glad He did.

IT ISN'T ABOUT MINISTRIES,
IT IS ABOUT WHO YOU ARE AS A PERSON.

“He who has an ear to hear, let him hear what the Spirit is saying to the churches.”

A few weeks ago God told me He was taking me into another intercessory phase. I didn't know He was going to break my heart again, but I've come to know it is the only way I can carry the burden. I need to experience the pain in my own life to pray effectively.

It is about the “who we are as a person.” I wept and wept for about a week. The model came from within my own family. It is all about how we treat each other. Anything less than with the value deserved by the one Jesus dies for on the cross, which is every person everywhere, is not enough.

I had finished my book and went to a group of Christians to show them, and to get some advice on how to publish my book and set up a web site. I read to them the story of going to see Bill Johnson, and receiving the message on “the church craves excitement.” Chapter 6. Because I mentioned Bill's name, one of the group said I needed to put in a disclaimer about not endorsing this man, as he believes doctrines that were not biblically sound, and doesn't follow truth correctly. He said I may compromise my integrity if I seemed to be endorsing him. He told me why he believed Bill had gone astray, but it was too complicated for me. I had been in the healing rooms for 5 years and, while I had never heard Bill speak before, I had read a couple of his books, and been to a seminar where two of his workers took us through a healing rooms training. I found this all good, especially the seminar. I did not speak about my book again during the meeting, even when asked to.

The next morning, this is what the Lord spoke to me. He said,

“Write a disclaimer, to disclaim that you need a disclaimer.”

He told me that what this man had spoken about was exactly the opposite of what my book is about. People who do this eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, a tree we were never meant to eat from; a tree that opened our eyes to things God never wanted us to know, that showed us we were naked and all the problems that has brought us, robbing us of intimacy with Him and each other, breaking His heart. It is a tree that causes us today to criticise, condemn and judge, in fact that stops us from loving as God wants us to love. I do not understand why this man and others search the lives and beliefs of other Christians to see if they are believing as they feel they should believe. When I read the seven letters to the seven churches, in Revelation Chapters 2 and 3, I find that almost no church is believing correctly, and the one that seems to be okay still has only a little strength, and is warned to hold fast to what they do have so no one can take their crown. Revelation Chapter 3, verses 8 to 11. I am puzzled as to why these people who criticise, condemn and judge, are so sure they are okay. I am too busy making sure I do not get led astray, to search the

lives of others to see how they are doing. I study the Word of God to learn how I can love God and others as deeply as possible, and to become like Jesus, not to acquire knowledge with which to criticise other Christians.

As I wrote this morning, I realised I was being given the perfect ending for this book, something I had been struggling to find. Remember the Lord's shouted message, "It is not about ministries, but about who you are as a person." This man talked for a large part of the meeting about the ministries he is in, and has started, and what he plans to start in the future, including a new church. He may have what God calls an ambitious spirit. The Kingdom of God is righteousness, peace and joy in the Lord. Romans Chapter 14, verse 17. It is not a competition between us, but a unity shared. The ambitious spirit is a dangerous spirit as it is total self. It comes out as one who loves to quarrel, who then loves to sin. Proverbs Chapter 17, verse 19. This man's life is quarrelling about right and wrong. Romans Chapter 2, verse 4 says,

"It is the goodness of God that leads to repentance,"

It is not the condemnation of man.

People who desire ministry can hurt others. This is why God doesn't like it. When your aim is to be the person He wants you to be, He teaches you how to not hurt people.

I really love this young man, always have since I first met him. But it breaks my heart to hear him being critical. How much more must it break His Heavenly Father's heart. I know how much God loves him.

We need to all be ever mindful of how we treat our brother, made in the image of God. This is especially important when dealing with our children. Scripture says,

"Fathers, do not provoke your children to anger."
Colossians Chapter 3, verse 21.

How dare we yell, or misjudge, or not listen to, or wrongly punish our sons and our daughters. Much less abuse, or in any severe way, damage them. God is not happy when we do. In fact, it makes Him really angry. Probably the angriest He ever gets.

For this is God's heart, that we love one another, that we be on each other's side, and so on God's side in believing He has it all in hand. He is able. We have to search to find what is wrong with others, but God knows everything in every heart, and He has it all worked out. He knows exactly what He is doing. He doesn't need our help to condemn. He needs our help to love.

Which side are you going to be on, Church, the world's side, to look for fault, or God's side, to love.

This is God's heart.