

***WORK FOR THE
NIGHT IS COMING***

The Memoirs of Dr. Bill Ghrist

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PREFACE

What is the point of yet another book by a Christian telling of his trials and victories? First of all we read in 1 Peter 3:15 that we should “always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have...”. Let’s face it, by reading this far I must assume that you have asked.

Secondly, please do not expect this to be a deeply spiritual devotional book. Maybe someday I’ll write that way, but I think the shelves are already stuffed with better than I could write.

Thirdly, it is my view that there is a great void in just plain Christian humor. The Psalmist in Psalm 146:5 says, “Happy is he that hath the God of Jacob for his help, whose hope is in the Lord his God.” (KJV). We are to be winsome witnesses for the Lord Jesus. Oh yes, I know that some of us are given intolerable burdens, and I’ve had my share with osteomyelitis, wondering if I would make it through medical school, failed my board exams the first time, watched our Safari Medical unit explode around me, seen my first administrative effort on the mission field nearly destroy a mission station with a Union crisis, watched a 7 year old African boy I had come to love, slowly die from the powerful poison of a Cobra and was forced to leave the mission field with cancer which is now cured. Yes, I believe each of us could dwell upon our burdens, but Solomon wrote in Proverbs 15:15b “he that is of a merry heart hath a continual feast” (KJV). Let us therefore feast with a merry heart.

As a doctor and a Christian it has not passed unnoticed the great hoary age that my favorite comedians of 30 years ago lived, Jack Benny, Bob Hope, Groucho Marx, and Fred Allen. The word of God speaks volumes even to unbelievers, when it says, again in Proverbs 17:22 “A merry heart doeth good like medicine” (KJV).

Unless otherwise specified, Biblical quotations are from the New International Version, accurate, understandable, and not culturally imperialistic on the mission field.

CHAPTER ONE: LITTLE BILLY IS DYING

My life began at an early age. I was born the second son of a mass of boys bearing the Ghrist name. To this writing, 18 sons by natural descent in a direct line of five generations without a single daughter, aside from our own much beloved adopted Bonnie Faith Ghrist.

My earliest recollections were scuffles with my older and more-clever brother, Bob, and my good dad busy building a medical practice at the end of the depression of the 1930s. My father also helped to found and direct the old "P & S" (Physicians and Surgeons) Hospital, later renamed, in futile search for a large donor, the Glendale Memorial Hospital, in oddly enough, Glendale, California, USA.

My dear mother, always proud of her French artistic heritage was named Eva by Iowa farmer parents who were sure she could no have THAT name shortened into a nickname, until she became a sophomore at Oberlin Observatory of Music and led "Eva's Dance Band". The next year she turned "cereal" (serious) and concentrated on church organ. By my birth, she had secured her lifetime position as organist of the First Baptist Church of Glendale, California, where she served nearly 55 years, insisting upon quality music for our Lord's worship services.

Mine was a family of doctors with both my paternal grandparents graduating from the world famous Keokuk Medical College in the minuscule metropolis of the same name in the state where the "tall corn grows", IOWA, pronounced in those days "I-O-WAY".

I was never privileged to meet my paternal grandmother, Dr. Jennie, who made her exit just before my entrance. But my grandfather "Dr. D.M." was a stern, skilled, kind-hearted x-ray specialist who delighted in pouring oil over ruffled Glendale physicians' feelings and making surprising diagnoses until his retirement at age 89.

It was just such a surprising quick and accurate diagnosis that he made upon me at the age of three when I tumbled down the new stairs at my parent's home and suffered continuing agonizing pain in my right knee even three hours after the mishap, but there was no fracture. Psalm 119:71 says "It was good for me to be afflicted so that I might learn your decrees" and indeed God knew what he was doing in my life, in dire peril, with the awful diagnosis of osteomyelitis in 1931 long before Dr. Flemming's discovery of penicillin a decade later.

With my right leg swollen and painful, and my body feverish and sick nearly to death, an orthopedic surgeon was called for consultation. The verdict was heartlessly given in my presence, “If you want to save Billy’s life, that right leg must be cut off!” Terror was then added to crushing pain.

What does a patient do when he does not like the treatment? Call another doctor. A second opinion was sought. “Cut the leg off to save his life”, and so it went with each of six successive excellent “orthopods” until God shone a ray of hope at the end of a long black tunnel and number seven, Dr. Hugh Toland Jones, was called from Los Angeles to look at sinking Billy.

I cannot remember from age three the exact sequence, but it was about this time that my brave and loving mother, who had so long held out her refusal to remove my leg, and who knew the Lord herself, asked me in great tenderness if I knew how sick I was? “Yes Mommy”, I moaned in pain, “I’m about to die”. She replied, “Billy, would you like to trust in Jesus to take you to heaven?” “Tell me how, please, Mommy”, I asked. She made it very plain to my little ears and then led me in a prayer of commitment to Jesus Christ. No one but Jesus heard my P.S., “Lord Jesus, if you are powerful enough to save my life and my leg, I will become a medical missionary for you.”

Could a three-year old very sick boy do this? Of course! Is God limited by our theology of “age of accountability” or His sovereignty diminished by the yearning heart of a boy whose mother and uncle were born again, and whose grand-uncle was a Bible preaching minister dedicated to the Lord’s service. My grandparents, in the afterglow of the 1905 revival, partly entered medical college with thoughts of becoming medical missionaries. But what of being a MEDICAL missionary? His grandparents, uncle and father were all doctors. If he lived, what else would little Billy be?

It is strange but that vow has never been eliminated from my mind. And in God’s providence, Dr. Hugh Jones, had a son just a year older than little Billy and he said to my distraught parents, “No, we will not cut off that leg, though Billy may well die.” And thus began his long, tedious, and frightening treatment which is only a blur in my mind. It consisted of starched white uniforms, masked people, the humid smell of fresh cast material, the delicious pungent odor of tincture of benzoin, and operation after operation until thirteen were counted.. No bone remained in a section of my right tibia, only filmy periosteum from which fresh healthy un-diseased bone would eventually be laid down. Months of casts, braces, and painful exercises followed. It is incalculable how much I owe Dr. Jones. I was so pleased many years later to express my gratitude to him personally when we were on furlough from Africa. He was so happy, that he directed the proceeds from the sale of sprigs of a new camellia he had bred in his retirement, to be directed to our work.

The cost was real, even to a physician's family. All my parents' meager savings including the special fund my mother had saved toward a home pipe organ were gone in hospital bills and medicines. Years later, I remember how, when lonely or depressed, I so enjoyed locating the key to the half-forbidden empty "organ loft" and going into that bare room to see physically how much my mother loved me. There should have been her organ and here I was instead. It was another ten years before mother had again saved enough to select and buy from the Estey Organ Factory in Vermont, what my life and leg had cost her.

Besides the sickness, pain and slow recovery, I also lived with the constant fear of recurrence and the frustration of being a taller-than-average boy who could not take part in any contact sports – especially Southern California's, and my own favorite, of American tackle football. I do have an ugly scar below the knee, but this was made inconsequential by the solace of one of my favorite "uncles", Hal Bucher, husband of my mother's lovely niece, Marie, of nearly the same age as my parents. Uncle Hal had a compound fracture of one leg and an unsightly osteomyelitis scar too. We often compared scars and since it obviously had not affected him, I was greatly encouraged.

I grew up in a normal fashion attending Sunday school, often followed by evening church, where my mother played the organ. In my early teenage years, a most helpful, older, enthusiastic couple, Dr. "Billy" and Mrs. "Pinky" Norman, worked, with me through the church and nearby Y.M.C.A. During summers, I would usually go for one or two weeks to the Glendale "Y camp" at Camp Fox, Catalina Island.

How I loved those holidays, tenting by the gravelly beach, swimming, hiking and dedicating my life anew to Jesus. I well remember going forward after one of Dr. Billy Norman's fireside messages – little realizing that in God's eternal security, I needn't be saved over and over again. But that night, especially, my childhood vow to be a missionary doctor was remembered and renewed, even though it seemed like a fairy tale or dream.

The next time I consciously remembered my childhood vow, came, amazingly enough, on the afternoon of my twenty-first birthday, when in our culture, I came of age. Cultures vary as to the age of maturity. In the day of Jesus, it was 30 years when a Hebrew man, born in the right family, could become a priest. Among the Masai, Pokot, and Turkana tribes of Kenya, it was when he could single-handedly slay a lion. Do you ever wonder how polygamy began? With so many young men's bones being gnawed upon by the friendly lions of Tsavo, Samburu, or Santa Ana's Safari Lion Park, what were the girls to do? I've heard the saying "half a man is better than none" and at the Roland K. Ames hospital in the Ukambani bush, I've seen it too!

In the California 49er culture, 1949 that is, the magic number for maturity was age 21, when a man could vote, be found in shady restaurants, and in general declare his legal independence, so long as he didn't carry a good thing too far while feasting at the family board or allowing mother the privilege of washing your things, and expecting dad to pay tuition, books, gasoline, pencils, thumbtacks, string – in other words the basic necessities of the great scholar's life – ha!

Medical school for the more modern "California 49er" was no easier to enter than today. Twentieth Century progress has been made in the great necessities of life such as drip-dry shirts, jet travel, and soft contact lenses, but in the advancing science of medicine in which I like to feel I share a part, progress in entering the schools of learning, has only retrogressed as the yearly thousands of highly motivated and qualified young men of today will attest. In my grandpa D.M.'s day, he needed only to flash a half-decade of sorghum farming bumper crops yield of \$1,000, and the director of Keokuk Medical College was persuaded to enroll a husband and wife for the entire two year course. This included all expenses, except the spade to dig your own skeleton at the nearby graveyard for the anatomy class.

Well, as I said, it was no easy task to be among those accepted to medical school. Therefore I have always thought it fitting and providential that Dean Raulston and the Lord chose my April birthday to notify me by postcard that I had been accepted to begin Medical School at the University of Southern California in early September. Amazing, as it may seem, my first thought as I stood there alone at the front door of our family home, postcard in hand was one of awe and amazement, as I remembered my childhood vow. I rather shrank inside, looked up and whispered "Lord, you are really going to hold me to that vow!" Then with a shout of joy I ran to bear the glad tidings to the rest of the family.

Some of my readers may well say – "That's all right for you Dr. Bill, but I have never had such opportunities." Well, I'm certainly no plaster saint as you will notice in the following pages, but let me just say, "Have you ever promised the Lord anything?" Maybe something so "wild and crazy" that you feel you or He just couldn't possibly fulfill it? You just begin, as late as it may seem, to take those first faltering steps toward fulfillment of your promise to the Lord and He will provide the money, the circumstances, yes, even the health and strength to reach your goal. I well know it is frightening to be "sold out to God", to put your faith in Jesus Christ on the line in front of a watching world, but you will never be alone. It is His strength, His power and His business to magnify your first steps of obedience into the thunder of the great footsteps of a great man or woman of God. I am not that great man of God, but I'm in the race with millions of others. As I look back at my life's directions, I can truly say there is no person on earth with whom I'd trade lives. Whatever we thought we were giving up has returned to us with manifold interest. We left California and private practice in obedience to our "call to the

mission field”. But what do you know, we now live in a place, selected almost miraculously by the Lord with a million dollar view, in a balmy healthful climate and are super fulfilled not only in the medical, but also the pastoral and administrative work we do. There is just no way you can give more to the Lord than He can return to you.

If you ever made a now unfulfilled promise to Jesus, you owe it to yourself and your family to jump in. The water’s fine!

CHAPTER TWO – SWOLLEN FACE

It is true that boys are made of “frogs and snails and puppy dog tails” and they get themselves into such trouble at times, of course by merest accident. I remember one day when I was about seven years old and it seemed like the ugly words “discipline” or “obedience” had been neglected with bruising effect of nearly daily applications of the rod by my mother, my dad, and anyone who happened to be in my sphere of influence, like principals, teachers, milkman, etc. Well, one morning, I distinctly remember awakening with an earth-shattering discovery. Just maybe – of course, it was far-fetched- but just maybe these ministrations of justice were really caused by some fault that lay within me. I was yet too young to have memorized such choice passages speaking of the universality of sin, Isaiah 53:6, “We all like sheep have gone astray, each of us has turned to his own way, and the Lord has laid on Him the iniquity of us all.” Doesn’t that give you the creeps those 700 years before Jesus would come, the jolly old prophet Isaiah, writing “The Lord has laid on Him the iniquity of us all.” WOW! Talk about plainness in scripture!

Or I was not thinking of Paul’s pithy preaching Romans 3:23, “For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.” Nevertheless, I distinctly remember saying to myself – “Billy, these lapses into naughty misconduct...or more appropriate 7-year old though words...must end, must cease. Today I will watch carefully, be wise and avoid the daily posterior blistering.” What resolve, what courage, what holy living. But you know, try as I might, before 4 p.m. there was mother breaking another wooden hanger over me, and I was just as amazed. Oh! I didn’t blame her a bit. I deserved what I got, but you know life is just not all easy to manage, is it?

In the following story, my swollen face, I will wonder how those postcards got to mother and to what extreme the Lord took me to avoid another spanking, justified or not.

I suppose most of my American readers will remember teenage weeks spent at summer camp. Camp Fox at Catalina Island 26 miles off the coast of Los Angeles Harbor, is, at last report, still nestled between the burnt

brown grass hills of the lovely island with its own gravelly beach. There is crystal clear water, in which semi-tropical fish abound. The camp is still operated by the Glendale YMCA every summer.

Actually the last time we saw that lovely island, was quite by mistake. During the summer of 1965 when with our family of five, June and I plus our three sons ages 13, 11 and 8, boldly set out one very early morning. We departed about an hour before dawn with weather reports, maps, even a phone call to my physician's exchange, of when to send out search and rescue people for us if no word reached them by 3 p.m. that afternoon. We had bought, repaired, painted and sailed for a month, a Silhouette sailboat of about 18 feet length, keel, cabin for two, and a 5 horsepower even-rude outboard engine.

What a clatter we seemed to make loading food, ice-chest, sails and children seemingly everywhere underfoot. We turned on the small night running lights, erected the sails for the first morning's breeze, paddled out of the dock and fired up the outboard chugging out of the basin at low speed, down the rock lined estuary barely able to see through the pre-dawn mist and using my hand compass headed straight for Catalina Island.

We knew how easy it would be to miss a lonely island over the horizon, so we had agreed that if by noon we had not sighted the island we would just do a 180-degree turn and hopefully it would be difficult to miss the mainland that extended for a thousand miles in either direction north or south. It was only as the day wore on we first noticed the amphibious airplanes flying directly overhead in the very same direction, then the Steamship to Avalon going past us in the same way just a mile distant, that we realized that we were not exactly one on the high seas and that our compass was leading us well. However, we did have one problem. We had meant to sail to Catalina, but following the early mist, we soon settled down to a fog, which eventually opened up as the sun climbed in the sky, but brought absolutely no wind. The sails flapped uselessly and one would have thought one was in the Sargasso Sea where I'm told ancient sailing vessels abound with their skeleton crews seeking for signs of wind. However, we did have our trusty evenrude and a good supply of gasoline aboard. There were a few times, for possibly 30 minutes at a time, when we could shut down the outboard motor and catch a slight breeze and sail along. I remember it was not long after a Fourth of July weekend and one of our sons had brought along a few firecrackers and being out beyond the three-mile limit we felt quite permissible to explode over the water.

At about 11:30 a.m. we saw the distant shape of Catalina Island with its characteristic shape where the isthmus lies near the southern tip. By 12:30 p.m. only a few miles from the island, a soft continuous breeze sprang up and we sailed directly for the center of the island. As we drew close, I recognized my old friend Camp Fox and there were maybe a hundred boys swimming, hiking, playing volleyball and boating in their large old rowboats.

How well I remembered the time when I was about 12 years old and my parents gave me a whole two weeks instead of one usual week at Camp Fox.

Saying a joyful goodbye to my mother at the Glendale station of the red Pacific Electric special streetcar, surrounded by other yelling excited boys, my mother pressed into my hand four self-addressed stamped postcards and said “Now Billy, be sure to write twice a week – every Wednesday and Sunday.” I recklessly promised I would do so and soon with a rattle and crackle of sparks, the electric streetcar began to move and the wonderful journey to Los Angeles Harbor, thirty miles distant, began. I put the postcards away and enjoyed the journey, then the steamship ride for five hours, and finally the motor launch from Avalon, the main city and port of Catalina, to Camp Fox.

Soon the whirl of activities engulfed me and I remember taking the postcards out of my suitcase sometime, but strangely I did not remember seeing them again, and what is absent is not missed, so it never again crossed my mind to write home.

During the days before I had left for camp, I had spent much time at the Verdugo swimming pool in Glendale, now called the “keyhole” due to its unusual shape being wide where the non-swimmers can frolic in 4 feet of water and more narrow where one can swim a good distance and dive from the assorted boards and platforms. One day, someone had dug their fingernail into my right cheek and I thought little of it as it healed mostly with a small scab when I left for Camp Fox.

After about 3-4 days at Camp Fox, my cheek was a bit swollen so I saw the camp nurse. She gave me some salve containing mercury which I used as often as 12-year old boy would think of it – maybe two times a day. Somehow, the cheek did not improve, but rather developed blisters. I was taken by launch into Avalon to see a doctor who prescribed another stronger medicine similar to the first. Gradually my face became more tense and weepy as the blisters seemed open as much as closed. Calamine lotion discolored it a chalky light pink until the second week was ended. The last five days I had been prohibited from swimming. By the last day I began noticing that other people seemed repulsed by my appearance and so was glad when the day came to return to Glendale by launch and PE car. Along with maybe 75 other Glendale boys, we poured out of the two streetcars with duffel bags, candy wrappers, and sandy shoes. With quite a throng present, I just stood in one place searching for a familiar face. Soon my mother hurried right past me. “Mother”, I cried, “it’s me! Here!” The poor lady recognized my voice, stopped and searched faces, passed over the ugly one with the lopsided grin, thickened chalky swollen right side and continued looking. She had stopped and that was enough for me. Soon, I was beside her telling her what a good time I had, as she looked like she was seeing a giant cockroach.

“Are you Billy?” she said in anguish. I had a face that only a mother could love, and she wasn’t even so sure. Then she pulled from her purse the four postcards all without a word written by me on them. She said, “I received these, absolutely blank and all on the same day, a week ago. Can you explain?” Apparently some Good Samaritan had done the mailing for me. I feigned inability to speak. What could I say?

The next day the diagnosis was made – allergy to mercury with which I had been treated - and an underlying ringworm infection. Soon Billy began to mend.

CHAPTER THREE – THREE SHOCKS

Physical and spiritual life progressed as I grew until three powerful unanswered problems arose which effectively derailed my spiritual growth. For the first problem I tried pastoral counseling, but was so disappointed that there seemed no one else to go to when the second and third equally serious shocks occurred. At least numbers one and two are probably most common today and divorce can be substituted for death, which is in some ways an even greater continuing shock.

What I needed at this time was a wise mature Christian. I’m sure they are numerous in each congregation, but my readers need be alert to how they can be of help. We must be available.

This in no way excuses my fall into carnality, it was my sin for which I was responsible and undoubtedly, in the providence of God, I learned many lessons.

About the same time at this impressionistic age I received three shocks that I unconsciously used to justify my backsliding, carnality and lack of single-mindedly following Jesus for many years. But let it be known, each single one is a powerful detractor to a life of joy and consecration.

One day in school I was confronted with “The Scientific Fact of Evolution”. Of course, being no Bible scholar, yet having read the first two chapters of Genesis a number of times, I was confused. I went to our pastor and most unfortunately, he too had never resolved this conflict and gave me the weak kneed “gap theory” that a day could be a billion years. I am now a voting member of the Creation Research Society and recognize the unscientific faith in evolution so common among otherwise learned scientific brethren and am aware how necessary answers are to an inquiring mind and how devastating straddling the fence can be. To my immature mind, I could only reason, “If the pastor does not believe the plain words of the Bible, then which should I?”

The second shock to my thirteen year old world came when my greatly beloved, younger, docile, loving and slightly mentally retarded brother Orrie David, at the age of seven, missed his footing playing on a rustic wooden garden bridge at our home, and fell four feet hitting his head. Within less than 24 hours, he had died of a subdural hematoma clot between the skull and brain. Knowing the happy and sweet disposition of my little brother, I just could not see why a loving God would allow or cause him to die. Many have stumbled for years over this same question not realizing that such children of believers do go to heaven and who is it that suffers? The dead loved one in heaven? No, only we who are so quick to try to interfere with a loving God's plans. I know now that my dear brother will be among the first to welcome me when I too "graduate". It was years before I returned to a real trust in the loving Savior. I had separated myself from His comfort.

Thirdly, at about that same time, the name "evangelist" became abhorrent to me. It was not until October 1977 when at the home of Dr. Bill and Vonnette Bright at Campus Crusade Headquarters when Dr. Bill introduced me; (imagine me, as a most effective evangelist not as an ophthalmologist, eye surgeon, or even associate staff of campus crusade, missionary or mission executive), did the distaste of that word vanish.. In actual fact, I guess Dr. Bright was correct, using his teaching of the spirit-filled life and keeping the four laws available, we have literally seen thousands converted in Mombasa.

But let me tell you of the evangelist brother of our pastor at First Baptist Church. Dr. Russell Brougher came in like a whirlwind to convert the heathen in Glendale beginning with the shadowy unsaved in his brother's church. Somehow church membership was equated with membership in the eternal Kingdom of God. Also, I must confess that I had never before met a real live evangelist and was very curious to see if he breathed our same air, if a heavenly glow emanated from his face like Moses or if he carried, for everyone to see, his special button to push that would signal the Spirit of the Lord to catch him away to Azotus or even Azusa. Hence it was that I was really happy when this godly and stern man walked into the Sunday school opening exercises in the side chapel that morning with the determination and stride of the Prophet Elijah. After a song or two and introductions had been made, the evangelist who towered above us all on the dais said, "I want to talk to the unbelievers, to the sinners". I glanced at my friends and they at me expecting some green-eyed monster to slither in from the side door, or some shaggy unwashed child to enter soon to receive this dramatic attention. The evangelist continued, "I want every one of you children over twelve who have been baptized and who are members of this church to stand up and move over to this side of the chapel." There was a rustling of small bodies as most crawled over and around me to quickly obey the man of God. Then he turned to the rest of us and said, "All right, now all those of you who are under 12 and whose parents are members of the church stand up and move to the other side of the chapel with your older brothers and sisters."

What was I to do? I was thirteen years of age, my mother had always said that she was a professional organist, had been raised a Presbyterian and thoroughly believed were she to join this church, she would soon be asked to play without salary. I had been raised in the church but was in the peculiar position of an “inside-outsider”. As I looked at our small group of isolated individuals, most of whom I hardly knew, invited guests of other kids here for their first time or two, and looked to the other side of the room where my friends were staring at me open-mouthed, I realized that I was the green-eyed monster, the sinner to whom God had sent His evangelist. I had loved Jesus, I had read the Bible, and I had prayed and trusted. I knew of no greater tragedy than to now be cast into outer darkness and gradually my mind became numb and I heard less and less of what the evangelist said. I was revolted, isolated and confused. I carried that word scar –“evangelist” for many years. It was many weeks before I returned to Sunday school and never again as a trusting member of the fellowship. The lack of trust, I should add, was purely in my mind.

CHAPTER FOUR – FREED FROM FLINTRIDGE HOLLOW

There are times when as a parent the Hindu custom of arranging your children’s marriage seems to have value, as one looks at increasing divorce rates in the Western, formerly Christian world. At the opposite end of the scale, is the Kenya Luo Custom of spending hours with parents who in turn spend hours with the prospective parents negotiating the bride price which is intended to indenture the young man for decades to come. Finally the young man takes a few trusted friends, kidnaps the bride, dragging her home, kicking and screaming against her will to be his life partner.

The only problem June and I had was that we began too soon at the beginning, so to speak. I was June’s first boyfriend at our common age of 16 and she was only my third. I had begun as a precocious child at the age of six having a friend of the family “girlfriend”. Before age nine, the whole idea of girls revolted me. This finally was adjusted at the age of 14, only to be scaled back to revulsion by the idiotic behavior of my second girlfriend at age 14 ½, who attempted to show off by intentionally tumbling into a cluster of poison oak, claiming that it didn’t affect her.

Days later I received a letter from her mother postmarked Santa Barbara Hospital where my heart flame was recovering from disseminated poison “oakitis”. I wondered if the female of the species were really necessary and again tried a waning readjustment in misogyny, or whatever it is that means cool to the warmer and weaker sex. Though I thought some of girls, I would never have guessed that I would marry rather young for a doctor, at age 21.

On the day following my being thrown out of Flintridge Preparatory School for Boys, I met my future bride. Does that shock the delicate sensibilities of the myth or Christian Missionary building material, to admit to a rapid exit from such a hallowed place of learning as Flintridge Prep? It is not the intention of the chronicler to make an unnecessary diversion into the sordid part of life, but having thus apologized, it would be unfair to leave my dear reader hanging at the precipice of doubt; was Bill caught gambling? No, I was not caught; I mean to say it was not related to sinful practices that I was given the old heave-ho. Was he guilty of academic failure – no, though my grades being poor in public school necessitated a change to a school where I would be taught to study, did undergo a slight downward drift in spite of “herculean effort”, if that is the correct term. No, and I nearly blush to say, but was really not my fault, as you can judge for yourself.

This was during the midst of World War II and each day at Flintridge was begun with a scripture reading and prayer for our fighting men overseas, for many, older brothers, uncles, distant relatives and neighbors. Flintridge Prep belied its name in the sense that it was located in an often fog bound hollow and not on a ridge at all. My parents had just given me a thick brown overcoat and the day in question was my first to be warm at Flintridge in many weeks.

Still, wearing my prized bulky exterior at lunch time, I happened to open my lunch bag, seated next to a rather uncoordinated fat friend in our class. Milk was severely rationed, yet we were given one dixie cup full. My ungainly bench mate reaching across the table to filch an unguarded peanut butter sandwich tipped my dixie cup of milk all over my sleeve whereupon it ran down onto my lap. “Forgive them for they know not what they do” could have been said, but before such a long thought could have been completed, I had already taken someone else’s dixie cup and thrown the contents at my friend, “Caudle”, who in ducking, shirked his opportunity at forgiveness too, allowing fully half of the milk to accidentally fall like a spring rain upon the next boy. He too tried to forgive and aimed milk in my direction, but his aim was poor and it mostly soaked the boys at the other side of the table. Soon the graces of mercy, peace and forgiveness were entirely lost as milk cascaded and burst out of Flintridge hollow in all directions. Well, all good things must end and since the milk supply was severely limited, within three minutes the entire episode was over and the last few morsels of milk-soaked lunch were consumed and we went out to play softball, basketball, or just sat in the fog and talked.

Imagine our surprise the next morning when a very stern and heartbroken headmaster began informing us that there were evil forces within the school who wanted Germany and Japan to win the War against the Allies, who by their actions demonstrated their ill regard for the sanctity of our meager and rationed supply of milk by throwing it to the four winds and upon each other. Every youngster involved in yesterday’s wicked milk fight

was asked to come forward. Well, I could hardly be among those not present, so along with everyone at our lunch table, I came forward to receive my just desserts.

We were amazed at its severity – five demerits! Ten demerits meant expulsion and quiet Bill had never received even one before. It was then announced that a special exception would be made for us to “work off” these blots against our record by showing up two days later, Saturday morning, for the “chain gang” to spend six hours in soul cleansing labor cleaning the grounds of the school. As an after thought, no option was possible – we must be there at 9 a.m. Saturday morning to serve in the “chain gang” as work was needed.

For some months I had been restless with the oddities of life. Here I was attending a boy’s only preparatory school, working harder than I had ever worked before in studies and getting slightly worse grades than before. Thoughts of Medical School were disappearing over the mountain of bad grades, and to make matters worse, I was again reconsidering the value of girls and found myself in an environment singularly without opportunity. On top of all this, my parents’ home was located in the same block as Glendale High School where I knew hundreds of interesting coeds passed each day in my absence. It was a tortured life this, to arise early and pass out onto the street 50 minutes before the first girl would walk past in order to walk five blocks away and be collected by a wheezy old Ford station wagon driven by a cheery balding history teacher, Mr. Faskin, to begin the 35 minute journey to Flintridge Hollow and to return again in time to observe only the rare girl who had been detained by athletics or serious study.

Reflecting upon my strange life that evening, I recalled my dear mother’s descriptions of “chain gangs” she had seen in Iowa as a young girl. I decided to interject a happy thought to my harried mother just before dinner when tensions were greatest, “Oh, mother, you know that USC-UCLA football game you have tickets for me to attend with you and Dad and Bob? Well, I can’t go – I’ve been put on the chain gang at Flintridge!” I noticed a certain dilation of the pupils and arching of the neck at the mention of “chain gang”. So I said it again in another way but using the two same emotion paired words “chain gang”. Soon Dad came home, but the words had little effect on him. I guess his education in the city of Ames, Iowa where his parents practiced medicine was not as broad as that of mother’s, on and off the farm, seeing men in striped suits with iron balls chained to their ankles.

Saturday morning I wondered what would happen. After breakfast mother pointed to her car and sweetly said “Bill, would you mind washing my car; it should look nice when we go to the football game.” Though my mind was racing at 80 miles an hour, there are times when the virtue of silence in subjection to higher authority

seems appropriate, and this was such a case. It is not overstating the case to say that never was a family car washed with such a tender and merry heart – I'm sure I even whistled a gay tune.

At exactly 9:30 a.m. I heard the telephone ring and I drifted beneath the breakfast room open window where I heard mother answer the phone and with great calm greet headmaster Lowery and say, "Oh, Bill is outside washing my car. Yes, yes...." And then with real spirit in her voice ask, "What did you call the group to which you have assigned my son for the day".....pause.....Then very loud "the chain gang? Oh no, Mr. Lowery my son shall not serve on a chain gang". There ensued rather garbled words and high emotion until I heard my dear mother say "Mr. Lowery, you are a crotchety old man!" and then the unmistakable clatter of a telephone being forcibly hung up. Stunned, I crept back to my job of polishing a chrome bumper.

Not a word was said until the next Monday morning when Dad arose early and advised me to accompany him to see his patient, Principal Hildreth at nearby Glendale High School. My days at Flintridge had ended. The very first class to which I was assigned was English. Principal Hildreth had a deputy escort and we arrived just after the class had begun. A vacant desk was found just across the aisle from a particularly attractive blonde girl, that I recognized as living just down the street from us. Suddenly the school bell rang and everyone stood up. I thought, "my, what short class periods they have at public school", having only been seated for 10-15 minutes. I gathered my books and began to leave but strangely everyone was standing looking straight ahead with heads slightly bowed. I could not imagine what had caused this peculiar behavior in unison, but the girl across the aisle from me leaned over and whispered, "we are praying for the boys overseas." Again the bell rang and I was left struggling with books in my hands. The pretty blonde motioned me to sit down and thus immediately after the class we became friends. June and Bill, which now after 30 years of marriage, is one of those unions formed in heaven to give a picture of Christ and his Bride, the church. How I love my closest friend and wife, June. Proverbs 18:22, "Whoso findeth a wife findeth a good thing, and obtaineth favor of the Lord."

When June and I met after that first class together at Glendale High, it did not take me long to discover that at this school there were many hitherto unknown social functions. One such was the Wednesday afternoon dance. Ballroom dancing was the style, with occasional Dixieland and Boogie Woogie piano for intermission entertainment. It was as much a time for the Glendale High Dance band to practice, on us, as it was a time to mix and meet. America's Big Band craze was at its height. Of course, most fellows were gathered in a knot at the southwest corner of the basketball court and most girls were gathered at the northeast corner. The dress was bobbie socks, skirts and blouses for girls and pants of all colors and shirts for the fellows, and saddle shoes worn by absolutely everyone. Most Wednesday afternoons from 4-5:30 p.m. found June and I dancing, talking and sharing a coke. We met in latter October and this was the last half of the football season, so we were soon

together at home Friday night games as well. Whatever the sport, football in the fall, basketball in the winter, or individual sports during the spring, we were soon seeing much of each other.

Soon a delightful morning custom developed, since she lived just one and one-half blocks further from school than I, and since my mother had three huge camellia bushes which were nearly in constant bloom. I awakened to the value of a lovely flower fresh from the bush each school day morning and soon was found waiting for June with a pink, white or red blossom in my hand, which June would attach to her hair, while I held her books, un-returned until we parted before the first class at school.

Being a bit larger than average size, I have never been especially timid, but well remember the evening of our first “date”. June had shown me the apartment which her parents managed a few days earlier and I assumed that her father would be standing about with a pipe-wrench or Ajax cleanser in hand, managing, when I met him. We were going out to a Glendale Dynamiter football game that night and I arrived just after dark whistling as I walked up the walk, climbed the stairs to the hallway and found the apartment labeled “Manager”. Nervously I checked to make sure my long sleeves were buttoned, knocked and waited expectantly. The door was not opened by June, but her father fully dressed in the costume of a Los Angeles County Deputy Sheriff complete with a .38 special revolver, handcuffs, dozens of polished bullets on his belt and an immense shiny badge. The door was standing open. When interrogated as to the purpose of the doorbell, I was mute with jaw agape.

I had long been plagued with a mild stutter. My eyes must have extended like the stocks on a snail as I stammered, “J..J..J..June Brownlee – does she live here?” As usual with girls, I was to find, she was still in dressing, so I was ushered into the living room to the clank of gunmetal upon handcuff chain and the squeak of highly polished police boots, gun-belts and whatever the diagonal cross sash that kept the whole apparatus anchored to the shoulder was called. I even think I spied a traffic ticket book in his hip pocket. Conversation was not exactly breezy, and then to my horror I was introduced to a handsome curly blonde-headed Apollo about two years my senior, Ted Berkey, and I immediately leapt to the conclusion that probably I had mixed up the nights and this was her “date” of tonight. There seemed no chance of escape from a very sticky situation. What a welcome! The chief of police and movie star were both sharing easy conversation and there was no way to control my stammer except to close my mouth and wish myself absent.

Eventually June’s mother came in to inspect what the cat had dragged in and the force had admitted to the house. She seemed motherly and offered me a cookie. Soon June came in looking cool and collected in the presence of immediate peril. She asked her dad, “When do you want me home?” – 10:30 p.m. was the verdict, after which I knew that the whole of Los Angeles, Glendale and Chula Vista police forces would set dragnets.

Then she walked over to handsome Ted and instead of saying “Let’s go, leave these chums” as I expected, she actually kissed him on the cheek, while I burned with envy, and then reached for my hand and as we walked out the door sweetly commented, “Did you enjoy getting to know my dad and cousin Ted?”

It is quite remarkable the change which occurred in my scholarly life, as well as my social life; revolutionary is only a pallid description. Something hitherto missing fell into place in bumbling Bill’s mind. June was a rather good student and maybe it was in order to measure up to her standards, or maybe it was the effect of hard anguishing Flintridge Prep studying, or most probably the Lord Jesus Himself just rearranged a few brain cells and suddenly I really understood and enjoyed my assignments and schoolwork. I entered as newcomer and found myself getting all A’s and B’s, was soon a friend and confidante of the class president, found myself on a student committee and amazingly enough, hope for medical school, nearly obliterated at prep school, arose anew.

Even though I was not consciously walking in God’s will, He had a plan for me. I was His child and with blessings He blessed me, Psalm 68:19, “Blessed be the Lord, who daily loadeth us with benefits...”(KJV). I can see now that just any girl would not have done twenty-two years later, on the mission field. Also, just any grades in school would never have qualified me for medical school. In many ways, as I look back, if it hadn’t been for some timely special blessing of the Lord, there would never have been a Lighthouse for Christ Eye Center ministering to thousands of otherwise blind people, and having a part in thousands coming to a saving knowledge of our loving savior, Jesus Christ. The credit goes entirely to the Lord. There are scores more qualified ophthalmologists, and hundreds more able pastors, but what a delight – He chose me.

The remainder of my days in high school, were mostly pleasant, mixed with serious, but successful studying, and a wholesome, fun and loving relationship with June. She had intended to go to college and enter nursing school, but when my dad voiced an objection, she switched to dental hygiene, which was highly acceptable.

After graduation from Glendale High School, I went on to Glendale Junior College for two years while June’s father was dealing in fixing up and selling apartments. They variously moved to South Pasadena, Arcadia, and Monrovia necessitating June’s attendance at Pasadena Junior College before we both attended University of Southern California during our third year of college. During those good years we found out about every preliminary to formal engagement that could be devised.

In high school we “went steady”, then exchanged class rings, then in junior college we attended a P.J.C. carnival in which for \$1.00, a lot of money in those days, you got a dime store 25 cent wedding ring, a mock

ceremony and certificate, and then a two minute honeymoon in a darkened closet with one chair before the next couple came along.

At U.S.C. June joined a sorority, Alpha Omicron Pi, and I a fraternity, Phi Kappa Tau, and I pinned my active badge upon June to the serenading of fellows and girls. It was therefore no great surprise when, after I had turned 21, we made a formal announcement of our engagement. But even that had careful planning.

My parents always told my brother and me that whenever we got married, all support for schooling would cease. By the time my 21st birthday came, June and I had been going together for five full years, and I had just been informed of my acceptance to U.S.C. Medical School.

With much planning which included a serious talk with my Uncle Hal to see if he would loan us enough to get through medical school, if such were necessary, we announced eight months later, during Christmas break from the first year of medical school, that we would be married the following June after June's graduation from dental hygiene since she would then be gainfully employed – six long years of waiting.

Well my parents came through with flying colors and helped immensely with the wedding reception at their large home, and continued their school support as well.

There probably are not many U.S. doctors who never graduated from undergraduate school, but I am one. Of course, it was all a mix-up. In spite of there being over 2,000 applicants for the 68 positions at U.S.C. Medical School, they did accept a few of us who had only completed three years of pre-med.

I well remember good friends on both sides of me in a chemistry lecture course ridiculing me when I told them that I had applied toward the end of three years only, my junior year of college. What glum faces they had the day I showed them my acceptance for the next fall. Actually, both did get in the following year, but were always a year behind me on the medical ladder.

The thought was that the first didactic school year of medical school would apply as the senior year of undergraduate school and that automatically one would get your Bachelor of Arts degree before the Medical Doctor Graduate School degree. Well, I was so close to the margin at the end of my first and second years of medical school, passing just by the skin of my teeth, that diddling with an undergraduate degree was far from my mind. Furthermore, I was not about to bait the lion of unknown authorities that were allowing me to pass, by asking them to write inter-department letters to get me my B.A. degree. I felt, "leave well enough left

alone!” By the end of my third year when much into clinical medicine and my grades were higher, I just never gave the undergraduate degree a thought. In fact, it was not until years had passed and I was in practice at Red Lake, that I wrote my alma mater having in hand my M.D. When the University searched the records and applied newer standards, they informed me that I lacked three units of upper division English and no petitions for redress could move them. I really do not believe that upper division English would have taught me much spelling, which brings us to the next chapter.

I have found that learning new things does take a toll on the nervous system with racing heartbeat, maybe a slight temporary tremor, flushed face and cold hands. Nevertheless, whether it is learning to drive, to fly, or a difficult technique in intra-ocular lens implants with cataract surgery, there accrues much satisfaction as well. Isaiah 48:6, “From now on I will tell you of new things, of hidden things unknown to you.” Such is too the joy of learning.

CHAPTER 5 – COLD HANDS AND MISSPELLINGS

I have a great appreciation to the faculty and staff of U.S.C. Medical School who turned an average student into a doctor, but not without God’s unmerited favor and superhuman effort from instructor and student alike.

I well remember in our second year, we began examining real live patients in the basic course of Physical Diagnosis, “how to take a medical history, do a physical examination and select probable diagnosis of illness”.

When my turn came to examine the chest and abdomen of my first patient, he was pointed out to me in a large men’s ward at the Los Angeles County General Hospital, having at that time about 6,000 beds. My victim, a large middle-aged black man, acquainted with grief and used to medical students, was far more at ease than I, who nearly shook with fright and tense determination. Hiding around the corner, I reviewed in detail each question and system of examination, even to the admonishment to approach the patient with warm hands. I must have appeared odd standing there with hands in axillae and mumbling medical incantations like a white coated “witch doctor”. Finally with courage screwed tight and systems organized, I rounded the door with a smile on my face to greet the great hulk of “savvy” black man. He responded nicely to my questions, maybe the 17th time since his admission and then, rubbing my hands like Dr. Jekyll, I asked to palpate his voluminous abdomen. What happened to my lovely warm hands I’ll never know, but when I placed two ice cold bricks on his stomach, his eyes opened wide and he exclaimed, “Hey Doc, them paws is freezin!”.

It is most gracious of God to send us to minister in Mombasa to a people who would have no use for “spelling bees” and other such tests of the vagaries of the idiosyncratic English language. Swahili, though filled with

bilabial fricatives such as Ngombe, the word for cattle and fully pronounceable unusual consonants like Nzuri and mbuzi (good and goat), is still so regular, that one writes it exactly as it sounds – phonetically. One of my struggles in Physical Diagnosis was the literary masterpiece, which was required by our jolly instructor describing our encounters with, hapless and oftentimes bored patients. These medical memorabilia were to be correct in grammar, punctuation, anatomic and pathologic terms, including, worst of all, spelling.

I had attended an “experimental grammar school” grades 1 – 6 in Glendale as a youth where the end of term rewards were only expressed in a report card with checks indicating poor performance or blank if satisfactory. I remember my distraught father gazing for guidance at my highly esteemed blank report card and muttering, “can’t you even earn a grade?” Well, all of this had left an aspiring medic, Bill, deficient in the art of spelling. For years I had depended upon my dear mother, but two factors now led to increasing difficulty. One, I was passing out of the general sphere of music and college English, and two, I had now begun my delightful lifetime companionship with my dental hygienist bride, June, and somehow the telephone call to ask mom how do you spell “_____”? seemed inappropriate and not politic. Hence, one after another came back with a large red circle containing numbers ranging from 26 to 48 spelling errors!

The course ended on a happy note of victory with my last literary effort inscribed in large bold red ink “Mr. Ghrist, you’re nearly there! Only 14 spelling errors!”

CHAPTER SIX – HAWAIIAN CUPIE DOLL

I am told that there are some folks who live their entire “three score and ten” residing within only a certain part of some of the huge cities of New York, Chicago and Los Angeles. I know there are many who have never set foot outside their own state in America. That is not difficult if you live in large states such as Texas or California, but would be rare in Rhode Island or South Dakota. From my parents who traveled to many spots of the world and my paternal grandmother, Dr. Jennie Ghrist, who led many tour groups to Europe for her own free passage, I am imbued with the desire to see interesting exotic sights.

Each person has a different value system. With the same \$500 one family would decide to repair their house, while another to buy a new car, but for us there was always a place for travel. I am aware that some killjoys feel that any such expenditure of money is a “waste of the Lord’s money”. However, one must admit that it enlarges one’s vision for the missionary needs of the world. And necessary travel for missionaries can be looked upon as a pain or blessing. We tend toward the latter.

Due to a parental gift and a rigid savings program during the next year as June worked as a dental hygienist supporting me in a manner to which I could easily become accustomed, we were able to take a trip from Los Angeles to the Hawaiian Islands, going on the lovely “Luraline”, and returning aboard a 12 passenger freighter. For transport around the islands for the two of us, we bought a Cushman eagle semi-motor scooter having both a low, and a high gear. It sort of tickled us one evening when we decided to splurge on our limited resources and go to “Trader Vic’s” Restaurant. How does one arrive at a fancy restaurant with costumed footmen astride a small motorcycle built for two? Well, we got all dressed up, June sat sidesaddle, I drove slowly, and we parked a block away and walked in as if we were “Mr. And Mrs. Somebody”.

Once we began exploring the Outer islands, sending our motorized steed ahead by air freight, we were in for a big surprise. We alighted from the DC-3 passenger plane and asked for our motorcycle, produced our documents and soon loaded our bag aboard and got ready to leave. After ten attempts to start the thing, the agent said, “Oh, Dr. Ghrist, they always drain all the gasoline before transporting as air freight.” There we were, 2 ½ miles from the nearest public gasoline station, and it meant a long walk in the tropical sun trying to figure out a solution to this problem.

Now motor scooters require very little gasoline to go even five miles, so as I passed a small refuse dump, my eye spied a used sturdy half pint whiskey flask designed to fit into a man’s hip pocket. When I reached the gasoline station I returned with my hip flask filled with premium ethyl, poured it in and off we went. The next stop when I collected our motorcycle, I pulled out my hip flask and poured it in, cranked up the machine, and from the murmuring lips of the agent, I think I heard, “Wow, what powerful brew”.

The last week of our stay in the islands, June felt poorly; she had picked up a “local bug”. It was true that we financially gravitated toward the hamburgers, french fries, and other “greasy foods” about which she complained.

Our return journey on the freighter was excellent for me, but the occasional smell of black strap molasses that was our primary cargo, and a moderate sea swell nauseated June, though we had an enjoyable return to Los Angeles harbor. The freighter gave us a more spacious accommodation, if inferior “greasy” food.

Shortly after our return I began my third of four years of medical school. With a song in my heart I drove to school that morning thinking of, at last, getting my teeth into clinical medicine. I had been stuffed full of theory. Little did I know what dark hours lay ahead.

Dr. Gaspar, our dynamic and fascinating professor of Obstetrics had our class for the first lecture of the day and new year. His presentation was precise, yet most interesting to the student mind. Only trouble was that I became more and more panicked with each passing minute – why? Well it had been our grand design to exactly space our family, the first to come during internship, yet two and a half years away. He began by giving some of the things newly pregnant women complained of – “feeling poorly”, “greasy food”, a feeling of abdominal fullness, dress too tight, etc. I began by thinking, “That’s strange, June has that”, point by point. Symptom and sign following inexorably, like nails pounding the lid on a coffin, I began to be concerned, soon worried, next in a sweat, by the end of the lecture with my notes clutched in my nearly shaking hands, I stumbled out to a bright new world of fatherhood; yes sir, June had not caught a local bug but a pretty worldwide disease. The pregnancy test three days later was positive and eight months later we received our Hawaiian cupie doll prize, Christopher David Ghrist, for whom we now praise the Lord.

CHAPTER SEVEN – TRAMP TIMES THREE

Proverbs 3:13, “Happy is the man that findeth wisdom, and the man that getteth understanding.”

Besides a lot of work, a lot of memorizing what seemed to be irrelevant material, such as the Krebs Cycle, the names of all the muscles of the forearm, what medicinal plant was found on the Eastern slopes of the Andes mountains, and what is the lethal dose of digitalis in a rat, there were many good times as well.

Though I personally have no doubt that most every man who enters medical school in the U.S.A., has an abiding interest in honestly helping his patient return to a state of good health, nevertheless there is a certain truth to the proverb, “Familiarity breeds contempt” as anyone assisting in a medical school anatomy laboratory will attest. Some do become cynical and crass. To relieve the appalling mass of accumulated decades of medical minutiae which each department and specialty is determined that the student must have stored in his brain, possibly once a year, the otherwise redundant class officers, would decide to have an evening of social relaxation. Our sophomore year was nearly completed when such an evening came along. Now, a visit to a beer factory is not the most scholarly nor spiritually uplifting occasion, but for enterprising tightwads like our officers, this was a “coup de maitre”, if I haven’t mixed up my metaphors. To convince some befogged brewers that this upstanding and exhausted group of future monied purchasers of common brew would contain the seeds of a permanent advertising extravaganza, whispering to future decades of patients that “Belcher’s Brew” was better than “Red Devils” and powdered “Rhino Horn” combined, was their thin hope. Actually we went because we were tired, they had a hall, and free beer and cokes and pretzels abounded. In the course of the evening the game of charades was embarked upon and the quick thinking exhibitionist type of first-hand-to-be-

raised people were chosen to act out the saying, song, movie, book title, etc. Such types as our favorite comedian who, listening to our droning and boring pathology professor speak of CCHD (chronic congestion heart disease), DLE (disseminated lupus erythematosis) and S.B.E. (sub acute bacterial endocarditis), as well as the better known, TB, MS and piles, added in all seriousness the designation of E.T.C. One watched the giant indexed computer in our professor's mind stop, search, grope, hunt, knowing this had a familiar ring – finally raise his eyes in slim hope of learning a new fact and say, “Please explain to the students who are ignorant, the meaning of E.T.C.” whereupon our clown simply said the patient died of et cetera. There followed a roar of approval and a dismal countenance upon the professor. Our clown did well in his charade task and the last person to be chosen to perform was our beloved class president, Sunny Fineberg.

He was given what to most would be the work of but a moment, the old war song, “Tramp, tramp, tramp the boys are marching”. The only problem was that unbeknownst to him, everyone knew and had been forewarned not to answer that title. With a smirk of ease, Sunny, began loudly and heavily marching. “Parade” someone called out. “Stompin’ at the Ritz” another voiced. “Arctic explorer” came from a girl and finally an enterprising medic said “Recovering from chillblains”. In the meanwhile, the volume of laughter picked up as President Fineberg truly looked the part of a war weary soldier, stunned that no one could guess his role. Finally someone felt sorry for him and said he was a “Tramp”. Grasping at even insults, he bade the contestant say it three times. Someone also said three tramps. Finally he concentrated upon “The boys are marching”. Such as answers as “little men, dwarfs, and male newborns” were forthcoming. The class was in absolute pandemonium of mirth and our dejected president could hardly believe it when twice the time limit of five minutes had elapsed and we gave him a great hand of applause and in unison sang “Tramp, tramp, tramp the boys are marching”.

Graduations are always special events. At U.S.C. that year there seemed to be thousands of people graduating from various disciplines ranging from the great hairy brutes in Physical Education, who had thrilled us on the football gridiron to the dainty soprano in the music department. All clad in black gowns and cardboard black cloth covered hats with tassels, the aspiring doctors sat together and upon signal walked to a smaller auditorium after the usual speeches which are supposed to inspire but usually bore to tears.

I was very pleased with my diploma and remember pictures of the day holding our only, at this time, and oldest son, Christopher in my arms with June and my parents surrounding me. After ten days vacation, I reported to begin my year of internship.

CHAPTER EIGHT – HOLLYWOOD INTERNSHIP

Internship was a special time, of growing and learning for both June and me, in some ways opposite and in some ways the same. For me it was the first time I could begin to earn money, albeit very little, about \$100 per month plus a one bedroom apartment on the grounds and free food in the hospital cafeteria. For June who had been working as a dental hygienist, it was time, according to program, to be again “with child”. It meant a gradual reduction in her earning capacity, as we both put on weight. She had the disposable weight of our beloved Timothy Stephen Ghrist. With me it was assorted free cakes, pies and starchy hospital food which clung “closer than a brother” for some years.

Hollywood Presbyterian Hospital, Olmstead Memorial in mid-century was not the most sought after internship, but suited our needs. There was time to examine patients with doctors of varying skill and temperaments always nearby. Also, there were times of real heartache trying desperately to save an otherwise healthy man with a bleeding peptic ulcer pumping pints and pints of blood, set up in each arm and each leg just getting him fit for emergency surgery, only to have him aspirate and die just as the anesthetist nearly had him under control. There, too, were patients needing a ready listening ear, beginning to really “practice” medicine in my starched white pants, shirt and jacket. But it was fun and often exciting and occasionally comical too.

I remember that even in those days “early ambulating”, the idea that whenever possible the patient after surgery should be allowed up and about, was coming in strong. Many hernia operations were performed; we even had a surgeon who nearly specialized in hernia operations and he was good. But we had a tough former Army Colonel who did not take to these new ideas of “early ambulating”. He kept his hernia patients confined to bed for two days with no food, cokes, peanuts, etc. allowed in the room. The patient was maintained on intravenous fluids during his two days of post-operative purgatory. It must be admitted that there is great variation even today in the best of medical centers. We will call Colonel Jones’ patient Mr. Smith. Mr. Smith had a private room and had been complaining of hunger pangs from about three hours after he had awakened from his anesthetic. The nurses felt so sorry for him and I commiserated with him offering him a “medicinal cough drop”. From his third story corner room he could look across the street at a drive in restaurant with pretty “carhops” galore. By the time 34 hours had elapsed and the hospital was quiet at 11 p.m., Mr. Smith pulled out his I.V. tubes, grabbed some mad money from his drawer, found a bathrobe, climbed down the fire escape and enjoyed a double cheeseburger, french fries and a banana split before the police found him oddly attired and thinking him an escapee from the “looney bin”, gathered him in tow and returned him to the hospital front desk.

“Call the intern on duty” was the saying and I had to give him a “tongue in cheek” lecture on disobeying his doctor. But I did join him in a bit of laughter as well.

As I consider now years later what made it the Hollywood Presbyterian Hospital, I never really was informed. Like many of the great names in recent church history, we too passed under the teaching of the Hollywood Presbyterian Church where my friend Dr. Bill Bright, Henrietta Meirs and others displayed such remarkable gifts. Only we just passed under and through visiting the church, which seemed to be a spiritual haven to the hospital only once and a couple's bible study all of twice. It would be another ten years before the Lord Jesus would turn our lives into His direction.

My parents had always been good at the card game of "bridge" and being raised with cards nearby, I learned about six new ways to play "solitaire" during internship. It was our humble duty while serving the obstetrics 24 hour on and 24 hour off duty, to scrub, gown and glove up, and be entirely at the lady's side during what was expected to be the last 30 minutes before delivery, just in case the private doctor couldn't get there in time, or in case he wanted our assistance. Of course, ladies in my family, at least, have not been known to be punctual, and oftentimes my own estimate of when the "youngin'" would arrive was not too accurate either. This led to a chronic problem of sitting with cap, mask, gown and gloves on, for all practical purposes immobilized, but ready for instant delivery action. Most took this as time to nod the head and doze or to think of better days to come. There may be books like this that may seem to be sterile, but I can assure you that no maternity head nurse would allow it to be handled while gloved and gowned.

The problem was solved when I discovered a new type of playing card entirely of plastic. They could be cold sterilized in solution, washed off with cool sterile water and soon the 7th and 8th type of solitaire was in progress, all perfectly sterile.

CHAPTER EIGHT – A. DR. WAHLMAN'S STAGE

A good friend of my father's was a most impressive eye surgeon who practiced at the Hollywood Presbyterian Hospital, Dr. Harold Wahlman. He looked like a Hollywood casting success – handsome, gray-headed, gentle in speech and manner, but so very dignified. He had a flair for drama too as I learned one day when I especially requested to impose my father's friendship upon the good doctor and assist him. He rarely allowed the uninitiated to assist him in a cataract operation.

I was warned to be very quiet and obey instantly. Having scrubbed, gowned and gloved before the mighty man's arrival, I was present as he came in, greeted the patient, his own special scrub nurses, and me, before gradually setting the stage. The lights were dimmed as he scrubbed and gowned – using no gloves, European style, since his delicate sensitive fingers, like a professional safe-cracker, needed to feel every part of the coming surgery.

As the injections were given, the room became soundless and all lights were extinguished except the two bright spotlights centering upon the eye, which seemed in perspective, to dominate and nearly fill the entire room.

Dr. Wahlman wanted absolute silence as he worked with intense concentration to restore sight to a nearly blind eye. Thumb soundlessly pounding forefinger meant forceps. Index and middle finger opening and closing stood for scissors. A twist of the wrist meant suture and the operation was well in progress.

Out in the hall at the same time there strode a carefree student nurse given the job of carrying a tall stack of 23 medium sized stainless steel kidney basins. She was looking for an empty room into which her tall balanced load could be deposited. She was lost and out of place in this end of the surgical suite. Seeing the door of a large operating room nearly completely darkened, she mistakenly assumed the room to be empty and a fine place to set the kidney basins down. Carefully balancing them in one hand she used the other hand and one hip to waltz into the center of Dr. Wahlman's hushed stage.

Her forward momentum could not be arrested as she instantly recognized the fabled Wahlman stage and a small cry escaped her lips 2 ½ seconds before pandemonium broke loose as 23 very clean, very musical separate metal kidney basins began bouncing upon the polished tile floor two feet behind the great surgeon's back. A true professional, Dr. Wahlman closed his fist, thrust out his thumb and with eyes closed and bent silently, motioned the student nurse out and completed the operation to the patient's great benefit.

Tiled walls, waxed floors and the constant pressure of being available to patient's needs, doctor's orders and nurses suggestions, sometimes a refreshing look at the beauty God has made in trees, parks and mountains brought a welcome relief. I know the verse speaks of a spiritual rest but my body and mind did at times need a change of pace as described in Isaiah 28:12 "...this is the rest wherewith ye may cause the weary to rest; and this is the refreshing...".

CHAPTER EIGHT – B. LADY GOLFERS AND DUMB PARAKEETS

Throughout internship we mostly faced each day's problems with a real zest for life and glad to be in very practical medicine.

We had many interesting and varied experiences from lady golfers to dumb parakeets and always the satisfaction of feeling a part of an effective medical team. These were great days of wonderment at what would be required, learned and observed today. Each month we would change to an entirely different service from

outpatients to obstetrics to internal medicine from waiting with the ladies-in-waiting, to seeing first hand how some of the best care, then current for heart attacks, could be managed.

Now and then an intern has a day off. We had one reliable car for June to drive the ten miles back and forth to work but we also had a \$100 clunker. It was an old hand painted green chevy coupe with rumble seat. Dr. Norm Kramer was blonde, athletic, good looking, personable and a year higher up the medical ladder than me, as a first year surgical resident. On occasion we would team up on an afternoon off to go to Griffith Park Public golf course and take in a short nine holes. At 3 p.m. on a weekday there was usually no trouble getting off the first tee.

One Thursday afternoon in April, Norm and I with our “mixed bag” of discarded heirloom clubs, climbed into the “green hornet”, our old Chevy, named after a popular afternoon radio serial character, and wheezed the 4 ½ miles to the links.

Norm, nearly a handsome Norse Prince and I, though more Germanic at over six foot, considered myself though mostly untaught, a powerful player. We each had energy to burn after days in ether and alcohol-laden miasmas of hospital corridors and starched white uniforms. The green fairways, the trees, and the pre-smog atmosphere were a delight. With chests dilated and visions of par, birdies and eagles running through our minds, we were asked to accept a third for our round of golf that day as it was slightly crowded. A small gray-headed lady of 60 years introduced herself and said in apology that she thought she would be able to keep up with us, as she was a fast walker.

We deferred to the gentler sex for honors off on the first tee. The lady had no driver, but only a matched set of irons. With a soft smack the half-pint gently hit her ball about 95 yards down the fairway. Norm stifled a smirk as we noticed it was par 4 and 245 yards to the cup. Now one of the things which made Norm and I such an interesting two-some was that though I had some difficulty controlling a novice’s slice-spin causing the ball to drift around to the right (really quite useful on a dog-leg to the right), Norm had a troublesome hook – a reverse spin causing the ball to gently buzz off to the left.

As Norm placed his ball upon its tee, his muscles rippled beneath his polo shirt. His club descended with a mighty arc, a crisp loud click was heard and his ball traveled nearly a full 200 yards – in the air mostly in altitude and to the left. The course was laid out with many parallel fairways and his ball was on the second fairway to the left – forward about 90 yards.

I soon followed and without as much power or slice, my ball went to the adjoining right hand fairway, possibly 150 yards in the air but only 100 yards forward. Yet her ball was closest to the cup.

Well any astute scholar of geometry can figure out that if this were to continue the elderly mom might edge the young bucks out if she drove straight consistently. Tiresomely, she did exactly that. When she reached the green she nearly always “two putted” and was seldom more than two above par and just as often marking par while Norm combed the foliage on the left and I excused myself on the right. We would even try to anticipate our hook or slice weakness and find the shot going straight instead of curving. It was indeed humbling to see the female putt ball machine take the honors every single hole. Yet she was a good sport and offered us no advice and the greens were green, the eucalyptus trees majestic, the pines fragrant, and the hospital was forgotten for an hour of sheer pleasure.

We lived in an upstairs one-bedroom apartment on the hospital grounds and had 1 ½ children for most of the year. Our second child, Tim, was born “on schedule” 8 weeks before internship ended. There was little opportunity or flexibility in the management of pets. Alligators, orangutans or even dogs were prohibited. We did manage two goldfish and one parakeet to brighten our living room. The pet store clerk assured me that this imported parakeet, at least ten generations before, was teachable, moldable and sure to be a forensic scholar. All he needed was the encouragement of a 45 RPM record player, and a special record that repeated the phrase “pretty bird” 79 times in 8 different tones and inflections.

Each time we would leave the house, one would go the record next to “pretty bird’s” cage. It was hoped that the yellow and green warbler would pick up the refrain, begin with the sound “pre...” and soon be amazing our family and friends with “pretty bird”. Whether it was because he was a frustrated female or permanently molting or just a dumb bird, we never knew, but he never lived up to our expectations, though I’m sure our downstairs neighbors, the Huckles, became tired of the exercise. I seem to remember Dr. George Huckle repeating the phrase “pretty bird” as he dozed while on relief.

CHAPTER EIGHT – C. CASTOR OIL

As internship days drew to a close and our second son was nearly due, June looked up one Saturday morning at breakfast and said “Bill, do you realize that in just eight weeks we should be on our way to Chicago and the Basic Science Course you’ve signed up for at the Eye and Ear Infirmary?”

I replied, “well, yes, eight weeks is about the time you and “shim” (our own pet name for the as yet unidentified baby – she and him mixed) should have before traveling. It is yet ten days before you are due and anyway; what do you expect me to do about it?”

“Well”, June said, “didn’t they tell you in the obstetrics lectures that sometimes castor oil would hasten the baby along when he’s nearly due?”

Somehow my mind was trained with formal medical school conferences where venerable foreheads frowned and the occasional pipe was lit; this momentous medical discussion around breakfast coffee with sweet wife, just wasn’t seemingly proper or even fitting.

I was appalled. Thinking I had her I played along and suggested, “yes, and the professor also said that scrubbing the kitchen floor on hands and knees is a mild stimulant to labor”. “Oh, the floor does need it. That’s a good idea. Would you pick me up a bottle of castor oil at the hospital pharmacy?” Horror-stricken I said I would not be a party to such medically unnecessary interference. There was a principle that “when the fruit is ripe it will fall”. “If you want it”, I said, “You can buy it yourself.”

When I returned for lunch June called out from the tub not to walk into the newly scrubbed, waxed and polished kitchen. There on the breakfast table was a half full bottle of castor oil. When she came out I told her “it probably won’t work anyway!” Pointing to the bottle, she said, “with some orange juice, it wasn’t half bad.” Her normal appointment to see her doctor was at 2 p.m. and so at 3 p.m. I was paged and heard her cheeky voice telling me that the obstetrician had told her to tell me that I should be a father again by dinnertime. June was calling from the admission desk of the hospital downstairs.

All went well and as predicted Timothy Stephen Ghrist came on time as I watched with cap, gown and mask in place. In five days, June and baby were home and dental hygiene was now a thing of the past as we began living on my intern salary and savings.

Life is indeed strange. What lasting effects a mere comment by a high school teacher can have. In our senior year of high school we had a class called “senior problems” and the subject matter ranged from check writing, manners to even the teacher’s pet peeve that it seemed the poorest people had the most number of children and vice versa. June and I discussed this point and agreed that though we would never be rich neither would we probably be poor and that four children would be just about right.

Now as I pen these words I realize that the inspired Psalmist writes in Psalm 127:3-5 “children are a heritage of the Lord: and the fruit of the womb is his reward. As arrows are in the hand of a mighty man; so are children of the youth. Happy is the man that hath his quiver full of them...” (KJV) It is indeed ironic that in America where children can most be afforded there is such pressure to refrain and here in Kenya where the average family has so little income, there is the highest birth rate in all Africa. I must agree with the Lord, what a heritage, what fun, and what deep satisfaction are our four as they walk with the Lord.

CHAPTER NINE – CHICAGO BASIC SCIENCE

Since it was really easier if June and boys arrived in Chicago by plane and with the financial help of parents, I rented a small wood frame u-haul trailer for personal belongings, packed up and with another internship friend, Dr. Iqbal Walie, drove in four days to Chicago. Walie continued on by bus to the east coast while I began searching for a nest for our small family.

Beginning the residency-training trail is for many of us similar to the pioneers moving west to an unknown better life. Similarly Abraham was called by God to go to a place he did not know. Hebrews 11:8-9 “By faith Abraham when called to go to a place...obeyed and went even though he did not know where he was going. By faith he made his home in the promised land like a stranger in a foreign country...”

I would not say that we had either a heavenly vision nor an angel of the Lord telling where we were to go during the next five years but as I look back on those days, wandering from Chicago to Red Lake, Minnesota, to Houston, Texas, to Detroit, Michigan and finally back home to Glendale, I see each distinct place with no less than 1,000 miles as a total mosaic of homelessness. We were sorely tried to quickly adjust to entirely new surroundings, yet having love and friends, I see it all as days of preparation by the Lord for our later much greater move to Africa, again with much uncertainty as to ultimate destination or conditions en-route.

Under pressure of near-term pregnancy or sick infants gave barely enough time to accomplish the travel with no thought of “settling in” before I reported for duty. Yet God gave us hooks of friendship to hang onto with Reverend Tom and Percy Philips in both Red Lake and Detroit and Dr. Percy and Bettie here in Houston. Overall, there is no doubt that they were days of preparation.

Never let it be said that we, or Abraham or the pioneers of the West “felt sorry for ourselves”. That we did not at all! It was a delicious adventure of trusting each other and in the Lord who made us.

CHAPTER NINE – A. THE FOILED AGENT

The rigors of living on savings while only paying out for eye course, transport, etc. gave little leeway above ghetto living.

Deciding we wanted to be on the “near North side” close to Lake Michigan for a breeze, I sought out a few apartment rental agencies. By the time I was able to get organized, the next day after our arrival in Chicago, take Walie to his bus and venture forth from my hotel again, it was mid-afternoon. Everyone in “Che-Ka-go” seemed to have a peculiar accent and it was my first experience attempting to live out of Los Angeles county. The agency man had a furtive aura about him and told me he had just the place I was looking for – one bedroom furnished, four blocks from the lake, and at just \$10/month more than I had set as my limit of \$70/month limit. He looked at his watch and said come back at 8 p.m., and he would have the key. “Do you work so late at night?” I asked. “Oh sure”, he said, “you have to hustle in the big city”. Not the most trust-worthy of pithy sayings, but these Chicagoans did seem odd.

Therefore with the end of June sun about to set, I arrived again at the agency and the man asked me to wait about 15 minutes while he talked on the phone in his office. Soon he said he was ready to go and climbed in my car with me checking his watch carefully. He drove me about a bit until we reached a reasonably nice apartment house. In the semi-darkness, we climbed a flight of stairs and with a sudden hurry he turned on the lights and quickly led me through the living room, nicely furnished, to the bedroom, pointed out the bathroom, took my arm and led me to the kitchen, turned on the lights for a moment, then started me towards the door and began talking about the next and little more expensive apartment he wanted to show me. I stopped, spun around, and turned on the lights again and went to the bathroom. “I must check this since my wife and I agreed we wanted a shower for the first time in our married life!” “It only has a tub”, he said as he dashed after me. “But we’ll cut the rent by \$5/month”. He grabbed at me and missed as I headed again for the kitchen. “We wanted a double sink – my wife likes to dry dishes in a second sink”. I started wondering why he was coming at me with hands like eagle talons and dismay on his face. As I turned on the kitchen light and clung to the wall, he pleaded, “It has only a single sink – we’ll cut the rent another fiver to exactly your price of \$70.” “We really must see this next apartment before the manager goes to bed for the night”. And I allowed myself reluctantly to be dragged toward the yawning front door. But we never made the door. There seemed to be a great swell of noise from the distance, then the floor began to vibrate and soon shake and with an unbelievable roar a passenger train with lights sweeping and flashing narrowly missed the second story bedroom while the passenger cars hurled past the shuddering apartment for a full 30 seconds and my hair stood on end. I ran to the bedroom window when the forces of a “thousand tons of machine, man and nature” subsided. I threw up the

window and there, six feet away, were the tracks of “The Chicago Elevated” train. With a downcast look the agent said, “I guess you don’t want it?” “No”, was nearly the last word spoken between us that evening.

Eventually, I found for \$75.00/ month, a peculiar furnished apartment which had a living room, a dining room, bath and kitchen but lacked all my other requirements of bedroom, shower or double sink. We added a curtain and turned the dining room into a bedroom and “lived with” its other deficiencies for the six months we were in Chicago. The kitchen turned out to be a marvel of efficiency with a breakfast nook for two adults – it nicely accommodated June and Chris, age two, on one side and me on the other. Newborn Tim wasn’t ready for solid food. June would cook on the stove, set the table, and call us for the meal, which could totally be reached from our nook seats. Stove, refrigerator, sink and cupboards – it was either a masterpiece of planning or an economic accident.

In our same group of 56 apartments one really didn’t get to know ones neighbors well, but a cheery “howdy” or a smiling “good morning” would usually elicit a word or short conversation with us newcomers from California.

When June’s parents came by to see us on a driving trip to Pittsburgh at the end of the summer, after staying a few days, June’s father, an ex-deputy sheriff, asked me, “Aren’t there a lot of Jews in these apartments?”

I remember being surprised as a kid to learn that this or that movie star was of Hebrew origin, not being raised in an anti-semitic home, having played next door for years back and forth with the Neiman boys, even attending the eldest son’s Bar Mitzvah. I really have no special feelings concerning God’s chosen people any more than I have with Red or East Indians, or Blacks. As the song says, “Red and yellow, black and white, they are precious in His sight”. So to my father-in-law’s question, I replied, “No, that’s just the funny Chicago accent – why our across the hall neighbor has red hair and freckles!”

Imagine my surprise in mid-autumn when one day as I walked down the large U of our apartment building, I smelled turkey and “fixin’s” and my neighbor greeted me with “Happy Holidays!” It wasn’t Thanksgiving yet and the Labor Day end-of-summer weekend was long past. I asked June, “What’s the Chicago holiday?” “Yom Kippur”, she replied, “Daddy was right; we’re in a nest of them!” and we both laughed at our ignorance.

CHAPTER NINE – B. ACADEMY FEASTS

While we were filling our minds with ophthalmic terminology, optics, physiology, neuro-anatomy, histology, etc., until I nearly felt that if I tipped my head too far to the side some of it would leak out, it was announced that in two weeks time we would have an excused holiday for a week. All were encouraged, if not begged, to go that year to New York to attend “The Eye Convention” – I still felt it is the greatest ophthalmic feast possible – The American Academy of Ophthalmology and Otolaryngology, the AAOO.

My own Dad wrote from California that though he would have to miss it this year since New York was just too far away; he sent us \$200 and said, “You and June should go!” – we did! We drove, leaving the kids with June’s parents who “happened to be returning from Pittsburgh”. Is it not amazing to look back and see the Lord’s hand in your life? You see the Lord does want us not only to be the best skilled and informed that we can, but I firmly believe that God intended me to travel with June. I would not say that everyone must do as the Lord Jesus has shown me. We worship a God of infinite variety. No one explained the intricacies of this gourmet feast of teaching to me, so I sought out the lecturers and found they had a busy schedule each morning and I was delighted to have each afternoon free from general lectures to sight see New York City with June. To this day I remember June and I at the banquet and a table for six, eating with the world famous Dr. and Mrs. Townley Paton, author of books I was studying in Chicago, and Chief of a famous Eye Residency Program in New York City itself. With me only in a basic science course, fresh out of internship, not even having started a recognized Residency yet and with the draft board breathing down my neck to pluck me for yet another two years, I felt like a page having dinner with the King, yet they were most gracious and the evening was most enjoyable. All of us “taken in” by an East European countess who was only introduced as an honored guest and asked to say a few words concerning her miraculous escape from behind “the iron curtain”. Two or three times she tried to stop but the intriguing story just held us spellbound and fearful that at any moment a Russian KGB agent would step out and seize her. Just as she was about to sit down to thundering applause, a powerful swarthy man ran purposefully in from the side and began wrestling with and dragging the lovely countess away before our eyes! Horrified that our worst fears were being realized, we seemed paralyzed. Suddenly, off came her long blonde wig, and with a man’s voice and black crewcut, he assured us it was not only an act, but the evening’s entertainment! We were astonished that we all had been so completely “taken in”.

Each morning of the convention I would sit and absorb the finest panel discussions or most stimulating eye lectures I’d ever heard. Then in the afternoon as the ENT doctors came to hear lectures, back to the hotel I would go and out sightseeing – the Statue of Liberty, the Empire State Building, Times Square, and the fascinating subways. It was all very strange because the next year June and I came down from the Indian

Reservation to Chicago and the Palmer House where Mother and Dad were staying and where the convention was headquartered. For the second year, Dad arranged to take me to only afternoon special study courses and I even mastered a method of refraction (checking peoples' eyes for glasses) that did not need the use of eye drops called the Lancaster Dial Technique. Somehow, though, I was very busy in the mornings looking at the exhibits, I figured the mornings lectures were omitted that year. It was not until my third year at the Academy – again down from the Minnesota Indian Reservation to Chicago – did I make the earth-shattering discovery that the Academy was twice the meeting that I was most satisfied with. Each morning there were lectures and panel discussions by world experts and each afternoon there was a choice of possibly 25-50 courses running for three one-hour periods and it was up to you to decide which to attend.

CHAPTER NINE – C. ROSE TIGER STRIPES

Meanwhile, back to the calm days of Chicago and learning the basics of being an oculist, the course was winding up in mid-December so that all would be free for Christmas. All good things must come to an end, except eternal life with the Lord Jesus, and so with cheers and happy hearts we bid fond adieu to Chicago and Drs. Pearlman, Hughes, and the very special Dr. Peter Kronfeld, whom to be a student under was a treat in itself, kindly born teacher, son of missionaries to China, and a gentleman in all shades of meaning which gentlemen can elicit. In the providence of God, the Draft Board had been neutralized by our volunteering for service with the U.S.P.H.S. that was to begin in just two weeks on January 3, 1955.

As a Christmas gift from parents, we received round trip, “el cheapo”, non-scheduled plane fares from Chicago to Burbank and so traveled to Southern California for a lovely two weeks of rest and visitation of parents and friends at Christmas time. Being parents to the only grandchildren on either side might have helped too! My Dad even arranged tickets for the Rose Bowl game that year, which brought poor June indirect grief. It was a cool threatening day, January 1, 1955, as we sat watching the granddaddy of all New Year's bowl games and a misty rain began. June had always enjoyed dressing nicely and had a thick medium gray overcoat we had bought in Chicago for the cold Minnesota winter. Though we had umbrellas, her back and one sleeve became very wet by the end of the game. We were scheduled to hopefully depart that same night at 11 p.m. My mother had a new electric clothes dryer, so with happy heart June tossed her coat in and set the timer for 15 minutes. Alas, when June opened the dryer door there were irregular red “tiger markings” all over, not only her beautiful dry coat, but also the inside of the dryer. An offending tube of lipstick had been inadvertently left in a coat pocket!

CHAPTER TEN – SEARCHING OR BEING FOUND

Most students think that when they have completed Medical School that they will have the “world by the tail” and that all problems in life have now been solved, and now that classroom school is over the period of happiness in life begins.

Of course, if you are going into a medical specialty, such as I had been convinced that I wanted to do from the time I was a boy, you soon find yourself back in school again. And this happened to me after I had finished my internship at Hollywood Presbyterian Hospital. It was a good internship and we had made many friends there, but our spiritual life was not deep. We lived just far enough from our home church that we only visited it occasionally and found too often that we were on day or night call or had been up the night before when a Sunday morning came.

With internship drawing to a close, I felt the best thing was to go to Chicago from Los Angeles and squeeze in a six month course in the Basic Science of Ophthalmology, that is the study of eyes, eye glasses, and eye surgery. The course was given at the old University of Illinois, Chicago Eye and Ear Infirmary on West Adams Street in the heart of some of the roughest neighborhood of Chicago. I learned that there is so much to the subject of Ophthalmology, that an entire new language must be learned. Ophthalmology is one of the oldest specialties and took its own direction in medical language and terminology. Of course, it is partly for this reason that the general doctor and other people in medicine hesitate to get very much involved with sick eyes; they much prefer to have the specialist who at least speaks the language take care of such eyes. While we were in Chicago I doubt if we attended church more than three or four times.

Due to the history of old osteomyelitis and the dreaded possibility of recurrence with any deep muscle or bone injury, I had been classified as “4-F” for regular military service. However, once I had a medical degree, in those days of the “doctor draft”, I became fair game for any of the U.S. armed services. In those days, the game was to avoid the Army at all costs, Okay for the Navy, and better for the Air Force, or even the United States Public Health Service with its medical management of the Coast Guard, Federal Prisons and the Indian Service. There was no war on at the time. The Korean War had ended a few months before, and so I did not feel under any compulsion to go out and save my country; it was just a duty to be performed. I had very heavily considered the Air Force because I was certainly interested in flying as came up later in my life. I was really most interested in Indian affairs and my wife’s cousin, Dr. Bill Brownlee who was at that time becoming a missionary, had an excellent time in the Indian service. Also, my own cousin, Dr. J. Harley Quint, Jr. was just completing his two years in South Dakota with the USPHS. I applied for a position, and was required to take

probably the most difficult test that I had ever faced in my whole medical career. It was a test so detailed and so picky in its questions that there was absolutely no way possible for me to pass. In fact I remember going down through a true and false list, one part of the all day test, and just getting into a rhythm of “true, true, false, false, true, false, true, false, etc. until I came again to a section about which I had not even a passing acquaintance. Some of my professors would have had difficulty answering many of the questions. I knew there was no hope I would pass the examination. However, two months later the grades came through and I had passed with flying colors. As I remember, I received something like 82% on the exam. I believe it was really a minus 82% to be honest, but also I believe they had an opening available and wanted ME! I really did expect to go to one of the Indian hospitals in the far west because that is where both my cousins had been sent and where I was from. Of course at the time I had applied we had a Chicago address.

On the long Thanksgiving weekend that year while in Chicago we had driven up to Minnesota to visit June’s aunts and uncles near Minneapolis. During a 36hour period the fathers and young men decided to go deer hunting and we came within a few miles of the Red Lake Indian Reservation and its hospital. Uncle Al Boll suggested driving over since I might be assigned there. I laughed and declined saying that I would most likely go to Arizona or New Mexico. Would you believe it? We were assigned to Red Lake Indian Hospital, Red Lake, Minnesota. I remember wondering at the time how many other doctors would be there. I was hoping to learn from them, since both my cousins had been at places where there were at least four doctors, including a General Surgeon and an OB-GYN specialist. Therefore, once I learned my assignment location I went to the huge USPHS hospital on North Clarendon Street near where we stayed in Chicago and asked the paymaster in charge of many states, including Minnesota, how many other doctors were at Red Lake. To my question, he replied, after checking the records, “just one”. “Wow”, I said, “I guess I’ll get to know him pretty well!” “Don’t worry”, the paymaster consoled, “that one is you!” “No one else is assigned there right now”. I believe the word is “thunderstruck”! I was to be sent into the lion’s den of sickness with absolutely no one else to rely upon. I wandered dazed back to our apartment to share the “good tidings of great joy” with June. What had we gotten ourselves into? I had never heard of such a junior officer, not only just out of internship, but even out of medicine for six months, studying the language of eyes, being shoved into the front lines of the “last of the Indian wars”. HA! But the Lord knew what He was doing.

It turned out to be a glorious experience for a young doctor to suddenly find himself the doctor in charge of a medical facility that had about 50 beds and have the total care of 3,000 wild Indians. Now some might think poorly of the term “wild Indians”, but to my mind, from the city of Glendale, California where no Indians of either the red or east variety existed, any true Indian was wild. And I must say that when they crossed the reservation border and began loading up on the 3.2% alcohol beer, they soon became truly wild.

It was interesting that the Red Lake Indian Reservation in those days was ruled by their tribal council and chief and was excluded from the normal laws of the state of Minnesota. The tribe made a separate treaty with the U.S. Government, and the only actual external laws in effect on the reservation were something like ten major crimes for which the Federal authorities (FBI and judges) came into jurisdiction; all other laws were controlled by the tribal council.

It was a time of great learning for me, and a time of early spiritual re-awakening as well. We really missed not being able to go to church but because we were 32 miles from the city of Bemidji, being Californians, and not being used to the weather which could dip down to 50 degrees below zero, and having a car equipped with a puny California heater sufficient for 20 degrees above zero weather only, we were hesitant to travel more than just a few miles from hospital and home. Winter is most of the year and we were just not found off the main road, literally fearful of freezing to death. You might wonder that I would say winter is most of the year in northern Minnesota, but Minnesotans told us that “this is a country of three seasons...July, August and winter!” Foresters told me that the sugar pine and white pine trees grew only four to five months of the year. Snow in May and October is not rare. Of course, often on Saturdays when there was traffic on the main road, we would drive into the metropolis of Bemidji, having a population of 10,004 when we were present, and stock up on supplies and drive back to the reservation again before nightfall.

We were assigned our first comfortable home, just thirty yards from the back door of the hospital. I was certainly amazed at the excellence of the nurses who worked with us and really provided quality medical care, except at times of my own ineptitude, mostly due to lack of experience, certainly not of unwillingness. There I learned compassion for people who were in distress and there we began to learn that there were other churches beyond the denomination in which I had been raised. Though raised a Baptist, the nearest Baptist church was 32 miles away in Bemidji and I did not feel we could make that journey every Sunday. What an excuse! The fact is that we never made the journey.

In the brief summer of July and August occasionally the fish flies and mosquitoes were so thick that one would drive through clouds of them blocking up the radiator of your car. But we enjoyed our time there; in fact when it came time to leave, we considered very seriously staying with the Public Health Service, until we learned that they had a rule against staying in any one station for more than three or four years. It was this rule as much as anything that caused us to finally return to nearly the lowest form of doctor – a first year resident trainee in the field of Ophthalmology.

While we were in Red Lake we found that there was a small Episcopal Church on the reservation, and got to know the young Episcopal minister, Reverend Tom Philips, and his lovely wife Percy. They were both fresh out of seminary and I know that deep within their hearts they both really wanted to please the Lord. We talked with them at great length and finally one day asked in a rather timid way “would it be all right if a couple of Baptists came to an Episcopal church service?” “Are you sure the wrath of God would not suddenly descend upon us for mixing such disparate denominations?” They graciously invited us to come and see.

It was while there that we learned that the Lord could do His work in the midst of few or many. One day in the small mission Episcopal Church, just across the street from the hospital Reverend Tom Philips was the preacher, the organist, choir leader, the man who did the readings from the Bible; in fact he reminded me of the one man band – he did absolutely everything. Of course part of the reason he had to was that on this particular Sunday there were only three of us in the congregation, besides the minister, Mr. Philips, one Indian lady, June and myself. Dear Mrs. Percy Philips was downstairs taking care of our two little boys and her own child. I remembered the verse in the Bible that says, “where two or three are gathered in my name, there will I be also.” It was amazing how I felt the presence of the Lord Jesus especially during that service.

Our time in the Indian service did come to an end, and as I look back some 25 years later, I am really amazed how the Lord was preparing us to be missionaries with friends who too would later be called to believe and become active in the work of Jesus Christ. I remember Larry and Gladie Erie, now strong believers having a Christian camp in northern Minnesota. And also, Dr. L.C. and Pat Dimery who came our last eight months there, quiet restrained Southern Baptists who well lived their faith in Jesus Christ. As we left the Indian service, we pursued our original intention of continuing the training in Ophthalmology. The training period to become an eye surgeon was then three years. I had really completed only six months training in Chicago. As we resumed medical training we drove 1,000 miles directly south from Minnesota snow to 75 degrees balmy Houston, Texas and Baylor Medical Center. I was assigned to the Veteran’s Administration Hospital in Houston, under the professorship of Dr. Everet L. Goar, whom we soon found to be a man of tremendous medical integrity, knowledge and ability to teach - a soft gentle man, but a man who knew what we needed to know as well. We remained in Houston for a year.

For the first time we tried the highly organized and strongly cultural Southern Baptist Church. On our first visit, as we walked inside the church and introduced ourselves, we were soon being greeted as Brother Ghrist and Sister Ghrist. Coming from a medical family and being filled with pride in the fact that I really had earned the title of doctor, to suddenly be taken down a peg and be called Brother Ghrist and to have my dear college graduate dental hygienist wife called Sister Ghrist was rankling. Next, we found ourselves separated, she to a

ladies' Sunday school group and me to a men's Sunday school class. We had always enjoyed going to a couples' class. Couldn't we even study the Bible together? We were so shocked that we never returned. However, we did try to continue with the Lord often on Sundays in Houston, though we were fed very sparse food in a large liberal church. Mostly we attended Sunday school and twice went to the worship service, but it never made much sense, so we drifted.

At the end of a year we transferred medical training to Detroit, Michigan, Wayne State University, Kresge Eye Institute, under the famous and fiery Dr. Albert Ruedemann. Although he swore easily and was known for his volatile temper, "Reudy" had a tender heart of gold as far as his patients and his resident trainees were concerned. There I spent the next year and a half that completed my total of three years residency time. Imagine our amazement to again find our friends, the Reverend Tom and Percy Philips nearby. We soon began traveling eighteen miles each Sunday to worship with them and within a matter of six months time found that we had completed the six philosophical classes necessary for us to be confirmed as Episcopalians. I never did understand much of what the main minister talked about, but whenever I talked with my friend, the assistant minister, Tom, we talked on a level that I could understand. We had come from a church in Glendale which I do not believe was intentionally Armenian in doctrine, but what came through to me was that you could be saved today and lost tomorrow. As I grew up in the First Baptist Church, I had the feeling that anytime I would sin, back I was, lost again. Since obviously I did sin, even though sometimes I would pray and ask for forgiveness, I came to the conclusion that it was fruitless to try. Why keep asking for forgiveness of sins since I would only sin again? How could the Lord forgive such a terrible Christian as me? Therefore I concluded that it was not possible for me to live a Christian life, and became what one might call a Christian "drop-out" for many years. But a spark did remain, a yearning to know more about Jesus. Having now joined the Episcopal Church in Detroit, Michigan, one of the things that appealed to us so much was general assumption that everyone who came to the church was Christians, of course, and really bound for heaven. What a refreshing thought! For us in our state of mind, it was a good thing to be assured that God loved us. This was truly "good news"! Of course for others who have never been told the way of salvation and who have never prayed and asked Jesus Christ to come into their hearts, this assumption is disaster. But for us it was a step forward to learn that you can trust in the Lord and you don't have to worry about your eternal salvation week by week. Finally, we finished our time in Detroit, and now having finished the entire three years time of training necessary to qualify as an Ophthalmologist and to take the Board Examinations, we moved back to Glendale, California, and I went into practice with my father. This had been our goal from the very beginning. He and I had three lovely years together before his untimely death, but during that time I was able to learn much from him. June and I continued on in the Episcopal Church as we now returned to Glendale, California. But we found a different atmosphere, a very social church, although it was a church where we still felt ourselves close to the Lord.

The second summer in practice we traveled 3,000 miles away to the state of Maine to take a special course in Ophthalmology, the Lancaster Course at Colby College. This was in preparation for the large American Board of Ophthalmology examinations.

One day in Maine I picked up a book on a newsstand called “The Conscience of a Conservative” by Senator Barry Goldwater. As I began to read that book, it suddenly dawned on me that I was not at heart a liberal, politically or theologically. Certainly I had always been taught in college and medical school that “any intelligent person” was a liberal and to be conservative was to be some sort of a throwback to the days of the western frontier. Yet, as I began to read this book on the conscience of a conservative, I began to see that thoughts that were deep in my heart, thoughts that were so much based upon Biblical principles were actually those of a political conservative, and I was just amazed. I remember reading aloud to my wife many sections from the book with wonder.

We returned to California and months later someone told me about a man by the name of Dr. Fred Swartz who was having a Christian Anti-Communism Crusade in the Los Angeles Sports Arena. By this time I was teaching at the University of Southern California in the Eye Department one morning a week and very active in practice. A surgeon friend gave me a ticket to go hear the good Dr. Swartz. My morning teaching duties were nearly over early one day and I was not far from the Sports Arena, so I went out of curiosity, and listened. That afternoon I canceled the few patients I had and asked June to get a baby sitter and come down to the Sports Arena herself. We came back dumbfounded. There was whole section of knowledge about which we were ignorant. June and I attended every meeting we could the rest of the week. By the time the Crusade was over we found that we were not only political conservatives, but now aggressively so. And we were amazed to find that our church was involved with the Socialist-oriented and highly-liberal World Council of Churches. This caused us to be very sad indeed.

Months passed by and we read more and more until finally one day during the summer of 1961 we read a book “Why Johnny Can’t Read”. This book gave us the reason why our oldest boy kept coming back from school with rather glowing reports and yet at home did not seem to read anything but comic books. When we tested him ourselves it dawned on us that our Christopher was “Johnny” and beginning to be a reading cripple. He hardly knew how to read at all and was in the third grade. We were then well prepared for the next step which came about the time school had begun, when the wife of a doctor friend of ours, Mrs. Edith Turril, called us on the telephone and asked if we were aware of a small Christian day school that had been operating for some years in Glendale in connection with a small Bible Presbyterian Church. We liked the idea, especially that they were really teaching children how to read, to write and to do arithmetic – the “three Rs”. Further, they were

being taught from the old McGuffey Readers. We had already purchased a set of McGuffey Readers and were struggling with our second and fourth grade children trying to teach them how to read the primer to the first grade reader!

Within 36 hours our older two boys were both enrolled in Westminster Academy. And there they began to learn. Soon our sons began to invite us to come to the eleven o'clock service at the church that sponsored the school. Well, we were Episcopalians, and saw no particular reason to go to two different church services. But one day just to satisfy our children we went to the Calvary Bible Presbyterian Church of Glendale after we had attended Saint Mark's Episcopal Church of the same city, the 9:30 a.m. service. The contrast was almost unbelievable. For the first time in many years we found we were being fed real meat from the Word of God. It wasn't long before we came again and then we began coming regularly so that we were attending the 9:30 a.m. service at the large Episcopal Church and the 11:00 a.m. service at the little Presbyterian Church. We were soon alerted to a type of theology described as neo-orthodoxy in which the minister uses terms to satisfy the older people in the pews but himself re-defines the terms to the younger people who are "on the inside" learning his definitions, particularly the Sunday School teachers and children. They understand what the new terminology means. I remember one day asking the Rector of the Church if he believed that Jesus was indeed the Son of God? He said he did and that Jesus was divine. It was not until I pinned him down months later on the same question that he had to admit that there was a spark of divinity in everyone and no more of this spark in the divinity of Jesus Christ than anyone else – an excellent example of the hypocrisy of neo-orthodoxy. Keep them happy in the pew, but bend the minds of the young! While attending both churches we noticed at the Episcopal Church we were not encouraged to either carry or bring a Bible, but at the Bible Presbyterian Church the Bible was definitely the mark of the people who came, and if you did not have one when you came, there was one provided for you in the pew. It was from the Bible, too, that all messages were preached.

Finally after some months, our oldest son turned to me one day while we were driving to church in the morning and said, "Daddy, are we going to the good church or the bad church?" It made me stop and think; it was indeed clear which was the good church where we were fed. We soon ended our search for a church and began to be found for service by the Lord.

CHAPTER ELEVEN – POW WOW PILGRIMAGE

Being really unprepared for northern Minnesota's extreme cold, June and I had each been given fleece lined, in my case World War II surplus pilot's boots, so 10:30 p.m. found us mixed into a herd of sleepy people clomping around with stadium boots, June with her hallucinogenic overcoat, two upset crying little boys and a suitcase with one clothes tie hanging out – such began our pow wow pilgrimage. The plane was only one hour late departing. Nearly all trans-continental night flights are exhausting and though we four did sleep a bit, mostly it was to change position or “daddy, get me a drink of water” or a sudden kick through the seat behind us as a teenager flexed suddenly. It was a dreary Chicago morning that greeted us at O'Hare Airport. We arrived in the sparse snow of Chicago, tired, bedraggled, but young and intact. An airport taxi delivered us to our car and trusty U-Haul trailer tucked away in a guarded lot and with keys in hand soon had our California registered two-door club coupe warming up for the long drive to Minnesota.

The journey, though progressively more cold, was uneventful until we rounded the last corner two miles from the hospital with 14” of snow everywhere, 10 degree weather, and the large white expanse of lower Red Lake frozen with ice folds off to the distant left; with “home” nearly in sight, Chris threw up all over the car, and thus began two weeks of influenza which eventually touched each member of our family.

Thirty minutes later, a bit cleaned up, we arrived at the Red Lake Indian Hospital front door reporting for duty. It was 11 a.m., and we were met by the head nurse, Mrs. Ada Jackson, two Finnish-American nurses, large Bonnie Van Squoik, and a small middle-aged Indian nurse plus assorted staff and one black American doctor on temporary loan from Cass Lake Indian Hospital.

The doctor gave me a quick tour of the hospital, showed us our assigned spacious two-bed-roomed house just forty steps from the rear door of the hospital, and after a quick bite of lunch with us in the small hospital staff dining room, got in his car and said goodbye and I began solo practice. What a shock! After completing a private hospital internship six months before, concentrating on reading, lectures and maybe 25 eye patients during the last six months, to realize that I was responsible for the health of 3,000 Red Lake Chippewa Indians was intimidating. Soon the head nurse, Mrs. Jackson, took me to the out-patient clinic and there sitting in the “waiting room” were 65 patients to be seen by “little old me”. I invited Mrs. Jackson into the O.P.D. alone and asked her again uncomprehendingly. “Am I supposed to see, examine, and treat all those patients this afternoon?” “Well, yes”, she said, “There's more than usual since they'd like a look at the ‘new doctor’!”

“I’m in trouble, Mrs. Jackson.. I’ve never, even on a busiest afternoon in internship, seen more than six patients in a whole afternoon. We will be here until past tomorrow night. How will I know what to give them?” I lamented. She thought for a second and then with her bright blue eyes dancing and smiling said, “Dr. Kleinman, your predecessor, was here for many years – he had excellent handwriting – just listen to the patient’s complaint, look over their record and if you make a similar diagnosis, just give them what Dr. Kleinman gave them – they will think you are great!” And I didn’t say, but agreed it would probably do them the most amount of good too.

God has mercifully erased that first two weeks from my memory. I’m not a perfectionist in medicine, but a good, safe, conscientious doctor who does his very best and seldom carries worries home. Within a month or so, a regular routine had been established and a sense of enjoyment of “rising to the occasion” and of being a “big frog in a very little pond” came.

Most other non-Indians on the reservation were living around the hospital, high school and administration complex with us at Red Lake over five miles away in the other metropolis of Redby. Actually, most of the Indian Service employees were pretty much in the same boat as June and I; white teachers, foresters, saw mill or fishery administrators, or even Christian ministers were here to work and grow a few years before getting into the mainstream of civilian life elsewhere.

There were a number of rare jewels of privilege accorded to us at Red Lake Reservation. These were incomparable deer and game bird hunting in the fall, and a long fishing season beginning on a frosty May 15 through September on three lakes absolutely virginal, being in the middle of this “closed Indian reservation” and open to fishing only by special tribal permit. We never saw more than one other boat on the same lake and this only twice in the dozen or so times we went.

For a Southern California city boy and girl to be in the forest constrained to watch such extreme variations in weather from 56 degrees below zero to 90 degrees above with four unmistakable seasons, and even gazing at the beautiful and eerie aurora borealis was an effective sermon on the general revelation of God. The luxury as “the doctor”, up part of the night with an accident or delivery of sleeping late on weekday mornings, lifting one eyelid to peer out through the window at a brilliant sun and snowy landscape of 20 below zero weather and to see 100 feet away, a school teacher trudging to work emitting visible vapor with every breath in a cloudless sky, or see a lonely car slowly drive past laying down an accidental white smoke-screen in the far sub-freezing atmosphere, was a source of awe.

It has been my observation working in six different states of America and overseas in three African countries that Americans have great practical distrust in their government and yet pride in their system, peculiar is it not? I had been raised to believe that the only reason one worked for the U.S. government was that you were a failure at anything else. However, when I met my superior officer in charge of the Bemidji sub-district, Dr. Sidney Finklestein, I gradually came to realize that here was quality, dedication, and leadership all in one. Sid was available for consultations by phone and occasionally in person for surgery which I felt unable to do, or he felt too expensive to send away – that is when the telephone lines were not swept down by a storm and we were isolated from the world.

The Lord is gracious to prepare you for the “impossible” in your own mind. I have found that most serious problems I have encountered as a missionary doctor had a smaller but very instructive precedent at Red Lake or in practice. Without doubt, the Lord Jesus takes each of us, you and me, through a training period or schoolhouse of troubles and problems to make us more fit for leadership in His kingdom later on in life. If you are at this time in such a crisis, just remember that our Lord Jesus has encountered and solved just that problem in the lives of hundreds of Christians before you and never despair. The gift of eternal love and light resides within you and the combined forces of all Hell cannot prevail. Oh yes, you may fall but you will learn too, and chances are you will discover more strength, intelligence and spiritual power within you with the help of the Holy Spirit, than ever you could have imagined.

CHAPTER ELEVEN – A. FIRST APPENDIX

I remember one March evening at the Red Lake Indian Hospital when the phones were inoperable; outside a blizzard howled, and nurse Bonnie called me over to see a 12-year old Indian boy, Edwin Bolioux. He had a tummy ache and a fever and was quite restless. Bonnie had done a fair amount of surgical nursing and was already getting set up for an appendectomy. Well, no doctor likes to be told what to do, so I calmly began a history and physical examination noticing right lower quadrant pain and even rebound tenderness. He certainly was not improving by the end of the examination, but you see I had never before put a whole appendix operation together. I had done the incision on one patient, I had put in a few bowel sutures on another, I had closed up on two or three, but the whole show – never. I determined to operate if the white blood count was even moderately elevated. I pricked his finger, drew the blood, did the proper mixing, placed it on a slide and began counting the cells in a few squares. Using a hand clicker counter my heart began to sink as I realized the numbers were rapidly piling up and when the calculation was at last made, it was 18,500 – twice the normal count. There was no doubt.

Sometimes the decision to leap out is the most difficult part. Bonnie was really expert and made me feel like Dr. Ochnoxer himself, whose medical book I was following. Little Edwin did fine, and oddly enough ten months later was the only Indian to send me a get- well card when I was hospitalized with thrombophlebitis some 100 miles away. I really appreciated that.

CHAPTER ELEVEN – B. NUMBSKULL HUNT

I believe there is a bit of Nimrod the mighty hunter in each man among us. As a boy with my BB rifle, I bagged the occasional blue jay that worried and broke open our hen's eggs. It is so easy to live a life of pacifism in one's comfortable apartment, city, home, or condominium. But while living in the forest, hunting becomes an exciting form of exercise. And without doubt, you see countryside, dells, glens, and wildlife which you never before knew existed.

It would be easy and possibly braggadocio to write of our very successful hunting and fishing trips, but rather I will choose an exciting time with two of my favorite friends, Dr. Sid Finklestein and Dr. Lee C. Dimery. After about six months I was able to share half the medical burden with Dr. John Lane. Then another six weeks and Lee and Pat Dimery of Duncan, South Carolina drove in to stay with their two-year old daughter, Marla, and ten year old Cadillac and took the house next door to us. L.C.'s parents were farmers and to him the sign of a successful doctor was a Cadillac. The moment he finished internship and headed for Minnesota they were driving one very old one.

They were a jovial loving couple that taught us about corn dodgers, grits, and a southern accent. Lee was assigned to do community health work but helped John and I with 1/3 of the night calls. Lee and I had many fishing and hunting adventures and kept our wives busy sending the Indian police out after us. At first I felt June and Pat were pretty hasty in declaring their strong frontiersmen deficient, but come to think of it, theirs was never a wasted effort, as will be shown.

This particular Saturday in the midst of deer season we had arranged for Sid to accompany the "defective duo". It was 10 a.m. before Sid arrived full of apologies for being the busy man that he was. The game plan was that we would hunt during the day just off the south-western border of the reservation, driving in on the boundary road for eight miles, and be back by dark or very shortly thereafter, and Sid's good wife would join June and Pat for afternoon tea and stay for the victorious huntsmen's dinner. Sid was effusive with camaraderie and insisted that we use his car with new snow tread tires. We gathered gear, piled in, and with visions of venison, drove out to the snowy eight-mile road. It had snowed four inches the night before, though sunny and 20

degrees at the time. There was possibly a hard packed ten inches of snow beneath, but we sailed along in the ruts of at least two other cars who had gone out before us. By 11:30 a.m. we reached the end of the road and found one car there with its occupants “gone-a-hunting”. We pulled our car off to the side, heading it back towards home and on solid packed snow, had a light lunch and coffee, all three spread out fifteen yards apart and began plodding through the snow up and down rolling hills with moderate cover. About 25% were evergreen trees, but the leafless saplings and larger deciduous trees allowed 75 yards of visibility. We saw the occasional deer just out of range and by 3 p.m. had completed a grand circle arriving back at the car for coffee and snack. As we were about to renew our trek, Sid asked to be excused – he was ten years our senior and said he would walk back a mile down the road and make a small circle, taking an hour or less. We agreed to return by dusk about 5:15 p.m.

Shortly after L.C. and I began, we saw a nice stag and each got a quick shot and hoping we had hit him started out across an open valley or meadow. We soon found it filled with deep snow and our legs sank into it three feet or more. After 40 minutes we made it across, and continued following the deer trail pushing ourselves to the limit. An hour later we were really tired and found no certain landmarks and really didn’t want to return through the snow marsh from which we had come, so we turned right and spotted a well traveled road, not just two ruts. Following this for 20 minutes we saw a few houses and smoke curling out of a chimney about ½ mile away. Exhausted and with the goal in sight, I sat down, then laid down for a short rest. Poor Lee suddenly became excited, I should say nearly beside himself, and with fear crazed eyes he shouted at me and pummeled me with blows begging me to arise before I froze to death. “Okay, okay, relax”, I said and got up and we walked arm in arm to the farmhouse. It was inhabited by a grizzly old man who tried to force whiskey on us, but capitulated to a cup of hot tea and fritos.

It was now going on 5 p.m. and when we discussed where friend Sid was waiting, he just said, “You’ll never make it. Not tonight anyway. Another storm is coming down from Canada, due here according to the radio, within two hours.” “How do we get back to Red Lake?” He said, “Oh, that’s a long way from here.” “Where’s the nearest phone?” I asked. “Clearbrook and the restaurant”, he replied. “Anyway of getting to Clearbrook?” Lee asked. “Yup, my neighbor down the road will be going to work past Clearbrook inside of an hour, you best get right along.”

Well, we made it to the telephone by 6 p.m. and phoned June shortly after dark. She, Pat, and Mrs. Finklestein had already sent the police on the eight-mile road after us at dark. However since we were stuck in Clearbrook without transport and the restaurant closed at 10 p.m., June promised to send Indian, Tom Lucier, a hospital driver in the hospital pick-up truck to fetch us.

Imagine our surprise when at 7:45 p.m. Tom and two of his Indian friends arrived at the restaurant. It had honestly never crossed their minds that there was no room for us remaining in the cab and that at now zero temperature no-one could travel in the open back end of the pick up.

Again we called June – still no sign of Sid and by now Mrs. Finklestein was near hysterics. We asked the police to look for Sid. Tom knew another road down to where we had parked, from the north, and the other men could wait for Tom to return later and pick them up.

By then a gentle snowfall had begun and after another two hours we reached Sid's car – abandoned! Unlocked, and out of gas (we had only begun with a quarter tank), we searched for a body – for anything – but found nothing, so we drove back slowly out the eight-mile road, to Minnesota Highway 89 and back to our house – sure that somewhere Sid's stiffened body was lying frozen in the darkened wilderness.

There was rollicking laughter at our arrival with Sid propped up, shoes off, half a sandwich in his hand and his dear wife hugging him. Sid had waited until his car and heater had run out of gas and had then proceeded to walk the entire distance out to the main Highway 89, hitched a ride with the police who were searching in the wrong area for him and had reached our house just ten minutes before. Such is life and nearly death, in what was often the coldest place in the U.S.A.

CHAPTER ELEVEN – C. CHIEF PETER GRAVES

Times of crisis are turbulent and exciting times in our walk with the Lord. As my friend Dr. Henry Brandt says “times of pressure, when someone bumps against you only reveal what is your spiritual and psychological cup.” If the fruits of the spirit, love, joy, peace, long-suffering, goodness, gentleness, etc. are within your “cup”, what sloshes out when bumped can only be love, joy and then peace. But if our walk with Jesus is strained or non-existent then out of the jostled cup comes anger, offense, bitterness, cursing, etc. The lesson is to “walk in the spirit and you will not fulfill the lusts of the flesh”. (Galations 5:16, KJV) I have found that a crisis in my life gives opportunity for exponential rather than normal growth.

Into each life, crises are presented. We had arrived on January 1, 1955 to a new culture, a new home, two sick boys under three, and my first experience in unsupervised medicine. We were young, June and I filled with hope and energy and delighted to be “on our own”.

We had been residents at Red Lake for about seven months and had begun our cultural adjustment and had met the important members of the tribe and government administrators. We had even attended the truly spectacular 4th of July “pow-wow” with days and nights of carnival atmosphere and serious tribal dancing. One day I received word that the ancient tribal patriarch and Chief, Peter Graves, was very sick and calling for the doctor to come to his home a few miles distant.

I quickly came by car and found the very thin, proud old Chief sick and dangerously dehydrated from diarrhea. Without doubt, Chief Peter Graves was desperately sick. He needed 24 hour nursing care, intravenous fluids and I.V. antibiotics, plus more than daily medical supervision.

When I suggested he come to the hospital for life saving treatment he and his family said “no”. Much patient explanation and questioning followed. His basic reason for abhorring the hospital besides the fact that he had never before entered as a bed patient, a fact to which he attached pride and cultural resistance, but he also said that within the hospital he had political enemies. Though the care of the Indians at Red Lake was my responsibility, as an ethical doctor, I could not be forced to provide poor and high-risk medical treatment at home. Our discussions reached an impasse and I finally informed the family that nothing could be gained by further discussion. If the Chief were to be treated, he would have to be brought into the hospital. I could not be responsible for the Chief dying at home with inadequate treatment. I admitted that politics were important, but as I said, “what good is a dead politician?”

I returned to the hospital and a busy afternoon clinic. Within two hours, after giving final instructions to his tribal leaders and a farewell to his family, (thinking he would die), we assisted the ancient Chief out of the back seat of his car and into a hospital bed in a room reserved for VIPs and desperately sick patients.

Within minutes, life-giving fluids containing I.V. tetracycline were flowing in his veins. God is good; three days later Chief Graves left the hospital in a happy mood walking out to his awaiting vehicle. It was about a year after I had left that the old Chippewa Patriarch “bit the dust”.

CHAPTER ELEVEN – D. MURIAL WHITEFEATHER

There are times in the life of the Christian (spiritual and carnal) or even non-Christians when God so bursts forth into our lives with unexpected blessing that it causes one to pause, reflect and calm the palpitating heart. “The kindness of mother nature” or mere “good fortune” sound insipid to describe this Godsend.

It was not easy to cause the Chippewa Indian to change his ways. I well remember an agricultural expert who brought a sack of highest quality hybrid corn seed for planting to an Indian who lived nearby, and after a two-hour lecture and demonstrating of planting near the front door left the bag of seeds. Six weeks later when the government agent came to see how the seedlings were progressing, he found both the Indian and the seeds sitting where he had left them. In explanation, the Indian said, “me hunter and fisherman – not farmer!”

There had never been much success with such public health actions as “well baby” or “prenatal” clinics, though we did have an energetic public health nurse. Dr. Kleinman, who preceded me had also made attempts, and when a special strain of streptococcus was found, tied his career to a superb investigation, and wound up in the Minnesota Department of Health

Therefore since we had a young Indian matron who had really been faithful in pre-natal clinics and had shown unusual interest, we treated Mrs. Murial Whitefeather as a very special patient, indeed.

I had heard that Murial was in labor and since the nurses handled many uncomplicated deliveries and Mrs. Whitefeather was just beginning labor, I reposed easily in a cold winter night’s sleep.

However, at 2:30 a.m., I was suddenly awakened by the jangling of the telephone next to our bed and heard a voice clamoring to clean the cobwebs from my dormant gray cells saying, “Dr. Ghrist, Dr. Ghrist, Murial Whitefeather is near to delivering and the cord has come out first!” A prolapsed cord is a grave obstetrical emergency. The pressure of the uterus trying to force the baby’s head through the birth canal, only just large enough, will surely cut off all pulse and blood supply through the umbilical cord. In a nutshell, Murial’s baby had now less than three minutes to be delivered or die.

Here was our prize patient who had obeyed all our enlightened suggestions in prenatal care.

With a sweep I had my pants on and feet in unbuckled snow boots, I dove into my parka, tugged it around me, and ran for the hospital through the lightly snowing night, lunged up the back hospital stairs – someone had opened the door – and I ran for the delivery room shucking my parka. Each of two nurses held a yawning sterile glove open wide and I slithered into the gloves, applied pressure from above and below and to our delight, out came a dusky blue baby. Quick suction and a flick of the hand to the posterior resulted in a quick gasp and soon a loud squall – the most beautiful music known to all in the room.

I then held up a now pink Indian papoose for Murial to see and said “Murial, meet your baby boy!” I was awake the rest of the night in awestruck reaction to what God had done for us.

CHAPTER ELEVEN – E. DANIEL, THE CROSS-EYED BASKETBALL PLAYER

I soon learned at Red Lake that high school basketball is the big winter sport of the snow-draped forests and solid frozen 10,000 lakes of Minnesota.

I suppose the lure which first snagged me into the mid-winter madness that goes to make up a highly partisan basketball game, was the day I was shown the second row bleacher seat for two which had stamped thereon – “Team Doctor”. I was told that we were admitted into all home and away games for free. I well knew there was no other doctor on the reservation but myself, so June and I determined to attend the first home game that was the next Friday night.

We entered an absolutely packed gymnasium to the deafening roar of the Red Lake Warrior’s team entry onto the floor to warm up – we also noticed that the temperature was almost like our home in Southern California – 78 degrees.

The variety of sights, sounds and smells were sensory eruption. “Sweed” Hedlund, the coach, grabbed me to look at a lad’s bruise which needed only some tender loving care while the assistant coach Larry Erie took June to the doctor’s choice seat and soon I joined her. We were amazed at the spirit and the feeling of this monumental event of which we were a part.

It was a close game and just before the half-time buzzer, a large Red Lake Warrior, Bud Lawrence, who had the ball still in his own half-court, saw the clock about to buzz, stopped, cocked his arm and unleashed a throw reminiscent of a center fielder trying for home plate. The ball left his hand a good second before the buzz, sailed through the air as the raucous note sounded and swished through the basket for a perfect two point basket and the score was tied. Shrieks, whistles and general pandemonium broke loose and whom do you suppose was screaming at the top of their lungs? The sedate team doctor and his wife – that’s who!

Whenever possible we attended the games and soon came to know personally each player and what could be hoped from him. One of the trickiest dribblers on the squad was Daniel, “the cross-eyed basketball player”. Now having successfully completed my ophthalmic basic science course I really knew an esotropia (cross-eyed) from an exotropia (wall-eyed or out turned eyes) but no suggestions from an expert could change Daniel’s verbal appendage, “the cross-eyed basketball player”. In reality he had an alternating fixation exotropia. This is in itself a marvelous disguise since naturally one watched a person’s eyes to see where he looks before

passing the ball. But with Daniel one could never figure out which eye to look at – each pointed to a different player and at all times, without moving or blinking an eye, he could switch from seeing with one eye to viewing with the other. Daniel was a master at confusion, was an excellent passer, and fine team player who himself usually scored second or third highest during a game, but who invariably set up the easy bucket for a teammate.

Well, during the Christmas holidays before our second basketball season was to begin, the love bug bit Daniel and his Pocahontas dream boat told him he would look a lot better if she could just figure out if he was looking into her eyes or looking at another Indian maiden.

Just like Samson and Delilah of old, Daniel came to me and asked to have his eyes straightened. By this time I was no novice, nearly an expert, I might add, since I had performed one other eye muscle operation six months before, having taken the patient to Bemidji and assisting in the surgery with the help of the Eye, Ear, Nose and Throat Specialist in town.

This time, however, Dr. Sid Finkelstein, my thrifty superior said “Bill, you had help on one case, now do this one yourself!”

I could hardly argue with the wisdom of my superior, so we scheduled Daniel and I whistled a merry tune as I scrubbed, perusing an ophthalmic surgical anatomy book for the 14th time refreshing my memory as to the exact plan of attack.

Everything went well except I remember that the technicolor of the book was much more bold in color than the pallor of Daniel’s rectus tendons. But happily no mistakes were made and at first dressing, Daniel was an Indian maiden’s straight-eyed hero.

But before I had time to pat myself on the back too much, the new coach, Larry Erie descended upon me two weeks later and said “Aw Doc, what have you done to Daniel’s game? He’s just an average player now.”

And true it was – Daniel’s genius for deception was gone, a casualty to the wiles of cupid.

CHAPTER TWELVE – SOUTH TO HOUSTON

It is amazing that now in 25-year hindsight, I can see how God was preparing me for missionary service even at Red Lake. The hospital was almost an exact replica of the Roland K. Armes Memorial Hospital at Mwingi, Kitui district of Kenya. The two-year cross-cultural experience, the administrative problems, and the necessity

of ordering medicines six months in advance, were days of discipline and enlightenment. Though the Lord did not occupy a high priority in our lives yet, there was a real yearning to know more and more of the Lord Jesus. Yes, the Lord had His hand upon me and was directing my footsteps.

As the time came for departure from Red Lake, June was “great with child” again and I had been accepted at Baylor University Medical Center under Dr. Everet Goar to begin January 1, 1957.

We saved up a bit of holiday time and departed December 24th with our Plymouth station wagon made up for one large play pen – bed behind the driver’s seat, dragging the ubiquitous U-Haul trailer – now medium sized – and one borrowed completely sterile delivery pack (later returned by parcel post) “just in case” – along the 1,000 mile journey south.

It was a very gray day with 20 inches of snow beside the road and 10 degrees, as we left and each hour reduced the snow and increased the temperature. We arrived, still a family of four, in Houston in 75-degree clear weather on December 30. We found and rented a nice two bedroom home in University Place within 24 hours and began struggling to furnish it, begin the eye residency, and prepare for “shim” number three at the same time.

The day before Douglas Alan Ghrist was born, we bought and erected his crib and made contact with a baby-sitter for Chris and Tim while June would be resting after her delivery. I would be away to the Eye Residency at the large Houston Veterans Administration Hospital. The Lord was good with such exact timing.

No one bothered to tell us how difficult life was, having to drive 1,000 miles, find housing, set up housekeeping, prepare for and accomplish delivery of number three son, and begin immediately working 10-hour days with night call thrown in. “Settling in time”, “moving grants”, and time to ruminate on the fact that we were not even being paid enough to make ends meet, never crossed our minds. We were young, enjoying each day’s fascination and bound for a “better life” – how similar to many unheralded Christians of today who make up the foot soldiers of the Lord’s army throughout the world. No life of extravagance and comfort in the African bush or the teeming metropolitan ghetto, yet we have seen scores of God’s greatest saints uncomplaining and looking toward “redemption and life” both in their life here, there, and for their children in the family of God. More facets on God’s gems were being chipped in Houston, Texas.

CHAPTER TWELVE – A. HICCUPS AND HEROES

There is much to learn in medicine, which cannot be learned from a book; only a live patient can teach certain lessons. Though specializing in eyes, nevertheless, each resident doctor in whatever branch of medicine at the

V.A. hospital in Houston had to rotate through the emergency night call every 3-4 weeks, as well as be responsible for emergency call in his own specialty a night each week.

Every new resident goes to great pains to impress his seniors with his diagnostic acumen; further, when there is a bit of slack period, the residents are “hungry for teaching cases” or eager for surgery. This is not to imply in any way that wrong or unnecessary surgery would be contemplated, only that a more diligent search might be made for those who could be helped.

About the second night duty I drew in the general admitting office, I was examining an older man for hiccups that had persisted for 24 hours. Of course, one has to stretch the imagination some to admit a hiccup patient to the eye ward. Yet, when I looked intently into this patient’s eyes with a flashlight, there was a definite dark green-gray hue and suspecting his hiccups would respond to a relaxant, I soon had my cataract patient admitted to the eye ward, relaxed with medicines and expecting a pat on the back the next morning.

Next morning I was the brunt of much good-natured kidding. My patient had been seen, examined and sent home – without hiccups now- before 9 a.m. when I was allowed to show up after only a half night sleep or less. I quickly learned that a flashlight is not a primary instrument for diagnosing cataracts. My patient had perfect 20/20 vision in each eye, very mild nuclear sclerosis and wondered why no one else on the ward was suffering from hiccups!

Easter Sunday morning found me on Ophthalmology call, but at home near the telephone. At 10:30 a.m. the phone rang and I was asked to come and see a man who had been hit in the left eye by his child while playing ball.

Mr. Thompson was a middle-aged college professor. He had sustained a serious injury – hyphemia and commotio retina, so I admitted him, instilled medicine and bandaged his eyes. Within three days his vision was back to normal and we dismissed him, but he did not forget.

About two months later there was a local eye convention in Houston, which attracted eye doctors from all Texas and a few other states nearby. Possibly a hundred doctors came plus all of us residents, who got in free. There were two very well known eye surgeons from the east. Dr. Edmund Spaeth, author of an encyclopedia textbook on eye surgery and Dr. Harold Sheie whom my father had befriended when speaking in Los Angeles at the midwinter Research Study Club, of which my dad was a co-chairman for many years.

At our Houston eye meeting, I noticed that Dr. Spaeth, whom I really looked forward to hearing in person, was given absolutely prime time – 9 to 10 a.m. each day and poor Dr. Sheie was given the worst time, right after lunch from 2 to 3 p.m., when the stomach is full and the eyelids droop. However, the very reverse of what was anticipated occurred. Dr. Spaeth put even me to sleep and Dr. Sheie had me so interested that I sat on the edge of my chair. It was then I resolved that beyond good scientific material, since they both presented the best, there is really something in how interesting and articulate one is.

Therefore, after discussions with June during the summer, we had the bright idea in the fall term of taking the basic “Introduction to Speech 101” at the University of Houston. We enrolled and showed up for our twice-weekly evening class.

June and I walked in, sat down with our notebooks and textbook and looked up to the exclamations of our professor, “Dr. Ghrist, the man who saved my left eye! Class, here is the self-sacrificing eye surgeon who gave up his Easter holiday to save my eye.” The first speech of the year, an introduction, lacking only my age and hereditary background had been given to a stunned audience, not the least of whom was me.

I will say that June and I worked hard in this class, but I fear my top grade had been made months before.

CHAPTER TWELVE – B. STONE AND STUNNED

I believe the most amazing patient I encountered in Houston was during my service at Texas Children’s Hospital under the very able direction of Dr. Mary Fletcher. Dr. Fletcher had entered ophthalmology from the back door of Pediatrics having completed her training first in the disease of children only. She was newly in charge of the newborn nursery at Jefferson Davis County Hospital in Houston, and take it from me that there is nowhere in an average hospital where “righteous indignation” can flare so quickly as among the nurses and attendants in the “preemie” section of a newborn nursery. Well, Dr. Mary was in charge and it was her first really authoritative position in medical hierarchy.

It was during the days after the end of World War II when the “disease” of retrolental fibroplasia (R.L.F.) was hitting preemie nurseries like a communicable disease and the cause – too much oxygen used for too long in an incubator – was not yet recognized.

Dr. Mary’s nursery had not been afflicted with the blinding blight of RLF until one day a well-known visiting Professor of Pediatrics came to speak in Houston and while there visited the Jefferson Davis preemie nursery.

Within hours they had their first RLF diagnoses and soon many had the dreaded disease and Dr. Mary admits writing to castigate the Easterner on his bringing “the infection” to HER nursery. Once so involved in pediatrics and ophthalmology and with the scent hot for the cause, Dr. Mary made her contribution and went right on into Pediatric Ophthalmology.

The most interesting patient was seen one day in the office of Dr. Fletcher that I was invited to see as an example of the newest and latest of efficient offices, having just been built, and she having just moved in one month before.

From the door to her examining room to the complex of patient’s motorized chair, refraction equipment, slit lamp, etc., was a distance of possibly 20 feet. With Dr. Fletcher’s desk in the far corner, I was standing near the window halfway to the door when she rang her receptionist to send in the next patient.

“Good morning, Joey. It’s good to see you looking so well, “ Dr. Mary said. “You haven’t seen my new office before, have you?” “No”, replied Joey as he purposefully walked to her, stepped around her, and continued. “Come over to the patient’s seat and let me look at your eyes” Dr. Mary said. My mind wandered at this rather basic conversation and when I brought myself back into the scene within, rather than the view outside, Dr. Mary was bidding Joey good-bye and reminding him she wanted to see him again in six months, asking about his mother, etc., until the door was closed and he was gone. Some interesting patients, I thought – as well you may too.

Then Dr. Fletcher said “Dr. Ghrist, how well do you suppose Jay can see?” I quickly engaged my mind – I couldn’t remember that she had checked how well the boy could see, so I began faking a bit, thinking – well, he entered the room, stepped around me, had never been here before, went right to the seat and navigated himself back out again without assistance. “Well, I’d guess he has finger counting at ten feet at the least, Dr. Fletcher”. “Hmm,” she replied. “Would you say he was a visual cripple from your observations?” “Absolutely not!” I replied. “For your information, Dr. Ghrist, Joey had malignant retinoblastoma tumors in each eye four years ago, and we removed both eyes to save his life. He has no eyes and is stone blind!” I couldn’t believe it! “Then how did he come into this new room, avoid me, and sit down without effort near you, and then return?” “Have you ever heard of Lighthouse for the Blind in Houston?” she asked. “There they teach receptive, intelligent kids to see with their ears – to hear their way into a room avoiding large objects and locating others by sound waves, much like a bat; they don’t even bother with seeing eye dogs”. I was amazed and still am.

CHAPTER TWELVE – C. REHOBAM’S SUCCESSOR

Solomon said in Proverbs 17:28, “Even a fool is thought wise if he keeps silent...” and after a long period of silence a tactful word can be spoken again Solomon says. It may be “a word aptly spoken is like apples of gold in settings of silver” (Proverbs 25:11); so it was with a “son of Solomon”.

Unfortunately the days at Houston were not all happy days. On the first of July that year, the aging Dr. Goar resigned from his professorship, and the position was filled by Dr. Louis Girard, an excellent clinician but one, like King Rehoboam, Solomon’s son, who began things on bad footing with residents and attending staff alike. A friend from Chicago days, Dr. Alan Hall, quit his residency after only two instead of three years. Then I noticed that my senior resident, Dr. Percy Lowe, developed a duodenal ulcer trying to work with Louie as Assistant Professor and the first three months of his full professorship.

We soon found that life was in constant turbulence and like Rehoboam, Dr. Girard’s solution was ever greater authority and authoritarianism. I asked Dr. Goar if he could arrange a transfer to another residency as I had come expecting to train under him. At the next Chicago Academy meeting in October 1957, it was arranged and after the meeting we visited Detroit for a mutual look at each other and went home to wait out and learn during our last two months in Houston.

Probably my most difficult time came in latter November after a Houston ophthalmological meeting when Dr. Girard took me in tow, led me into the bar, ordered me a soft drink, and belligerently said, “Okay, Dr. Ghrist, tell me exactly why you are leaving next month!” What could I say? It was because of him and the recurrent waves of turmoil crashing over our heads with no end in sight. Life is just too short for that kind of living.

As I framed first one answer, then another, then a third, then a twenty-third, every single answer could only cause permanent scars and angry words to be spoken. After a full ten minutes, the longest ten minutes of my life, to that point, I finally replied, “Dr. Girard, in the years ahead I would like the freedom to call upon you by telephone when I have complicated eye muscle problem, or contact lens problem, or a problem of surgery in which you are a world authority. Please let us part as friends.” He relaxed his frown, shook my hand and took me downstairs in the elevator and left for his own car. The Lord really helped me that day and I still have a warm feeling for Louie.

CHAPTER THIRTEEN – DETROIT DAISIES

December 24, 1957, a year to the day from when we had left snowy Minnesota for warm Texas, found us packed and leaving Houston for gray, sleety Detroit, Michigan – another move on the residency trail. Our course took us to the outskirts of Baton Rouge, Louisiana by 5 p.m., Christmas Eve. Being raised in rather Christian homes, June and I were amazed at the necessity to dodge drunk drivers. We were soon fearful for our lives as we saw people literally reel out of a bar toward their cars and roar off into snarls of traffic. After three near misses and an accident next to us, we sought out a motel and retired early from the gasohol mixture.

Detroit was a repeat of Houston in finding a house in 24 hours, moving in, re-assembling the parts of our furniture, bicycles, etc., which the Red Ball Express movers had so meticulously taken apart to conserve space in packing. I reported for duty on January 2, only this time June was not pregnant, but with three boys under six, her hands were full.

We soon found that we were in the “big league” in this crisp demanding big eastern city atmosphere. We missed the sunny though sub-zero days of northern Minnesota and the warm sunny days of Houston. In fact we just plain missed seeing sun at all.

Dr. Al Ruedemann was a hard driver, one of those peculiar humans who actually require only three to four hours sleep a day. He would read from 11 p.m. until nearly 2 a.m. each night, then sleep until 5 a.m., awake refreshed but with no one else up, pattered with his hobby of growing orchids in Grosse Point, Michigan (not the world’s most friendly climate for orchid growing – only made possible by steam-heated greenhouse), then impatiently he would arrive at the receiving hospital at 6:50 a.m. and with foot tapping, await his followers who must be at work by 7 a.m., not 7:01 or 7:03 a.m. but 7 a.m. sharp.

During those first January days it was standard conversation upon being introduced – “Dr. Ghrist, where do you come from?” “Recently or originally?” I would inquire. “Both” – “Well, recently from Houston, Texas, and originally...” I would pause, look out a window at the dreary weather and sigh “sunny Southern California!” “What are you doing here?” would invariably be their reply.

It became such a joke that one day when I was 90 seconds late and Dr. Ruedemann had already begun a discussion on a problem patient at his bedside and I tried to meld into the double circle of white coats, Dr. Ruedemann spotted me, stopped and with voice dripping with sarcasm said “Good afternoon Dr. Ghrist, where

have you been?" I looked out the window at the gloomy gray landscape and sighed and said "Just out picking the spring daisies, Dr. Ruedemann". There was a roar of laughter, foremost among them, was his own.

A highly organized tightly run ship would describe the Kresge Eye Institute Detroit Receiving Hospital Residency under Dr. Ruedemann. Everyone had his slot to fill and each piece of the puzzle was jammed with knowledge and experience that fit into a mosaic of first class training in "How to be a good ophthalmologist".

CHAPTER THIRTEEN – A. COLORED ORDERS AND BITTERSWEET SUGAR

I was immediately given the necessary but boring job of Ward Resident for the two huge eye wards containing 30 to 40 patients in each ward. I was primarily responsible for all the aches and pains of every eye bed patient, and nearly all my time was spent on the wards from 6:30 a.m. until 5:30 p.m. In the wintertime, except out a window, I never really saw the sun, leaving long before light and departing in the dark.

One of the most difficult jobs the ward resident had was writing a progress note on every patient, writing any new patient's medicine orders, but made infinitely more complicated by a typical bureaucratic hospital rule that no medicine order was valid for more than three days. For years this alone had been the biggest headache between nurses and doctors. A patient with a pyogenic corneal infection on antibiotic drops, or a histoplasmatoc patient on Daraprym, or a uveitis patient on steroids – if the harried ward resident forgot or neglected to renew the patient's medicine, though patient and doctor both knew it must continue, the nurse had every right, even command, to stop the treatment. This applied to everything from aspirin through laxatives and sleeping medicines to the most refined life and sight saving medicines available. What to do?

One day during my first week on the ward, I was searching and deciphering dates on ordered medicines; I was pestered by the usual patients who had not received their medicine or by a really caring nurse who would remind me of the rule, when suddenly I thought of a solution. Buy a good supply of red, green and black ball point pens and use only one color one whole day, say red. The next day, use only a green pen, and the third day a black pen. Since most people carry blue ball-points, I could immediately spot a new order out of rhythm and re-write all former red orders or intentionally let them lapse. Our problem was solved and nurses, patients and doctors alike grew in harmony. Like many good ideas, though, I was amazed to find that no other doctors who followed when I moved on, considered it worth the bother and the days of nurse/doctor strife re-commenced. My next rotation beginning April 1st was with the world famed Dr. Solomon Sugar in the highly specialized glaucoma clinic. From being responsible to everyone, I was suddenly responsible to only one, Dr. Sugar. He was like the little "red hots" we used to buy as kids, name of sugar on the outside, an absolute gold mine of

information but – what shall I say- delicately balanced red hot on the inside. He would probably arise each morning with a smile, have a Kosher breakfast, kiss his wife goodbye, and while driving in the thick of traffic have someone call him a dirty name. Best of intentions, I am sure, but by the time he would arrive each Monday morning, he was ready to eat “you little cretin of a resident” with mushroom sauce and toast.

In his defense, I might add that those who attempt to scale the lofty heights of genius or Mt. Everest, must expect dangers and possibly falls. How, really, can a world authority – author of the current book simply enough entitled “The Glaucomas”, expect to converse without irritation with a second year resident who hardly knows a Trefine from Trabeculum.

I just couldn't believe how much trouble I could get into by asking what I thought was pertinent questions. Dr. Sugar only wanted perfection, a complete mastery of his book and the last two years' medical journal articles on the subject of glaucoma, a perfectly worked up patient with tonography, water, drinking tests, diurnal tonometry, visual fields and diagrams of disks, in other words the diagnosis fully made. And then he would chide, “why present this fully diagnosed patient to me?” I took my turn of suffering the first month but was learning mountains; there was literally no time left to think of anything except glaucoma and Dr. Sugar.

Then, quite by accident, as the second of three months began, I noticed in the usual hovering crowd of buzzard-eye residents ready to strip the last sinew from dried bones, waiting for me to be meticulously and expertly called down by Dr. Sugar, an awed face and expression of a senior resident, Dr. Fred Weisman. He had a genuine love for this harsh descendant of the Prophet Moses. A question was framing itself on Fred's lips. I hesitated and acted the stupid role thrust upon me and into the breach Dr. Weisman asked his question: “Dr. Sugar, how do you diagnose pigmentary glaucoma in an albino?” Dr. Sugar became more calm – a most ominous sign – his face began to smile, though a pulsating vein on his angelic face betrayed the lava about to flow and for once, the first flow of wrath for the day was not upon “Bumbling Bill” but upon Fred Weisman. The rest of the morning went more smoothly.

Next week I especially invited Dr. Weisman to look at a complicated case with me and on Monday as I pretended to look for my notes “good old Fred” came through with another “pip” of a question for Dr. Sugar and the first prick of blood was drawn – if one would call a full gallon of the red sticky “a prick”. After his initial outburst – not upon me – I believe Dr. Sugar felt “out of character” in not verbally lashing “his own resident” and rapidly mellowed.

Week after week it was the same and one day at lunch Fred and I were talking and he, nearly choked with emotion, said “I love Dr. Sugar so...why do you suppose he loses his temper at me again and again? I already had him for three months a year ago”. I was rather silent, though consoling. Fred was a nice guy and a valuable friend.

The high point came the last week after everyone had left and Dr. Sugar strangely stuck around. With everyone gone, Dr. Sugar grasped my hand and said “Dr. Ghrist, you’ve learned well. You’re the best glaucoma resident I’ve ever had!” Maybe like a gigolo he “told them all the same thing” but I don’t think so. I, too, love and respect Dr. Sol Sugar.

CHAPTER THIRTEEN – B. SPILLED SOUP AND FOOTBALL

As I began my third year, (the time where we were finally allowed to operate) I found myself shipped off to the Dearborn Veterans Administration Hospital with the kindly, enthusiastic master-teacher, Dr. Lauder, in charge. Being a “Johnny came lately” to the residency program, I really had nothing to complain about. I was completely by myself except for the two mornings per week when the “chief” came to check my progress, assist, and teach me. From a highly structured big city program, I was suddenly “out on a farm”, but with more than enough patients to keep me busy.

Quickly noticing that I had done some cataract operations before, Dr. Lauder, continued me from my own point of learning and facility and one day asked me a simple question, “Dr. Ghrist, have you ever tried inserting corneal scleral suture, especially the nasal half of the wound of the left eye, in left-handed?” The thought had never occurred to me. I demurred by saying “I’m not ambidextrous”. “Oh, yes I know that, but if you would practice eating left-handed for three weeks, I’ll teach you and you’ll have a dexterity few attain.”

Here was a real challenge. I remembered that a few years before my father, Dr. Orrie E. Ghrist, had developed a painful bursitis of his right shoulder and was about to give up doing E.N.T. surgery when he decided that his skill was not his right hand, but in his mind, so quickly taught himself to operate left-handed and was quite successful until at last the bursitis was gone.

I have nearly always had a moderate weight problem – even as a boy, my brother teased me with the couplet – “Bill is much like a pelican, his eyes held more than his belly can” and in sibling rivalry delighted in calling me “fatso”. Hence, I had found that the best lunch for me was soup, a cracker, and a bowl of salad. But how does one eat soup left-handed? Though much soup was spilled and many bits of shredded lettuce were to be found in

the pockets of my white “lab coat”, nevertheless, true to his promise, Dr. Lauder did teach me to insert sutures left, as well as right-handed, which now, working entirely by microscope, I find most helpful. A willing heart and spirit can be taught much.

It was exactly this time when it suddenly dawned upon me that God was very kind to me. The football season had just begun and I had previously warned my reader that American tackle football gave me greatest pleasure of any sporting event.

I was amazed to hear that yet again, U.S.C., my alma mater, was traveling to where I was living. This first happened in Chicago in 1954 when U.S.C. came to play Northwestern University, then two years later when in Minnesota, U.S.C. came to play the University of Minnesota in a blizzard which Minnesota theoretically won by a field goal when it was snowing so hard that one could hardly see the players and the kicked field goal attempt was given to U. of M., though the ball itself was never seen again after it left the ground. I hope I don't sound too partisan...ha!

Then while in Houston in 1957, U.S.C. came to play Rice University whose stadium was only a five-minute drive from our house. Now finally in 1958 good old U.S.C. followed us to University of Michigan at Ann Arbor, not many miles distant. Is it not amazing how many unrecognized “treats” or blessings the Lord Jesus showers upon us?

The rest of my senior year of residency was back into the Detroit Receiving Hospital where, I was greatly honored to be chosen one quarter as “Chief Resident”.

CHAPTER THIRTEEN – C. CRASHING SLEEP

It was during that time, again winter, one Saturday evening when I was grabbing an hour's sleep, I was vaguely aware of a commotion going on downstairs in the kitchen. Now fully awake, I heard the crash of a bottle, the thud of a body falling, and the crying of a baby, whom I assumed to be little Dougie, more yelling and sobbing by our eldest son, Chris, now age 6, running up the stairs, bursting into our bedroom and crying out, “Dad, come quick, there's blood, milk, Mom and Dougie on the floor!” Leaping out of bed I rushed downstairs to find the report had been accurate.

June was lying down in the weirdest mixture of sight and sound I had ever seen. Apparently, she had been fixing Doug's special soybean formula bottle – he was allergic to cow's milk. She had Doug in one arm and lifting an 8-ounce bottle of milk from its sterile heating container when she suddenly felt very weak. She had

been suffering from the five-day flu, and knowing she was going to faint, went down somewhat easy. The body thud that I heard was her carrying Dougie down on top of her. Dougie, sensing the loss of his dinner, grabbed for and tipped all four full glass baby bottles into a crash next to them. June had punctured her arm at a vein and had lost maybe one quarter pint of blood while Dougie cried in frustration having such a very near miss to supper. In fright and sympathy, Timmy was bawling too. I quickly picked up assorted loved ones, got them into the dining room and assayed the damages, Dougie and Timmy unscathed and June with a small puncture which by now had stopped bleeding.

Trying to be of comfort I said the wrong thing. June asked, “How bad is it?” Thinking medically I said, “It’s nothing, sweetie” I said, “It won’t even need a stitch.” I should have commended her on her sacrificing of self, life’s blood, etc. to preserve Doug and assured her that all would heal in time and that another can of soy milk could be fixed for little Doug and quiet the other two frightened boys.

We did enjoy our time in Detroit. I learned prodigious amounts medically and we drew closer to the Lord as we began to develop an attitude of trust in the dependability of God through His Son Jesus, whom we worshiped as regularly as residency training would allow. What a joy it was to have as friends, Reverend Tom and Percy Philips with whom we spent so many weekend evenings or Sunday afternoons with stimulating God-directed conversations. Tom took me many steps toward my latent goal of missionary service. He had already been one in Minnesota and I knew it.

CHAPTER THIRTEEN – D. ADIEU, TREE ROOT!

As our 18 months in Detroit drew to a close, early summer had just begun and for the first time in our lives we looked forward to not being in an educational or military discipline. We made arrangements for the ubiquitous U-Haul, now a large covered trailer about big enough to transport a horse. We had inherited my mother’s old Chrysler which had been good for June to do shopping while I was seven miles away to work in downtown Detroit.

We decided the Chrysler was expendable and began thinking of ways to sell it. For a period of four months while parked in front of our house it had been ice bound – somehow a large puddle, maybe 14 inches deep had formed even with the curb and a tree root and one tire. We had not driven it until spring thaw and then found it had a nearly fatal disease of “non-start-itis”. We could with much time and effort, get it started but it was inadvisable to turn off the engine except when home again. I advertised in throwaway local advertiser newspapers, we pinned 3x5 cards in markets and even had a “for sale” sign on the rear window, but nobody

called. Finally with but ten days to go, I began taking it to used car dealers, by now hoping for a bare \$100. The first two forced me to turn off the engine and re-start it again. Well each time it was a disaster and an hour with their own mechanic helping me to get it on the road again. The third dealer, in three consecutive days, had his office nearby and I left the engine running, but his assistant went out and turned it off just as the phone rang calling the assistant back inside. We dickered and finally agreed to \$100. The “old pro” pulled off five twenties. I signed the transfer papers and said I would walk home. The light dawned and he said, “She’s a hard starter!” I agreed and he laughed and laughed and told his assistant to drive me home. The last I heard was him saying “some sucker I am – ha ha ha!” I imagine he fiddled a bit with something and resold it for \$250.

The next week we brought the large U-Haul trailer home, very carefully parked it, hitched it to our car and most scientifically loaded it for balance and good parking. The next day we were all up putting last minute things in suitcases, climbed in the car and began to drive off to June’s parents lakeside cabin in northern Minnesota.

As we moved forward, suddenly the hood of the car was elevated and the front wheels could turn with only half pressure and the back of the car nearly dragged on the street. The offending sub-asphalt root had fixed us again. Little had I realized that when I parked in front of the house, my car rear tires were raised six inches higher than usual so that in packing the trailer level, we actually had far over weighted the front of the trailer. The packing so carefully done had taken many hours – how could we rectify the situation? We didn’t; we just carefully drove from Detroit to northern Minnesota and while there bought a pair of junked “overload springs” to settle the car level again. But it did cost us a pair of rear tires blown out traveling from Minnesota to California across the Dakota “badlands” and into the Nevada desert.

CHAPTER FOURTEEN – HOME TO CIRCULAR LIVING

Soon we had rented a lovely three-bedroom house on Palm Drive in Glendale, began practicing with my dad in his office and enrolled our son, Chris, in the nearby grade school. We really felt that “life had begun”.

Dad and I had a good relationship and worked well together both in the office and in the operating room. Dad was an excellent doctor and a man who really inspired confidence. As I have said before, he introduced me to the Academy meetings and had a prominent role in the Research Study Club, so he always kept abreast of the latest in medicine. It would have been unthinkable for me to have done less.

I probably learned as much from Dad both in the office and operating room as any one other person; when we had a complication, we could discuss our problem and to this day there are unique ways I do cataract and pterygium operations which we talked about, considered and adjusted until we had nearly foolproof techniques.

On the other hand, Dad had chosen to live in Glendale for a very special reason that did not apply to me. He was asthmatic and at our home on East Broadway he found a salubrious lack of either pollen or wind, and a very warm, dry, even-temperated, happy mixture of foothills and alluvial slope.

Having lived in comfort in sub zero Minnesota and hot humid Texas and many other less extreme climes, I would have picked either a mountain or a beach community, but God knew what he was doing even though I wasn't listening very carefully.

Our house on Palm Drive served us well during the five years we were there. Though it had square corners and was a rather fat rectangle in shape, we found it to be a "circular house". One walked from the living room to the dining room to the kitchen to the service porch to the boys' bedroom to the study, to the sewing room down a hall with a three-quarter bath to the master bedroom and back to square one in the living room.

It didn't take long for our three boys – raised on an Indian reservation – to find the merits of cowboys and Indians, tearing lap by lap around the house in wild abandon. There were of course times when in the name of discipline, mom or dad would be the police car tearing after them until an arrest was made and the "Cal 500" was flagged to a stop.

CHAPTER FOURTEEN – A. MUMPS REALLY COST

Now Mumps is a childhood disease, though I had it while being the doctor at Red Lake Hospital. Our three boys had it and were exposing each other. June realized one day, taking care of two mildly sick ones, that she had never had the mumps.

I must admit that I had a hard time believing her since she was surely exposed when I had it five years before, and further she had not yet returned to her second childhood.

She begged me for a \$50 shot of gamma globulin from pooled blood bank serum. In those days that was about all we could save in an average month, so I consulted with an expert – a general practice friend who saw many people so exposed to mumps. My friend Griff said there was a new skin test out which would tell us if she had ever had mumps and this only cost a doctor three dollars. Griff lived nearby so that evening after work he

stopped in and we both read the directions and gave the skin test. The next day it indicated that June had previously had the mumps. So we rejoiced in \$47 saved. That is until ten days later when June's throat began to swell. By the next day the kids stopped calling her "porky pig" and it just became "poor mom". That evening when Griff stopped by to see his patient, he confided to me that she was the most swollen and uncomfortable mumps case he had ever seen – wouldn't you know – a doctor's wife!

But we didn't really save the \$50 since June's parents came to take care of her and our whole family couldn't remember having had mumps plus Griff had read that in such a bad case, gamma globulin might prevent any serious complication. Well, we spent \$50 for three doses – Grandpa, Grandma and June - and I've never had as much faith in skin tests!

CHAPTER FOURTEEN – B. HOW DO FIRST BORN SURVIVE?

One evening just after dark we were all playing "Monster". I may have been the fire-breathing dragon, when in the half-light, Chris stepped on a skate, down he went and fractured a tarsal bone in his foot. One of the other doctor friends in our same building was an orthopedist, Dr. Frank Paxton.

As June sometimes has had a weak back, Frank had been consulted many times. In some ways Frank was a bit gruff but kind-hearted. Nevertheless, June was so thoroughly intimidated that she missed as many appointments as she kept, just a sub-conscious blotting out what she was afraid to do.

Well, into this background, June took Chris, then nicknamed "Kit" to Dr. Paxton. He applied a plaster cast and the next day built into it a rubber heel to make it a "walking cast". Soon it became a running cast, and then it began to fragment. June said "What can we do Bill? Frank Paxton will be furious!"

I remembered that in the next office, my parents had rented to a G.P., that the unfortunate doctor had died and there remained some old cast material. Of course, I hadn't applied plaster for some years but with indomitable optimism, I brought a goodly supply home and put humpty dumpty back together again. Though Frank never said anything, I'm sure he wondered how he had managed to make such an ungainly specimen of the caster's art.

About a year later, our same son, Kit, developed a strange skin disease on his other foot with weeping blisters that did not heal with any of my limited bag of tricks. June took Kit to our favorite dermatologist who peered at

the offending member, murmured “hmmm” and finally prescribed a tablespoon of a liquid that was to be poured into ½ bucket of water and Kit would soak his foot therein with a fresh mixture thrice daily.

By the third soak, Kit’s toes, foot and ankle began turning purple. The skin became dessicated and crusty. With another soak the next morning the foot was nearly purple/black with iridescent sheen, and the toes were cracked and slightly bleeding. Kit was now unable to walk and too big to carry.

Now calling a dermatologist for an emergency house call is “just not done” but we did it. He was amazed that we even asked him to come, but a description of the black bleeding appendage brought him. He took one look and was horror struck. He examined the liquid and found that the druggist had increased the strength ten times. Well, the medicine sure cured the disease, only Kit had to wait for four more days to recover from the cure.

There are times in life when a disciplining father makes a mistake and it is certainly true that it is a wonder that first-borns make it to maturity. One such comic act occurred when we took our little family of five out to a nearby “Bob’s Hamburger Grill”. We were nicely seated in our usual child-parent-child-parent-child ratio. I’ve not yet figured out who was surrounding whom. There we were perusing the menu when I noticed Chris squinting with one eye closed. I looked around to see if a sibling was making a similar grimace, then around the nearby tables to see if we had any friends nearby who could elicit such a strange response from Chris. I saw nothing out of order and everyone intent upon the business at hand so I said in a matter of fact tone, “Chris, open both eyes and look at your menu”. I don’t know why I noticed but I am an eye doctor and used to all manner of fake patient dodges. Soon Chris had just a hand up in front of one eye. “Chris, open your eyes, take your hand away and decide what you want!” (a bit more forceful and higher pitch).

Back to the menu and I noticed him turning his head so that his nose would block off the sight of his other eye. I lifted a nearby teaspoon and gently rapped him on the head, saying “Quit fooling around and be ready to order” as the waitress approached.

Chris shed a tear and looked at me saying, “Dad, I see two of everything when I’ve got both eyes open.” Now, I’m an eye doctor who honestly tries to have compassion on his patients. I’ve been on the patient’s seat. What had I done? I hadn’t really hurt him but did I ever feel mean – wow!

On the way home I stopped at the office and did a complete eye exam and uncovered a latent transient intermittent exotropia – eyes somewhat pointing outwards from each other, brought on by his recent case of mumps.

CHAPTER FIFTEEN – EAST TO WEST FOR BOARDS

I. A LANCASTER LARK

To a U.S. medical specialist, it is good to have finished medical school - it really matters not where in the U.S. - to take the national board or state board examination, to be licensed to practice and to complete his internship. But that is only the cement foundation of the house to be built. The frame, walls, and roof are applied in the years of residency training, in the case of ophthalmology three years, or in general surgery, four to five years. Then when this is all complete and one has practiced in his specialty about a year, one becomes eligible to attempt the all day long, horrendously complicated and difficult multiple choice and true false examination.

Often, as in my case, an additional “last minute brush up on the basic sciences” is done by taking a summer course now offered in two or three locations. When I was the specimen being pinned to the wall, it was only “the Lancaster course” at Colby College, Waterville, Maine. This is just about as far from Southern California as it is possible to go and still remain in the same country, about 3,000 miles.

Therefore the summer of 1961 found our little family of five flying to Portland, Maine on a Friday afternoon and Saturday morning, with a tight budget, and shopping for an older car. When found, it was a Chevy Club Coupe. It ran well and had good tread on the tires and didn't burn too much oil, so on Sunday afternoon with yet 70 miles to go, we climbed aboard our Chevy and motored through the green and rocky farmlands. They have so many rocks that often their fences are just rocks piled high, certainly permanent and saving of timber. We arrived in time to register for their course and then to our great delight, drove twelve miles into the country to our reserved cabin at Maple Nook Lodge on lovely Lake Macgrath, pronounced Magraw by the residents of Maine. I asked them since people from California are called Californian, and those from Texas are Texans, and those of Michigan, Michiganders, what do we call you people from Maine? They promptly replied, “Maniacs” with a smile.

There in our knotty pine rustic two-bedroom cabin, just 150 feet up a gentle slope from the lake in a quiet resort, June and the kids spent a most excellent summer with swimming, boating and fishing. Timmy, age six, was even written up in a local newspaper as a grand fisherman, hooking an eight-pound bass.

Most every class Monday through Friday I would drive home for a picnic on the beach and a swim. The quality of the lecturers was astounding – difficult concepts made crystal clear with not just good lecturers, who made you memorize abstract ideas, but gentlemen of great teaching ability whose passion was real understanding.

We learned many things that summer, including a taste for lobster with an ample service of french fries to be had at dozens of roadside shanties for \$1.00.

Within a week of our arrival, we also learned of an insidious practice – one wonders in the man-hours spent versus the savings – re-grooving tires. Three of the five tires with our “new old car” were so doctored. One takes a bald tire with most all tread worn away and with a cutting tool slices into the remaining one quarter inch before the cord shows, simulating real tread. Of course, the tire is weakened but it may help to sell a car. Such was our lesson with the casings, worthless, even for re-treads.

The idyllic summer ended all too soon and we sold the car and flew home to resume practice and take and pass the written examination for my “boards”.

CHAPTER FIFTEEN – B. WATCH THE RED BADGE

Passing the written exam only entitled one to be eligible to now take the whole week of oral examinations. In that year it was given twice, once in San Francisco and once on the east coast. I chose San Francisco, not only because it was nearest but also because it occurred sooner than the other. What a week of high tension and last minute cramming! There were eight major subjects and no more than one subject would be taken in either the morning or afternoon. We were each given our individual schedule of examinations, and were expected to report to the appropriate classrooms, lab, or clinics on time, and ready for any question to be asked in that or closely related subjects.

A most interesting two rules were that no examiner who was well known in his sub specialty, such as Dr. Max Fine in corneal transplants, would be allowed to examine in that particular subject. It was quite rightly assumed that they might ask irrelevant minutiae and so discourage a good student. Just to show the desperately wicked human heart, even among professors, a certain specialist in ophthalmic bacteriology when allowed to test in external disease, had a few blood agar plates in his lab coat pockets which he would whip out and startle the examinee by asking him to identify the organism by its appearance on these lab cultures. Within a day or so he was moved to test only for refraction of patients' eyes for glasses.

The second safeguard rule was that though there were many excellent eye teachers present, possibly sixty, they all wore blue badges. Only one of the twelve old professors who actually make up the American Board of Ophthalmology (all wearing red badges) had the right to flunk an examinee. Blue badge men could pass people and those they felt unworthy had to be re-examined in private by a red badge man - a very sensible safeguard.

One was allowed to fail one test – to be repeated at a later examination – without having to repeat the entire series.

The closest I came to failure was in external disease when as I was waiting my turn to be examined, Dr. Banks Anderson of Durham, North Carolina, a red badge man saw me waiting and said, “Young man, come over here and let me ask you a few questions.” By the terror he saw on my face he must have known how shocked I was so we just sat and visited for the first ten minutes about my residency in Detroit and his friend, Dr. Ruedemann. Thereafter his questions were simple and direct and he soon signed my card “passed”.

As I walked away after the last pass, I realized that the years and years of study had finally brought forth fruit and approval. I walked into a darkened corner and gave all the praise and thanksgiving to Jesus. Then I hurried to my hotel room, and telephoned June with the good news.

CHAPTER SIXTEEN – FLYING COFFIN

The first time I seriously considered private flying as a sport and a means of transport was during our six months beginning eye residency in Chicago at the University of Illinois, Eye and Ear Infirmary on West Adams Street, a rather seamy part of Chicago in those days. I well remember walking a block away to the nearby “Cultural Center”, The Adams Tavern for lunch. They specialized in kosher hot pastrami or corned beef sandwiches. As we sat at our table we could easily see the assorted down-and-outers gathered two deep at the long bar. They would be especially restive on the days when the Chicago Cubs or the Chicago White Sox were playing baseball. The good old tavern had a standing rule printed boldly on a big sign that whenever a Chicago team hit a home run, and the games were televised, if you were standing at the long bar, you would get a refill of whatever you were drinking. The television set was always switched on for the thirsty crowd of true sportsmen, rooting for the home team. When the crack of horsehide on wooden bat was heard, a hushed silence fell over the crowd and if the announcer would say, “it’s a home run!” the place would utterly go wild with whistles and cheers. I’m not sure so much with community spirit or spirit of another kind.

Thus it was for the first time as I was sitting with a classmate in our basic science course in ophthalmology that I heard Dr. Allen Hall of Houston, Texas describe what was necessary to do to interest the “little woman” in flying. Of course, he had been in practice for five years as a general practitioner and at least in my eyes was a millionaire, since I had never earned more than \$225 per month as a hospital orderly and less as an intern, and was now living on savings June and I had accumulated while she had worked as a dental hygienist.

Allen described how after he had nearly learned to fly, it became apparent to him that it would be much better to have his own older airplane in which to accumulate hours, but his wife was not exactly warm to this expenditure of the family nest egg. However he thought up a plan that he said was foolproof. Since he managed the financial affairs and gave his wife what she needed to run the house, he came home one day and showed his wife an envelope containing one crisp hundred dollar bill, which in those days would buy almost any dress in any store in town and maybe more. Allen said she could have the bill and each of two more like them if she would just take three one-hour flying lessons that he would also pay for.

After the first lesson his bride held out her hand for the prized envelope, went out, and with no questions asked, spent the money. After the second lesson, she talked for five minutes about flying and then held out her hand for the envelope and went out to spend the money. However, after the third lesson she just could not keep from talking about flying. They finally agreed to put the last hundred-dollar bill on the rest of her flying lessons and bought a used Piper Tri-pacer.

Well it was quite a story and to prove its accuracy, he invited June and me to come in two weeks with him to go flying. His wife was flying their plane alone up from Texas for the Thanksgiving holiday and would be landing at Meigs Field, the little private airport that juts out from Chicago into Lake Michigan, near the center of town. It was true, she did exactly that, telling June how she had spent much of the time airborne reading ladies' magazines while simply following a compass course, making occasional corrections and flying straight and level.

We certainly did not have any money to spare while in Chicago, but a year later when I was spending my two years of service to Uncle Sam up at Red Lake Indian Hospital and getting the salary of an Army Major, only called in the USPHS, a "surgeon", I took a couple of hours of flying lessons at the Bemidji airport in a little rattletrap "Champion". My mind was filled with getting checked out not only for single engine land, but also pontoons and skiis as well. But unfortunately, to find a spare hour or two on a busy Saturday in the short summertime with competition from picnics and fishing was difficult. I had never had a strong stomach as a boy when driving in the mountains. Even to the extent of persuading my parents to stop once driving in the winter on the Angeles Crest Highway in the mountains just above Glendale and La Canada, so that I could throw a snowball, only to refuse to get back into that awful moving car and stating that I was prepared to walk home! Of course, I did no such thing.

But back to learning to fly; during the first lesson which was to last for a whole hour, I had to inform the instructor who was having me make 90 and 180 degree turns with the earth's horizon turning nearly vertical and

the bottom seemingly dropping out of my world, plus a few up and down drafts and assorted bumps and gusts, that I would soon be soiling the inside of his plane if he didn't get me down. After that we made the lessons only 30 minutes long. But then "Shorty", the manager of the Bemidji airport twice had to drive his red gasoline truck onto the runway to stop us from taking off while we were sitting warming the engine, going through the lesson in advance. Some Indian matron was about to deliver a baby and needed my services; gradually my lessons became less and less frequent and ceased.

Six years later I had come out from under the cloud of concern, being wracked with guilt for any moment not being spent reviewing and studying for "the Boards". When that hurdle had been overcome, the yearning to fly again encompassed me. One day while in practice, I noticed a small plane descend near the San Fernando-Ventura Freeway and I thought it was going to crash into a small hill, when a moment later it was climbing again revealing the presence of a small airport at which the plane was doing "touch and goes". This was only a fifteen minutes drive from our rented house in Glendale. I had begun practice with my dad in the same city.

Soon I dug out my old Minnesota logbook that showed two and one half hours of instruction and took another lesson. This time a full hour with an instructor who just wanted me to learn to fly straight and level and feel the controls through a few take-offs and landings. Soon June was joining me in an occasional lesson. However, we encountered a requirement that we had not expected so early – Ground School. Actually it could be taken at the Burbank High School following a flying lesson and halfway home. The instructor was a very kindly ex-United Airlines pilot, an old fly-bird named "Pappy". He was an excellent teacher and we really enjoyed our weekly afternoon and evening out. The afternoon would begin with a flying lesson for either June or me or both and go on to an early delicious hamburger nearby the high school and wind up in the ground school class. A major part of the examination given by the Federal Aviation Agency involved map reading and locating exactly where one was with varying winds using a hand held slide-rule type computer.

It was a big day when June and I were to take the examination held at the Van Nuys Airport about 20 miles from Glendale which we had never visited before either by plane or car. The test was to begin at twelve noon and I made sure I had no patients beyond 10:30 a.m. so that I could leisurely drive out for the test. June, having some car pool problems, was running pretty close to the margin, and so was driving her own car. She got into the maze of the freeway, and with map in hand on her way to take the big test in map reading, got hopelessly lost on the freeways. So lost, in fact, that it was an hour before she found her way to the Van Nuys Airport and she decided to skip the test and take it later, which she did and passed.

For each of us there was the nervous anticipation of when you would “solo”. Over and again we were each taught in a Cessna 150 to take off and land. To fly straight and level, to make 90, 180 and 360 degree turns, to slow fly, to pull out of a stall and many other maneuvers. As time built up into “teens” of hours we knew we were getting close.

Nevertheless, when after the third “touch and go” the instructor says to you “now pull over off the runway” well clear of anything except a good view in this non-controlled airfield, and gets out of the plane and says “O.K., now go easy, watch your airspeed, make it nice and gentle and take it around yourself”, only then do you realize the loneliness of solo flying, completely on your very own. Concentrating upon six things at once you taxi to the beginning of the runway, the instructor waves, you check for traffic and push in the throttle, hold her on the ground until the plane strains to be free of the earth, and then take your bird into the sky. What an awesome feeling of responsibility and yet thrill. You are actually flying and the seat beside you looks so very empty. Soon you reach pattern altitude (the height above the ground at which you are to stay while entering or circling the airfield with intention of landing), and hold it there making your 90-degree turns until you are on final approach. The runway looks so very small and the dot that is your instructor is so small. There is nothing he can do to help you now. The throttle has long been eased and you are gliding down in a perfect path to meet the first one-quarter of the runway. The ground approaches, you correct for wind, mushroom, and plant her firmly onto the ground – with just one noisy bounce – roll to the end of the runway and taxi to your instructor and kill the engine. He whoops and presses your shaking hand, gets in and takes the jelly-like blob back to the instruction office where everyone pumps your hand, out come scissors and a square of your t-shirt is cut, inked with your name and date and hung as a trophy on the “solo board”.

In the course of time it was not long before June and her flight instructor were making “touch and goes” and at last the day came when much to her surprise the instructor said to pull off to the side of the runway where he got out and said to her “You’re ready, now you take the plane around exactly the same way yourself!” The whole process was repeated with June found in the “winner’s circle”, only she grabbed the scissors and cut a square from an old slip she had been wearing to lessons for the last three weeks, just in case.

Shortly thereafter June was scheduled for another hour of instruction, this time with Hank Coffin, the owner and operator of the school. It does take some wry sense of humor for a man by the name of Coffin to operate a flying school, though I will admit he resisted the temptation to call it the “Flying Coffin” school. But absolutely everyone thought of it as such. Anyway, Hank was a gnarled old barnstormer who had flown for a century or more, very kindly especially to his pupils. After they were airborne and up to 7,000 feet altitude and had been doing a few stalls, 180, 360, and even 720-degree turns which June was mastering he said, “Now we’ll try a

spin”. She was concentrating so hard in flying that she hardly heard him. He slowed the plane down, took it into a stall and then kicked hard on one rudder pedal and suddenly they were falling, spinning, and floating ground-ward like a red autumn leaf shed by an oak tree.

June took one look at the world spinning, at the aircraft sinking without power, at the ground rushing up toward her, and burst into tears. She had never been in a spin before, since it was not required for licensure, much less had she any idea what to do to get out. She knew she was powerless to do anything, and if Hank Coffin didn’t take over soon they were both dead.

Instantly the “old pro” applied power and kicked the opposite rudder and leveled out the plane with many thousands of feet to spare and then began profuse apologies. “Hadn’t anyone taken you through a spin before?” he asked in dismay. “Nnnno, never!” was her answer. He was chagrined at having done the unforgivable of frightening one of his students out of her wits.

June did fly some more but shortly after our fourth child came, our first daughter, Bonnie, June’s flying instructions came to a halt. I did finish my “ticket” and June was always prepared to land the plane in an emergency and could certainly read maps, so long as they didn’t involve the poorly marked Los Angeles freeway system.

CHAPTER SIXTEEN – A. THE SQUEAKY J4A

About that time with some of the most basic instruction under our belts and needing to just build flying time, we heard of a most unusual airplane for sale – cheap – a Piper J4A – a side-by-side two-place Piper cub.

I asked my flight instructor to fly with me up to a small airport, Quartz Hill, in the Mojave Valley. We looked at it and bought it on the spot. But since I didn’t yet know how to take off and land a “tail dragger” rather than a Cessna 150 tricycle landing gear, my instructor flew the piper home and I followed alongside in the Cessna.

Within a week I had learned the art of “tail-dragging” and thus began many happy hours in our own small plane. Only trouble was that a) it had no radio and b) it was not self-starting but had to be “propped” and c) had a floating cork for a gasoline “gauge”. All in all it was a pretty “mickey mouse” airplane but we kept it until one gusty day I heard its wooden spars, struts, and framing covered only with cloth, groan, creak and make cracking sounds. Reluctantly I put it up for sale having obtained my private license by then. Hoping to have, when the piper was sold, money generated, I began looking to buy into a larger, safer and faster plane.

CHAPTER 16 – B. GABBY MORRIS

So it was, that one day I got a call from one of my former flight instructors, Morris by name. He was a very talkative fellow but happy and a rather good instructor. Morris had a Luscomb two-place plane in which he had a ¼ share and wanted to sell out. I hadn't flown for a couple of weeks and I had made arrangements to be at Whiteman Airpark at 2 p.m. to get checked out in a Cessna 182 that we were thinking of flying to the next Chicago Academy meeting.

Morris begged me to come at 11:30 a.m., fly with him for 30 minutes “just to see the Luscomb”, we'd have lunch together, and I could still make my 182 check-out at 2 p.m. I had finished patients early so I agreed.

Morris was his happy effusive self as we climbed into his plane which seemed pretty old and I had about decided it wasn't worth the trouble flying it, but I'd never been in a Luscomb so away we went.

After heading out the San Fernando Valley and pass while about 3,500 feet above the ground, Morris turned the controls over to me and said, “Test her out!” I tried a 180 turn, then slow flew, then with full power tried a power on stall and not knowing what else to do tried another power on stall. Suddenly the engine began to cough and sputter. I leveled it out into a slight glide and said, “Here Morris, it's your airplane.”

Well he worked and tried everything to maintain altitude but we were slowly going down – in a very controlled sort of way.

Having practiced this maneuver for my license many times, forced landing, I was quick to find a level patch with a dirt road running down the middle and I said, “there's the spot, Morris!” I remember thinking this is so easy that I hardly need to bother the Lord with a prayer for help, but oh well, anyway, “Lord watch over us and help us. Amen”. It was years later before I discovered what happened. A rule of making such a forced landing is that when you find a good spot, the pilot should keep it off his wing tip to always have it in view. Morris turned my way. Of course, I saw it, but he had lost it and began coming down into the next field south by it. By the time I realized what he was doing we were committed. There were telephone lines at the near end, horses in the middle and a small fence at the end.

I yelled, “Look out for the wires” and we both pulled back on the controls and we leaped over them, but now had more altitude to lose with the fence coming up. The horses sensibly scattered and Morris said, “When I say go, Bill, apply the toe brakes!” Well we were both excited and the fence was coming up fast. As soon as were solidly down, Morris said, “Go!” and I jammed the toe brakes down as hard as I could. There was an odd

floating sensation and then a resounding blow and I wondered if were dead, but “yackity Morris” was still talking and I realized I was hanging upside down for some reason. I remembered someone once told me that from that position let yourself down S-L-O-W-L-Y or you’ll wrench your neck landing on your head. I did and Morris was kicking his way out the door and yelled at me to hurry because it could catch fire at any moment.

In less time than it takes to read this, we were standing outside about 20 feet away from the wing tip looking at the first airplane I had ever seen laying on its back, belly side up!

“Morris”, I said, “I don’t think I want to buy into your airplane”. Dismally he looked at his wounded bird and said “What airplane?”

Well they say “any landing you can walk away from is a good landing” and we wandered away wondering why a fire truck, sirens going full blast, was coming up to us. Soon there was a crowd and a reporter. I had a one-inch cut on my left shin and the next day I noticed a broken rib, but a man very kindly gave me a lift back to Whiteman airport. I arrived at exactly 2 p.m. and there was the man with the Cessna 182. He seemed rather quiet as I played it cool and greeted him as if nothing had happened. He took me for a half-hour checkout ride and signed my logbook “checked out for C-182”, and departed. Just then June came out to the field and I said “Sweetie, come fly in our Piper cub with me for a few minutes. I’d like to show you something.”

I had heard that one should go right back up again after a crash. Cheerily she agreed and 15 minutes later we flew over the “wounded bird Luscomb” and June said, “look at that plane; it’s upside down!” “Yes, I know”, I said, “Morris and I were in it when it flipped”.

Later I learned that the C-182 pilot had been told too. In fact, about everyone at Whiteman Airport knew and no one said a word

I decided not to worry my poor mother with the news so while I was home sewing up my shin cut under local anesthetic, the phone rang and it was our hyper-excitable Italian office girl, Nelda, saying “Oh, Doctor, I’m so glad to hear your voice. You are alive aren’t you? A patient just phoned us with the news of your aircrash...he had heard it on the radio!” So reluctantly I phoned my mother. The news was out.

Within six weeks the piper was sold and I did the sensible thing and added a bit to the cub sale money and bought a membership in an ultra-safety large flying cub at Lockheed Air Terminal in next door Burbank called

“Sky Roamers”. We bought into the lowest rung of the ladder, Cessna 172s, four passenger, tricycle gear, always 4-6 planes available and never more than a few years old.

They were ultra-safety conscious, required a yearly checkout and let you know if they saw you do anything not according to highest standard. In fact, their standing rule was that if ever you felt doubtful about flying on a trip, just set the plane down and come home by bus or commercial flight and one of their instructors would go get the plane in a day or two.

CHAPTER SEVENTEEN – MEXICAN SHORT TERM MISSIONS

In my walk with the Lord, I have found much of unusual interest and happiness and fulfillment as the Spirit of Christ has led me into adventures for Him.

There was a period of our lives during the 60's when flying weekend missionary trips to Mexico were possible and delightful.

I had just joined the Christian Medical Society. Their Southern California representative was Mel Alexander, a medium-sized man with black crew-cut hair, who also attended Biola College part-time. He first visited me in my private office after a morning of seeing patients and invited me to a most undesirable meeting. Can you imagine a busy Ophthalmologist getting up at 5:30 a.m. to attend a 6:00 a.m. prayer breakfast with five other Christian physicians whom he did not even know existed? I did not even believe that a decent restaurant was open at that hour. However, trained as I was by my father, who built his practice in the depression days, I figured it might be “good for the practice” to meet the other doctors. The only prayer I felt I would be able to generate would be “Lord, keep me awake!” I did not have a highly spiritual attitude.

The breakfast, Bible Study, and round of prayer were of only moderate interest to me. But in our conversation, Mel found out from me that I had just completed private pilot’s training and earned my “ticket” (pilot’s license). He asked if I knew John Boewe, a printer with Church Press in Glendale. I did not.

Within a few days, Mel and John, a large man with a radiant smile and an open heart for God and the people of Mexico, came to visit me after office hours. I must say, they changed my lifestyle and goals. Would one say angels sent by the Lord? Certainly they were messengers from the Lord to whom I am even today grateful.

After introductions, it was apparent to me that here were two men after my own heart. They loved the Lord Jesus and did not hide it. They also had a plan for lay ministry that included me, my talents, and interests. It included, a) flying to Mexico on weekend missionary journeys every two or three months, b) taking a doctor and/or dentist along to hold a clinic and attract a crowd and c) giving exposure in what it is like to be a missionary. Boy was I “ripe”. My answer was “when do we go?” We talked for an hour and a half and I made arrangements to go on this Christian Medical Society (C.M.S.) sponsored trip 600 miles away to Douglas, Arizona, Esquida and Cumpas, Mexico and return in four days time. Excited by the adventure of that much flying and a very interesting trip to a foreign land and culture, I agreed to accompany John and Mel in John’s airplane, as a general physician for a trip scheduled in about three weeks time. An experienced pilot and dentist, Dr. Bob Ryan went with us on that trip, which turned out to be about the second such trip ever made by the group. I was tantalized with every aspect of my first short-term mission (S.T.M.). It was amazing to think that anything so adventuresome could be done to advance Jesus Christ and His Kingdom!

We examined patients working with a translator. It was hard work all day long. Gospel tracts and gospels of John in Spanish were given out. At night we joined 400 Mexicans of all ages in the city plaza to watch a black and white 16 mm movie on the life of Christ. In the distant background there was the “putt putt putt” of the portable generator. Esquida had no electricity.

On our second gospel adventure, two months later, I flew our own Sky Roamers Cessna 172. With my wife June as a good navigator at my side, we followed John Boewe, Mel and a different dentist in their much faster Beech Bonanza. Throngs of people and the even the mayor of Esquida welcomed us as we came now with our formation of two aircraft to their hillside dirt airstrip. A short drive in the only pickup truck in this Western frontier town brought us to the school where the clinic was set up.

Beginning with a prayer and a cup of strong black coffee at 11 a.m., my lovely wife, June, a former dental hygienist, gave injections and dispensed medicines, under my direction. We worked hard seeing an endless stream of patients with our translator, until about 5 p.m. With a lull in the clinic line, June sat down for a moment’s rest. A kindly smiling Mexican woman with a red shawl over her head, diffidently came up to June and gave her some shelled, red-skinned little round “peanuts”. June murmured one of her newly learned Spanish words of “gracias” and popped a handful into her mouth. She really was hungry. The poor Mexican woman’s eyes nearly popped out in amazement and anguish as she blurted out in international language, “No! No! Senora”. Too late, June discovered that Mexican peanuts were in fact large, extra hot, red chili pepper seeds. With tears of pain and disappointment streaming down her face, June ran out of the clinic to find a

ladylike area in which to spit. This soon brought us relief in the form of warm cokes served to all, and a hearty laugh at the misunderstanding.

On that same trip, two days later, Sunday morning, we prepared to leave Cumpas and fly north to Agua Priete, the Mexican border town opposite Douglas, Arizona. As a careful pilot I checked the oil in my Cessna with the dipstick and found it down one pint. I added the needful oil from a supply we brought along. Just then photographs were called for, so I quickly came forward to join the others, ham that I am. Five minutes later when I returned to the airplane checklist I did not notice that the oil cap, attached with a safety chain, hung unscrewed beside the engine.

With a wave of triumph and adventure, we took off and began heading for Agua Priete, one hundred miles along the beige ribbon of dirt road. About 25 miles from our destination a red warning light illuminated the instrument panel, indicating low oil pressure. The oil pressure was not yet critical and we were 5,000 feet above ground level, so throttling back to 60% power I began a gradual descent watching for possible landing spots. It wasn't until just before Agua Priete was in sight that I remembered the probable cause.

What a step down from the jaunty adventurer for Christ to a bumbling oil-smearing pilot. An hour was spent, consuming a roll of paper towels trying to erase the slick black-spattered band that graced the lovely yellow and white Cessna paint job. God was teaching me many things for which I praise Him, amidst my embarrassing chuckles.

As is often true of volunteer efforts, they are long on titles and short on cash. By my third flight to Esquida, I was designated "medical director" of the project. To my knowledge, we never had a "dental director" since it is not possible to convince any dentist to go more than two times in a row.

About the fifth time we went, we took in our four-place Cessna 172, Dr. Bob and Carolyn Ross, a friend and dentist from our home church in Glendale, California. My wife, June and Dr. Bob graduated from the same fount of knowledge within a few years of each other at the University of Southern California School of Dentistry. Both had received much emphasis upon good nutrition and the importance of a balanced diet.

By noon on Friday in Esquida, we had finished the last of our stateside sack lunch and were now dependent for nourishment upon what could be found locally. We were well aware of the dangers of Mexican dysentery that peculiarly enough is reciprocal. They have similar bowel problems when they come north to the U.S.A. We worked right up until dark, about 6:30 p.m. and found ourselves absolutely famished. We were in the midst of a

double cultural handicap. We were somewhat fearful of their food and we did not know that Spanish American customs dictates eating supper at 9 p.m. We did know that on our own we should only eat that which was cooked or canned. It was now dark; we were tired and nearly ready for bed. Yet, there seemed no plot afoot to begin fixing any hot supper. As we made our imperative request known, the local people graciously opened the country store to us, where we at least seized upon graham crackers and cans of peaches. As we sat laughing with the Rosses at the nutritional merits of such a lugubrious diet, I am sure that our Mexican brethren felt we must be of some odd dietetic California sect.

Our host, surely made up for the lack of dinner; the next morning we were invited into the large kitchen of a nearby combination house-store. We did not notice the large extent of the back of the building. However, we did see in progress the largest tortillas we had ever seen being slapped from hand to hand until they were nearly two feet in diameter and then quickly grilled upon a huge wood stove.

Ham and eggs with steaming coffee completed the breakfast. After finishing our breakfast, the mayor, who had treated us with such Christ-like love, invited us to see the remainder and larger back part of his house.

In a merry mood we walked in the dim inner light of the large building to the center of a room with a peculiarly sour smell. Much to our chagrin and amazement we found ourselves in the midst of the mayor's "cantina" or tavern. "Cervesa, Senior y Senioritas?" Would you care for some warm beer? We discovered more missionary work needed to be accomplished in Esquida!

On that same journey, we began flying back from Douglas, Arizona on a lovely Sunday morning with excellent weather reports and characteristic of the Southwest, miles and miles of visibility. The Rosses sat in the back seat of our nearly new four-place flying club Cessna. June was doing the navigation. We had many aids to navigation like sectional maps, ADF radio and OMNI directional beacons and felt quite comfortable about flying over miles of lonely desert with the Rosses.

One heads toward Blythe, California, nestled upon the banks of the huge desolate Colorado River. It is a ribbon of light brown water with a thin line of green erupting out of the desert sand. The most direct route through which we were headed put us halfway on the fringe of omni radio reception. We had very adequate gasoline to fly to Blythe and were expecting merely a long dull flight until we would hear the Blythe radio or in case of radio failure saw the unmistakable Colorado River.

One can usually notice topographical areas on the sectional maps to check one's progress and with a clock, determine airspeed, etc. However, soon after stretching beyond the fringe of the radio reception we began

missing anticipated lonely roads, power lines, dry mountain peaks, etc. We certainly knew how fast we had been flying and yet expected map points just did not materialize. Of course, we were following a compass course without variation and realized that the wind could be blowing us slightly off-course, so we really probed the limits of our vision for the café-au-lait Colorado. In addition, we had difficulty seeing clearly into the 4 p.m. desert haze as we headed westward. There seemed much static in radio reception and although we could eventually pick up the Blythe Morse Code letters and fix our omni upon her beacon, we were already ten minutes overdue into Blythe Airport on the other side of the river, but without the river even in sight.

We began praying a bit more earnestly for safety in flying when finally from the Blythe station, distantly and in a most matter-of-fact tone, we learned that this whole section of the desert was experiencing a moderate wind and sandstorm and we were heading almost directly into a 45 mile an hour surface wind, to say nothing about what the velocity was at 8,000 feet.

We finally passed over the lovely Colorado River with 45 minutes of fuel aboard, spotted the Blythe airport and contacted the tower for permission to land. We were amazed to be told that they were reporting less than one-half mile visibility and that unless I had an instrument license, which I did not have, it would be illegal for me to land! I remember well that crazy controller repeatedly asking, "What are your intentions?" I was so amazed I probably told him my intentions were honorable! The nearest controlled airport was over 50 miles away and its conditions were deteriorating. It was especially amazing since we could clearly see the entire airport from five miles away in any direction, having circled while wondering what to do. I finally confessed that I just did not know what to do and asked the controller for advice. He told me that he had sent a few other planes seven miles away to an abandoned World War II air-force practice-landing pad that was 2,000 feet square and gave me exact compass directions.

Very shortly we found the pad and roared swiftly downwind over it checking it out and finding it to be quite level, with four other planes parked over to one side. With three passengers aboard I could only think of the distance needed to land and completely forgot as I came in carefully to touch down just as the pad began, that my ground speed was only about 20 miles per hour landing directly into the 45 mile an hour wind. We used up less than one-quarter of the runway.

It was not until later that we found out that the joke was on us. Earlier that morning some heavy road equipment had begun tearing up part of the Blythe airport runway for replacement leaving a dusty sandy bare area just in the area where the sensitive visibility meters were located. It was true that in that area, and only in that area, was the visibility down to less than one-half mile. The rest of the whole airport probably had over three miles visibility.

I remembered the verse, “Whoso trusteth in the Lord, happy is he.” (Proverbs 16:20 (KJV)). We left the plane for our flying club instructors to retrieve the next day and came home leaving “...the driving to us”, by Greyhound bus.

Altogether we made about six or seven trips to Esquida, Hermasillio (a near village to Cumpas), and to Cumpas itself. After the first few trips, the Christian Medical Society no longer seemed to have interest in the trips, but John Boewe who later founded and ran El Camino Press until his untimely death in an air crash a mile from his press in 1975, continued the medical evangelistic trips for years after our departure to Kenya in 1966.

There was an amusing incident – a comedy of errors – that occurred on our own very last flight to Mexico. Just a month prior to our departure as full-time missionaries to Kenya, we went as a whole family to the Christian Medical Society Colorado Dude Ranch Family Conference at Deer Valley Resort. Our four children were all still small ranging in age from 2 to 15. With only moderate baggage and the weight of each of us calculated, we were well within the weight limits of our aircraft, though only designed for four. We flew uneventfully to Colorado, enjoyed our week of Christian fellowship with Ray Knighton and CMS doctors and families and headed for Tucson, Arizona our staging area with John Boewe for this our last Mexico mission.

I left June, Bonnie, and our youngest son, Doug at the airport motel to enjoy the sun and swim in their pool and at dawn with our two sons, Chris and Tim, followed John Boewe in his plane down to the Mexican border at Nogales. We cut across the barren hills and low mountains and began our ministry as usual in Esquida.

On the immediate previous visit we had found a man blind with cataracts in Esquida and had asked permission of the only government doctor in the whole area at Cumpas to use his tiled and immaculate operating room and his six bed small hospital. He had agreed upon the condition that on our next visit we would see eye patients only in his hospital while in Cumpas. My unrestrained pride led me to believe that it must be some honor to his headquarters clinic and hospital to have a scheduled visiting eye surgeon come. On the previous trip when we had first met, he had given me a lesson in cross-cultural pride that left me chuckling in amazement. He had said, “Doctor, you are an eye surgeon.” “Yes”, I agreed. “Then why have you been coming to Esquida, 50 miles away and Hermisillo, 15 miles away seeing general patients? They are completely covered by my care. I am the physician responsible for them all.” At first I thought he wondered why I was doing general medicine, which in times of stress, I sometimes wondered about myself. Then, I recognized the magnitude of his statement – that he who almost never left Cumpas was administratively responsible for all patients in his area. This included remote villages filled with people who had never even seen a doctor. Just due to his presence in Cumpas, he reasoned they were “completely covered”! I was speechless!

On this, our last visit, things were going well. There had been numerous professions of faith in Jesus the night before in Esquida, my boys were accompanying the evangelist, and John Boewe and I were taken by pick-up truck from our small hotel, now having an electric appliance shop with many items in anticipation of an electric power line drawing nearer to Cumpas. We were taken to the Government Health Center and Hospital and welcomed by the doctor. After seeing a long line of eye patients for about two hours, we were cheered by the aroma of coffee being prepared when into the room walked a large man with a swagger and pistola strapped to a gun belt at his waist. He obviously struck fear into the hearts of all present and my first thought was that here was a fabled “Bandito” (Mexican bandit). He walked right up to me and in Spanish, with his gestures I well understood, said, “you come with me!” I was somewhat relieved to learn that he was the personal policeman of the mayor of Cumpas. Still wary, I dropped my instruments on the table and followed him out to a large black limousine parked before the clinic.

The door opened from the inside and seated there was a middle-aged, well dressed Mexican man who introduced himself as the Mayor Cumpas, Dr. Morales, the only other physician in Cumpas and in private practice. His test question was “Dr. Ghrist, I have heard that you are an eye surgeon. What are you doing in the clinic of my enemy? I am the mayor of Cumpas..” turning to his large policeman with the pistola “...here is the law. I order you to go back inside with the policeman, remove your instruments and come to see the eye patients whom I have waiting at my office!” I was aghast! I have since come to see the dry humor of two scrapping doctor politicians and the naïve Yankee. I immediately remembered the government doctor’s words that I should see “eye patients only in his hospital” and I remembered inspecting in fun the inside of the rude dirt floored jail in Esquida and said a quick prayer, “Lord give me wisdom!” and what do you know, he did!

Gospel tracts were being given out to each patient and a Mexican evangelist was present speaking to many waiting in line; this was the Lord’s work and the scriptures say “When you are brought before ...authorities, do not worry about how you will defend yourselves or what you will say, for the Holy Spirit will teach you at that time what you should say.”

Without thinking my response was politically devastating. “I guess I’ll just have to go back to the hotel and stop seeing any patients.” The city government said to see patients only in the mayor’s office and the federal government said to see patients only in the government health clinic. I walked in to collect my instruments and the mayor was in a worse fix. He would soon be very unpopular for stopping the eye doctor, so he decided better to be magnanimous than unpopular and called me back, giving me permission to carry on this visit where I was, but menacingly informing me that on my next visit I must work in his office! His limousine departed in a cloud of red dust. I have not returned to Cumpas. That child-like phase of our ministry was finished, but our

joy was full as that chapter closed on our lives. How good it was too, to have given my wife and two older sons a taste of foreign missionary service.

CHAPTER EIGHTEEN – SAD OSLO

The practice was growing with Dad and I together. Now that I had passed my Boards and the constant pressure to review and study was finished, we began to become more involved with both doctor friends and wives and also church activities.

That summer, 1961, my parents took an extensive trip to Europe re-visiting many places where they had studied in Vienna on their extended honeymoon. I worked hard in the office. Then, to give the staff a holiday too, June and I planned a three-week holiday in Europe specially arranged for us by my travel agent brother, Bob. Dad's holiday and mine overlapped by one week with our office nearly closed. We flew to New York and boarded the old Queen Mary for a transatlantic crossing.

Remembering the necessity of a good deck chair on a trip we had made to Hawaii some years before, we were among the first to rent deck chairs. But we kept waiting day by day in mid-August for the sun to come out in mid-Atlantic so that we could use our chairs. Well, the sun never shone once. We had rain or chilly fog the entire trip and then we recognized the wisdom of their inside swimming pool! We spent one evening in London and encountered, to my sorrow, a culture shock, long before becoming missionaries. That evening at supper I asked for ice water with my dinner, not the culture in Europe. The dining room was very fancy and had many mirrors. My water was brought and as I took a sip, June asked for a glass like mine. Out of the corner of my eye I noticed our rather humble Portuguese waiter gently pour ice water from a wine bucket into a goblet and bring it to June. Well, anyone knows that wine bottles are not exactly scrubbed clean on their exterior before being immersed to chill in an ice bucket and that the same bucket is used to chill many grubby dusty bottles. I stopped June from being poisoned but beginning at midnight for 18 hours I had a distinct bowel problem.

We flew to Bergen, Norway the next day and the day following boarded a lovely excursion bus touring the Norwegian Fjords for three days winding up in Oslo, the capital city. After an afternoon in the park and dinner out, we returned to our hotel room.

At 7:30 the next morning the telephone rang and a distant voice told us that he was vice-president of the Norwegian-American shipping line. He presented his compliments and had a matter of the utmost urgency to talk to me about in person. Could he come directly to our room? "Well yes", I said, "send him up". June and I put on our bathrobes and responded to his knock at our door. A portly middle aged, obviously very successful businessman, who spoke flawless continental English, came in and asked us both to be seated.

“Dr. Ghrist, I am afraid I am the bearer of very bad news. Your father Dr. Orrie Ghrist died yesterday in the Glendale Memorial Hospital from a heart attack having undergone an emergency gall bladder operation the day before. You have my most heartfelt condolences. Your uncle, Hal Bucher, my personal friend, has asked me to tell you, and request that you and Mrs. Ghrist return immediately to California”.

Of course, we were stunned. We thanked him for his sad mission of mercy and arrived back in Los Angeles in 24 hours time. I was suddenly in solo practice with a large leaderless staff.

Soon, as we all worked together, we were meeting all the expenses and began to earn a bit as well. I was immediately twice as busy with three times the wasted space. Half of Dad’s practice had been ear, nose and throat and many special rooms were for that purpose only.

We worked with the cumbersome system for nearly a year until we took off six weeks the following summer and tore out and remodeled the entire office creating a most efficient and appealing ophthalmic suite with four eye lanes.

CHAPTER NINETEEN – DO YOU DRINK?

If you ever keep a prayer list or diary you will be astonished at the prayers Jesus answers. I should not be, but really am amazed at the timing of the Lord’s program in our lives. We are the children of the Supernatural God who delights to answer prayer and arrange our lives in a most unmistakable way. In fact, as can be seen in what follows, “Before they call, I will answer...” (Isaiah 65:24). Before I ever knew or thought of being a church officer, the Lord was putting my life right.

I was raised in the depression and last days of Prohibition when “near-beer”, nearly alcohol free beer, was common and my parents kept it by the case. I was allowed to drink it from an early age like soda pop. Though I enjoyed its taste, I also enjoyed cokes and root beers. During my college fraternity days drinking parties held no special charm to me since God had built into my intestinal system a peculiar “second drink tummy-ache”. Odd, how these things are, but there you have it. One drink of any alcoholic beverage was always my limit if I wanted to remain digestively serene. A second drink caused a demon wildcat to claw at my epigastric portion.

My good wife, June, has always had, due to warnings from her ex-Deputy Sheriff father who saw plenty of good cause, little desire for the juice of the grape or the ferment of various staple grains. Hence, we would

usually take one drink to assuage thirst and be sociable, but with no show of emotion, water the plants or set down an unwanted second drink.

I do remember that as a sign of “arrival” to the honored place of physician in practice the first two or three years in Glendale, I received gaily wrapped and colored bottles of spirits for Christmas from druggists, salesmen, etc. These were stored in the kitchen pantry on the top shelf in case an occasional guest needed sustenance or was snake bit.

During the year 1964 between the conservative Goldwater effort and a growing excitement that June and I shared as we accepted our pastor Dr. George Fincke’s challenge to read through the Bible in one year, inevitably we grew closer to the Lord Jesus and to each other as well. Many were the times of amazement when either of us would stop and say to the other, “Do you know what the Bible says about ___? Listen!”

We had heard many arguments and Proverbs heatedly presented about “look not upon wine when it is red...it biteth like a serpent and stingeth like an adder.” (KJV) but then I knew it was also good for stomach’s sake and for thine often infirmities.

We were just neutral to it and since we seldom drank anyway it was a non-issue. However, on New Year’s Eve 1964 –1965 along with about 1/3 of our young married Sunday school class of rising Christian professionals in medicine, law and sales, we attended the party of a good friend to usher in the New Year.

There seemed to be a lot of drinks as we waited for the rather late supper. At last it came, saving me from watering the plants for the third time with a cocktail thrust into my hand.

Soon after dinner while the digestive juices sailed through my system like a merry dragon flying over a lily pond, I did notice more drinks appearing from all directions and the surreptitious watering of plants began again for June and me. When the host donned a new Christmas black scuba-diving suit and fell into the swimming pool to win a one dollar bet followed amazingly enough by a wobbly well-dressed guest, I should have suspected that it was “biting like a serpent”. But only when I was shocked and disgusted seeing friend and Sunday school couple A’s husband warmly embracing and kissing couple B’s wife, did it dawn on me that I was observing the “sting like an adder”.

June and I talked much in the next few days and prayed even more until one evening when I came home from the office and June greeted me with “Do you know what wife B said?” June continued that she had been

talking with three of the Sunday school wives at a Bible study coffee to which they belonged and they had all said, remembering the New Year's Eve party in a foggy horror of sin, when we saw Dr. Bill and June drinking and knowing how their lives have been changing and how they've even been going as missionaries to Mexico, we figured it must be all right, but we just couldn't stop once we got started."

June and I were stunned at what we had done to our friends and then asked our three sons if they knew we had whiskey around? "Oh, sure, dad, you keep it up there on the top shelf so we won't see," said our eldest boy, then age 12.

A feeling of hypocrisy stole over us and we prayed that the Lord would forgive us for our insensitivity to what others including our own sons saw in us.

Then we invited the boys to come into the kitchen where we poured out the contents of the bottles down the kitchen sink while they watched with bulging amazed eyes and then sat down and prayed for the Lord Jesus to forgive us. Next we had a good family dinner with sins forgiven and forgotten, "cast behind His back".

The sequel came six nights later when elder Bernard Peterman, clerk of the session of our church, called me by phone and told me that they were thinking of possible men to nominate for the scriptural office of deacon in our church and had unanimously felt that I would do. What did I think? I assured him I would be most pleased and honored. "Oh, by the way", asked elder Peterman, "I know it's only a formality but you don't drink intoxicants do you?" I was amazed – Had God told our secret? Only six days before we had given it up? "No", I answered in all honesty, "we do not drink!"

CHAPTER NINETEEN – A. NOW WE ARE SIX

Working as we do in Mombasa with so many Muslim people it is a great comfort to us but extremely difficult to explain to them the doctrine of adoption. Just think, you and I can be, or have been adopted as children of the Lord God Almighty. When we repent of our sins and put our trust in Jesus and His sacrifice on the cross for us, we leave the Kingdom of Satan and darkness and are instantly and permanently adopted into God's family of light and eternal life.

This concept is so foreign to the Muslim mind that a dear and elect lady, Bilkas Shah, who left Islam in Pakistan wrote a book of her experience and gave it the meaningful title of "I Dared to Call Him Father". You see, no Muslim would dare to call the all powerful and unpredictable Allah, "Father".

John in his gospel, Chapter 1, verse 12, referring to this adoption says “But as many as received Him, to them gave He power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on His name.” (KJV) It is so simple. I have received and trusted in Jesus therefore power from God has entered my body and soul and adopted me into His own special family. I can only respond with “Hallelujah!”

Paul’s epistle to the Ephesians, chapter 1, verses 4 and 5 make it even more clear. “For He chose us in Him before the creation of the world to be holy and blameless in His sight. In love He predestined us to be adopted as his sons through Jesus Christ in accordance with His pleasure and will.” That may sound heavy but it is quite clear. I am a believer in Jesus, therefore I am adopted into His family and you are my brother or sister in the Lord. WOW!

We have had friends who see so much in “genetics”, that they are fearful of any form of adoption. Others whom we know took a relative under their roof but would never really adopt him, and then wondered why this stepchild turned out badly. To June and me, the whole concept of spiritual adoption was so real that we thought maybe “the Lord would delight us” with an adopted daughter.”

Ever since the birth of our third son Doug in Houston, we had felt we wanted to “round out” our family to four children. But with the very strong male genetics of 16 consecutive sons and no daughters through four generations, we did not want another son, but rather a daughter. Hence, while still in Texas I had called an adoption agency; when they heard that we already had three boys the lady literally laughed at my request for a daughter. “Impossible”, she said, “There are just too many childless couples that want to adopt.”

However, now that we were settled and in practice, the thought recurred. About that time a brilliant rising young attorney, now a Judge, Robert Schifferman, and I became friends and clients through our wives. When they adopted their second child I was surprised and quoted my Texas conversation to Bob. He reminded me that much pertaining to law and babies was different in California than in Texas and encouraged June and I to attend a tea given by the Children’s Home Society of Los Angeles for possible prospective parents. Still, with a reluctance, having three healthy boys, we timidly attended.

We were somewhat amazed that they considered our request as not only possible, but rather routine. We went through all the forms, examinations, physical and fiscal and social worker’s visits to assay the home environment until one day in June of 1964 we received a telephone call and were told “we have a lovely baby

girl for you to come and see. If you like her it is approved for you to take her home through the tentative legal period.”

Oh, what a dilemma arose! During the previous six months we had tried hard to offer our services overseas as a short-term missionary with either the Christian Medical Society, Baptist Mid-Missions or the Independent Board for Presbyterian Foreign Missions connected with our home church.

Having become interested in STMs (short term missions) through the CMS (Christian Medical Society) and having flown repeatedly to Mexico, we just looked at a map, saw Central America, looked at our bank balance and said, “With the bit of Spanish we have learned and our finances, let’s go to Central America on an STM, for a month this summer. Somehow we had the idea that every mission board and the CMS had dozens of mission hospitals to choose from, little realizing that the ratio of mission hospitals to mission stations may be as small as 1 in 30.

From CMS there was nothing available. Baptist Mid-Missions had a hospital in the Philippines where we could go and the Independent Board connected with our Philippines church invited us to Kenya, East Africa. We had to look in the world book encyclopedia to even find Kenya. Then we remembered that my parents had traveled once through Nairobi and had told fabulous tales of wild African animals. By stretching ourselves to the limit financially we could make it to Kenya and back in 2 ½ weeks. But even that was dependent upon a University of Southern California Medical School Charter flight from Los Angeles to London and back, which 2 ½ months before departing was only 15% booked.

Just at that time the Lord arranged for a most interesting Australian minister who badly needed to earn some money, to come to our church. As we were introduced and I heard his thick, romantic and exotic, but very understandable accent, the thought occurred to me that if we had him work the odd half-days when I was either in surgery, teaching at U.S.C. Medical School, or taking off, he could come to my office and using the list of hundreds of doctor’s names who taught at the medical school, ring them on the telephone and ask if they might like to take the charter flight to jolly old England. It would sound like an Englishman was personally inviting them to his country. As the time approached it was nip and tuck but the Lord blessed and well over the minimum number of seats were sold.

But this then became our dilemma. The call came to collect the baby just two weeks before departure. Though we had wanted to go to Africa, the missionaries there were not sure it was safe, so instead June and I toured reformation centers of Switzerland, Germany and France. When we called the social worker she was even more

delighted that the little girl would be going into such an interesting home and assured us it would be no trouble for them to keep the little baby girl for an additional four weeks.

Therefore when we returned we were called again and the time came to inspect our little doll with our three boys as “advisors”. It was love at first sight. The boys said, “Is this really our little sister?” “Yes, even as we have been adopted into the family of God by belief in the Lord Jesus, so we are adopting this baby girl into our family.” They asked, “Will she always be our little sister?” “Will you ever lose your adoption by Jesus?” I asked. “NO” they said with eyes filled with delight. And just then, the knowing people at the Agency took a picture of our entire family of six that hangs in our bedroom to this day.

We decided on the name of “Bonnie” for the beautiful and “Faith” for that which God has promised to us as children. She is today Bonnie Faith Ghrist, our dear and much beloved and special daughter in whom we delight.

CHAPTER NINETEEN – B. RHINO IN FRONT

One aspect of the scholarly life is that seemingly there is always yet another rung on the ladder to be climbed. I well remember the feeling of lofty vision, intellectual prowess and social power that came to us in the sixth grade at John Marshall grammar school as we surveyed all the children in lower grades. What a let down it was the next year at Woodrow Wilson Junior High School as I was in seventh grade and among the lowest of the dismayed and diffident school boys. Switching schools in eighth grade caused me to miss being “on top” again at ninth grade, but by the time I recommenced public high school in eleventh grade, I could see the top of the mountain just ahead. Sure enough, my senior year in twelfth grade was “a blast” and again I could look from the lofty heights of Mt. Pisgah, or more likely the Verdugo foothills and rejoice on being atop the ladder again.

Life is really tiresome, however, since these mountain top experiences continue ad infinitum at the end of junior college, at the completion of university, at the conclusion of medical school, at the finish of internship, at the termination of eye residency, at the passing of the ophthalmology boards, and finally having attained “medical directorship” of our Mexican short term missions to Esquida and Cumpas, there must be a higher goal yet. Well we found it in a short-term missionary assignment to darkest Africa. The only trouble was that there yet exists a step beyond short-term missionary service. I leave the guessing to my dear reader, but it is playing with fire to keep wanting to step higher - maybe even a burning spiritual fire that can be satisfied with nothing less than total dedication.

Our short-term mission to Africa was sidetracked in 1964 because of the uncertainty of Uhuru (freedom) and the rumors that there would be uprisings and bloodshed. This certainly has occurred in other parts of Africa and the world under a similar political vacuum. But praise God it did not happen in Kenya. Hope deferred is only made sweeter in its fulfillment. So it was that by the following year, we boarded a Pan American flight to Rome, stopped over to rest and sight-see and continued on the same world encircling flight which made stops like a circular route of a trolley car. “You pays your money and gets off” at the station, or airport of your choice. I opened my eyes at Athens but slept through Istanbul and we got off at Beirut, Lebanon. Here we also rested and went sightseeing, and there, amazingly enough, we were “tailed”. The man followed us from the moment of our arrival to our hotel, to the restaurant where we ate, back to the hotel, and the next day he was seen as we shopped in the bazaar and was on the bus to the airport and at the last minute left the line before we boarded the DC-3 airliner taking us to Jordan. We never understood it and didn’t piece it all together until we were in the air. I guess June and I were mighty suspicious characters – ha!

June’s cousin, Dr. William H. Brownlee and good wife, Joan, were missionaries under the same Independent Board only in the “other medical work” at Baraka Tuberculosis Sanitarium near Bethlehem. They had opened a medical work for the same mission board in South Korea some years before but their cottage hospital had been closed by various pressures.

Therefore “on the way” to Africa, we visited the Holy Land, or at least the divided Arab section thereof, before the six-day war. We saw Rachels’ tomb, the garden tomb, and assorted tombs from Absalom to Lazarus. We did enjoy our cousins, Dr. Bill and Joan, before flying to Cairo and on to Nairobi.

Dr. Matt and Ruth Johnson met us at the Nairobi airport. They royally entertained us with a trip to Kenya’s finest, Amboselli Game Park, at the foot of Mt. Kilimanjaro and we stayed in tents placed by the Johnsons in the midst of a nocturnal feeding ground for elephants and nearby a pride of lions. We were really impressed with the faith in the watch care over them by God Almighty. Even Matt aroused once at 1 a.m. to turn on the Landrover headlights and hoot the car horn when the elephants got too close. My parents had been correct about “wild animals abounding”. Our first day in this volcanic game park, we had a professional game scout along. Matt was driving and June and I were at the rear windows. Matt said “Look, there’s an elephant nearby on our left; we nearly stopped. When the scout said “and a lion too close on your right”, we stopped. Around a bush calmly in his shortsightedness, walked a rhino from in front of us. “Doctor”, the scout said, “you had better back up slowly!” We did.

While at the Roland K. Armes Memorial Mission Hospital in Kitui District and Mwingi location, I very carefully instructed Dr. Johnson in the many steps of the cataract operation and from diagnosis to glasses. I did the first two and he did the next twelve as in our short stay, fourteen such operations were done and a complete set of instruments left for him.

However, in retrospect, I can see that the instructor was really the pupil and Dr. Matt and the Lord Jesus were showing us what would become our life work when we were more ready to listen.

CHAPTER TWENTY – A COURSE IN P.E.

It is an axiom that growing children and teenagers are constantly hungry and thirsty. In our family we called it “the hollow leg syndrome”. There seemed no way to fill the appetites of our three teenage boys in 1970, ages 13, 16 and 18. As their father who loved to eat, I finally had to submit that this was a contest at the table that could only result in tubby disaster if I continued the competition.

So, it was in a spiritual sense of hunger and thirst in 1965, that June and I gained an insatiable appetite and thirst for knowledge of God, the Bible and Jesus Christ. Psalm 63:1 applied to us “O God, you are my God, earnestly I seek you; my soul thirsts for you, my body longs for you, in a dry and weary land where there is no water”. (NIV). But the promise of Jesus in James 7:37 was more comforting too, “if a man is thirsty, let him come to me and drink.” (NIV)

A strong impulse in our lives at that point was an ardent thirst for the Bible and for knowledge of Jesus Christ. I cannot say we understood everything we read in the Bible, but we kept our minister Dr. George Fincke busy answering our odd and exhaustive questions.

So, it was that when we returned to California, regular life and practice, that we were looking for a special spiritual blessing. We had noticed for months a desire to tell others about Jesus Christ. But not only had we had little or no ability, but seemingly a negative ability. In a nutshell, we were not winsome, but blunt, and expressed our opinion on everything from politics to salvation. In fact we usually mixed the two to the detriment of each. This is not to say that they cannot be lovingly mixed but we had no ability to do so.

We had the oversight of the College/Career Age Sunday evening young peoples’ group. We soon found that absolutely anything repeated two or three times in a month became stale. We searched our minds and congregation for programs, speakers and wholesome entertainment.

One evening as school terms were beginning anew in September, some of the students told us that at the little Bible college – Highland College, which they attended, a course was beginning in Personal Evangelism and why didn't June and I enroll too? The course met two early mornings per week and with a bit of juggling of schedule we were not only able to fit that in, but also another course on the gospel of John. Thus began formal biblical study through which we passed from Bible College to seminary at various periods in our life.

As thrilling as this course was to us, it was really quite theoretical and rather than stimulating us to really become personal evangelists, mostly gave us hundreds of answers to our own doubting hearts. However, we really praise the Lord for the one practical requirement of the course...before one took the final exam each of us had to witness to one person, to challenge that person to pray with us to receive Christ, though the results were left to God alone.

I well remember as the deadline approached, I would call home from the office to talk with June about something and invariably the question would arise, "I haven't, have you yet?" Until two days before while I was visiting my brother in his travel agency in Glendale and were talking most naturally, I was able to direct the conversation to spiritual things. We had the only time in our life that we were able to speak of Jesus Christ. What a blessing to be able to communicate even once with your brother.

He asked me the oddest question when we began, "Bill, I've always been the black sheep of the family; why then do you go flying off to Africa to do penance?" What a God given opportunity to tell that it is by grace, not works that we inherit eternal life.

Getting a "B" in our personal evangelism class we found, "does not a personal evangelist make." It would be yet another seven years before we could qualify for such a title.

CHAPTER TWENTY-ONE – LET GEORGE DO IT

There are good books written on the large subject of "knowing your call to service by God." One can "put out the fleece" or use the "open or shut doors" which both basically say in a pragmatic sense, if it works out, you are called. I would not speak against any method of "call" since as I study people, animals and plants, one can see that the thumb print, so to speak, of God is variety, tremendous diversity, in fact, beautiful multi-formity. But each form of life displays the complexity and yet order of the living God.

Recognizing this, how then could I say “but this is not the way God will call you to His service!” In my own life I have noticed that when a decision is called for, that I can rely upon the Spirit of Jesus to so confidently work with my spirit that I can be assured or have a full conviction that I should do this or that. 1 John 4:13 tells us that, “we know that we live in Him and He in us, because He has given us of His Spirit.” (NIV) I can only say that his Spirit living in me makes things very clear. How often have I been tempted to do something which may even be obviously in opposition to the will of God, the Commandments or the works of His love and grace and yet after asking the Lord to show me and waiting for him to work, I find it was not in His will.

What a relief then descends over me when I decide against this plan. I blush to think of the many problems that I could have been in that so required such special attention to avoid. It is, if not supernatural, this feeling of joy which is mine when I have avoided something which days or weeks before may have seemed so neutral or even possibly blessed by God. Of course, I am not the first to note that God may have one of three answers to what we ask so assuredly – “Yes or no, Lord?”. He may well just say wait and learn.

Other times it seems as though it is almost required that He hit me on the head with a baseball bat before I “rise up and listen”. But is it not neat that our loving God can and does make himself and His will so well known in our lives? Wouldn't it be horrible not to live on this edge of the supernatural?

Halfway through the first term at Highland College, a very special Sunday came along which literally changed our lives. I'd like to tell you that it was one of those rare and beautiful crisp early winter smog free Sunday mornings in which the Glendale foothills can be crowned with frosting of snow, but unfortunately I don't remember the atmospheric conditions, only the sermon.

Dr. George Fincke announced his text that morning was John 9:1-7, the man born blind. Well, I thought, I have always wondered about how the Lord Jesus healed a man with a situation – being born blind – which even today is impossible. The only trouble with George was that he had an irritating habit of making his applications too personal. You know, “why don't you”, and then he would turn his hetero-chromia irides (multicolored iris) eyes seemingly right at me!

Well, when he came to verse 4, “I must work the works of Him that sent me while it is day, the night cometh when no man can work.” (KJV) He paused and really began to preach. “Has the Lord called you to a job you've long neglected? Exactly how long do you believe the Lord God will be patient with you? You are not getting any younger and the time may well come when in disgust Jesus will just set you on a shelf marked 'inactive' and let you live out your remaining life in the shadows of materialism, self-indulgence, and

humanistic community recognition. But brothers and sisters, now is the day, this is the hour, rejoice in what way the Lord can use you, by letting yourself go completely, committed to the Lord Jesus Christ and the Bible.”

On and on he went and I thought he was talking to Dr. Bill Ghrist who had made a childhood vow, “If you can save my life and my leg, I’ll become a medical missionary for you.” I felt he was speaking only to me who had learned the adventure and excitement of Mexican STMs, of Africa and of witnessing. When finally the benediction was given, I was under conviction and “in a sweat”.

It is amazing how quickly “normalcy” returns as you greet friends in Church, the kids run up and tug you away from the direction of the pastor to “look at what I did in Sunday school”, then a friend asks me about her mother’s eye operation done in San Francisco. Soon we were in the car headed for June’s parents for Sunday dinner. Not a thought crossed my mind again until we were driving back to Sunday evening church and I remembered that Reverend George Clark, missionary to Beirut, Lebanon, was going to speak. They had not been there when we had visited five months before. I remember thinking as we strolled in as a family, “That was a close call this morning. I wonder what Phil’s brother will tell us about Lebanon”. I had met George’s older brother, Dr. J. Philip Clark, on a couple of occasions as the General Secretary of the Independent Board for Presbyterian Foreign Missions, so was most looking forward to hearing George and Sherie Clark speak that evening.

Imagine my amazement when the missionary announced his text, “Please turn to the Gospel of John, Chapter 9, and verse 4. I must work the works of Him who sent me while it is day, the night cometh when no man can work”. Now there are thousands of verses in the Bible that contains 66 books. Our Pastor had fully preached that verse in the morning – what more could be said? “Oh ye of little faith”, ha!

By the time George II had finished there was no doubt as to the renewed call to the mission field for me. I talked about that amazing coincidence to June that evening – that is of both men speaking on the same verse – she didn’t seem too concerned. That evening I stayed up late drafting a letter to Dr. Phil Clark telling him of my strong call to the mission field.

There are times when your own mind is so filled with thoughts that you hardly notice your spouse is not thinking the same. So it was that the next day I handed June the letter and asked if she would like to sign it too so that the idea would be coming from both of us.

She read the missive and was shocked. I must give her credit – she never argued – but rather immediately

thought of a missionary wife we had met who never felt she had been “called to the field”, and as a result was a drag to her husband. Many couples have left at the end of one term only, exactly because of this reason.

Now June writes: -

I was shocked because I had no idea that Bill had even thought these thoughts. I read the letter again. It said, I feel a strong call to the mission field – I didn’t feel anything. I wasn’t opposed to the idea of being a missionary, I just had never thought of it before. Therefore, I told Bill that I couldn’t sign the letter, because I didn’t feel the feelings expressed in the letter.

It seems that Bill thought this might happen, so he said, “Why don’t we have our Pastor George Fincke over to talk to us?” I said I didn’t see why we needed to have anyone counsel us. I had only thought that those people incapable of figuring out their own problems – or those who had big problems – like unstable marriages – would need counsel, but Bill said he could just talk with us. Bill called him on the telephone, and what do you know, almost immediately he was at our front door. He had been waiting by his telephone for our call. We brought up the problem of the letter. George said why don’t you try the method of the open and closed doors. If the Lord wants you to go to the mission field, the door will open, but if the Lord doesn’t want you to go, He will close the door. I said, “No, I don’t want to do that. I’m perfectly healthy and I know if I say I’m going, I’ll go.” I said, “Maybe you can find a Bible verse which can help.” He thought again, and said, “Let me ask you two questions: 1. Have you committed yourself completely to the Lord?” I said I was saved, but I hadn’t really committed my whole life to the Lord, but I would be willing. 2. “Are you willing to go wherever the Lord would lead you?” I said yes.

He then said that for a wife that would be considered a call. That night I signed the letter and now the request to the Mission Board was coming from both of us!

CHAPTER TWENTY-ONE – A. STEWED OR SMASHED

By most peculiar circumstances within a few days of each other Dr. Clark at the mission board office in Philadelphia received voluntary letters from two doctors – ours, and that of Dr. Tom and Kat Proctor of Tennessee.

Interestingly enough the Proctors had visited as short-term missionaries to the Baraka Hospital near Bethlehem, and was the only other “Independent Board Hospital” in Kenya. With characteristic administrative excellence, Phil soon had five people, including himself, attend a most unlikely meeting. I remember getting a circular advertising this Christian Medical Society meeting to be held between Christmas and New Year of 1965 at, of all places, Wheaton College, Wheaton, Illinois. “Now who in their right minds would plan a holiday in December in frigid Illinois?” I laughed as I tossed the advertisement into the “round file”, but the joke was on us – we were there.

Of all the excellent talks and papers presented at this conference on Missionary Medicine the one I have never forgotten had a cheery title for prospectives like us, entitled something like “The Causes of Death among Missionaries Around the World”. We felt like staying in our room for that one, but we were amazed to find that the number one cause of death overseas is not being boiled in a cannibal’s stew, but rather being smashed in a car accident. Why? Rather simple; two prominent failings of God’s children. They can only afford old rattle-traps of cars and they drive them at high speed expecting “the Lord to protect His very own”. And this on miserable roads with flocks of other poorly trained drivers about. In many countries the receiving of a driver’s license is only the “going rate” of a bribe.

There on the hallowed grounds of “W.C.” each of our families made the obvious but awesome decision to serve as full-time missionaries in the Middle East for the Proctors and in Kenya, East Africa for us. Tom in his typical Tennessee drawl called the people they were going to minister to “A – Rabs”. I remember praising the Lord that He had not chosen us to serve “A – Rabs”. Little did I know the sense of humor that the Lord has, that he would soon send us willingly to lovely Mombasa Island, a formerly “A-Rab” stronghold where even yet over 50% of our patients are followers of Mohammed. We love them too.

CHAPTER TWENTY-ONE – B. HIGHLAND HEAVY

It came as no great surprise when Dr. J Philip Clark suggested as we parted, “it would be best, Doctor, if you would enroll full-time for the second semester at Highland College. The more theology, Bible and Homiletic you can cram in, the better Missionary you will be.” I really had no desire to be relegated to the hospital only for my “total ministry”.

As I have observed missions, mission hospitals, and missionaries by the dozens, one of the saddest wastes of Christian zeal occurs to medical missionaries. Oh, yes, I am sure there are a few “timid souls” amongst medical missionaries and second-generation doctor missionaries who have never enjoyed the preaching, witnessing and

teaching side. I see them as professional doctors of high moral character and a pioneering spirit who really believe that the place for a medical missionary is efficiently seeing patients in the clinic or hospital and “leave the pastoring to the assigned national” but oh, what a toll, what a waste of zeal, and how common does a stultifying hopeless situation develop.

I have seen more than one good medical missionary doctor gradually atrophy in his zeal for the Lord’s work and give up in disgust. In their same situation I would do the same.

I would recommend to many such missions to allow their zealous Christian doctors to stay home and work effectively in their local church and send 50% of their income to the mission to hire two non-Christian cigar-smoking Dutch doctors to take their place at the mission hospital. The patients will be seen, the national pastor will preach, the Christian doctor will be fulfilled spiritually and you may win a few Dutch converts. You see, the Netherlands has a surplus of doctors.

Well, off the soapbox...as the second term at Highland College had begun just by “sheerest luck” (if there is such a thing), I was able to set up 18 units of Bible, Homiletic and theology in four mornings a week and still make an attempt at carrying on a practice, now for sale, at the same time.

No doubt people vary, but I found that my mind is most sharp, most able to memorize and store large amounts of information in the early morning so each day at 4:45 a.m. I would arise, memorize Bible verses, learn and study and cram information into the old bean until 7:15 a.m. when we would eat breakfast as a family and I could be at my first class six miles away by 8 a.m. and begin seeing patients by 1 p.m.

To say that those five months were relaxed and happy would be to “toy with the truth” but we grew miles, as we trusted the Lord Jesus under great pressure.

CHAPTER TWENTY-TWO – THE LORD’S MARCH

June and I had laid out the fleece in regard to selling the practice. “If it is your will we go this summer, Lord, let us properly dispose of the practice”. Like many others, mine was a complicated life of contracts, leases and loans to be paid, to say nothing of responsibility to over two generations of patients. I did not feel like just bailing out. I read everything I could find on the subject of selling a medical practice and the possibilities were not cheerful. Very few doctors even bothered with the thought of buying a practice and few that were offered sold anyway. Usually the reason was that the doctor had died and his widow tried unsuccessfully to gain something. But there was a tip. One article said any prospective buyer will want to know what was the gross

LAST MONTH, not six months ago. This created a real problem since attending school four full mornings from 8-12 left little time for seeing patients and I usually saw 20% more patients in the morning than in the afternoon.

I carefully watched gross receipts in both January and February 1966 but there was no special change from before. When at last March was finished and we were partway into April and just halfway to the end of school, Nelda my bookkeeper came to me with a smile and said, "The March books are up to date". At the end of that busy day I sat down and looked. I looked again and I looked again. I could hardly believe my eyes. Nelda said, "Doctor, I've checked the figures twice and they are accurate". We had made 50% more in the Lord's March than at any month ever.

Not surprisingly, ten days later Dr. Walter Tilghman came by looking for an eye practice and his predictable question was "How did you do last month, Dr. Ghrist?" I showed him, he stopped and said, "I'll take it!" Our last obstacle vanished and I called my travel agent brother and booked four tickets on HMSS Oriana, departing Los Angeles harbor the end of August, in just over four months.

Having been just a year before to the Independent Presbyterian Mission Hospital at Mwingi, Kitui District, Kenya with Dr. Matt and Ruth Johnson, we did know what it was like, to a degree. Also, we knew that two years later there was a very important missionary congress in New Jersey to which we were all urged to come, so that we expected to return in just two years.

People at home seem to feel we have "given up so much. Yes, not seeing friends and relatives for two years is a burden. Yes, a new culture and language difficulties are a strain, but how many people do you know who are doing exactly what they love to do most? We have missed very few meals and if you know you are exactly where God wants you to be and having the time of your life – it is really we who feel sorry for most of our friends at home.

Also, as I told my dear mother, "You and dad left Iowa for the far distant shores of California. How long did it take you to get back when your father was very sick?" "A full day on a Ford Trimotor" she remembered. Well, we can be home by jet in 24 hours even from halfway around the world." And June did exactly that in January 1971 when an emergency arose. "Mother", I asked, "When you went to California, how long were you gone before you visited Iowa again?" Two years was the reply, and within the first 18 months both my brother and mother and June's parents came to visit us. No, we're not so far away really, and Jesus is just as near here as He is in Southern California where so much of our heart and home is.

The days raced by and soon school was over. Walter Tilghman moved in and I gradually eased out of the practice and we packed in earnest. Now some people go to the field with a suitcase and a metal drum filled with house-hold goods. We were told to “bring whatever you want since there is no customs duty the first time you move to Kenya”. You remember the always-ready U-Haul trailer. By now we required the better part of a U-Haul self drive moving van.

It was great fun at a farewell party in our honor by our Couples Sunday school class that lasted until midnight that Saturday night. Then we dashed home to change and into our moving van for the all night drive to Oakland, California, 400 miles away and the missionary packing agency with the name, like a mortuary – “The Home of Peace”. My first question upon arrival was where do we “rest in peace”?

If you know the road to Oakland from Los Angeles and you depart at midnight, where will you be at 2:30 a.m.? On “the Grapevine” of course and that is where I became so sleepy I couldn’t drive further. So up pops June, my “girl Friday” lady truck driver and says “you sleep, Bill, I’m wide awake” – so June, all 5’3” of her managed the moving van through that dangerous series of mountainous grades and long descents before Bakersfield.

We made it by the noon deadline for the packers and flew home to prepare for our voyage of a lifetime.

The Lord was so good to us. The Proctors, Dr. Tom and Kat and two of their children were going to the Holy Land, so they met us in Glendale and our two families of 4 each or 8 people, traveled the Oriana together. We disembarked first at Aden and they next at Port Said, halfway around the world and five weeks later. Our two oldest sons, Chris and Tim, flew to Kenya and began boarding school in early September – no small piece of adventure for them either.

CHAPTER TWENTY-TWO – A. CRUTCH, HANKIE AND GYPED

As we prepared to leave my mother’s home where we had stayed the last week, there was an unnecessary flutter of concern. Nearly everyone in our church wanted to visit us on board the ship and say good-bye but the shipping line had a rule about only a few visitor passes per passenger. However, the Lord solved the problem since there was a mix-up at the docks and they didn’t ask to see anyone’s pass. Over 100 people came to see us off and it was a really gigantic prayer meeting which was held in the ship’s library, in our four miniature staterooms, and finally as the whistle began to blow at the Quay. What a sight! There was a great crowd of people standing below us from pastor to choir to church officers to toddler’s Sunday school serenading us with

favorite hymns and the eight of us newly commissioned missionaries standing at the ship's rail weeping for mixed joy and heartache. Everyone was throwing gaily-colored streamers; the heart overflowed with emotion realizing how much prayer and financial support our church of 300 could muster. They as a congregation actually picked up 90% of our entire monthly support. They had seen us grow in the Lord there, and be called from among them to service in a far distant land. We will never forget that day.

As the ship gradually and imperceptibly at first, floated away, our Pastor George Fincke who had torn a ligament in his ankle and had a cast on temporarily, affixed a hankie to his crutch and began waving a flag of compassion and peace in Jesus to us. As the sun set and the engines began to throb, the last thing we could see was the white handkerchief atop the crutch still waving "Goodbye, God bless you, we're behind you!"

The Oriana is a most proper English ship and the children are not to be a bother to the old colonial bull and cow pachyderms in the dining room. Therefore there was a "children's dinner" at 6 p.m. followed by the adult dinner at 7:30 p.m. or 9 p.m. depending upon the "sitting" one chose.

The first evening as the colorful lights of the California coastline receded into the darkness of night, we four novice missionaries were shown to our lovely sparkling table with so many hand tools present that one hardly knew with which silver fork or knife to begin sipping the soup – ha! The menu was encyclopedic. Tom Proctor is not a small man, in any dimension and when queried as to what super friendly nicknames we could share with each other, with a twinkle in his eye, he said "Willy, just call me 'Skinny'!"

Well as we were being seated, suddenly with agony of soul "Skinny" said, "I've been gypped! Look at this seat, bolted to the floor, yes in case of bad weather, but observe this is only one-quarter inch of remaining space between my abdomen quivering with hunger pangs and yon table edge! Waiter, I have a complaint to make to the captain!" So began five weeks of delightful fun and fellowship.

We had been so busy studying the Bible and theology, and packing, that under the Lord's guidance, friends showered both the Proctors and us with classic missionary biographies. We passed the books back and forth and received a crash course in studying the lives of Adonirah Judson, Hudson Taylor, C.T. Studd and others. Me, a missionary? Yes, by the grace of God, and I just love it!

CHAPTER TWENTY-THREE – LIFTED EYES

Man is one of the few earthbound creatures that spend a significant part of his time with uplifted eyes. We watch the glories of a gold, red and purple colored sunset, beautiful colors are set in stark contrast with silhouettes of mountain, cloud or graceful trees. We notice the provocative shapes of white cumulus clouds against a bright blue sky, see the vapor trails of transcontinental jets, or on a clear night become absorbed in the identity of the twinkling stars or for the hardy frigid few the pale florescent curtains or drapes in motion of the aurora borealis or “northern lights”.

Yes, we lift our eyes for many reasons. Psalm 123:1, 2, “Unto thee lift I up mine eyes, O Thou that dwellest in the heavens. Behold as the eyes of servants look unto the hand of their masters, and as the eyes of a maiden unto the hand of her mistress; so our eyes wait upon the Lord our God, until that He have mercy upon us.” (KJV).

As we lift our eyes to heaven and consider the Lord Jesus and His promise, we recognize that many are fulfilled each day in this present world, this present day, our present relationship with immediate family, peers and brothers and sisters in Christ. But many years ago while working as a doctor on the Red Lake Indian Reservation in Northern Minnesota, I learned that I am a future oriented person.

Various Indian Service and United States Public Health Service personnel were gathered at a meeting in Fargo, North Dakota and an instructor was pointing out the differences in the culture of the Chippewa Indian from we who were trying to be of assistance to them in schooling, health, and agriculture. We were bluntly told “you are a future oriented person while most Indians with whom you work are present oriented”. As an example, he asked each of us to look at our wristwatches. Then he asked us to be honest and tell him had we thought of what time it actually was, or had we not looked to see what time had not yet arrived? Of course we all knew he was due to finish in another 15 minutes, and he was right, we had all mentally said “He has 15 minutes remaining of future time”. He concluded by reminding us that the average Indian of that time did not even wear a watch, just looking at the sun told him his present situation.

Well, as future oriented Christians we do and should hold close to the many promises of the Lord – a home in heaven, a crown that does not fade, and an ever-present help in this life in times of trouble, discipline and blessing.

When sometimes I am asked, “Dr. Bill, how can you give up so much in the United States, family, and friends at home and go to the other side of the world in darkest Africa? Just think of the good you could do here in

California!” I must admit that there is sometimes loneliness outside of your own culture and family that afflicts us when we take our eyes off the Lord Jesus.

But there is a very clear answer to the person who says, “Could you not do just as much good at home?” First, it is a matter of obedience. I feel a strong call to be a missionary doctor, and I must admit I am completely fulfilled. In fact, I am having the time of my life. Secondly, one could say we’ve given up home, family, friends and culture, but these have been more than abundantly replaced with many black African, brown Indian and white missionary brothers and sisters in Christ. Just last night we had an older missionary couple that teaches in a nearby Bible Institute along with their Campus Crusade son and daughter-in-law and nine month old baby for dinner and fellowship. The old missionary is as brilliant as any college professor at home, the son is even now studying for his Ph.D., and the child is such a blessed reminder of our own grandson, Joshua. The conversation was intellectually, emotionally and spiritually stimulating and they ARE my family in Christ. This sort of evening is certainly not unusual.

Thirdly, what can one really expect to accomplish in one’s life? As a well-trained eye surgeon doing an average amount of surgery, especially cataracts, corneal transplants and retinal detachments, one would expect to do, say 100 such operations per year and be active in practice for maybe thirty years. This would amount to 3,000 sight restorative operations. Now since our average patient is in his fifties and his additional average life span would be about twenty years, some young people much longer and some elderly much shorter, it is a simple calculation to find that one’s life work can be measured as 60,000 years of good sight provided. Now, most any humanist would glow with delight at such a thought and I must admit this is no small accomplishment to so help my brothers and sisters created in the image of God, whether they be Christians or not.

But sit back for a moment and look again at what can be done in obedience to the Great Commission. Matthew 28:19-20, “Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I will be with you always, to the very end of the age.” This is your own special call from our Savior and the injunction of Jesus in John 9:4, “I must work the works of Him who sent me while it is day, the night cometh when no man can work.” My own commission having been thoroughly called to be missionaries and a two generation old practice in ophthalmology sold, I found myself at 7:20 p.m. Sunday night July, 10, 1966, bathed in all the lights at the front of our Calvary Presbyterian Church, Glendale, California, on my knees with head pushed down like a turtle by the weight of the hands of many. What in the world was “fatso Bill”, my brother Bob’s not too inaccurate appellation of me, doing here being ordained as an elder in preparation for departure to the East African bush to be a medical missionary.

We are greatly loved by the good people of our home church, even as they are so beloved to us. They had picked up 90% of the support monthly we needed in those days and this was amazing for a church of just over 300 people, who already supported many missionaries, a Bible College nearby and were active in denominational needs, as well. As I knelt there, our minister Dr. George Fincke outlined many things a missionary is and my thoughts have added some more.

What really is a missionary except a person who is willing to go wherever the Lord Jesus would direct and be used totally and use every skill he has and many he does not know he possesses for the glory of God to win brothers and sisters in humanity to eternal life? It is not a job or an occupation but rather a way of thinking. You can be a missionary to your own family, to your parents, your children, your neighbors, or as in our case, right now, to the Bajuni Swahili people of Mombasa, Kenya, East Africa. The key is, are you willing to let loose of what the world thinks, hold your possessions loosely, have the time of your life, suffer loneliness while being filled with God's love and forgiveness, have some people think you're a "nut" and others mistakenly think you are too much, while knowing that you are accepted by Jesus and being used to turn others to Him?

After a great number of loving and friendly departure lunches, teas, and dinners, we at last drove to San Pedro harbor of Los Angeles and from a great distance off could see the lovely and imposing super-structure of HMS Oriana, an immense two class world encircling luxury liner. The all aluminum five-story high super-structure gave many decks of interesting public rooms, libraries, writing nooks, swimming pools, lounge chair space, and eating establishments. I suppose some stateroom suites were aloft, but those we called home were deep within the bowels of the ship, but beautifully appointed with washbasin, glittering stainless steel and soft walnut vanity cupboard, built in dressers and closets and two bunks, upper and lower. The food on English vessels has never been impressive, except, I am sure, to the English, who delight in marmalades, chutneys, boiled potatoes, mutton, dry cold toast and dry cake, yet the service and nourishment were worthy of high marks.

As lavish as second class accommodations were, which occupied two thirds of the ship, while in the various ports of call we learned by strolling through the first class section, that theirs was fully 50% softer, more commodious and elegant.

After our first quite formal Anglican Church service on our initial Sunday morning aboard ship, we requested from the captain, and quite graciously he granted us, a small secret lounge in the first class section which could be reached by a circuitous route up and down various decks, hallways and stairways until one opened one door from the second class and were there or another door from first class and had arrived. It was all in varying colors of red and white and cozily accommodated 25 people. I say it was secret since so few came to our

service and it was difficult to find. It was publicly advertised on bulletin boards that we were given permission to post upon, and Tom and Kat Proctor, June and I did thoroughly enjoy our thrice-weekly hour with a few others who came. As a result, June led her first missionary convert to the Lord.

An elderly English lady steeped in Anglican “Churchianity” but having no idea if she were going to heaven when she died came to our Bible studies. Soon June befriended her, loved her and assured her many questions of the soul seeking to know and trust Jesus.

Finally June led her in a prayer of commitment and relief and joy flooded both their souls. She was a regular attendee. Also two middle-aged bachelor brothers, from a very legitimate background, came regularly.

As I considered my own renewed call at the age of 37 after six years of private practice in Glendale, California, realizing that it is so true that “the night cometh when no man can work”, health and strength does fail, nations do close their doors to missionaries, family pressures can overcome one and books can be written about lost opportunities. The time does come when no more work for God or man can be done. As I meditated upon these things, two considerations leapt into my mind and bit me. A. The average missionary doctor will certainly do considerably more sight restorative surgery than he would at home, 150-1000% more, so that even at a humanistic level, he will provide from 90,000 to 600,000 years of good sight. But the largest factor is something that any of you readers can do with minimal training – not the four years of university, the four years of medical school, the years of internship and the three years of ophthalmology, but rather the extended weekend at a Campus Crusade Executive Seminar Lay Institute or the two months of one night a week training at your own church. I am speaking of B. Leading one soul to Jesus Christ. How does that set in the balance of 60,000 years of good sight against one person who is not limited to 60,000 but receives everlasting, eternal life – spiritual vision which will never end after literally millions times millions of years? Then, to this dimension, multiply that one person by scores of even hundreds of such people who also respond because of your obedience, training and joy that you can share.

There is a saying that “you can’t have your cake and eat it too!” But such is the Lord’s blessing upon my life that I can do 50 to 100% more sight restorative operations here in Mombasa AND also lead hundreds of highly receptive souls to my Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. I am daily amazed, excited and tickled with the fact that I can have my sight restorative care and eat it too!

You might well ask how did all this begin and, of course, I could respond, “I’ve already written a book!” True but many would not be as interested in early life, motivation and call to mission service and the rigors involved as they would be in what is it really like to get on a boat, sail halfway around the world, arrive in darkest Africa

– the sun is really just as bright here, mind you – watch the Lord take you through experiences enough to curl your hair if it's straight or vice versa (assuming you have hair left at age 38) and watch as the only Son of God sets up a life of excitement, purpose and delight. That is the purpose of this book from the time we set trembling feet upon the gangplank until we went home for furlough in 1979 seeing a significant percentage of our city of Mombasa reached for Christ, with a cluster of seven little churches under our Lighthouse for Christ Fellowship of Churches and nearly 400 people meeting weekly. The Lord is good indeed and his mercy endureth forever.

PART TWO - MISSION EXPERIENCES

CHAPTER ONE – FINGER SCAR AND CULTURE SHOCK

One of the dentists June used to work for had a saying typically reflective of materialistic America of the 1950s. “It just costs a little more to go first class”. Well, we sure did not go first class aboard the Oriana with two across the small minuscule stateroom without porthole. But this did have an advantage. Anytime day or night when “40 winks” were desired, just crawl into one’s bunk, shut off the light and there was a total eclipse. The added continuous vibration and soft hum of the mechanical rhythm of the slip just seemed to “rock-a-my-soul-in the bosom of Abraham...”

While we were at lunch or supper, Doug, age 9, was theoretically baby-sitting his little 2-½ year old sister, Bonnie. The only trouble was that friendly Doug was so busy during the day, what with friendly contacts among stewards, seamen, waiters, children, and aspiring grandmothers that he would be exhausted after dinner. It would be more accurately described as Bonnie who baby-sat snoring Doug. One such evening Bonnie was playing house in their stateroom washing clothes, bed sheets, brushing teeth, etc. in their sink when she dropped a glass and cut her finger – blood, wailing, and tears brought the second dinner granny next door but never stirred Doug. To this day, if you ask her, Bonnie can show you that faint finger scar.

About the second day out, I made a really great discovery at one of the swimming pool milk bars. For sixpence – one half-shilling- or 6 cents in U.S. money, they had milk shakes for sale. Skinny (Dr. Tom Proctor) and I had soon calculated that conservatively we would be able to afford 225 milk shakes between the two of us during our five-week voyage. However, there are times when one can only conclude that life is cruel. We two connoisseurs of malted milk, rushed to the milk bar when it opened and were served their first two English milk shakes, thin, watery, chalky, insipid and made from powdered milk; we had encountered our first missionary

life culture shock. American and English “milk shakes” are not the same. What delights the English boy’s palate gives no joy to the serious connoisseur of American ice cream parlors.

CHAPTER TWO – ADEN’S MEHTA

Even incomparable trips must come to an end, and so it was after seeing the South Seas, Australia and Ceylon, our little family disembarked into a hot bed of political terrorism at Aden on the Red Sea. We were awaiting the Kenya Castle passenger ship that was supposed to take us a bit back on our route but to our ultimate destination of Mombasa, Kenya.

Upon arrival in Aden, I visited the P & O Steamship office to see how our 17 cartons could be taken from the off-loading docks to the expected site of the Kenya Castle and guarded there until loaded upon our ship to Mombasa.

I was directed by the man at the desk to Mr. Mehta, a local agent for such things. Within three hours he had prepared a list of all things he would be doing, documents for me to sign, and an invoice for \$1,200.00 for the service. I was amazed at the price but he assured me that with all the customs in transit, warfare, transport, etc. that this was quite standard and that law, set to 4% of the total, was his profit.

I was to meet him at the bank nearby the P & O office at 3 p.m. and give him my traveler’s checks paying for all this. Somehow, though, I was there from 2:30 to 3:30 p.m., Mr. Mehta did not show up. I was heavy-hearted and strolled down by the wharf where our wooden cartons were lying in plain view. A uniformed port policeman walked over and cheerily greeted me and asked if I was the owner of those wooden boxes. “Yes”, I agreed, “but if I had known the extreme costs of Aden, I would have shipped them direct rather than at the cheaper rate of ‘Accompanied Goods’”. He frowned and said “Sir, this is yet an English colony, and has very low charges indeed.” I pulled out the papers and told him what I was waiting to pay his colonial government in local Adonis currency. He was amazed! Then he looked at the papers and soon stopped at a large charge for “transient customs duty”, and said, “Sir, there is something very wrong here. Aden is a free port, and there are no customs duties. You’d better come with me to see my Chief Inspector.”

Shortly, a very efficient British officer was perusing my documents and charges. Then he said, “Dr. Ghrist, Mr. Mehta is a thief; where did you meet him?” “I was referred to him by the man at the P & O office”. “Oh”, said the officer, “He must get a percent for the referral! You are in the Middle East, Doctor, and must be very careful with your money. Many people live by their wits here.”

Shortly, he had friend Mehta on the telephone demanding that Mehta come to the police desk. Immediately another voice came on the line – “This is Mr. Mehta’s personal physician speaking. Mr. Mehta is very ill and cannot leave his bed for the next week.” Just long enough to be sure I would be gone and could not press charges.

Well, shortly I hired “coolies” and wagons and transferred the boxes, hired off duty police guards and spent \$85 for the whole exercise. Another culture shock! I guess you could call me witless but protected.

CHAPTER THREE – MOMBASA FIRST TIME

If the ORIANA was an aluminum dreamboat, the Kenya Castle was a “bucket of bolts” on nearly its last voyage before being sold for scrap. Nevertheless we made it only 36 hours late into Mombasa being met by dear Dr. Matt and Ruth Johnson. It is strange that we had no idea that this mushrooming city was to eventually be our lifetime work. I was so impressed by the moderate sized Arab quarter or Casbah where Matt assured me that for a price you could “buy anything in the world.” The ancient Portuguese Fort Jesus and original “old Harbor” where anchored for a few months each year were the last remnant of the Sailor-Smuggler craft – the Arab dhows. In those days, one could see more than 100 of them at a time in port during the last few weeks of the Northeast Monsoon before the long rainy season began and the wind shifted 90 degrees from Northeast to Southeast and blew them back to Arabia and the coast of Cash. Today if we see ten in port at one time it is unusual.

But we only remained in Mombasa a day or two and then took the long dusty drive to Nairobi where we were to begin Swahili language school. It is amazing the funny little retardants to progress with which governments get saddled. The heroic building of the railroad from Mombasa to a little turning around center called Nairobi, occurred shortly before the days of Teddy Roosevelt carried an agreement not to build a highway that would compete with the investment. It was not until Kenya became an independent country in 1964 that such a contract could be forgotten and a ribbon of “tarmac” forged the 300 miles between Mombasa and Nairobi. When we arrived, work was in progress, but there were yet vast sections of road made of red dust dirt lane through which patrol tankers, and diesel freighters fought for visibility along with land rovers, cars and country buses.

CHAPTER FOUR – LANGUAGE UNLEARNING

There is no doubt that the ideal missionary “gets right in and learns the language”. I’m sorry to say that we have missed the ideal. We can speak enough Swahili to get around – “market place” type fluency – but are not much good, really. As I say when queried, “we took the Swahili course twice and failed it!” Of course, there are valid reasons, from beginning at age 38, to being surrounded by people at work and at home who speak English. Everyone of our staff is tri-lingual – their own special tribal tongue (Kamba, Luo, Giriyama, Taita or Kikuyu), and there are over two dozen tribal languages, some similar and some very different. But the language of the grade school educated African is English, yet the language of trade is Swahili. Enough excuses – we had “the joy” of taking a six week course in Swahili – then trying to convert this to Kikamba when at Mwingi, then again a six week course after four years in Swahililand – Mombasa and did no better. We are still learners and do understand a bit more year by year.

It is not like living in South America where everyone speaks Spanish or Portuguese. In Mombasa, probably 30% of the people speak English fluently, another 65% speak Swahili, another 25% speak Gujarati (from India) and still others speak primarily Arabic, Baluchi, Hindi or one of the Kenya Tribal tongues. Many even speak four or five languages.

While attending the Church Mission Society (Anglican) Swahili language school we had the joy of living upstairs from Dr. and Mrs. William Hawks. They are a very godly couple that taught us many things about the Lord. He was the principal of the Independent Board’s Bible College of East Africa and a rare jewel who had lived a full life as a Bible College teacher and pastor and when most would retire, volunteered for the foreign mission field and world another ten years in Rurarka, a suburb of Nairobi, until retired again. The last I heard, he is pastoring a small church in Michigan.

We became very enthusiastic about learning Swahili and might have progressed to fluency had we not a) been surrounded by English speakers and b) immediately moved to a thoroughly Kikamba speaking area. There, at Mwingi Hospital, we found Swahili only a dismally third language that mostly men of trade spoke. The “approved method” of learning Kikamba was the old “grammar first” method. Learning by tape recording, greetings, simple phrases, etc. was highly discouraged by other missionaries. We tried both and succeeded at nothing.

CHAPTER FIVE – FRIGHTENING HOARSE

During the last three weeks of our Swahili language course in Nairobi, I caught a nasty cold and soon became hoarse. Because of the great emphasis upon hearing on tape and immediate parrot-like repetition, the

hoarseness did not improve much, even when the course finished just before Christmas. By the time of our “official move” from Nairobi to Mwingi on January 1st, 1967 my hoarseness still persisted, even though my upper respiratory infection was completely gone. By this time we had made the acquaintance of Dr. Philip Morris, Christian Ophthalmologist and former Africa Inland Missions missionary who practiced in downtown Nairobi. At Philip’s suggestion, I saw a well- trained ear, nose and throat specialist, Dr. Sethi, who took one look in my throat and said, “we must do a biopsy, Dr. Ghrist, there is a tumor on your left vocal cord.”

One problem with being a doctor is that you well know of all the worst possibilities. Instantly there flashed across my mind my Dad, when we practiced together, having so examined a man my same age, having to excuse himself to go into his private office to take a nitroglycerin tablet to relieve his own angina heart pain at the prospect of telling this 38-year old man that his hoarseness may very well be caused by a malignant tumor of his vocal cord and knowing well the patient’s, in those days, poor chances.

We agreed to have the biopsy the next day and it was a tense twenty-four hours. I had not known that frozen-section-20-minute results were not done for such in Nairobi.

So when I came out from anesthesia and asked for the results, Dr. Sethi said, “Oh, we will know in a week.” The next two days were spent much in prayer that having at last begun our missionary work, the night would not be at the threshold “when no man can work”.

Finally by Tuesday noon, June, who used to being a squeaky doctor’s wife, had obtained, after many delays, the telephone number of the pathologist who was reading the slide of my vocal cord. After further delays, he rather absentmindedly said, “Oh, Mrs. Dr. Ghrist, the biopsy was only a non-malignant singer’s nodule.” Phew! Praise the Lord!

CHAPTER SIX – VICTORY OVER MOSQUITOES

Kenya is an entomologist’s haven. There are large and small bugs, narrow and wide insects, red and green ones, even noisy and silent ones. When we first arrived at the I.P.M. Hospital in Mwingi, it was my observation that, though two lady missionaries had become immune, of the thirteen remaining adult missionaries on the station, there was someone down sick with malaria about 20% of the time.

This posed a real public health problem, which we were amazed to find did not seem to concern anyone.

During the evenings in every missionary home, one could hear the swat of the hand upon the exposed arm or leg after the mosquito had already drawn blood.

Now, there are many kinds of mosquitoes in Kenya. I once read in an East African Medical Journal, of an investigator who captured dozens of mosquitoes in a one or two acre plot of ground, then analyzed them first for type of mosquito – and he had more than a dozen different species – and then examined each mosquito's body for red blood cells sucked from people or animals and again had over a dozen different mammals from whom these mosquitoes had feasted – from baboons, to cows, to men. In Kenya, it is recognized that the anophelese mosquito is the one that carries the malarial parasites.

Being interested in our “public health problem” I soon contacted professionals who told me that our enemy – Bwana anophelese – a) lives only three weeks b) travels not much more than one half mile from its secluded area and c) remains 80% of its adult life indoors in dark secluded areas. Armed with that information and a special wall clinging spray, we soon treated the walls of the hospital and each of the missionaries' houses and the problem of malaria became only a rare malady on our station.

When we went to the city of Mombasa to begin the Lighthouse for Christ Eye Center, along came the wall-clinging spray and out went the noxious mosquitoes. However, because of the openness of the housing style in tropical Mombasa, within six weeks to two months, a small resident crop of the vampire insects found their way into unsprayed drawers, beneath tables, etc., thus requiring our continued use of anti-malarial tablets and watch care for such sources to be directly sprayed with contact insecticides.

I well remember one Tuesday afternoon in the eye clinic in October 1973. As usual, I was busy seeing patients and had given a gospel message, when suddenly my last patient of the day, Mr. Mahru, an Asian Hindu contact lens patient, asked if I had time to discuss Christianity. I replied “That's exactly why we are here; yes, we have plenty of time.” He had apparently taken Religious Knowledge in secondary school and had studied in and about the Bible, passing his course. We talked for a while about Jesus and the Bible before I got out our witnessing booklet and read through it.

As soon as the witnessing booklet came out, I began to feel two different mosquitoes drawing my life's blood away. Each time I attempted to stop and swat them, Mr. Mahru's chain of thought would slip. Finally, I mentally said a quick prayer and figured that if Satan was reduced to sending even malaria laden anopheles mosquitoes, that the Lord God who dwells within me could give me wisdom and healing and endurance.

Within minutes my patient prayed to receive the Lord Jesus into his heart and I slipped into the next room for a quick gulp of anti-malarial medicine. Here is missionary heroism at its best – ha!

CHAPTER SIX – A. BACK TO GENERAL MEDICINE

My primary work was to set up an eye clinic, re-learn enough of general medicine modified by mission hospital availability, tropical medicine and African culture to be able to soon alternate night and weekend call with Dr. Matt and spend time in Kikamba language learning. There seemed never enough time for the latter two, no matter how small and short the eye clinic was. During our 18 months at the Mwingi Hospital I only verified what Dr. Bill Burkett, a government “bush eye surgeon” told me, that ophthalmology among the Kamba was not yet a viable option because a) by tribal custom they washed their face daily, even with water carried many miles and therefore had almost no trachoma or eye disease and b) because they were still so uneducated that most did not read so didn’t need glasses or were so resistant to cultural change that they often visited the witch doctor for months before the mission hospital. Our eye clinic was seldom more than 30% utilized though it continued two afternoons per week the entire time.

After getting “settled in” for three months, relearning how to do a cesarean section and becoming acquainted with spartan treatment of tropical disease, one day Dr. Johnson made a startling announcement. He and the mission board had agreed that beginning in July 1967 (it was now the middle of April), he and Ruth would go home to America for one year’s furlough. Though it was a surprise, shocking and amazing to me, there was no doubt about its propriety as he had completed another four year term, his youngest son was graduating from the mission high school and here was Dr. Bill, “fully prepared and on the spot”.

What this meant to me was that my plan to be the “second doctor” would soon fade as for the first time in ten years, I would be like in Red Lake, back fully into general practice for a year and completely responsible for the hospital and its administration as well.

With three months warning, I visited about five other mission hospitals to get ideas and in God’s providence, the classic “Medical Care in Developing Countries” by Maurice King had just come off the press and I devoured that book finding much of practical value. A full month in advance I had written a synopsis of innovations, reasons and “wheres” and “whys” being done, from raising fees to getting the delivery table out of the operating room, and had authority and full backing from the mission board. When July 1st came, the Johnsons had departed and we began what was to be probably the most interesting troublesome and closest year

walking with the Lord of our lives to that point. Nearly every month could be another chapter of satanic opposition, near death or disaster and yet startling conversions and miraculous victories.

CHAPTER SEVEN – COLONIAL FRIENDS

During our year spent at the Independent Presbyterian Hospital at Mwingi, located out in the “bush” along a miserable, dusty, corrugated dirt road, 65 miles from the industrial city of Thika, itself 30 miles from the capital, Nairobi, we encountered one of our most ridiculous episodes while visiting the big city of Nairobi.

When we had first arrived in Kenya, we were eager to learn the universal second language of all Kenya’s 27 tribes, Swahili. We were quickly enrolled in the Anglican Church Mission Society’s Swahili Language course headed up by the very proper, friendly, but dignified, Canon and Mrs. Bramwell. They were kind to June and me. Having missed the first two weeks of a nine-week course, we were placed into our own group of two students. Mrs. Bramwell gave us special help and encouragement.

Therefore, some months later when we were on a weekend rest and buying safari into Nairobi, we dropped in at teatime to visit our friends, the Canon Bramwells. We had with us, our inquisitive five-year old daughter, who had an insatiable desire to “T.I.” (toilet inspect) every edifice we entered. Just as a most proper and lovely English tea was being served us, Bonnie asked to be excused to visit the rest room. All went well for five minutes until we began to hear sobbing from another part of the house.

There was a key in a rather stiff lock to the “water closet” (W.C.) door on the inside and Bonnie had turned the lock and could not turn it back again. Within another five minutes, the tranquil scene of a proper English tea was turned into one howling daughter sounds inside, and a straining father outside at a window, finally extricating his daughter, and one rather besmeared Canon Bramwell disassembling the entire grimy lock works of said door. I’m sure our visit was remembered for years.

Some of our most relaxed and interesting evenings were spent in the company of the late Dr. Philip Morris and his wife, Molly. Philip, a former Africa Inland Missionary, was in private ophthalmic practice in Nairobi, though super English, he had a resilient quality of always being able to do more for his friends, including us, than they could possibly return.

One evening, visiting the Morris’ overnight, we were worn from the tiring trip to Nairobi and an afternoon of shopping. After dinner and coffee in their living room, we were about to retire when Philip received a call from

a friend who wanted a delivery of some inconsequential item across town. Philip was tired from a busy day in his office, too, and June whispered into my ear that Philip would probably appreciate my company on the long drive across town and back. Trying hard, for once to be “one up” in loving fellowship with Philip, I was pleased to go along with him. When we returned and garaged the car for the night, I headed for the guest room, mentally patting myself on the back, saying, “well, for once...” I got no further, as there was a discreet rap at my door and standing there was dear Philip in his bathrobe, thermos in one hand, cup in the other and an amused grin on his lips, saying “hot chocolate, Bill?”

CHAPTER SEVEN – A. IN LABOR

We had exactly seven weeks head start before Satan struck. Now labor unions have a place in industry, but not in missions and among evangelists. We have one head, one husband, the Lord Jesus Christ, and we cannot serve two masters. Therefore when the “Domestic and Hotel Workers Union” came and asked permission to use hospital grounds and student classrooms as an organizing territory, I inquired in great detail who they were and who else in the Mwingi metropolis were members. There were bar workers and hotel workers, including ladies of questionable repute who did “odd” jobs around the hotels, the workers at a nearby Roman Catholic mission and others who hopefully might find it their patriotic duty to support these men who had come from Nairobi.

I informed the organizers that the public highway was public and that the hospital classrooms were private and they should confine their activities to the public areas. Then I made a cultural mistake and called “the most responsible member” of each special peer group – the girl student nurses (Sofia), the boy student nurses (Benjamin) and the laundry-man/janitors (Muthembi). I had a 20-minute conference with all of them telling them that I expected to inform the others in their group that the Union was shortly going to ask them to join. Kenya is a free country and no one can force them to join or not to join and that the decision to continue working at this mission was theirs. We were under no obligation to train students who were union members and had changed their loyalty to a faceless group of non-Christians in Nairobi. It was their privilege to join or refuse and it was our privilege to give two weeks notice of dismissal to any who joined.

Nothing much happened for ten days that we saw, until one day in the mail arrived a bulky package from the Union Headquarters in Nairobi containing the two original signatures, they had obtained from each person, on a union mimeographed form of every one of our thirty-two students and above classified workers, except for only two. One was Benjamin, but included among the signatures or right thumb prints, were both Sofia and Muthemba. CRASH went our plans. And this was five miles out in the African bush in a Christian mission

hospital dedicated to the fruits of the spirit of Christ – love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness and temperance. Among the papers which we carefully read were detailed instructions of the complicated bookkeeping and pay withholding we were expected to do for them and to which bank in Nairobi and what special account we were to make out our check to save them the trouble of coming out in the bush to collect the money, except, of course, when they were “on strike” against us.

After a few hours of study, we called a meeting of the entire staff and when all assembled, asked Muthemba, Benjamin and Sofia to come forward and asked them if I had told them before what would happen. They agreed that I had. Then I found out my cultural mistake. No African feels he can order another of his peers to do anything. Therefore, not one of the three had even informed one of their friends that they would be dismissed if they joined a union, or at least this is what they said, and I tend to believe them. Therefore it was a great shock to all but three when I announced that as of today they had two weeks notice of dismissal and that we would shut down the hospital for all but what work we could do ourselves and gather more help to recommence. This was an especially bitter pill for students and missionary teaching staff alike since one of our “grand goals” was to graduate the first ever nursing class from Mwingi Hospital in just 9 ½ months and a “capping ceremony” was due in just two weeks time.

The rest of the day was dismal with hurt, anger, polarity and a feeling of impending doom. As I talked with other missionaries, we had universal agreement about our course. As June and I prayed that evening for wisdom and strength knowing that soon there would be little hospital to administer and few patients that we could treat for at least three to six months until we could build and train personnel anew, we had no peace, but finally went to bed praying and pondering. Suddenly, just before dawn, I awakened and God gave me a plan. Something that jolly Dr. Hawks had described but that we had never seen done – and in fact little knew how to do. I was up rapping at each missionary’s home as they awakened and all agreed that at least here was action and that spiritual power was bound to follow. We would have a day of prayer and fasting. As I said, we did not know where or how to begin. At a sullen staff prayer meeting, I announced that we would work for one hour, then would read the Bible aloud on the grass for 15 minutes, sing for 15 minutes, and pray for 30 minutes. Throughout the day with no lunch break from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. it was voluntary and anyone who wanted to work and take their noon eating break was free to do so.

At first, about half the staff and all the hospital oriented missionaries and a few patients joined us. Quickly, the room in which we had planned to pray turned out to be too small. We moved out on the lawn and instead of 15 or 25 people as I had expected, we soon had one hundred, including patients. By the second lap in the schedule, the African teachers and missionaries at the Bible School had dismissed classes for the day to pray and fast with

us. Soon Christians from town began coming, and by evening the African Pastor had notified all his church leaders and asked us to gather for an evening meeting at the main church in which he surprised me by castigating the students for jeopardizing their futures and we unitedly prayed that God would deliver us from our impasse and troubles.

We had sent one of our male missionaries into town to consult our attorneys the day before but had no hope, other than in the Lord.

At least that night there was a great peace over the mission which was exactly characterized the next morning as I greeted a student nurse with “How are you this morning, Lennah?” Her reply, considering the last 26 hours, was classic. “Doctor, I’m rejoicing in the Lord.” How often it is I thought, that the simple faith of those we have come to minister to, surpasses our own.

We all worked well together that morning, though only twelve days from disaster. However, at 2:30 p.m. from a far distance down the dusty dirt road toward town came a growing sound of a horn being blown intermittently on and off, on and off, until we all began to look out the ward windows and sliding to a stop at the front door of the clinic was John Morrow, just returned from Nairobi. He leapt up onto the top of the cab of the blue pick-up truck and called for everyone to gather around. I thought this rather theatrical but we all came close, possibly fifty people and John said, “Rejoice with me. Our God, Jesus, has delivered us from the union”. I could hardly believe his words. In my mind I could see those lists of signatures, so very official and real. John continued, “The paper that was used is miraculously illegal. The union mimeographed off their own illegal forms.” In Kenya, to sign up for a union the law plainly states that special government forms must be used and they were not. We have seen the forms in the possession of the Union and they are not official ones. You are all released and free to choose again, this time intelligently. What a celebration we had of prayer and praise. We felt this to be a 20th century miracle!

CHAPTER EIGHT – KENYA WORD PRONUNCIATION

Some of our experiences with word pronunciation in Kenya have been priceless and ludicrous. During my year doing general medicine at the Mwingi Hospital I was struggling to understand what Kikamba language I could from the patients. In addition, it was often interesting to try to master British English, especially as spoken by the African brethren. Numerous times I fell for the pronunciation trap, which I will now describe. We would be making rounds on the bed patients, a missionary nurse, an African male dresser and I. Walking from one building to the next, the energetic and busy missionary nurse out front by five steps, the dresser would come up

close to me so he wouldn't be heard by the lady nurse and ask a question that had been asked to him in Kikamba by the patient. He would say, "Doctor, can you help Mrs. Mwoga with her 'boils'?" Coming out of a fog of concern for another patient I had seen, I would jump startled and say, "Boils, I didn't see any boils, where does she have boils?" "No, doctor, her daily boil-movement" and I would remember their quaint way of pronouncing bowels!

Like Chinese who speak of "flied lice" for fried rice, many of the African languages and people who speak them can hear no difference between "l" and "r". Once when a well-known American evangelist, Merv Russell, came out to Kenya, we were speaking of the Reverend Russell and our African brothers who had in years past well remembered a missionary named Revered Lozier were totally confused – Russell or Lozier. Switch the "r" and the "l" and the "z" and the "ss" and you have the same name. To our ears these are much different, but to theirs, identical.

Once while in Mombasa, a Pakistani sailor whose destroyer was visiting our lovely harbor, came browsing into the Hope Christian book shop while we were about. The sailor said he was from a "semi-Christian" family and was all excited at the rich spiritual experience he was expecting during the next few days. When asked what experience that was, he replied that their ship's next port of call was Dar Es Salaam (the capital of neighboring Tanzania to the south of us) and he was going to write home and tell his parents he had visited the Holy Land! Why? Well, if you say Dar Es Salaam and Jerusalem both with a Pakistani accent, they sound identical. He really thought they were going into Jerusalem with their destroyer! I'm glad he wasn't steering the ship!

CHAPTER EIGHT – A. SATAN EXPLODES

It was only a month or so later when there was called a conference of four to six small denominations of "like precious faith" on a mountaintop in Machakos District about seventy miles from Mwingi.

I had had no days off in a long while so we decided to attend the conference for a couple of days and then drive into Nairobi for supplies taking our brand new medical camper unit to act as a first aid station at the conference. It was a long, and the last few miles precarious, journey up the "back way" short cut. We made it by 1 p.m. and the conference was in full swing. We saw fascinating African choirs with drums and rattles and "dancing for the Lord" and heard thrilling messages.

I treated two people for minor problems and then after dark we gathered in a large building for a dinner of real ugali and meat soup and boiling hot African chai (sweet hot tea milkshake). It was a cold night at 4,000 feet

altitude on a windy mountaintop and we had all the camper windows tightly shut. Bonnie, age 3 ½ was sleeping in her sleeping bag on a built in bunk bed, while June and I were in the double bed.

As usual at about 2 a.m., Bonnie became restless as she needed help to relieve herself. June arose and couldn't find a flashlight or as the English say "torch" and so finding a box of matches and being our first night in our strange but useful camper, struck a light in the pitch blackness. Immediately, there was a tremendous roar, a blinding light, and I am told by an eye witness, a ball of flame which rose 75 feet in the black sheltered night. I thought I was going to be roasted alive as flames rushed out a vent in the roof above me. I still have a peculiar "blast injury" to my hearing now, totally missing certain high decibels. But instantly, near blackness returned and I could only hear my own, Bonnie's and especially my wife, June's screams. Soon only June was screaming in shock and pain as the curtains lazily crackled and burned. We had started a tremendous butane gas explosion and June's hands, face and inner thighs were severely burned. It's a wonder she didn't come unglued in more ways than one. June had been wearing a short blue nylon negligee and a long sleeved sweater over that. The wool jumper protected her chest but the blue nylon ignited as it blew into droplets of burning molten nylon which was found stuck to the front window of a car 20 feet away as the door was blown open and the camper demolished. Bonnie, snug in her sleeping bag suffered only a singed finger and extreme fright.

Well, Satan nearly got us, or sent us home again, but a side benefit of our explosion was that very soon June's parents were found by the New Orleans police before they boarded a freighter to come visit us, and instead flew out quickly to visit and encourage June often in the hospital, and to eventually take care of Bonnie and I while June slowly recovered. It was a month or so before June was released from the Nairobi Hospital and very shakily returned "home" to Mwingi.

CHAPTER NINE – MUIMI AND BLESSED FEMURS

Not many weeks later on a Saturday morning when I was feeling a bit peaked with a low grade flu and very slight fever, one of the male student nurses came running with the request that I come quickly to the hospital. A boy had fallen out of a tree while trying to get honey and his intestine was "all out". Well, this is not the kind of request that one can dawdle about with asking for more information or worry about one's 99 degree fever. In a trice, if they have trices in the African bush, I was dressed and running towards the hospital. Just as I arrived, little Muimi was being hoisted up from the wheelbarrow in which they had brought him.

Apparently he had fallen from a limb and had made a "belly flop" on a small sapling stump and truly his intestine was "hanging loose!" It had happened a few hours before and the bumpy wheelbarrow ride had done

him no good as he was nearly in shock. We took him directly into the operating room as I thought, “What business has an eye surgeon with all these intestines. Oh, help us both, Lord Jesus!”

Soon we had an i.v. drip going, and nurse Marilyn Fawcette had an ether anesthesia going and we began washing his abdomen, chest and legs with soap, then disinfectant while I scrubbed. The mere fact that he had not bled to death was a hopeful sign but as I looked at the pile of small and large bowel, I just didn’t know how little Muimi could live. We began irrigating bottles of 5% glucose in saline over him, just to keep his innards wet. I carefully opened up his anterior abdominal wall to be able to inspect everything. His liver was undamaged and his spleen amazingly intact – a very good lesson in eight-year old anatomy, except that here was a little boy just like my own three; I nearly wept.

Soon I gave up looking for large organs and decided to just start with the stomach and carefully inspect every inch of “food tube”. Of course, there was a lot of sand, dirt and grass to float way, to completely lift out, and to grittily express. Amazingly enough, I found not a single puncture in his intestine, so we flushed a large amount of penicillin and streptomycin around in his abdominal cavity and not knowing anything better to do we just began sewing him closed and replaced everything – thoroughly cleansed.

I expected ileus, intusescption, or fulminating infection, so I kept up the I.V., and much penicillin, and liquids only to eat, until three days had passed. Nearly every person on the staff witnessed to Muimi, and the same day we let him up, he prayed to become a Christian. Muimi came from the Kingdom of darkness and death both physically and spiritually into the Kingdom of light, Life and Jesus.

Within a week it was all we could do to slow him down and two weeks later when the skin stitches came out, we let him go home. Much as I felt sorry for our patients with major injuries, by the time six months had passed I had nearly learned to rejoice when a patient with a broken upper leg was brought in. Hospital stays of a week or less, though patching the body, even saving the life, only resulted in a real spiritual commitment about one third of the time. But, as we brought in patients for femur traction and knowing that they would stay for six weeks, the chances of their becoming Christians and receiving everlasting life through faith in Jesus was nearly 100%. I must admit the thought crossed my mind...I wondered how I could break all these peoples’ legs, but it neither seemed worthy nor practical – ha!

CHAPTER TEN – SHOOTING STARS

My friend Philip Morris and I had so many things in common – a love for treating sick eyeballs, an undying interest in seeing people come to Jesus, and also flying private single engine aircraft. Soon Philip had invited me to accompany him on a safari to Shiuyauga, Africa Inland Mission Hospital, flying from Nairobi over fascinating scenery of dry lake Megiddo and past the then smoking volcanic crater and even skirting a diamond mine before landing at Shiuyauga, Tanzania. We made the trip twice together, and once, too, to Letein Dispensary, also of African Inland Mission.

It was a struggle but I managed to keep my U.S. private license current and even eventually obtained my Kenya private pilot's license as well, though not until later when we moved to Mombasa.

At the risk of tiring my readers, I really should mention yet another flying escapade. It was one of those rare days when I had a few hours to spare having come in for a weekend from Mwingi to Nairobi. As usual, it had been about three months since I had flown and I decided it would be fun to hire a Cessna 150 at Wilson Airdrome, the large private aircraft landing ground in Nairobi with a very active control tower and two runways.

I showed my documents to a small operator who had two C-150s for rent and he sent a pilot with me for perfunctory single circuit check ride and then I was on my own for flying the pattern and doing touch and goes for the next 45 minutes.

I had come around about four times and was making my base leg turning onto final and having some difficulty in understanding not only the British terminology but also the African Controller's semi-British English rendition of it. I have learned here in Kenya that unless you know the words to expect to be used, it is very easy to not understand. One may repeat, "say again slowly" over and over again but the tower voice changes little. Of course, you are confined to a small airplane approaching the tower at 80 miles per hour and there is little enough time in a busy pattern.

Well, I had been having the usual word trouble when suddenly as I came onto final, I heard nothing from the tower. Probably there was a fault in my aircraft's radio but I had tired of these touch and go games and getting the tower speech patterns unscrambled, so I resolved to just put the plane down this time and taxi back to the hanger. I made the usual approach and was about 50 feet from the ground when it looked like the fourth of July with red rockets, flares and streams of glitter emitting from the tower. I gathered something must be "amiss" so shoved in the power and drifted to the right of the runway and there landing below me was a fast twin engine

plane which had made a direct approach, never entering the circuit but using a straight in long final, and had been beneath my glide path at least 35 miles per hour faster all the way along.

I had made a correct diagnosis in that the tower controller did not want me to land. It was only years later when studying for the Kenya flying license that I learned what those “shooting stars” of varying colors mean.

CHAPTER TEN – A. I LOVE EYES

I have found over the years of working both in the U.S. and here in Africa that the work that tires me most is the work I attempt which I know I do poorly.

Once, for instance, when we had first moved to Mombasa I was struggling to build wardrobes, supervise electricians and chase after hardware and painting supplies in town as well as answer letters from home about why we had become independent missionaries and helping out an ophthalmologist in Mombasa who had been involved in a near fatal auto crash, Dr. Kanu Ved. I literally walked in his office to see patients with each footfall nearly splitting my head from a tension headache. I wondered who was most in need of assistance, the patients or the doctor. But within 45 minutes of just doing that which I love to do and am trained well to do, my tension headache –without any medication-had disappeared!

So it was that some of the greatest joy I found during our year at Mwingi were the two periods of three and six weeks when my friend Mr. Philip Morris – Mr. is a term of great distinction for English surgeons – went on holiday and asked me to come in at dawn Friday morning and see patients in his “surgery” in downtown Nairobi all day Friday and a half-day on Saturday. What joy and relaxation in the midst of time pressure and release it was for me to zip into town 95 miles by dirt road and act like an ophthalmologist again. Even to have a businessman’s lunch in a fancy restaurant all dressed up with suit and tie. It was great and I blessed God for the harried “vacations”.

CHAPTER TEN – B. MOTTLED

One morning as Philip, Benjamin and I were making rounds, we found a new patient who had been admitted only at dawn. He was an elderly black African man of about 85 years, who was very sick, vomiting almost continuously.

I did a careful examination on him and soon decided he had a strangulated inguinal hernia. A section of intestine had been trapped and now blocked as it came into a long existent un-repaired groin hernia. By then, three relatives had come and I spoke with them explaining the seriousness of his problem and that he would probably need a section of his bowel cut out and the two ends sewed back together. This is a very hazardous operation even when performed by the best of intestinal surgeons and I frankly told them I had never attempted such a large operation, nor on so old a person. However, I knew there was a general surgeon 55 miles away at the Kitui district government hospital and I felt he could easily make it in time to have the surgery competently done.

I left them discussing the problem and was busy in the hospital the rest of the day. The next morning I was again making rounds and when we entered the men's ward, around the corner, "out of sight" was one very, very sick 85-year old man. I was astonished. "Is he still here?" I asked, "Why was he not taken to Kitui?" Philip shuffled his big feet, he is 6'3" tall, and staring at the floor hesitantly told me that yesterday afternoon the relatives had finally come to a decision. It would cost \$5.65 to transport the old man to Kitui and after all he was very old and really not worth that much money. They had all said goodbye to him and left him here to die.

By now he was in bad shape but I could not just watch him die. We immediately began two i.v. drips to rehydrate him and told the staff to have the operating room ready in 90 minutes. Then, with my father-in-law present and very interested, I felt that if I could explain to anyone what we were going to do, it would help my own fluttering heart and clarify my thoughts.

Together, we found a Surgical Atlas in Matt Johnson's library with celluloid "see through" pictures of how to handle a strangulated inguinal hernia. The lovely colored pictures showed that if the intestine was a dusky purple black, color, when released from its entrapment, it must be cut out and the two pink ends tediously, carefully and skillfully sewed together again. But, when set free of its blockage, if the intestine was a healthy pink color, that meant that no damage had been done to the intestine and one could just let it go back into place, repair the hernia (I had only done two in my life) and breathe a sigh of relief.

Informed is armed, so with my building contractor, deputy sheriff, father-in-law at my side for expert consultation, the Lord Jesus supervising, and after prayer, we gave the old man a spinal anesthetic, were delighted that it stopped at exactly the level we had intended, and proceeded to "open him up" – heart in mouth dreading that awful picture of purple black bowel shown in the Atlas. Finally when we had the bowel completely released I stood there amazed and uncertain. What I held in my gloved hand was mottled pink and

purple bowel – speckled if you will. Nowhere in the Atlas had there been such a picture! Now one cannot just go around drilling out each purple spot or you would have a sieve, a leaky hose, not a “food tube”.

Lacking anything more brilliant to do and feeling a great need for supernatural help, I bowed my head and said, “Let us pray for wisdom!” Quite intentionally I talked a long time to the Lord – possibly a full five minutes. The old man was feeling nothing, we were going nowhere and God well knew the exact answer.

When I opened my eyes again I looked at the offending innard and it was distinctly now pinker and less mottled. I felt that to be a sign from the Lord and dropped the intestine back into the abdomen and concentrated upon the hernia repair. Soon Humpty Dumpty was back together again, and not sparing the antibiotics, nor the I.V. drip, we sent him back to his bed.

Three days later, the aged patriarch had only one complaint – “piles”. I figured he could live with these and in ten days dismissed him to his astonished relatives.

CHAPTER ELEVEN – ROSE THORN?

Next to the mission station, in fact one of the main reasons the mission was located there, was a gigantic boulder, called “kautha” that was most useful. It towered about 250 feet above the houses, hospital, church, bible school and dormitories. Whenever a few inches of rain fell, there are catchment troughs engineered and built to gather thousands of gallons of fresh water for the storage tanks at the base of the rock. Yet, these are well above the level of the building needing the precious fluid in that arid countryside. With strong inquisitive sons to shepherd and follow, all of us had climbed the lofty heights of “kautha” many times for sport for a bird’s eye view of the mission or just for a special occasion.

Having decided to attack “kautha’s” height from the gentle slope direction instead of up the steep rock face, I had four-year old Bonnie by the hand and we had attracted six varieties of “wait-a-bits” (an 8 foot graceful bush that grows next to most every path, behind which assorted beasts lie in ambush) and were climbing the mountain when my foot slipped on thin dirt overlying solid granite and with my free hand I grabbed the tree trunk of a 5” tree and ouch! Can you believe that out from the far side of the tree trunk there emerged ¾” thorns. No blood was drawn but I was in the position that suits missionaries best – on my knees – but not exactly praising the Lord, more like an Abrahamic curse upon these midianite trees!

So it was that a few weeks later, a student nurse came to fetch me and told me that they had a 12-year old boy with a thorn in his foot. Immediately visions of my experience sprang to my mind and I said, “I’ll be up shortly!” Twenty minutes later as I walked into the hospital, I was told, “The boy is in the operating theater, Doctor”. “Operating theater, for a thorn in the foot?” I hurried down mildly upset that such a minor case would be brought into our rather sterile surgery. Soon I saw the boy on the operating table with a sharply whittled razor impaling his foot just behind the toes all the way through from bottom to top. “Wow” I said, “who stabbed him with that home-made knife?” “Knife?”, the student nurse replied, “that is a thorn!” “Oh, now wait a minute!”, I said. “I thought you wouldn’t believe me”, she replied as she pointed to the corner of the surgery where the boy’s clothes lay and there was the most amazing branch with huge glistening white 12” thorns, three or four a branch.

Someone else spoke up saying, “The boy was running after a dic dic, he leapt over a rock, and this thorn perforated his foot.” Indeed this boy won the prize for the largest thorn I had ever seen. We sawed off one end and extracted the thorn, sewed him up, and amazingly no nerves, ligaments, bones or blood vessels were ruptured and with good care two weeks later, he tenderly walked away.

CHAPTER TWELVE – LION GRASS AND SLEEPING ZEBRAS

Ukamboni, the home of the Wakamba people is a land infested with deadly snakes. Mwingi hospital draws from exactly this situation.

Many were the times when adults were waiting at dawn by the hospital front steps with a greatly swollen extremity from the bite of either a puff adder or a cobra. As a general rule, most people were not bit in the neck or head and over the age twelve would live, though they occasionally lose a finger or foot from gangrene.

I well remember an 8-year old African boy brought in to us only 40 minutes after a cobra bite of the ankle. He reminded me so much of our son, Doug. We had fresh cobra anti-venom that we gave him. A visiting Dutch doctor from the Mutomo Roman Catholic’s hospital a hundred miles away was enjoying a cup of coffee with us and we followed the extra things he suggested – I.M., steroids, etc. We debriefed the wound and flushed it out – in short we did absolutely everything we knew to do including much praying. But after four hours, the boy breathed his last and died, overcome by the great power of a toxin his little body just could not dilute. And I cried. No, it was not all victory at Mwingi. We daily faced life and death problems and occasionally in great sadness, we lost.

Thus it was that I was highly aware of the danger of walking in the bush and the need to see exactly where you trod your foot. One time trying to measure out a landing strip near the hospital, I missed stepping upon a puff adder by a bare two inches and seeing him, quickly leapt away before he could lazily bite me.

Whenever we walked, the paths between houses or to and from the hospital at night, we had a flashlight beam pointing four to ten feet ahead. If we saw a snake a loud yell would quickly bring someone with a shotgun or spade.

One weekend while the boys were home from boarding school, Gary Johnson, laboratory technician at the hospital, and I decided to go on a hunting safari to Suswa Crater in the Great Rift Valley, not far from our boys' school, Rift Valley Academy. Our prime target was zebra. The hunting block was especially known for many zebra and was usually booked far in advance by professional hunters with their overseas visitors, but we had it – Gary and I – two guns for three days only. Also, it especially appealed to me since having tried and failed so many times at camping – forgotten tent poles, forgotten can opener, camped in a dry river bed when it rained – that I was quite content to leave the boys and Gary – the “bushmen” – to their tenting while I could drive 40 minutes away and sleep at friend Dr. Bill Barnett's home at RVA.

Getting a late start we only made it in time to locate and set up the camp the first day. The second day we scoured the Eastern half of our hunting block, saw many baboons and my oldest son saw a Thompson gazelle grazing at 200 yards. Chris dropped to a prone position and using a .22 long rifle aimed 5” high and squeezed off a shot. The Tommy dropped instantly with a heart shot while we all rejoiced and patted our marksmen on the shoulder. But only once did we see a few zebra far away.

With such bold black and white stripes, one would think that zebra would be highly visible, but this is not true. After 150 yards or so the two colors meld into a featureless gray and only their horsey gait and chubby appearance can you tell what they are.

Inside Suswa Crater are large meadows, ravines, and even a dense small rain forest sunken deep within, and always helter skelter outcroppings of bare rock and paths of rough ignus solitudinal lava, a great variation. On the last day we had hunted well past noon before we stopped driving within the great open crater. After a catnap we were on the move again by 3 p.m. with hopes fading, when far off in the distance we saw a mixed herd of Coke's Hartebeaste – or large horse faced gazelle, mixed with zebra. As we watched carefully, there were maybe 30 zebra mixed in. There was a gently declining vast meadow of lion grass with 300 yards away and two large fortress-like outcroppings of rock. The animals were nearly a mile away and walking slowly

toward us. Taking my .337 Magnum I got out of the car to head for the rock fortresses sending Tim ½ mile ahead with the .22. Gary with his 30-06 and little Doug with his .17 air pellet rifle were driven in a wide arc to one half mile beyond the animals to drive them down toward Tim and me. If the zebra sensed a trap, Gary still might get an excellent shot.

Plans explained, I started on foot becoming more and more uneasy. Lion grass is well named. It is the color of lion, grows thickly to 3 ½ feet and is absolutely an ideal refuge for the king of the beasts. Here I was walking into it with the lion's most favorite food, plump zebra, approaching now less than a mile away. To give me further unease I became aware that I could not see where my feet were falling and there must have been at least a density of one cobra and two puff adders per square acre of warm wild grassland.

Soon I was trotting as quietly as I could manage in a cold sweat at what lay between the rocks and me. After what seemed a very long time I climbed up into an island of rocks watching for scorpions, tarantulas, and the aforementioned serpents. Gradually my heart began slowing down and I glanced at my watch – 5:15 p.m. – just 75 minutes more of light and our hunt would be over.

I was sitting about 25 feet above the land of the lion grass and saw no motion except the occasional ripple of a breeze quartering from my left down hill.

I listened instantly and watched, wondering if I would hear Tim or the report of Gary's rifle far off to my right. Then suddenly I heard a group of six zebras behind me go running down a trail and immediately 70 yards away came another group of eight zebras through the lion grass from right to left downhill.

Bobbing up and down as they ran at moderate pace, there was no picking out an animal so I aimed at the midst of zebra flesh and fired. Absolutely nothing happened except the zebra scattered, ran to join the first six, waited a moment and then all 14 in three small groups came running back up the gentle incline, now 100 yards away. Not wanting to shoot towards Tim to my right, I got off one quick shot at knotted zebra flesh just left and downhill of my imaginary path into these rocks. Again, nothing except 56 thundering hoofs back to where they had come from. Vainly I waited for the crack of a .22" or for the roar of the 30-06 but there was not another sound for a full five minutes. Well, I'd had my shooting and there was nothing to be gained by continuing to sit and wait with all game within two miles thoroughly warned, so I began to make my way down the rocky fortress when I remembered bygone days of reading articles in the National Rifleman Magazine, lesson #1, "always investigate where you shot, you might pick up a blood trail from a solidly wounded animal.

I had mentally marked the nearest and first shot so I disinterestedly wandered over in that direction and after about 60 yards looked around a bit. Suddenly bedded down in the lion grass, I saw a zebra sleeping. I gave a jump and cautiously walked up to the large beast. It did not move and was not breathing. “It must have died yesterday of old age”, I thought, “and yet it looked remarkably well fed.” I shoved a foot against its hind leg to assay the rigor mortis and the leg moved easily. Sensing a danger trick I kept the safety off and the rifle cradled “at ready” and circled Mr. Zebra. Without a doubt he had recently died. I stooped and put my hand upon a flank and he was still warm. Only then did I see the bullet hole through the base of the neck and spine. I had killed him with my first shot and he had dropped instantly so that I had not even seen it happen.

I gave a whoop and a holler and fired the gun. Soon Tim, Gary, and Doug were surveying our prize and Chris was drawing the Pugeot 404 station wagon across the mostly flat bed of lion grass to where we were. Boy, were we happy! The zebra skin made a lovely wall decoration and we would eat frozen zebra steak and roast for months to come. Even the hoofs and legs wound up as decorative lamp stands. We field dressed the animal and with much heaving, got the carcass into the back of the station wagon, just as the last rays of the sun were slanting across the lion grass. Gary walked 10 feet in front of the left front wheel and Tim the same before the right front tire. We were carefully watching to avoid rocks and headed for the road when Gary let out a yell, “Dr. Bill!” “There’s another sleeping zebra”. We ran around to look and sure enough my second shot had brain shot Mr. Zebra’s brother who had likewise dropped “like a ton of bricks”.

Now the car barely held one full-sized zebra so we called a cabinet meeting of successful hunters and decided that Doug, Gary and I would drive this first one back to camp where dinner could be initiated, while Chris and Tim with the .22 would wait by the second carcass with a flashlight until I could return with the car in an hour or so. The plan sounded good enough until as I was returning in the pitch darkness, I suddenly realized what I had done – left my older two sons standing atop the world’s best lion or leopard bait in an area thickly inhabited by killer cats with nothing more than a flashlight and a .22 pop gun. The last 10 miles the cold sweat returned to my brow and I heaved a great sigh of relief and answered prayer as I finally saw the tiny pencil of light bidding me welcome to where my boys sat quite unconcernedly astride the zebra. It ended well and we really praised the Lord for such innocent days in the wilds of East Africa.

CHAPTER TWELVE – A. UNEXPECTEDLY SHOCKING CULTURE

We returned again to begin life at Mwingi. Much is written about culture shock and it is without a doubt, real. But there are other kinds of culture shock that are just not mentioned. The oddest one happened to us 18 months later, in 1968, when we returned from the African bush hospital to Philadelphia. As a qualification, let

me remind you that we were now used to traveling one weekend every two or three weeks, to the capital city of Kenya, where in a mad rush we would buy everything from medicines to meat and from empty bottles to full butane cylinders. The trip was four hours on a dusty dirt road or hours in gooey mud.

Well, when we arrived in the city of brotherly love, we were assigned to use a six-year old Ford station wagon about twice the length of our V.W. variant that we used in Africa, and were immediately reminded of the huge “boats” that people are used to driving. Soon we were on the Schuylkill Expressway and being nudged over and passed by Chryslers and Cadillacs, even 50% larger and longer yet.

Shortly we were due to speak at a church in Williamsport, PA, and taking interstate 80 we stopped for a rest stop at a huge modern complex of gas station and restaurant. After a cup of coffee and a roll as I was standing in line for the cashier, I began to feel uncomfortable with so many things for sale at my elbow, shoulder and eye level - mints, magazines, pretzels, No Doze, and paperbacks. As I handed in my restaurant bill, the girl seemed disappointed and said, “nothing else?” I clung to my wallet and decided to retire from the organized conspiracy to filch my farthings in the gent’s restroom.

Heaving a sigh of relief in the sterile sanitary odors as I mopped my feverish brow with a wet paper towel, I glanced to my left at a huge money monster hung surrounding a mirror which said, “Are you satisfied with the way you look?” And I recoiled in horror at the yawning slots for 10, 25, 35 or 50 cents for a new comb, hankie, puff of cologne, nail file, aspirin, or band-aid. “Deposit the correct change and pull the handle” it read, and I fled. Shocked by my own culture.

Another culture shock which we certainly experienced at Mwingi on the “gathered fortress colony type station” was the feeling of “shared responsibility for each other”, i.e. everybody watching all that you did and very willing to tell you about it – or just plain nosey neighbors who felt your business was “our Christian witness”.

We were young enthusiastic missionaries who had lived in their own house, married with four healthy raucous yelling kids and were brought into the midst of a station of older and younger spinsters, widow lady, middle aged couples, and one exceptionally restrained family of five equally young scholarly children. A raised voice in such a hallowed sanctuary for the meditative life was met with equally raised eyebrows and a sure word of advice at the next prayer or mission meeting.

We just had never learned that the Christian life was to be “inner peace and outward solemnity”. Neither had we realized what “holy ground” we tread as we moved into the mission compound.

As I told each of the missionaries when I wrote the Board, I am certain that dear missionary ladies never entered the Lord's service with a view to "women rule" of an energetic witnessing, Bible College, and hospital mission station. But people being what they are and with past disappointments in male leadership who deserted the Board, the station when we arrived had two men and six ladies who were qualified to vote on mission matters out of five men and eight ladies.

Within six months when there were shifts of assignments, we had the absurd line up of five ladies only who could vote out of six ladies and three men, and we saw the attempt of the curse of the Lord upon Jerusalem and Judah by the prophet Isaiah, chapter 3, verse 12"...women rule over them."

CHAPTER THIRTEEN – OUR FIRST IN MOMBASA

For some months there was a real question of whether Dr. and Mrs. Johnson were going to return. This led us to much soul searching. We had absolutely no doubt that God had called us back into General Practice for this year, but "what if", oh, how many of us lose our trust in the Master over those two words – "what if". What would we really do if the Johnsons did not return and there were no doctor to keep the R.K. Armes Memorial Hospital going?

That needed and received much prayer and finally another day of prayer and fasting. We eventually gave in, again, to the Lord and said "Thy will be done". Lord, if you want us to stay in General Medicine at Mwingi, we are available. We so wrote to Dr. Phil Clark at the Independent Board office too.

However, as so often happens when the Lord just wants to know if your heart is right before Him, within a few weeks, word reached us that Matt and Ruth were returning on schedule July 1, 1968 and that we were cleared to travel to Mombasa and survey for a new mission station, the Biblical Missions Eye Center, departing July 1st. It was recognized that an eye work would develop too slowly in the African bush.

With happy hearts, we packed our things, had a diesel lorry collect and transport our bulky items and with the agreement of our friend and pioneer missionary from Congo, Ukambani and most recently 15 years in Mombasa, Rev. and Mrs. George Lyons, moved lock, stock and barrel to Kwa Jomvu, a Mombasa suburb and their guest house. There was an immense enclosed porch that housed all our crates and Kenya bought furniture while we lived in the connected 1 ½ bedroom apartment.

Boy, was it hot and humid in a single story dwelling with a corrugated metal roof, just like an oven. We literally took three to four baths per day just to cool off. I soon met Dr. Kanu Ved, the best-trained eye surgeon in town and he was most welcoming, really craving stimulating scientific fellowship.

We soon sat about making a large map of Mombasa and twenty-five miles north and south and marking each prospective plot we visited. We only had two weeks to look in July not even knowing how much money we had for purchase and development, but it did give us an idea of what to expect.

During the last week at Mwingi I had fallen on a sandy hill from my Vespa motor scooter and wrenched my knee. On the first Sunday morning we were in Mombasa, my knee was so sore that I could hardly get out of bed, so we just remained at home and June gave a Sunday school lesson while I preached to June, Bonnie and me. June's Sunday school lesson was on Noah and the Ark.

CHAPTER FOURTEEN – MOMBASA IN, BOARD OUT

We had heard bits and pieces of the many conflicts of our mission board – the Independent Board for Presbyterian Foreign Missions – of the split after Dr. Machen died resulting in the Orthodox Presbyterian Church separating from the Bible Presbyterian Church, of the many good men who had left Dr. Carl MacIntire for one reason or another, of the 1956 split from which the Reformed Presbyterian Church Evangelical Synod had been formed, and of the domineering of Dr. MacIntire. But, having come into the mission board via our home church in California which still had at least 70% of our support, and really knowing few on the East Coast where we felt the people must just be more fussy, it never occurred to us that we could become swept up in conflict.

The main person we knew at the Board was Dr. J. Philip Clark, General Secretary and a real “pro”... diplomatic, handsome, wise and filled with the spirit of God. Yes, we had met Dr. MacIntire on three or four occasions but to us he was nothing more than a distant “father figure”.

Even before we left Mwingi, we received word that our home church pastorate in California was, of all things, going to be filled by our most respected friend, Dr. Phil Clark. We were delighted for our home church, but wondered what the new general secretary of the mission, Dr. Lynn Grey Gordon would be like.

When we arrived back in America we gradually felt “out of place” and were amazed to find that all was not well between Drs. McIntire and Clark. We could never understand what the fuss was about and really felt that the entire affair would blow over. However, within the month before we returned, Dr. McIntire began publicly

in his newspaper, The Christian Beacon, attacking Dr. Clark and by the night before we departed for Africa, Dr. Gordon explained to me that he used to think that Dr. MacIntire could make a mistake, but had now concluded that God spoke through Dr. Macintire. WOW! I was speechless. This is the fabric of which prophets and cults are made. Well I hoped that the other side of the world would help, and we ardently joined hundreds of others praying for peace. But it never came as the seminary broke asunder and most all the professors and students left Dr. McIntire and formed what eventually became Biblical Theological Seminary. When we reached Mombasa and began looking again for property, we completed a survey of 42 plots within five weeks.

We had three basic criteria that we prayed the Lord Jesus would give us a) a place with a sea breeze, preferably on the coast or water's edge, b) a location close enough to a general medical work to allow me to really practice ophthalmology and not as a general medical first-aid station, c) at a crossroads where many people would walk daily.

Many places had one or two but only one place had all three criteria – “Miriam Villa”. This unique old Arab house had been abandoned for two years with the owners moved to London, but with cousins still living in Mombasa. It sits overlooking the old harbor atop a bluff with a lovely breeze and near vertical descent 80 feet to a small beach and tidal coral shelf below. It is located 300 yards from the large Kenya Government Coast Province Hospital, and being on the main road to Nyali Bridge, thousands and thousands of people walk past its outer gate daily.

The day after seeing “Miriam Villa”, I brought our whole family of six, we walked around its acre grounds, the boys scaled the bluff to the sea below and chased “ghost crabs” and we finally gathered alone at dusk by the inner front gate and we all knelt while I prayed to the God of the universe “claiming this property for Jesus Christ and his eternal Kingdom”. The next day at an attorneys office I saw something I had never seen before or since – as we tried to bargain or dicker around the price that the real estate agent had quoted me, the price slowly at first and then gaining in momentum soared out of sight. It seemed the more they heard my American accent, the greater the visions of U.S. dollar sugar plums spun in their heads until in disgust I finally walked out.

In the meanwhile, on the home front, the situation deteriorated as even I had letters sent to me via the Board from another missionary dutifully denouncing Dr. Clark with the strong implication that I should follow suit. I soon began thinking that maybe with all the home troubles, I had better just rent an office and a house separately and settle down to seeing patients and gradually, as time permitted, find and build the Eye Center that we envisioned. Therefore, one day I went back to “the old fox” Ramji Jethabhai the Agent for “Miriam Villa”,

among many others and told him that we were going to consider “Plan B” – renting both a home and office for some months or years until a suitable property could be found to buy and develop.

“I’ve got just the place for you”, he said and we drove off in his car. I was soon lost winding on small Mombasa roads until we turned right and passed the Miriam Villa sign and I thought, “Well, at least we will be close to that choice plot!” And he drove up to Miriam Villa, opened the door and said, “There it is, how long do you want to rent it?” I couldn’t believe my ears. “No, Mr. Jethabhai, you are breaking my heart – I cannot buy it, I want to rent a house and office.”

“What’s wrong with this?” I can get it for you for six months or a year lease with an option for double that time and for 1,500 shillings (\$200/month). “Do you mean the owners will lease this property for one to two years?” “Of course!”, he said. “Do you suppose we could offer 18 months/lease with an option for another 18 months to make three years total – for 1,500 shillings per month?” I asked. “We have nothing to lose, let’s try!”

The owners accepted but wanted the lease drawn by an attorney. Then came an unexpected problem. The rest of the Kenya Mission in Nairobi and Mwingi suddenly became unwilling to be of any help to me with our lease.

Phone calls and telegrams finally gave me permission by the Board to sign the lease “on my own, as a private individual”. Then as June and I were about to sign the next day, we remembered a statement we had been required to sign as we became missionaries 2 ½ years before, to the effect that if for any reason we left the Board, we agreed to separate by 50 miles from any mission station which the Board was operating.

Suddenly we saw a trap. If the board demanded that we leave our home church as the price for remaining in the mission and on the field – as they had done in 1956- and now with our home church pastored by a man they considered almost an “enemy”, what could we do? If we were personally responsible for \$200/month for a property and the board could fire us for not severing relationship with our home church, we would have to move from Mombasa and continue to pay \$200/month for 18 months.

Of course, we had no intention of leaving our home church. Therefore, I sent similar telegrams asking for a firm statement from each if it was okay with them if we remained a part of the other. Our church assured “you are our missionary, no matter under whose board, or even independently you work, we love and support you.” The board waited a week and then cabled, “we pray all will work out satisfactorily”. Weakness when we needed strength!

We prayed for wisdom and then seeing the jaws of the trap, sent a registered airmail letter informing the Board that we were reluctantly resigning from the mission board. But that this could be revoked by February 15 – two weeks – if a written waiver of the 50-mile rule would be sent to us. More letters came asking us to re-consider but never the needed waiver. On February 16, 1969 we became irrevocably independent, and forthwith signed the lease, there being no work, missionaries or station of the Independent Board existent in Mombasa. Within a week we had moved in and began remodeling to open the Lighthouse for Christ Eye Center, June 1, 1969.

An interesting sequel to this occurred a few months later when Dr. Gordon, general secretary of the Board was in Nairobi. He and another missionary apparently decided to fly down to Mombasa – I suppose to “plant the flag”, claim they had a mission station, and ask us to then move. They boarded a propjet East African Airways aircraft bound for Mombasa. When they arrived, they deplaned at the coastal airport, grabbed a taxi as the aircraft departed and said to the amazed driver – “Take us for lunch at the Manor Hotel in downtown Mombasa”. It took the taxi driver five minutes to explain that their flight came first to the resort town of Malindi, 60 miles north of Mombasa before flying on to Mombasa and they were now at the Malindi Airport and their airliner had left for Mombasa six minutes before. There was only one more flight coming to Malindi in the next 24 hours and that was in two hours when a flight originating in Mombasa stopped in Malindi on its way back to Nairobi.

Did you really want a 60-mile ride to Mombasa costing 1,500 shillings? Their attempt was abandoned and we never heard another word about it. Except that we really did have dear friends at the Board office, and had no hard feelings for anyone, realizing that we are going to laugh about this through all eternity together. So next furlough home we made it a point to visit Dr. MacIntire’s church while he preached, greet him and drop into the Board office and tell them we loved them and prayed for them too.

Even though it took three and ½ months to remodel, repaint, repair electricity and create an efficient Eye Clinic out of a large old Arab home, we began a Sunday school and Tuesday night “Bible pictures” evangelistic meeting by the end of the first month.

In the midst of our gradual withdrawal from our mission board and towards the end of December 1968, I heard one day that my most welcoming colleague Dr. Ved and his wife were hospitalized in the Pandya Clinic with severe injuries from an auto accident on the deadly Mombasa-Nairobi road, at that time considered the second most deadly road in Black Africa. I was thoroughly shocked when I visited them in adjoining rooms. Dr. Ved had a broken jaw, many broken ribs, a serious burn on one arm and generally traumatized. Mrs. Ved had both a

dislocated cervical vertebrae and a dislocated hip and was in traction pulling her in opposite directions. They both looked bad.

I offered to help two days a week in Dr. Ved's private practice office and two mornings per week at the Coast Province Government Hospital which service was gratis. Dr. Ved nearly wept with gratitude, as he was acutely conscious of his patient's needs as well.

So it was that the Lord opened the Mombasa medical fraternity to me, as it was quickly known that Dr. Ghrist was filling in for the best-known eye doctor in town. There were three or four others, two near retirement age and two others doing little eye surgery. Immediately I was caring for patients at the European, Hindi and Muslim hospitals in town – all quite open to any race or religion as well as the only eye surgeon at the Government Hospital also.

CHAPTER FIFTEEN – ANGELIC HOLMES

As preparations neared completion for the Eye Center and we were about to set a date for the dedication service and opening to patients, I received a letter from William J. Holmes, M.D. and family of Honolulu, Hawaii asking if they could drop by for a few days as they traveled from India to West Africa, or some such. How they heard of our minuscule work, not yet born, I have never figured out. But three days before we opened to see the first patients, their family of four adults came.

We had plenty of room and really enjoyed their fellowship. We had never met before and, in fact, he was among the select group of thousands of American ophthalmologists of whom I had never heard. But, unknown to me, he was not at all unknown to the Lord of Lords, Jesus. Dr. Holmes was in fact sent by God himself to answer a pressing problem that I had sub-consciously submerged, having no real solution.

I well remember a lovely luncheon we had, when Dr. Holmes wanted to see a beautiful beach and treat us to a festive meal. As we began eating, between the soup and fish courses, Dr. Holmes innocently asked me the question for which I had no answer. "Bill, where are you going to operate on the low fee patients who can afford so little? Most will need cataract operations and others will need correction from the ravages of trachoma, the equatorial sun and tropical disease."

Well, I knew all the places we could NOT turn. At the Coast Province Hospital, Dr. Ved had five eye beds only and with one hold over each week from trauma or tumor, that left only four beds for four or five operations each

Thursday morning. There was “no room at the inn”. The cheapest I could manage in a private hospital was 600-900 shillings (two to three times the price our patients could then afford). I was stuck and said so.

“Bill”, Dr. Holmes said, “have you ever heard of outpatient cataract surgery?” “You mean operating for cataracts under local anesthesia and sending the patient home when he is cleared of the pre-operative medicine...you must be crazy!”, I said with feeling. “Why when I was in private practice in Glendale I was so conservative that I would often send my post-op cataract patients to the intensive care unit for the first 24 hours, though I had been dismissing my patients in 4 or 5 days instead of the usual week. Send them home on the same day, my foot!”, I thought. Then Dr. Holmes informed me that he was a member of the select fraternity in ophthalmology called the A.O.S. (American Ophthalmology Society) composed mostly of professors and research oriented eye men and that a few years before another member of their group, Dr. Jack Jervey of Greenville, S.C., had reported on 500 outpatient cataract operations he had done in Greenville.

Then Dr. Holmes went on to describe in his world travels as a sub-specialist in ocular leprosy, that he had met an ophthalmologist in Hong Kong who found outpatient cataracts an inexpensive solution to the crowded hospital space in that tiny island of freedom.

I felt my resistance crumbling as he spoke and it was quite obvious that if I were to be busy, we had to solve this problem and it was the only positive response we could make. I would never have even thought of this “hazardous” way but now 12 years and over 2,000 operations later we see not only no hazard, but distinct advantage, to elderly people who cherish familiar surrounding for their recovery.

The Holmes were here the very first day we saw patients and as a special blessing, the Lord sent a patient in great distress needing a simple transition procedure and Dr. Holmes scrubbed with me, “holding my hand” figuratively, as we embarked upon outpatient intraocular surgery. He would be surprised to know that I have considered him to be an angel of mercy sent to minister to me – ha!

CHAPTER SIXTEEN – THE LIGHTHOUSE FOR CHRIST PET SHOW

One Friday in March, 1973, our daughter Bonnie found out that two days hence, Sunday morning at 10 a.m., there was to be held a gala Mombasa Pet Show, and who, of course, should be chosen as the winner of the show dogs but our own thoroughbred Welsh Corgi, Chui; at least in Bonnie’s mind, no other dog had a chance. The real rub was that it was to be on the Lord’s Day. For every bit of sweet smelling ointment there just must be a fly!

Soon Bonnie had another idea and proceeded to make up her own invitation poster for the “Lighthouse for Christ” Pet Show to be held a day sooner – Saturday at 3 p.m. Her poster read as follows: “These are the pets you can bring – cats, bred dog, very many dogs, bull dog, dog that can jump, unusual dog, rabbits, mice and guinea pigs, best pet bird, pet lizard and snakes.” That Friday evening June and I retired thanking God for our dog, Chui, especially as we didn’t expect any other entrants.

However, by 3 p.m. “busy Bonnie” had rounded up two other very keen competitors. Peter Brown, son of missionaries to the Asian people in Mombasa, brought his most unusual straight-eyed Siamese cat “Sim Sim”. Now as an eye surgeon whose job it is to measure and straighten children’s eyes that are crossed, here was by far the finest example of a Siamese cat I had ever seen. One who would never win a silver spoon, but one would never need ophthalmic surgery to put my heart at ease. There was no getting around it, Sim Sim was judged to win the yellow ribbon “grand prize”.

Somehow, another of Bonnie’s friends, Palela Skuce, whose father was the Mombasa airport controller, and a good man to be friendly with as a private pilot, brought her most unhygienic and rude duckling. A special red ribbon for “special prize” was awarded while our thoroughbred “Chui” and Bonnie had to console themselves with the blue ribbon of first prize. The Lord really blessed our pet show with laughter and joy.

CHAPTER SIXTEEN – A. A WAY OF LIFE

Life as a missionary eye doctor is just a constant series of learning experiences, in areas of medicine, theology, evangelism and church growth. That is part of the real fun of walking with the Lord. When we came as missionaries we had taken a course in P.E. (personal evangelism), had witnessed to maybe six people and had seen maybe ten people become “Christians” as a result of our preaching.

Believe it or not, what made me most uneasy, was sitting next to an unbeliever on the plane or bus. I knew I should do something but the various methods I had memorized just never seemed to fit. My mind would turn blank and I would preach or argue, but not persuade.

While we were home on short furlough in 1970, we returned to visit Dr. Curtis Benton, Jr. of Fort Lauderdale, Florida. Shortly after we had begun our eye clinic and Sunday school the year before in Mombasa, Curtis and his son Dudley, who had been visiting a missionary eye hospital in Pakistan, and had come to Kenya to hunt elephant and other big game, came to visit us for 24 hours and see the newest and possibly smallest missionary eye clinic. During the drive reaching our place it was quite obvious that though Dr. Curtis was a believer, it

seemed Dudley couldn't be pinned down and perhaps felt he did not fit into the "Christian world". Maybe he was, but maybe he was not. The next day as I was speaking to our Muslim, Hindu and pagan African patients assembled, June asked Dudley if he knew he was going to heaven? He just didn't know and June then in surprise, said "Maybe you're no closer to Jesus than these Muslims and Hindus, Dudley." He agreed and said he would like to do something about it. June took him aside and on their knees, June, always a better intuitive witness than I, led him to commit his life to Jesus Christ.

Not more than 40 minutes later, Dudley and his father were on the airplane flying together to Nairobi when Dudley told his Dad of his commitment. The letter of praise and thanksgiving of a concerned and relieved father was most precious. They had asked us to visit their home and so, while on furlough, we had included them on our itinerary. While there, Curtis told us of how his wife and he plus his brother-in-law, Dr. McCarr and his wife all went door to door witnessing at times visiting newcomers to their churches. They all knew and used both the Kennedy Evangelism Explosion Plan, as well as the Campus Crusade's "Four Laws", selecting which seemed best at the time.

Margaret and Curtis enthusiastically, showed and gave us six "four law" booklets and then Curtis showed me a special cassette tape recorder, together with six cassettes of Dr. Bill Bright, whom I had heard of but never met, for a special price of \$25. He had five such sets with recorders. Knowing the used price of a cassette recorder then was more like \$40, I recognized a bargain and dutifully agreed to listen to the tapes. I bought one set and took it to Africa with us in our suitcase.

As soon as we were "settling in" again, I had June read the four laws through carefully to be sure they were all right. She had been such a scanner or censor years before when we helped found a conservative bookstore in Glendale, and needed someone to peruse prospective books. One would be amazed at those who posed as conservatives, yes even Nazi party members – can you imagine the National Socialist Party of Hitler's Germany posing as conservative?

Well, June carefully read the four laws through and said they were excellent. Out in the waiting room, after six months, two had been taken. Not a very effective or sought after tract we concluded.

As the months rolled by, I did my duty and while filing letters, listened one by one to Dr. Bright's tapes, though used the cassette machine mostly to listen to music. I will say that on at least two occasions I was so impressed by something Dr. Bright said that I called June in and played it over again. But in his defense, I didn't expect much and also we have never been great learners from cassette tapes.

Some months later when a friend was confined to the hospital recovering from painful surgery I lent him the same tapes and he too was quite happy with them. But thereafter they were stored in a drawer.

Then when we next returned to California and our home for short furlough in August, 1972, and we were driving numerous times from Glendale via San Bernardino to Lake Arrowhead, my mother's lakeside home, we would pass on California Highway 18, the turnoff to Campus Crusade Headquarters at Arrowhead Springs.

I had been taken as a boy with my parents to the Arrowhead Springs Hotel when it was a commercial health spa, and my father being a southern California practicing physician, received a special weekend discount offer and we stayed two nights in the summer of 1941.

Now in 1972 as were beginning the 18-mile drive "up the hill" from San Bernardino, I spoke to June saying, "Remember those 'four spiritual law' booklets and the tapes by Bill Bright?" "Yes", June said, "well here is the headquarters of Campus Crusade, just a half mile off the road. We've got the time. Why don't we drive in and take a look?"

Then I confessed that I really had a hard time witnessing one-on-one and that I had heard that people who knew how to use the four spiritual laws found great success. Practical June said, "Well, let's go in and have them show us how!"

As June and I walked up to the reception desk of the hotel for information, a college age young lady asked if she could help. I said, "We are missionaries from Africa who have read your 'four spiritual laws' booklet and wondered if anyone could teach us how to use it?" I don't imagine that reception clerks at Arrowhead Springs, who surely all know how, and do use the booklet regularly, hear such a request from such an unlikely source. She said, "What did you say?" I repeated my request and her eyes opened wide and she said, they were having a new staff training down at the village and why didn't I go down and sit in on either Mr. or Mrs. Myer's class because they could help.

Back into our car and following a small road map marked with the receptionist's red X, we found our way to some classrooms, were directed and timidly knocked and I was welcomed by Don Myers and June was taken next door to Sue Myer's class.

They were busy hearing and critiquing different people – about ten in the group, with their "three minute testimony". In about 35 minutes the class ended and standing outside talking with Sue Myers, we got around to our same question again.

Now Sue is a very enthusiastic person and she told us that what we really needed to do was to come attend a Lay Institute for Evangelism, which they were going to have there in just three weeks. Then we would in three days be well trained to use the booklet. The cost was under a hundred dollars each and Sue and June were soon good friends and excited together about this.

Personally I felt like a man going in to buy a package of candy and a salesman was trying to get me to invest in candy company shares. As we drove out June had her calendar out and was talking about whom we could get for a baby sitter, and seeing the lovely swimming pool as we drove by, I agreed that “If the Lord can arrange that busy three days off, we might go,” but I did not say it with any enthusiasm.

All the way up the “rim of the world highway”, June was talking about who we might get to baby sit Bonnie, and I remembered the only person we had ever known associated with Campus Crusade was our now married former neighbor baby sitter, Cheryl Woodbury Gustafson. She had gone on a “BAL Weekend” in a college age project in her church witnessing one-on-one using the four spiritual laws on an Easter weekend at Balboa beach and had been very enthusiastic.

We had her phone number so within the next few days, June rang her and to my surprise, Cheryl said they would be delighted to have 8-year old Bonnie while we attended the Lay Institute, which she seemed to know all about. We decided that why not bring 13-year old Doug and 16-year old Tim along too, so on the way back to Glendale a few days later, we registered all four of us.

Having heard criticisms of Campus Crusade from other sources, I found an expose of Crusade and the four laws by a Bible school instructor from the East Coast and as we drove to the conference from Glendale – 1 ½ hours away – I read aloud the entire expose small book so that our souls would be fully alerted to any deviation from God’s word.

We checked into the hotel and were just in time for the first message. What happened that weekend was truly life changing. No, I can’t say that I agreed with everything said, being a five point Calvinist who believes in limited atonement and irresistible grace, but there, this caused me no great concern, since I do have enough faith to believe that when we pray before witnessing for God to make divine and eternal appointments, that those who do respond – and it is surprising how many do – have been chosen from before the foundation of the world. A great flaw of some of my “kinfolk Calvinists” is that they want to play God and themselves decide who and under what conditions God will use them to seal an eternal contract. We are certainly enjoined to be “bold witnesses” for the Lord and not hide our hearts and lack of training under a theological banner.

During the weekend we learned first how to handle sin in our lives – to breathe spiritually – then gradually the necessity of witnessing to a life of joy and fulfillment, then the kernel of what we had come to learn, how to initiate a conversation about Jesus Christ, share the booklet, complete with practice sessions with each other and on each of two afternoons, and door-to-door evangelism in the greater San Bernardino area. Each one in our family had the joy of meeting a divine appointee and hearing them reverently bow their heads and ask Jesus to be their Savior.

We were amazed to find that a number of the criticisms in the expose we had read must have been concerning an earlier edition of the Four Laws and not the one we were using. To me the fact that there are dozens of methods, of which the Four Laws is only one, is an example of God’s gracious design to use men and women each with different ideas to proclaim His Good News. Yes, Jesus is the only way, but we who introduce Him may do it with brevity or complexity, and especially stressing our own individual theology. The wonder of it all is that God so graciously uses us as He does. In His irresistible grace He must chuckle at so much that we add that His Holy Spirit must level.

On one of our days Tim and I working together spoke to an older teenager and a 12-year old boy, each responding with a prayer of commitment and exactly following our instructions. We were amazed at the response. June with another lady, visited a house in which an aging widow lived.

All in all, it was a really thrilling, inspiring and useful weekend in launching us into a “way of life” of witnessing. To have such a tool as the four laws available in your pocket means that an effective witness can be made at any time in any place.

I believe the most interesting comparison for me, was made when one of the instructors, Dr. Ron Jones I believe, said that to be without a four law booklet in your pocket makes about as much sense as an old time western cowboy carrying his six-gun without bullets. If you expect to be an effective Christian – don’t go without bullets – don’t go without a four laws booklet handy. Observing this rule in the nine years since then, have meant for me a small part in the salvation of dozens of souls.

Since our son Tim was attending Bob Jones University and the name of the “Four Spiritual Laws” or even “Campus Crusade” was one of the main tools or organizations they found to be odious, during the next ten days June and I made up our own witnessing booklet, somewhat similar, but for the sake of our home church, people who prefer the King James Bible verses and so that Tim would not be expelled for using the wrong witnessing

tool. Our friend, John Boewe, who printed the four laws by the hundreds of thousands, printed them for us too.

We say to anyone who finds fault with the four laws, “Okay, let’s see your witnessing booklet”. As Dr. Bill Bright stresses, it is a very transferable concept once you learn how – you can use it occasionally or regularly and you just don’t forget. It only requires the courage to read the cover, “Have You Heard of the Four Spiritual Laws?” and you have begun.

Within three days of our attending the Lay Institute, we had enthusiastically explained it all in detail to my dear Christian mother who herself had led me to the Lord when I was three years old. After five minutes of explanation stressing reading it to the other person, word for word, we gave mother three four laws booklets. We were staying at her house for the month. A few nights later while we were visiting friends in the evening, mother’s best friend, Blanche, a somewhat younger widow lady, came to mother in great distress. Her own mother was sick and in a rest home, and she had just put her brother in the hospital. She was fearful and discouraged and asked if there was any way we could help her. “I need God and I don’t know where to turn!”

Mother had Blanche sit down, walked over to her stairway landing, walked to the top of the stairs, went to her desk, took a copy of the four laws and went back to Blanche, sat next to her and with her finger, directed Blanche to the cover, “Blanche, dear, have you ever heard of the Four Spiritual Laws?” “No, Eva, I haven’t”, Blanche replied. Ten minutes later, Blanche had been found by Jesus, and her life took an abrupt turn. She and her husband had prided themselves that they were not “pious church people” and just never darkened a church door.

Yes the booklet is so transferable, that even the first time, my mother had no trouble at all.

June and I soon found that we were leading strangers, airplane seat partners, and good friends to the Lord and when a person declined we knew we had given a proper witness but that person just wasn’t ready yet or not among the elect – but our witness was successful, the fruit was not yet ripe.

Two months later attending the huge Academy meeting in Dallas I spent some time with an old friend, Lorne Person, president of a company, also interested in the meeting. He had been so helpful to us in dozens of ways. I knew he was open to the Gospel, but the voice of Satan whispered into my ear, “You fool, don’t witness to this one; if he becomes angry at you, the mission will lose thousands of dollars. Don’t do it!” Yet there came

one afternoon as I was about to dash back to the convention center to attend a lecture which had cost me \$4 for the ticket and which would be medically helpful, when my friend and I were talking in his suite.

I don't remember how we got to it, but soon out came the booklet and I read, "Have you ever heard of the Four Spiritual Laws?" "No Bill", he replied and I began to share. When we came to the circles he said he wanted to be on the right, and having been friends for years, even in the Episcopal Church together, he suddenly asked, "Well, aren't I already a Christian being confirmed, baptized and a member of the vestry of my church?"

I replied, "If I sleep in a garage, eat my meals there and am found there often that doesn't make me a car. If I'm washed in the garage using their special techniques surely I am a car!" Then I compared our relationship to Jesus Christ to that of a man and wife. "Are you married?" I asked. "Bill, you know I'm married; my wife is in the next room resting right now." Well I described how they had stood up in the front of the church with many people watching, "what did you say when the minister asked if you took this woman to be your wife?" I asked. "I do!" he declared. "But what if at that moment you had turned to everyone and said, 'I know all about this girl, her birth date, her dress size, even her favorite foods; knowing all this, surely that makes us married!' Why should I say I do?" "That person would be a nut!" my friend said. "That is exactly what I'm trying to have you say...I do to Jesus Christ in a time in your life when you the bride say to Jesus, the husband, 'I believe in you, forgive me of my sins, I am one of yours'." My friend then read the prayer, out loud on his own.

CHAPTER SEVENTEEN – IRRESISTIBLY TO HEAVEN

Dr. Luke tells us that there is joy in heaven over one sinner that repents and believes in Jesus. One Wednesday night in February 1975, Dr. Javin 'Azinga, one of our church elders and a primary school teacher, brought along two other men teachers with him to our prayer meeting. Like other Kenya government posts, that of primary school teacher is a rather itinerant life. One may spend five years at a location or be transferred within five months with only a week's notice.

Both of Javin's friends were men in their 30s, moderately well educated in their respective teacher's training colleges and recent arrivals to the big city of Mombasa, having left their families up-country. They both seemed rather "worldly wise" and somewhat smirking and condescending toward others in our prayer service. We had a usual evening of lively singing, sharing of those who had been out witnessing, a Bible study that I led, and prayer. Afterwards, I had an opportunity to sit down with Javin and his two friends and speak to them about the Lord Jesus.

It wasn't until the next Sunday when one of them, James Nganga, got up in the morning service and gave his testimony. We found out what had gone through his mind a few nights before. We know that it is the Holy Spirit who really calls, and causes a person to be "saved", and sometimes we discuss the subject of "irresistible grace", but it is uncommon to hear it so plainly as we did that Sunday morning.

James told us that he had come that Wednesday evening with Javin just because he had nothing else to do and it was too early to get a beer. He had been raised Roman Catholic, but had not been to church for years and felt that as an educated man, he had outgrown the ritual of Christianity. He was somewhat moved by the singing and the Bible lesson, but still looking forward to the latter part of his planned evening, when he found himself sitting down next to me as I read him our witnessing booklet which includes a simple but detailed four point presentation of the gospel with a challenge to pray to receive Jesus.

He completely understood all that was said, but knew that he enjoyed his life exactly as it was and, in fact, chose to remain in control of his own life rather than submit to the control of the Lord Jesus Christ. In fact, he felt somewhat superior to the Gospel. Yet, when I asked him if he would consider praying with me to receive Christ, he said, "I suddenly noticed there was a battle taking place within me for my soul. God was actually forcing me to submit to Him, and I finally had no choice but to receive Jesus, whom I now find fills me with joy indescribable. As Dr. Ghrist was reading that simple booklet, I remember thinking that it was just too simple for an educated man such as me. When he asked me if I wanted to pray, though, I said to myself, 'no', but I was irresistibly drawn by God to say 'yes' and I did. Now I am so happy that I did, and that I am now a truly converted man."

CHAPTER EIGHTEEN – MERCY TO ALBERT

He that hath mercy on the poor, happy is he. (Proverbs 14:21)

Missionaries, and those nationals to whom they minister, teach and heal are people, albeit redeemed, just like anyone else. In our efforts to show love and also be good stewards of the Lord's money, we often find ourselves in absurd circumstances and with a wry smirk we need to remember to ask God – how did we get ourselves in this?

Mombasa as a mission field certainly has spiritual problems of great magnitude and coupled with these are physical problems of unemployment and literally thousands of young men walking the streets who often tell us they are "willing to do anything". Poverty and hunger are present, but not in the same scale as the Starvation

Relief Camps of the Kenya northern frontier, or most anywhere in India or the Far East. Increasingly, as the flame of real freedom has been replaced in Africa by the cold merciless hand of Marxism or petty military dictators, Kenya has become a haven for refugees.

There has naturally developed not only professional beggars, but also most professional sob story artists. Some do have usefulness for a time and undoubtedly a singed conscience. In a country where everyone likes to show their letters of recommendation, even when a thoughtful observer can easily read it to be no recommendation, a help is to find that the person has been aided by Roman Catholics, Anglicans and Evangelicals. The more ecumenical the aid, the less chance of the person's real need.

Of such was Albert Kiwanuka. Taller than average, rather clean and speaking quite understandable British English, Albert claimed to be a Ugandan refugee fleeing because he was somewhat educated and of the former ruling tribe, both valid reasons in Africa indeed today. He claimed to be a "press photographer" and said that his hotel-keeper had seized his camera in payment of debt and he asked me to help. I quickly assayed his spiritual condition and led him to commitment to the Lord Jesus as Lord of his life. Albert also claimed to be able to type fairly well, so I worked out a plan whereby in exchange for paying for the release of his camera, he would do some much needed addressing and folding of letters and take photos of a series of evangelistic meetings we were just beginning and we would deduct 60% and pay him 40%. He also claimed that the same afternoon, an important Ugandan was being married, and he had promised Albert much money if he would take wedding photos.

There are real extremes of action left open to the conscience as American Christians who have seldom encountered true poverty, and having a real love for the Lord Jesus and for men and women made in the image of God. I have seen missionaries, after having been made a fool of repeatedly, over a period of years, gradually retract like a snail's antennae into the hard shell of bitter experience and hard-heartedness, claiming that theirs is "the Lord's money" and accountable to bring forth good fruit. On the other hand, I have seen American Christians so moved by poverty that they are willing to hand out a full day's wage to anyone who comes with a "need".

One can only do, after prayer, what seems best at the time depending somewhat upon your own finances at the time as well.

With the added pressure of the Witnessing Seminar upon me, seeing patients and trying to keep the mission running smoothly, I assigned Albert the corner of an unused room in which to work, rescued his camera, and

bought some film. He did work for a few hours each day at typing and turned out some completed addresses, but soon his corner was a jumble of papers, carbons, pencils, film, and I discovered two very amateurish wedding photos taken from much too far away, and with the camera slightly tilted off-square. Every day, it seemed Albert had more needs and little of his earnings went toward paying off his debt. But I will say, he was an apt student of witnessing and one evening during the training that he attended, he led three other people to the Lord.

Finally, the day came when I picked up the developed pictures he had taken of the Seminar and realized that he had no ability or training as a “press photographer” and decided to cut my losses at that point. Albert came to me saying that he had an urgent need to get 300 miles away to Nairobi where an excellent job was awaiting him. As we have done with many, I bought Albert a one-way ticket to Nairobi and drove him to the Kamba bus station, with him pleading all the way for more money. My comment in my diary that day was, “never ever could satisfy cheeky Albert”.

The next day, June, in cleaning up his rats’ nest drawer, found much undone work, hidden away, and letters from Roman Catholics and Anglican church leaders recommending Albert. I don’t begrudge our time with Albert. He was pleasant, he either became or re-activated his faith while here, and he was used of God to draw others to Himself eternally. How much different would any of us be, having to live by our wits in an alien land? God knows our love shown toward Albert was really a sacrifice to Jesus. Happy were we for the opportunity to show mercy.

CHAPTER EIGHTEEN – A. BUGS AND BUGS

In January of 1976, June and I attended a large meeting of eye surgeons “just across the puddle”, the Indian Ocean, from Mombasa in Madras, India. I had wangled an invitation to speak, and gave an interesting and well-received paper on the “one man eye center” which included a clear belief in Jesus Christ. We had opportunity to visit a number of Christian missions and were appalled at the coexistent munificence and poverty of India. Coming home we embarked on the rather new India Steamship Company’s liner Harsha Vardhana, which was only 1/3 filled with passengers. We two occupied a lovely stateroom designed for four. We eagerly anticipated a placid five days of rest, reading and relaxation and, of course, some witnessing as well.

The second night June’s crying awakened me and the bedside lamp was turned on. “A bug, a bug, a flying insect just flew and crawled into my ear! I can hear him buzzing!” Being a well-prepared eye doctor, I soon had my handy penlight in hand and was gazing deep into the inner recesses of June’s left ear canal. I was

amazed to see the large red-brown legs of a cockroach moving as he settled into this anatomic cave. Knowing of no way to entice the beast out, I decided to flush him out with a stream of warm water, using a nearly empty nasal spray bottle. The flooding did end his vibrations and his life, but the corpse was still in place when 10 a.m. arrived and the opening of the Ship Surgeon's Dispensary.

Introductions were made to the rotund surgeon who confided that this was the first voyage for both him and the only nurse. When asked what the problem was, I explained that a bug had crawled into my wife's ear. His amazingly offended response was "Doctor, we do not have bugs on this ship!" I was dumbfounded. Pulling out my penlight and pushing June's cranium down, I showed him the offending insect, in situ. He just shook his head and soon found me a metal ear syringe. With vigorous irrigation, out floated the culprit. The ship's surgeon then calmly opined, "Cockroaches we have, 'bugs' we do not have!" A problem of English semantics had arisen. In British English a bug is a bedbug, and these the Harsha Vardhana most assuredly did not have! One Wednesday evening in November of 1975, after a blessed evening of street witnessing in which fourteen people were led to Jesus with seven of us out witnessing, and Bible study and prayer were over, we had eaten supper on the roof with its delightful view of the lights of the city reflected on the harbor water and were tiredly preparing for bed. I had just had a shower and in my pajamas was about to sit on the bed when June, whose hearing is acute, asked, "What is that rattling noise from your side of the bed?" The air conditioner dehumidifier was gently going, only reducing the temperature from 86 to 80 degrees, but extracting so much of the humidity that entering the room feels like a breath of fresh spring air. The gentle hum of the air conditioner, plus my slight hearing defect in high tones caused by a previous explosion, made it so that I heard no "rattle" at all. Being tired and ready to get to bed, I just mumbled that I didn't hear a thing. Surprisingly June sat bolt upright in the bed and said, "There, I hear it again!" Sleepily I said "what?"

June nimbly jumped out of the bed and began looking under the bed and asked for a flashlight. Just to pacify her, I took a second flashlight we keep handy for when the electricity fails and began looking under the bed. Nothing could be seen. Again, I began to walk toward my side of the bed when she said, "I hear it again! It is coming from your side of the bed." Hearing nothing, I flung back the bedspread, laid down upon the bed and peered over the side of the bed and there resting on the sheet just inches from nose and where my right hand would soon have rested, was a huge seven inch poisonous centipede clacking its scales as it slowly moved toward me. Shaking with fright, it was but the work of a moment to enter orbit from the bed and send a size 13 shoe into descent upon the hapless but venomous gigantic insect.

Our prayers that night were filled with thanksgiving and praise to God and June's acute hearing and persistence. It reminded me of a similar experience some eight years before while assigned to the I.P.M. Hospital at Mwingi.

We were living in the doctor's house and our daughter, Bonnie, slept in the second room down the hall. The mission station had its own generated electric power from 6 p.m. to 10 p.m. each night. During the night in question, June had arisen in the middle of the night to attend to Bonnie, age three. Using the soft light of a kerosene lantern, as she tucked Bonnie back into bed she noticed what appeared to be a second electric outlet on the wall next to Bonnie's bed. As she was returning to bed it dawned on her that there is only one outlet near the bed! She grabbed a flashlight and quickly focusing the beam upon the wall was amazed to see a large, nearly rectangular, brown hairy spider – a poisonous tarantula. With one motion she grabbed Bonnie by the shoulder and whisked her out of the bed and slammed the door shut.

By this time, awakened and curious at her midnight itinerations, I was sitting on the edge of our bed putting on my slippers, which we always wore to avoid stepping upon some creepy monster barefooted. A wide-eyed June with Bonnie in arms, quickly thrust the flashlight into my upraised hand, propelled me to the menacing shut door, said there was a huge tarantula lurking inside, opened the door and assisted her hero through with the departing remark – “One of you come out alive!” Though I felt rather unarmed and dismayed in the presence of so formidable a foe, I said a quick prayer for wisdom and victory, removed my large slipper and “SPLAT” reduced the “electric outlets” back to one.

Another ludicrous bug situation arose during the same year we were ministering at the Mwingi Hospital. At various times during the dry season, one would see a two-inch wide stream of half-inch long ants variously called “pinching ants” or “army ants”. About every half-inch, stationed at attention with its mighty pincers out and ready, were the warriors to inflict pain or destruction on anything that might break the flow of the stream of workers who were often moving ant eggs or food along in such a manner. Once our daughter Bonnie and her playmates Debbie and little Johnny Faucette all three stood in the middle of such a stream jumping up and down yelling and whooping with pain as many warriors clung to their tender skin.

We had been told by older missionaries that when such a stream comes through the house, to just leave it alone, but June, the tidy housewife had on at least two occasions fought them to a draw at the front steps with bottles of insecticide and finally coal and hot ashes from the wood stove and fireplace. On the particular day in question I lay in bed moderately sick from one of the seemingly endless stream of respiratory and gastrointestinal infections which at best afflict missionaries possibly 5% of the time. June was away for most of the day, when suddenly out of the corner of my eye I noticed what at first I thought was our main dread, a snake. It was seemingly stationary yet advancing.

Yes, it was the first five feet of an advancing phalanx of army ants, coming through an open window in the room and already beginning a column on the red-waxed floor. I quickly got a full bottle of spray insecticide and lay down to watch, and if necessary, defend my fortress bed. Gradually the advancing head of the stream flowed through the room, within three inches of the right lower foot of my bed and down the hall, and finally after an hour, out the opened door of the den and side porch. It was about four hours that I was on the alert with my fortress defense as I watched the line sway closer and then away from the foot of my bed. A few strays that ventured too close were dispatched with a very short close range burst of spray. It was a ridiculous way for a missionary eye surgeon to spend his day, but the older missionaries were right – eventually the stream passed through the house leaving only a little less red wax on the floor over which millions of tiny feet had trod.

CHAPTER NINETEEN – WHITE KOFIA

We have a God with a real sense of humor, one of surprise and real joy. One Wednesday afternoon in November 1978, we were having an enjoyable church leader's meeting with men from five of our six churches present, and for once not facing any imminent crises. About half way through the meeting, I was surprised by the entrance of a Dutchman I had never met before, Peter Oestrom, who came in and greeted me like a long lost brother. Finally to my confusion he mentioned the name of Hank DeRitter, a Dutch Campus Crusade Agape worker whom we had met on two occasions and who had asked some advice about a Christian countryman of his who would be coming to Mombasa to set up shop or lab or whatever aspiring Ph.Ds do when they want to study the old sod, terra firma, or soil. Though why one would come to the edge of the vast Indian Ocean and the island of Mombasa to study clouds seemed remarkable.

In any event, Brother Oestrom having arrived with great flourish could not be pried from our leader's meeting. There are times when one lives under tension, whether to insist on less adhesion to the rules of hospitality and more excommunication from the counsel of the elect, or to charitably acquiesce. Lacking any clear direction, we welcomed him into our midst. Soon our meeting was finished and having a quarter of an hour before we were due to sally forth in our team witnessing effort in our men-fishing stream out front, Peter and I retired to the living room of our house for a cold fruit punch. June joined us and before I knew it I was about five minutes late and making apologies, dashed for witnessing materials and ankled it for the busy street.

When I reached my accustomed place on the sidewalk I noticed across the street a rare sight. Looking a bit like three birds sitting atop the rail of a shooting-gallery target, was Isaac Ngega, one of our Bible school students witnessing to a young man on either side of him all perched atop a 5' wall.

After “priming the pump” with some Swahili tracts, I soon found a man who spoke English and as he was soon joined by two others and I went through the booklet and all three prayed with me to receive Christ.

As the others left, one newcomer had only heard the last few words with the others and remained, seemingly interested. However, I quickly noticed his white Muslim kofia or cap. Now, it usually requires, for me at least, a special leading of the Spirit before I squander one-third of my witnessing time with an argumentative young Muslim. Some people find debate exhilarating, but our weekly hour in the stream always seemed so short, along with all our other activities, that seldom did I stop for more than just a gospel tract and a smile.

However, the Lord seemed to be urging me to press on, so with resolve to pull away at the first sign of argument, I asked the community religious survey questions, designed to cause people to think a bit about what they do and do not know about Jesus. Mohammed, the boy, had a most original name, answered every question as though he had been his namesake and I nearly wavered, but God must have been chuckling at his valourous missionary as He nudged me on. Out came the witnessing booklet and recognizing his complete understanding of English, I proceeded carefully on.

Soon, for the first time in weeks, I noticed I was surrounded by many white capped Muslims listening intently, though standing directly next to my Islamic listener was a non-Muslim black African man, also absorbed in the Gospel message. When I came to the point one chooses whether or not he would like Jesus to be in control of his life, I was really surprised to hear and see Mohammed choosing the right hand life with Jesus in control even before “Paterson” the non-Muslim chose the same. Then I began to marvel at the goodness of God in giving this young Muslim man boldness to be totally unaffected by the presence of others who, by his intent listening and choices, was a great witness.

CHAPTER NINETEEN – A. DWIGHT’S LETTER

By the time one year only of our three-year lease had expired, we entered into negotiations again with Mr. Murtaza Jivanjee, the owner of Miriam Villa. As we traveled through London in 1970 on our way home for furlough, we conferred with him in person. We could never agree to a fixed price. It was a game of how much you will bid, and then whatever that price, add 25-50% more for a start.

In August of 1971, Mr. Jivanjee came to Kenya ostensibly to remain until the deal was finalized. Dealing with another lawyer, we finally by September 15 agreed upon a price in the presence of his attorney, shook hands on the deal and awaited the lawyer’s detailed contract. A month went by, then two months, when I saw Mr.

Jivanjee in town and he said he should receive the contract any day now. Finally by early December, I went to the attorney's office to inquire what was the hold-up. He seemed rather distant and guarded.

So I asked him specifically about the sale of the property deal that Mr. Jivanjee and I had agreed upon in this very same office on 15 September 1971. He looked at me and calmly lied, "Dr. Ghrist, I do not remember any such deal taking place in this office, whatsoever...you must be mistaken. Further, Mr. Jivanjee, has returned to London. We have no further business to discuss." What can one say?

Early the next month I went to "counsel with the neighborhood father image" Old Mr. Seleh, a friendly Arab patriarch who lived nearby and who had donated four beds at one time for our recovery rooms. I was beginning to feel rather oppressed, almost "paranoid" and told him my story of attempts to buy this one-acre plot seventeen which we were leasing and whose lease was to expire in just a little more than a month. He spoke flawless English, was in the process of building his own mosque and was a very successful businessman with numerous sons who were already being groomed into various aspects of his family business empire. He heard my entire story and as a "shot in the dark", I asked him if he knew of one single real estate broker in Mombasa who was honest and would stick to an agreement, or else one over whom he himself had some leverage. I was becoming desperate.

His answer was amazing, "No doctor, there are no honest real estate agents in Mombasa". I don't know that I could agree with him, but he had had multiple decades living here. Then after a pause he confided, "of course you know that we have been bidding for Miriam Villa also. I have so many sons and one likes them near when one is old." Crash went my trusted father figure! That evening I went bed a very lonely missionary. My prayer was for a sure knowledge of God's presence. Like so many times before and since then, my mind went back to our claiming this property for the Lord Jesus Christ and drifted off to sleep remembering "precious promises" – "I will never leave thee nor forsake thee..." (Hebrews 13:5) "Lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world." (Matthew 28:20)...and believe me, Mombasa, Kenya, 11 hours time difference from where I was raised is "even unto the end of the world" – the very end! HA!

It was not long before our lease had expired and we were renting on a month-by-month basis. In the meanwhile, new friends at Christoffel Blinden Mission of West Germany offered us a considerable sum of cash, but requiring indirectly that we purchase not just Miriam Villa, Plot 17, but the four very small plots also in a straight shot to the main road.

We talked to the bank and they would loan us an amount payable over five years only – the longest loan available in such an unstable country and especially amazing in view of the fact that we were not Kenya citizens. At length we said, that since all the funds except those loaned by the bank come either from Germany or the U.S.A., that if Mr. Jivanjee could present us with a Kenya government certificate giving him permission to receive the marks and dollars in England for payment, that we would do so. This began to swing the deal. Our Arab neighbor had no such capability of foreign funds and what could Mr. Jivanjee do with Kenya shillings in England? They are not usually transferable.

Mr. Jivanjee came again from London and we met repeatedly. By now the price was pretty much agreed but now he wanted to not sell it, but rather give it to us for the same price on a 99-year lease. I refused and he countered a 999-year lease. I demurred and next he wanted a plaque in the waiting room grandiosely stating that his dear father was one of the principal donors to this Eye Center. I had never met the father and would not lie. Would we change the name to Jivanjee Eye Center? I laughed and said “no”.

Finally he said he would return that evening, and we could sign the agreement of which by now we each had a copy. He left and we prayed.

At 8 p.m. June 12, 1972, he arrived and I got out the papers and he had his and then he said “Dr., I have been meeting with the whole family this afternoon and they are not happy. They insist we must have more dollars, thirteen hundred dollars more in cash, minimum.”

“Mr. Jivanjee, you know very well that we have offered every dollar we possess. The German mission is absolutely inflexible; their offer is rigid. Our bank balance will be zero; we have no more to give.” “I am sorry Doctor, but my family rejects the deal without \$1,300 more,” he said. I walked out on him trembling in seeing this man milking and conniving for the last drop of blood. June and I prayed and then I remembered a strange airgram letter we had received in the morning’s mail.

We were planning on going back to America for our every other year’s short furlough and had encouraged Christian ophthalmologists to pay their own way and come out for a tax-deductible change of pace for a month at a time. For some time we had one month vacant. We had written to nearly every prospect that we knew. One young Ophthalmologist, just finishing his residency, had said he might be able to come if we could pay his round trip airfare as he was nearly broke. A well-known Christian eye surgeon in Fresno, California, Dr. Dwight Trowbridge, had heard of this need. In those days using cheap charter flights one could make it round trip from Los Angeles to Nairobi for \$650 each. He had therefore written saying that he would be happy to give us \$650 for that purpose, or ANY OTHER, and was dispatching his check in a few days to our bookkeeper Mrs. Laura French.

In yesterday's mail had come an offer to come fill our one remaining vacancy from an older ophthalmologist in Texas, who had no problem buying his own tickets, so the vacancy problem had been solved.

June and I got Dwight's letter again and read it three times to make sure we were not disregarding the donor's express purpose and it said "...to give us \$650 for that purpose – or any other..." The original purpose was the vacancy which was now filled, therefore, "or any other purpose" came into prominence.

I drew a deep breath and took the blue airgram into the next room and showed Mr. Jivanjee the letter with a postmark just seven days before and the key line and said, "Just today we received this offer of \$650; will you take that and sign?" There was a look of confusion and astonishment on his face as he nodded his head in agreement and signed both documents with a flourish, adding the extra \$650 to the purchase price in dollars.

What I learned later was that often Asians ask for exactly twice what they expect. Mr. Murtaza Jivanjee had expected \$650. The Lord knew it and caused the exact sum to be offered by Dr. Trowbridge and the letter to be received on exactly the day it was needed. Who can walk upon the sea? Only the Son of God! Who can take away my sins? Only the Son of God! Who can arrange Dwight's six hundred and fifty? Only the Son of God! The Lord closed the deal upon his own, "Lighthouse for Christ Eye Center and Mission".

CHAPTER NINETEEN – B. ROOF TOP CHURCH?

In the spring of 1975 our waiting room church had grown to the point, where after doubling the size of the waiting room, we were still nearly filling its 80-seat capacity. I had seen our architect and he had made a sketch of a church out on the front of our property, near the main and busy Digo Road, with a bus stop Christian book kiosk directly on the road. The plan was quite flexible allowing a church to be built in three sections, each holding about 125 people.

When costs were estimated, it appeared as though at least the first section of the church alone would be \$25,000. We had no such funds, but knowing that the Lord's arm is not short and that He owns the cattle upon a thousand hills, this did not seem an insurmountable cost, providing it was within the will of God. About that same time a most unfortunate situation arose at the mission station of some of our friends in Nairobi.

To understand the background one must try to understand the tension that exists in probably most mission fields between paternalism on the part of American or European missionaries, and the sometimes juvenile desire for

rapid acquisition of not only church office and denominational leadership, but also of ownership of property and handling of large sums of money.

Into this milieu is the all too common problem of the national pastor or worker, who by his culture, actually thinks differently in terms of sanctity of funds and bookkeeping. By culture here, if I have \$100 in my pocket and an older relative, say an uncle, comes to me with a need, I have no way of refusing his request for \$50 even if that money belongs to the church. Into this situation are men, who have never seen a thousand dollars all at one time in their lives, who have no bookkeeping experience, and who are not future-oriented, but by custom, present-oriented. They look at their watch to see what time it is, not to see what time has not arrived yet, as we do. They find it difficult to accumulate for a future need and the needs of each day are pressing. Future priorities cannot take precedence over present problems.

Missionary journals and books are replete with instances of paternalism in which missionaries have been unable to “cut the apron strings” and actually stunt the growth and development of national church leaders. We do live in a sinful world and we are sinners saved by grace. Trying to find the Lord’s path between paternalism and what I would call juvenilism, requires much adjustable long-range planning and observation of others’ troubles from which to stay away.

Never think that there are not real problems with national juvenilism. What does one do with the third in a row national treasurer who has used his funds to pay school fees and other needs for his extended family? Most of the other national church leaders advise to forgive him, and begin anew again with the same man and then you find that he is selling mission bought postage stamps to the local high school students. In a society in which political cronies are slapped on the wrist for stealing millions, with corruption and bribery mushrooming, it is easy to be the only voice for justice.

How does one cope with national denominational leaders who want money for a Holy Land trip for themselves. These leaders move an older missionary from his mission station, which his own hands and the local church people built. How does one cope when the missionary is moved 300 miles away to learn a different language, while the church is closed and the mission station rented out to another mission to generate income for the Holy Land trip and on-going denominational expenses?

The tension is real between paternalism and juvenilism and to abandon the field to the latter is no more the answer than it was formerly to speak only of the former. There is a tendency in today’s African missionology to set up mature national “straw men” into nearly top positions with a “trainer” beneath them to teach

administration. But the poor national Christian leader, finds himself sandwiched between authority both above and below him. I do not pretend to know the answer, but we are trying complete local autonomy of national pastors in a voluntary fellowship of churches with a National Deputy and cultural advisor to the missionary director. Truly, it takes the wisdom of Solomon today, and a constant walk in the Spirit by all concerned. Another unfortunate situation arose with missionary friends who had a large cement and stone church in the middle of their mission compound. The mission churches had already suffered a major split with more than half of the churches banding together as an entirely independent national-led denomination. Some ruffled feelings persisted on both sides. Due to this split the missionaries deemed it wise, to hand over the leadership of this main “mother” church on their compound to a most trusted national pastor.. However, this pastor, did the worst and declared the independence of this church and then joined the newly independent denomination. What is the predictable reaction to such an attempt to set up a rebel church in the midst of the mission compound? Lock the compound gates while the newspapers flash their photos and front-page notoriety ensues.

Therefore, not only the cost of the first phase church construction bothered me, but also that we were setting exactly the same “time bomb”.

At about this time we were invited to a Campus Crusade African Continental staff retreat at which Dr. Bill Bright would be the main speaker. I was asked to present the unique work of the Lighthouse for Christ Eye Center, and the effect that our own personal training at the August 1972 Lay Institute at Arrowhead Springs, and subsequent lay institutes held at the “lighthouse” in Mombasa, had in the growth and development of our minuscule chapel, begun also early in 1972.

Since the meetings were over at breakfast on Sunday morning, I had invited Reverend Yemi Ladipo, Nigerian Director for Life Ministry (Campus Crusade in Africa), to speak at our bulging chapel. Dr. Bright and his traveling companion and special assistant to the president, Mr. John Lowe, both decided to come visit our service and mission on their way to the airport.

I was happy to show our honored guests around the clinic, our home and the incomparable view from our huge flat tiled roof with a 3 ½ foot parapet. We even have a small thatched roof area with electric lights, under which we can eat our evening meal, overlooking the twinkling lights of the harbor, and city on balmy “hot season” evenings. Having seen our bulging clinic waiting room church, Dr. Bill asked Dr. Bill, “What is your next step in expansion of the church?” I told him of the sketch, the church building out front, but also of my concern of building a mission “time bomb”. He thought a minute, looked around at the expanse of our roof, designed for a second story but never used, and said, “Doctor, why don’t you have a church here on the roof? With a cultural

thatched roof, it would hold even more than 125 people; you only need shade from the sunlight- like your eating area, only much larger.”

Instantly leaping into my mind was the whole congregation walking through our living room to the inner stairway and up to church. I objected saying with a smile, “My wife, June, already thinks we live in a goldfish bowl with the operating room off the living room, and the staff walking from kitchen to sterilizing room to library, past our bedroom and on into the clinic many times a day. How can I suggest the entire congregation as well? “That’s easy”, he said, “Just add an outside stairway over there next to the driveway.” I was amazed. Here was the answer – not a church building of block and concrete, but a thatched roof on top of the house and clinic. Instead of building a church on the roof to hold 125 people, we spent \$2,500 for a church able to hold 200 and have had as many as 700 packed in and spilling out beyond the thatching. A church on the roof – just like in Palestine – and with a soft cool breeze away from street noise and the inspiring view of the Lord’s Indian Ocean.

Our friend, Don Myers, African Continental Director of Affairs directly under Dr. Bright, came and spoke at our dedication service three months later.

CHAPTER TWENTY – FASTIDIOUS

In the summer of 1976 when home on a four-month furlough, I was taking a three-week graduate course in Principles and Practices of Church Growth at Fuller Seminary in Pasadena, just 15 minutes from our home in Glendale.

A similar personality to Dr. Wahlman’s of my internship, a kindred spirit if you will, fastidious, dignified, and theatrical visiting speaker to our summer class in Church Growth, was the Reverend Wyn Arn, a very distinguished and debonair churchman. As students, we had just viewed a film directed, produced and starring himself, and as a break was announced, I remained behind to shake his hand and say a few words to him. However, I suppose appearing like a middle-aged janitor, I was asked to clean off the blackboard with a few erasers. Blue chalk had been used.

Now I am as good at remembering the words of our Lord as anyone about not putting oneself first at the banquet, so I cheerfully did the needful with the erasers, and then forthwith approached the distinguished gentleman from my right side, murmuring introductions as I advanced. His handsome smile and outstretched hand froze into horror as our hands barely made contact – his manicured and pink and mine a chalky blue. As

the expression of that summer so aptly expressed it – he was “grossed out”! Even I was amazed and could hardly keep from guffawing. The poor man never once looked at me during his most interesting lecture. I’ve often wondered how many other times he has received the blue hand of fellowship during his noteworthy career.

CHAPTER TWENTY-ONE – DIERKIESMEIER’S GEORGE

It must have been when I was about 15 years old and we had spent one or two summers up at Lake Arrowhead, when I first met Charles Dierkiesmeier, otherwise known as “Dirk”. His enthusiasm and good humor were boundless. He was in the peculiar position of the “not so well to do” cousin of very rich people, and managed to spend the summer in their shadow. However, “Dirk” was so much of a character himself, that one only remotely thought of his connection to the Hamilton “controllable pitch propeller” millions.

I really cannot remember exactly how Dirk came to be my Saturday and Sunday afternoon “crew” aboard the “Willybob”. We had learned how to sail. My father had developed an interest, bordering upon science, in sailing theory and rules and bought my brother Bob and me, who was then called “Willy”, a lovely new star class sailboat, number 1486. I had learned how to sail on an old “Patricia Skimmer” which a man had decided to get rid of while I was working on Edi Juan’s gas dock pumping gasoline into the speedboats. It was about 2 p.m. one sunny afternoon with the blue water licking at the floating dock and the wind lightly whispering through the stately pine trees, as I was serving a somewhat tipsy speedboat captain. Edi came up to him and began asking for back due rent for storage of his sailboat. Irritated, the man asked why he should pay storage on such a worthless boat as an old Patricia Skimmer that nobody wanted? Edi agreed it was not much of a sailboat, but it had taken up space in his storage garage and he meant to collect what was due. The speedboat captain said, “I wish I could give the ----boat away”. Well, here was a free boat staring me in the face, so I rather tentatively volunteered to take the boat. The captain told me in Edi’s presence, “Go get it and it’s yours. Come and get the sails later!” That day when I was finished at work, a friend, Don Brown, and I went in Don’s family pick-up truck and located the skimmer, so dried out that there were spaces of nearly an inch between the boards. Edi agreed to drop the boat in the water near his dock and she immediately sunk to the gunnells where we left her for the next week, allowing the planks to soak up as much water as possible. Then we began a mammoth job of caulking and stuffing cotton between the visible cracks. Next came the collection of the sails. Unfortunately, the wife had not been told of the captain’s magnanimity, and some acrimony ensued between husband and wife and the sails were soon thrown at my feet and I tenderly crept off bearing my light burden. Within a month I had learned much about sailing with a sailboat, which, when accumulating much bilge water, ran forward toward its blunt nose and the boat began to dive like a German sub at the approach of English

frigates. Sometimes it would continue its downward motion until either I could turn her into the wind to luff the sails and halt forward motion and allow the ship to rise again, or else nearly swamp the shallow cockpit. In addition, mine must have been the most tippy yacht on the lake since it was a rare day that we did not tip over at least once and require some friendly powerboat owner to tow us home.

Thus it was that I was very excited to be sailing a lovely star boat, with a deep keel to prevent our ever tipping over again, and eventually, having crewed for the best sailor on the lake, Don Brown, I entered the races with Dirk as crew. We did well considering the competition and managed to actually beat Don once or twice when he chose a percentage wind that did not materialize. Those were the days when water skiing was just coming in and Dirk and I were good buddies. Dirk was always the first to dive into the water to search for a pair of pliers, a watch, or a ring that had fallen off the dock.

I well remember the time, at the end of the season, there was a special party for the sailors, crew and dates. My future bride – then my steady – was staying for the week at my parent’s house with our family. Suddenly someone began doing the rather new “jitterbug” dance and Dirk grabbed June who was much smaller and with the “strength of ten” began dancing, even lifting her up like a rag doll, first on one hip, then around on the other hip before breaking and wildly dancing again. It was certainly a sight, and only Dirk who had such indomitable power and strength could have done it.

Well, as with many things in life, that period ended and as I entered medical school, my summers at Lake Arrowhead became shorter and shorter. June and I married and we both worked during summers with only occasional weekends up at Lake Arrowhead. I lost track of my good friend, Dirk. One day early in September 1976, while we were home on furlough and were staying at Lake Arrowhead, a lovely woman suitable to “Dirk”, pointed out her husband in the midst of a crowd of laughing people a few docks away at the yacht club. Two days later was Labor Day and by 4 p.m. the sailing races were finished and people were busy hoisting their boats from the clear blue spring water at Lake Arrowhead. I drove my mother’s powerboat down to the Yacht Club while June went into town to get a few items. I saw Dirk sitting by himself with the “end of season blues”. Dirk had been Commodore that year and now the season had come to a crushing close and there was my good friend, in need of a friend. I shook his hand and sat down beside him while we talked of old times.

With the same jovial gleam in his eye, he handed me his business card that said something like: CHARLES DIERKIESMEIER, P.H., REAL ESTATE.

As I'm sure many did when seeing his card, I asked what the P.H. after his name meant and he smiled and said, "Professor of Happiness, Bill". I looked at him and asked a really elementary question, "Dirk, are you really happy?" "Oh sure, I give it forth", he said, "but you know, Bill, there's something missing inside."

I asked, "Dirk, do you know God, or his Son Jesus?" Dirk sat and thought a while and then like a man recalling a dream said, "You know, sometimes when I'm driving the freeways and I've got some troubles, I know that there is a higher power up there", lifting his eyes, "and I know many people have many names for Him, but since I really don't know Him personally, I just call him 'George'. And sometimes when I'm driving along I guess I pray, 'George, you know I really need help.'"

Well that afternoon I had the privilege of introducing Dirk to the real "George" whose name is Jesus Christ of Nazareth and Dirk and I prayed together afterward rejoicing in his new birth. Isn't it neat to have a God with a sense of humor that will draw all men to Himself, even those who call Him, George??

CHAPTER TWENTY-TWO – FLAT WITNESSING

There seems to be quite a span in the meaning to Christians about the term "witnessing". During 1974 we had an occasion to visit close friends who are missionaries from a similar Biblical and reformed background as we. They live in the capital city of Nairobi and their work is even more cosmopolitan than our own. As it happened, we were staying at their home on a weekday evening when our friend said that he was going out witnessing with some of their national Christians and another missionary of their own group, and would I be interested in joining them? Since we got out to the busy street in front of our mission every Wednesday afternoon and since I am constantly on the lookout to learn more effective ways to witness, I answered that I would be really happy to go along.

We assembled a short distance away at their little stone church and each were given a handful of tracts and another handful of flyers telling of the church and service times. We then drove to a nearby apartment house complex, each large building having about four stories and four to six apartments per story. As we got out of the car and said a short prayer, the complex of four apartment houses were divided among our three teams, with the one spare being left for the team that finished with their first assignment.

My friend and I were soon climbing up the stairs to reach the top story. Many were not home so we just left the tract and flyer under the door. Soon, however, a little boy came to the door and seeing our white faces, invited us in and called for his father. Most graciously, the man was invited to attend the nearby services and an

inquiry was made as to what, if any, church the family attended. After a few sentences of conversation, we gradually eased ourselves out the door, thanking the man for his hospitality and reminding him of the times of the service. Another few locked doors presented themselves, while a gradually increasing crowd of children began to follow us, the third story pied pipers. Next we came to a door answered by a man and we were invited in. I asked my friend for permission to talk to him about the Lord, pulling out our witnessing booklet. Within ten minutes the man was praying to receive Jesus into his heart and I was praising God. All other doors were either locked or only young women or children were in the house. Twenty-five minutes after we had begun, we were downstairs and standing there were our two other teams, obviously a bit exasperated. The question from the other missionary focused on the problem. “Well, what took you so long? We did our witnessing to not only the first, but the second apartment and have been waiting down here for you for the last five minutes!” With a smile, I just said that we too had been witnessing!

CHAPTER TWENTY-THREE – KIOSK PASSERSBY

It is our impression that people are very entertaining, especially when viewed in their natural habitat walking past our Lighthouse for Christ Eye Center and Christian Book Kiosk on a very busy and jammed Abdul Nassar Road.

One Wednesday evening in October 1975, June and I, some of our staff, and some from our congregation, were out on the sidewalk witnessing to people as they streamed by between 5 and 6 p.m. I began speaking with a Luo man and soon was reading him our witnessing booklet in English, which he understood. Typical of many African wives, his wife could not understand English at all. However, June, standing about ten steps down the road, saw the man’s wife standing alone and came up to talk with her. She decided to try to communicate with the Luo’s wife in the trade language of Swahili, but soon found out that the wife understood even less Swahili than June did. Being at a bus stop, others do stand around, and soon a kindly Muslim African woman, wearing her black cloth over garment (called a Buibui which indicated her ownership by her husband) came over and told my exasperated wife that she spoke English and offered to translate. So interestingly enough, there stood the Christian missionary communicating the good news of Jesus Christ to a Luo woman by means of a friendly Muslim woman. Both the Luo husband and wife that day prayed to receive Jesus Christ and at June’s urging, the accommodating Muslim woman agreed to take the witnessing booklet, which she had translated, home with her to study and possibly pray herself. Isn’t the Lord good to cross impossible barriers with interesting passersby?

The same evening, another humorous diversion occurred in the person of a very elderly and raggedly dressed African man whom we could hear coming about 100 yards away. We never had seen him before and never have since. He had a real burden for the lost and was proclaiming the gospel message of redemption in his stentorian voice, like John the Baptist, calling for instant repentance to the tolerant but uninterested passing throng.

When he came to “our territory”, he saw us passing out gospel tracts and reading witnessing booklets to people who had collected in knots around us. Not seeing our pocket New Testament in hand, he began exhorting the crowd, and us, that we were “false prophets” and to beware since we did not hold in our hands the whole Bible as he did, but merely gave out small papers. However, he soon continued his search for another righteous man and escaped from our earshot.

A few months before on a similar Wednesday evening, shortly after our Christian book kiosk had opened, I had my camera with side-action lens. Using this lens attached to the camera, one actually photographs what one sees 90 degrees off either the left or right of the front of the camera, making it possible to take interesting relaxed photos of shy people. I had just taken such a photo when I noticed an African man dressed entirely in white with the white turban of a Muslim priest, walk right up to our small building and begin gesticulating and hopping up and down in place while incanting some monotonous phrases.

Soon he began unrolling his turban and flicking it like a towel toward the books on display and Ammon Mwanyuma, our bookseller. I noticed that all the African passersby gave him a very wide berth and a few off-duty student nurses from the nearby Coast Province Hospital were nervously laughing at him and speaking in Swahili. Taking a few photos of his performance, I then asked Ammon what was happening. I was amazed, amused and gratified to learn that this was a Muslim holy man or priest who was weaving and casting a very dire curse upon our kiosk. Knowing the power of the triune God and the Holy Spirit, I felt only amusement at his antics and gratitude at the recognition by Satan of our effectiveness for Jesus.

CHAPTER TWENTY-FOUR – CAR TROUBLES

There is no doubt that cars are a major headache to missionaries. Much of missionary travel in foreign countries is done on very bad roads and all too often in very old over-priced, under-maintained automobiles.

At the missionary medical convention of the Christian Medical Society held at Wheaton College in 1965, I heard a discussion of the number one cause of death of missionaries in the field. It was not anything too exotic, but rather auto accidents.

We have often heard, that mile for mile, the Nairobi-Mombasa Road is among the four most dangerous highways in Africa. For years there was no speed limit, portions of it were used for the East African Safari Rally, and many motorists developed a Safari Rally complex of trying to equal the speed of their favorite rally driver. The road is only one lane in each direction with no center divider and sometimes a faded centerline, plus being well traveled with large petroleum and freight lorries that do their share to produce the many existent potholes.

In February 1973, we wrote the following typical paragraph home:

“It looks like we will be keeping our old Peugeot car a while longer, especially now that we’ve found another mechanic who specializes in missionaries’ old jalopies and does good work cheap. Actually, should we get a “new” car, it would probably just be a newer model of the same car and would look identical. Our car does have a strange speedometer. Last year in one day it flipped from 54,000 miles to 64,000 miles, adding 10,000 miles in one drive into town. I complained to the Peugeot dealer in town but got nothing done. Then the other day it flipped from 73,000 to 83,000 miles again. Since we got the car second hand with 36,000 miles on it, it may just be getting back to ‘reality’. It may have been 136,000 miles, or it may be a fault in the meter, but it “sure do” make the car age fast!

CHAPTER TWENTY-FIVE – HEALING THE LEPER

I saw my first cases of leprosy among some of the beggars of Nairobi and Mombasa, and actually diagnosed and treated my first case as a physician while at the Mwingi Hospital. The diminished sensitivity to a pin gently scratching the skin is of great aid in diagnosis. I well remember as a young pre-med student, seeing on television the sorrowful case of an American serviceman, who had contracted leprosy, being ripped away with tears from his family in San Francisco to be sent to the Carvel Leprosy Colony in Louisiana. I have seen active leper colonies in connection with a general medical hospital in Zambia, but most having this dread and highly non-contagious disease in Kenya, merely receive the tablets or injections for treatment.

One Sunday morning in October 1973, I preached on the subject of the man with leprosy who came to Jesus for healing as found in Mark 1:40. Following the message a very worried young African man, a newcomer, came

up to me and was concerned that a few colorless pinpoint areas in his skin might be leprosy. Upon close examination I was able to assure him that they were not.

He then asked about our Wednesday evening witnessing and prayer meeting service and asked the very interesting question, “What is witnessing?” I soon had one of our witnessing booklets in my hand and asked him the interesting question from Dr. James Kennedy, “If you were to die and stand before God and He were to ask, ‘Why should I let you into my heaven?’ what would you say?” Young David answered with great feeling, “I haven’t the faintest idea what I’d say!” Within ten minutes, the seed that had been sown, and watered in days and minutes past, was harvested as the booklet was read and he prayed to receive the Lord Jesus Christ. What joy to see a “leprous” man healed spiritually!

CHAPTER TWENTY-SIX – SPICY WATER

The English colonial boarding school system has been thought out with great care. The American missionary school for missionary children, Rift Valley Academy, follows the same schedule pattern of three months of school and one month of vacation year round, with the month of April (Easter) being off, the month of August (summer vacation) and the month of December (Christmas) also being a holiday.

For those children whose homes are close enough at the “half-term”, there is a long weekend and hence, being only 330 miles away from the school, it was our delight and privilege to have our children, and usually a friend or roommate, whose parents lived much too far away, to come along for the fun-filled weekend.

On a particular such “long half-term weekend” in June 1973, our son brought his roommate Dan Snyder along to Mombasa. Dan’s parents are a missionary doctor and his wife at a Free Methodist mission hospital in the country of Rwanda. It happened that we had accepted an invitation to have a social evening with our good friend and medical colleague in Mombasa, Dr. and Mrs. Ved, also Eye, Ear, Nose and Throat. In East Africa it is quite according to custom when one has a house –guest, that a simple phone call to the hostess is sufficient to alert her, and one is expected to bring the house-guest, and not either leave the house-guest at home or break the engagement. Therefore, Mrs. Ved was so informed that Doug’s 16-year old roommate, Dan Snyder would accompany us for their lovely spicy Asian dinner.

Living as we do in cosmopolitan Mombasa, we are on occasion, exposed to exotic and highly spicy foods and do fairly well with them. Poor Dan, whose parents live miles from any city, just wasn’t used to the hot spicy curry dishes. Finally, with his mouth burning and his cold water glass empty, he spied a frosted bottle on the

shelf. We ourselves keep cold water in the refrigerator and when exposed for a while, the bottle becomes frosty. Somehow, Dan in his haste, didn't notice it was a squared bottle with a screw cap and fancy scroll label upon which was imprinted the single word, "GIN".

A moment later Dan was standing at our son Doug's side staring in anguish at his water glass. One of those intermittent breaks in the drone of conversation had occurred and everyone from Doug to Dr. Ved himself could hear Dan exclaim, "Doug, even the water here is hot and spicy!"

Within moments we had all pieced together the story and were roaring with laughter, while another cold sparkling pure glass of water was handed to Dan.

CHAPTER TWENTY-SEVEN – WHITE LEGS

On a number of occasions since our own training in person-to-person witnessing at Campus Crusade Headquarters in August 1972, we have launched Witnessing Seminars, with training centered around the Four Spiritual Laws booklet, and often with high quality Campus Crusade personnel as the instructors.

The first such Witnessing Seminar we conducted, however, was done completely as a "home effort", using mostly tape-recorded messages by Dr. Bill Bright, with myself giving only one crucial message that had become so moldy as to be inoperable on our tape recorder. Of course, two-by-two instruction and practical aspects were handled by June and me.

About three days before we began our first seminar in December 1972, we were attending a Christmas carol sing at the Mission to Seamen in Mombasa. As the donated sandwiches, samosas, salads, etc. were being unveiled on appropriately placed tables, I struck up a conversation with a middle-aged English merchant seaman, Alan Dobson. While we chatted over Christmas dainties, he told me that he was a "converted man" and how it had happened. However, he longed for a closer walk with Christ. Having a Campus Crusade blue Holy Spirit booklet along, as the happy throng surged ahead to collect pies and cakes, I read the booklet to Alan, and right there with over a hundred people milling about, he prayed to recommit his life, to be filled with the Holy Spirit.

When we began our witnessing seminar a few days later, Alan Dobson's pale pink face stood out in marked contrast with the thirty other black or sun-bronzed faces of those of our staff and congregation and Christian families in Mombasa in attendance.

That first and blessed conference, saw thirty others trained in how to easily share one's faith. But the sight I remember with most amusement was the last evening of the four-night conference. We had all gone out to the streets to seek people whom we might speak to about their souls, and every single one of our trainees had, the night before, led at least one person to Jesus Christ. This last night of the conference, I had taken some African brethren to the Mwembe Tayari bus station and we were a bit late in returning, but I was on the lookout for any of the rest of our group who might be also late in returning. Just as I rounded the corner nearby our mission, I spotted a moderate crowd of young African men standing on the sidewalk, obviously listening to someone speak. Try as I might, I could not see the face of the speaker, but as we drove by I suddenly glanced and saw two pale white legs standing in the midst and knew it was Alan, filled with the Spirit and boldly sharing the gospel to people of a foreign land. I've heard of "pale-faces" but not of "pale-legs". Could one even say, "How beautiful are the 'pale-feet' of them that preach the gospel of peace...?"

CHAPTER TWENTY-EIGHT – PING

Now any of us who have ever experienced the excruciating pain of kidney stones (renal colic) can attest that there is very little amusing about it. Yet, the Lord allows joy in the ridiculous to shine through even the unforgotten pain of such a time.

In mid-February 1976, after a well-attended church service in our Church on the Roof, and an almost habitual curry Sunday dinner at the downtown Manor Hotel, where many of the missionaries (the "elect") meet to eat, and after our usual Sunday afternoon nap, I suddenly found myself with a very upset tummy and writhing with pain. At first I thought, "I really picked up a quick bug from the Manor today!" However, as a few hours passed and the pain became localized to my kidney and groin area, there was no doubt as to its cause and I entered the Katherine Bibby Hospital in Mombasa.

Days passed without the kidney stone doing the same. Doctors have their own warped sense of humor and one of my English friends in general practice kept asking me the same wry question with a twinkle in his eye, "Bill, have you heard the 'ping' yet?" Obviously he referred to the sound of a stone striking the inside of a metal urinal. One does look for more originality and compassion from one's friends than this question every day, especially when I so desperately wanted the concretion to appear!

After five days of subsiding pain, I went home from the hospital, but with x-ray evidence that the stone was still in a bad location, accepted scheduling of a surgical attempt to relieve the pressure on my kidney. However, my friend, the surgeon, did advise me to play tennis, be active, in fact to literally jump up and down slamming

solidly on my heels to try to dislodge the offending pebble. Within moments of following this specific advice and after two cups of coffee in the Surgeon's office, and a cup of tea at home with visiting missionaries, Ghrist registered a "ping" and relief flooded my soul. Within moments, I had alerted my wife, our staff and began telephoning my physician friends. Like the woman, described by Dr. Luke, who lost her silver coin, and exclaimed to her friends, so did I with my friends. "Rejoice with me", "Rejoice with me" it has been found! Even my Hindu ophthalmic colleague in town, Dr. Ved said, copying, I presume our own common expression, – "Praise the Lord!" And we did!

CHAPTER TWENTY-NINE – COMMUNICATIONS GAP

As a busy eye doctor who also spends much time in conferences with the staff, in preparing messages, and supervising many other projects for winning Mombasa to Jesus Christ, I like to have control of my time. To do this, I must also carefully control the number of patients whom I see on our "open" clinic mornings twice a week. We pretty well guarantee the first ten patients who come early, possibly at 5 a.m. and sit on numbered benches, will be seen. Those who come later may also receive a complete eye examination including dilation of the pupil and checking for glasses, but those after the initial ten depend upon how fast we are seeing the first group. Often we see as many as twenty in a morning clinic, not including return patients.

One particular morning after I had seen about five patients, our clerk, Ammon, came to inform me that there were three extra patients waiting to be seen, beyond the ten who had been registered. A few minutes later he brought the card of a patient we had seen a year before at St. Luke's Kalolani Hospital, 35 miles out in the bush on an eye safari, whom we had recommended at that time have a cataract operation on one of his eyes. Ammon wanted to know if we could see him. I told him the parts of the examination that needed to be repeated now thirteen months later. About 15 minutes later, after having seen a few more patients and being a bit confused as to how many patients I had already seen, since some had come to me out of sequence, I asked Ammon how many more patients were waiting to be seen yet. He replied that there were three. As I turned away, I remember that he had said three beyond the ten wanted to be seen so I checked to see if these were the three he was talking about. I wanted to know how many remained of the first ten patients. He replied that he didn't know but he would ask Philip, the ophthalmic assistant who was nearby. I turned to Philip and he counted two more cards. I asked if he had counted the patient waiting in lane one and he said, "No, that makes three.". Then as I turned to go, I remembered the Kalolani patient, and asked about him. Philip and Ammon then both said, "Oh, that makes four!" Information is not easily communicated, especially when we go through this little drama every Tuesday and Friday morning, yet each week it is as though it were the first time ever to ask the question. Hallelujah anyway!

CHAPTER TWENTY-NINE – A. WHO’S BAPTIZING WHOM?

Now baptism is a very serious and thrilling work of a pastor, commanded by the Lord Jesus Christ. It is so serious in fact, as to cause at times, most unloving divisions within Christendom, to the chagrin of the Christian missionary, meeting those of other religions. Sometimes we obstruct the view of the unsaved so that they cannot, as they should, see the “new commandment” given by Jesus, “By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if you have love, one to another.”

Yes, baptism is serious and thrilling – thrilling to see the step of faith taken by either the new convert or the Christian parent. Yet, our God of wonder and diversity may give us a “merry heart” and a chuckle even in the midst of this otherwise serious ordinance.

Recently, it was my turn to visit our two-month old “Faith in God” Church, composed mostly of children with a few adults, all black and mostly of the Luo tribe, which meets in a lovely shaded natural “patio” under some tall lush green trees in Mikindani, on the outskirts of Mombasa.

We had just ended a week of intensive Evangelism Training Seminars with the Continental Director of Campus Crusade for Christ in Africa, Don Myers and his wife Sue. They accepted my invitation to leave early for their Nairobi flight and visit a thoroughly African church near the airport. Knowing only that I was to preach, I brought a thermos of cold water along to drink.

After much hearty singing, I was informed by Alex Obundo, the student pastor who had begun the church, that there was a godly father whom Alex and his cousin, John Orondo, our cook, had counseled at length the day before, who had five “totos” (little children) whom he would like to have baptized this morning. While more singing carried on, I spoke through interpretation asking the father about his own relationship with Jesus and being well satisfied, I then explained what baptism is and what it is not.

Realizing that it was a hot morning and no other water that we could safely drink was nearby, it seemed the merest trifle to offer a cup of the cold water to our visitors before placing my hand within the same cup to baptize.

The father holding his six-month infant son stood up surrounded by four other children and toddlers. One by one I asked the father and the congregation if they would promise before God to raise this child to be a

Christian, and pour-sprinkled (the symbol of the washing of the Holy Spirit) on the child's head. That is, until the third child.

Just as the third child was being baptized, I both heard and saw a much greater volume of fluid than I had in my hand pouring down. The infant son held by the father watered his father, who stood unmoving as I baptized his older sister. It was beautiful! It was all the visitors and the visiting minister could do to remain with the father, unmoving. But hearts were merry and I nearly thought I heard one of us chuckle – maybe it was the Lord himself!

CHAPTER THIRTY – SALT FOR BREAKFAST

Living overseas as a missionary in a bustling port city has both its drawbacks and its blessings. Such automatic labor saving devices as automatic dishwashers, all drip-dry clothes, “box cakes”, and even the dubious advantages of “t.v. dinners” and other frozen pizzas, waffles, etc. are either too costly, too rare, or impossible to repair when the manufacturer is 10,000 miles away and no agent with adequate spare parts exists. This says nothing of the occasional electric power failures (once a week for five minutes to five hours), or even more important electric power and water shortages and rationing – 12 hours on and 12 hours off.

Into the midst of these pressures of living in a different culture, there is the blessing of what has nearly been forgotten in the developed countries where minimum wage, welfare, unemployment benefits, etc. have removed from the work force those who could be economically employed to help in or outside the home – the domestic worker, gardener, maid or cook. In most cultures of the third world, there is nothing demeaning about such employment, and these can be very stable and skilled and relatively well-paid jobs, considering benefits of housing, electricity, water and a variable amount of food.

Lacking the “labor saving devices” like most missionaries, we have a cook, John Orondo. He is a fine young Christian man, who, before his conversion, was an unskilled boy of 17, who was chased away from his job serving tables in a bar because he came late one day to work. John has come a long way and is now pastor of our largest daughter church at Mikindani. Mrs. Ghrist had trained him from scratch and he is now learning to make cinnamon rolls and pies.

The day that I especially want to speak of, was a usual busy clinic morning – Tuesday – and for breakfast we had eggs. Mrs. Ghrist had gone into the next room to answer a phone call when I noticed the absence of the salt and pepper from the table. We had given John a checklist of the things necessary on the table, and we had

reminded him patiently and repeatedly, but the people with whom we work just seem congenitally “anti-system”, even when the system is understood, which often it is not.

I called to John and after a few moments of search, found him talking to another staff member and asked him to bring the “chumvi” (salt). With eyes wide he delivered the forgotten spice. Very calmly, I said, “John, you know that salt and pepper are a part of every table setting; breakfast, lunch and dinner. It is on your list. In fact, just as regularly as you put on your shoes to come to work so should the salt and pepper be on the table at every meal.” I glanced down as I was preparing to offer another firm suggestion, to see him clad in uniform, but barefoot. My illustration ceased. I was speechless, but John understood. The salt was produced, as were the shoes. I understood a bit more of our cultural gap and chuckled to myself.

CHAPTER THIRTY – A. THREE AT ONCE

As Christians, we are enjoined to pray for one another and especially for friends whom we just do not know, or whom we have reason to doubt, their eternal salvation in Jesus Christ.

No, we make no pretense of being God, but the Bible does say that we will judge men and nations and “by their fruits ye shall know them”. Certainly ten minutes in the presence of another person with whom you can communicate is usually sufficient to feel a spark of the Holy Spirit who resides in the heart of each believer. The problem is not one of denomination, but determining the difference between the long backsliders or carnal Christian and the non-Christian. The blue book or Holy Spirit booklet of Campus Crusade is most excellent in this description.

I well remember, about six months after our first Lay Institute, I was examining the mother of a juvenile glaucoma patient, an effervescent Canadian woman of the “Billie Burke” type – chattery and forgetful. She occasionally attended a Bible study that my wife also attended and we had many Christian friends in common. So believing she was already born again, I pulled out a “blue book” and showed her the three circles representing the non-Christian, the Carnal Christian, and the Spirit-filled Christian life. After ten minutes of careful explanation, she frankly told me that she had never invited Jesus into her heart and life. Leaving the blue booklet with her, I then reached for the four laws and proceeded to read this one, to which she promptly responded.

However, back to friends for whom one prays...we had four or five doctor and wife friends with whom we had traveled, deer hunted and referred patients to over the seven years we had been in practice. In short, good

doctors, good companions, and good friends. When only three years in practice, it had been my privilege and awesome responsibility of doing a vision saving operation for “8-ball hemorrhage” on the 12-year old son of the anesthetist. How I wished that day before a very risky operation they had chosen anyone else except me, but how I praised God later for the boy’s perfect result. Only one wife had we felt sure was a Christian.

Therefore month after month, both at home and while in Africa, year in and year out, June and I had prayed that someone bold in the Lord would be able to witness to our friends. It seemed such a forlorn hope to pray so in the Kenya bush for friends in the Southern California megapolis.

Two and half years after our first Lay Institute – by then we had sponsored two more Life Conferences in Mombasa – while we were unusually home at Christmas time, as I had extended our furlough to attend a term in seminary, we were invited to the same anesthetist’s home for a festive seasonal dinner party. After initial introductions, the host took me aside and said, “You know, Bill, my son who is now in college and active in some religious group, has been at me to read the Bible, and so at times before bed, I open it and read for 15 minutes or so until I get sleepy. I just don’t seem to get anything out of it – either at the beginning, middle or end. Why is that?” I looked around at maybe 40 other people in the room and knowing his duties as a host, just didn’t feel there was time to explain. “I think I know the trouble, but it will require 15 minutes or so of explanation. Maybe after the party we can talk?” “Sure, Bill, that would be great.” About that same time, the hostess had found June, and confided in her that their college age daughter had become very active in Christian things at school and had announced when she came home for Christmas vacation that she “really wanted to get to know her mother better”. The mother in all innocence asked June, “What do you suppose she wants to know?” June said, “I think I know. Maybe we can find a place to talk after the party.” “Oh June, I knew you would know!” said our relieved hostess.

As the festive occasion was ending, I left June and took my mother the five-minute drive home and picked up a stack of “Four Wonders” and quickly returned.

Much to my amazement, not only were the doctor and his wife waiting with June, but also a second doctor and wife whom we had also been praying for for many years, as well as the eager faced son and daughter. Exactly as taught in the Lay Institute, I passed out one booklet to each one present and invited them to read each page as I read.

Both doctors and our hostess wanted to invite Jesus into their hearts when the time arrived, and so all together, each of the three read the prayer aloud claiming it as their own heart’s desire to be eternally saved by Jesus.

What a moment of victory for son and daughter, for June and I, and for the remaining wife who had become a Christian years before. Who do you suppose answered our long-standing prayer to send someone to witness to our friends? We never guessed that it would be ourselves – with all preparation being made by the Spirit of Christ!

As June, our hostess and their daughter hugged each other, the girl said, “Now, Mom, we can really get to know each other!” Soon our host and son were at my side and he said again, “Do you suppose now I’ll understand the Bible?” I assured him that before he had invited Jesus into his heart, it was like reading someone else’s love letters – interesting but not dynamic. One month later the son saw me and said, “Dad’s reading the Bible now like it’s going out of style!”

CHAPTER THIRTY – B. VICTORY OVER DEFEAT

In a way I feel like the brother of our Lord, Jude, who “...was making every effort to write...about...” something else, but “...felt the necessity to write...first, about another thing.” I have long felt there were too many things written about Christian’s troubles and not enough about the humorous things that befall him, so had begun just such a humorous book. In fact, I had written a major part of it during the midst of our own battering from Satan. But in the course of being called upon to give account what mercy the Lord had shown to us during our year of great trial, a publisher suggested that many might find strength for their own testings when reading about our own.

Part of the glory due to the Lord would also be missed if this story were delayed until all concerns were over and we were “living happily ever after”. Such is not yet the case, yet our trust and reliance upon the omnipotent God remains steadily with us.

How would you feel if you had come to the place of effectiveness in the Lord’s work, after many years of seeing early fruit only, that at last you felt “we’re just on the brink of a successful medical and spiritual ministry” and at that point notice a strange swelling on the back of your left leg?

It was February 1977, and my lovely wife, June, and I began an independent evangelical medical mission station exactly eight years before in the bustling African port city – formerly solidly Muslim – of Mombasa, Kenya. Mombasa was then a city of one-third of a million people with one of the most diverse city atmospheres possible. People stroll the streets in all stages of dress and undress, cultural costumes, and racial colors. Mombasa is an old town with a long history before the Portuguese erected Fort Jesus. For many years

Mombasa Island was the possession of the Sultan of Zanzibar, from which the English rented it, until as a part of the country of Kenya, it became independent in 1962.

After my medical training and board certification, we settled into my father's practice of Ophthalmology with him in Glendale, California where we remained seven years. My dad died suddenly of a heart attack after we had been three years in practice together.

Shortly before that time, we had sent two of our three small sons to a Christian day school, Westminster Academy, and they were soon led to the Lord. June and I had grown up in nominal Christian homes, my mother being a believer and organist at the First Baptist Church of Glendale, California for over 50 years. She had led me to a profession of faith in Jesus when I was merely three years old at the time when I almost lost my leg and my life and had also made my life changing vow to become a medical missionary to Africa. Thirteen operations, and a year later, I was out of danger and, though, somewhat scarred, my right leg was entirely functional.

I often remembered my boyhood vow to the Lord, but never mentioned it to a soul - even on the day of my twenty-first birthday, when I received the wonderful news by postcard from the University of Southern California that I was accepted to medical school – one of 68 amongst over 2,000 applicants. Even in the joy of the moment, before I had time to tell anyone, my spirit said to the Holy Spirit within me, “you really are going to hold me to that vow – wow!” Nevertheless, I remained mute and though we had a church wedding, I did not walk closely with the Lord, but like so many, was a spectator only and rather neutral in playing the game of being a Christian.

As studies and marriage absorbed my every waking moment, striving as hard as I could just to stay in medical school, our interest in church waned and we only barely considered ourselves Christians, gracing the church in whatever city we found ourselves during internship and residency, with our presence about once a month – often Sunday school only, at that. This continued, until, as I said, we sent our two oldest boys to Westminster Academy in 2nd and 4th grades. Soon we were urged to attend the church service by one function or another of the school and it did a very strange thing for us. We would attend the 9:30 family service at the fashionable church where we were now members, and at which we dutifully carried our prayer book, then quickly gathered our family of three boys together and drove a mile away and exchanged prayer book for Bible in the car and arrived a few moments late for the 11 o'clock service at Calvary Bible Presbyterian Church. Two services in one morning? But the contrast was intriguing and our sons persistent, and we reluctant to sever old civic well-accepted ties. One morning the Minister at the Calvary church, Dr. George Fincke, Jr. said something I've

never forgotten and never heard before. “If I tell you something from behind the pulpit, which does not match with what the Bible says, don’t you believe me! I am human and one can make mistakes. But the Bible is God’s infallible Word.” And this man could really preach.

Some months later while quickly making the short drive between churches on an especially harried Sunday morning, our oldest son, Chris, confused, looked up at me and said, “Daddy, are we going to the good church or the bad one?” June’s and my eyes met with agreement and understanding, and we later agreed it was just that obvious where the action was for us.

During the next five years we grew much in knowledge and love of the Lord Jesus and were blessed in the adoption of our baby daughter, Bonnie, to whom we gave the middle name, Faith, knowing what God had done for each one in our family.

In 1965, after trying weekend short-term missions to Mexico with the Christian Medical Society by small airplane, we decided to really give a whole summer’s vacation away from my solo practice to the Lord, by going all the way to Africa to teach a general practitioner in a remote bush hospital in Kenya how to do cataract surgery. We actually spent a full two weeks in the same bush hospital that we eventually ended up in when we first became missionaries. At the time of that short term visit I somehow really thought this great effort on our part, of two weeks teaching Dr. Matt Johnson to do cataract surgery would satisfy the Lord and my vow would be fulfilled. But who was it that was unsatisfied? ME!

Isn’t the Lord wonderful to move in such ways?

Well, as I already mentioned, one by one, the Lord struck down our objections and hurdles to become missionaries, and how within exactly one year we were headed out to Kenya as medical missionaries on the HMS Oriana, sailing from Los Angeles for Kenya.

June and I spent 18 months at Mwingi and the R.K. Armes Memorial Hospital in Kitui District, the last year being the only doctor on the station and in charge of the hospital, so we heaved a sigh of relief when we finally felt God calling us to the city of Mombasa where a real need existed for a mission eye center.

By June 1979 the Lighthouse for Christ Eye Center had its doors open and even I was amazed at what we were doing in the way of outpatient cataract extractions. The practice quickly built up as we saw mostly poor patients, with two afternoons devoted to seeing private patients, who helped greatly in the support of the mission, and kept me on my toes in treating all patients, rich or poor, with the respect due to God’s creation.

We had begun a Sunday school and evening gospel service even before the clinics were opened, and gradually the pressure built up to begin a church. As an ordained elder, I felt it would be all right to begin a church, but was reluctant to shoulder the responsibility of pastor, as well as eye surgeon. However, in 1972, services were begun in a very small way, specifically calling it the Lighthouse for Christ Chapel.

The Lord was so good, though, while home on short furlough that summer, to cause me to mention to June as we passed by Arrowhead Springs, Headquarters of Campus Crusade for Christ, “Isn’t it strange that as an eye doctor I would travel thousands of miles to learn a better way to treat my patients, and yet here we pass Campus Crusade Headquarters so often, and we really do not know how to talk to a person by himself about the Lord Jesus for salvation?” The next time we drove “up the hill”, we diverted off highway 18 and entered the well-kept grounds and asked at the lobby desk about how to learn to use their “Four Spiritual Laws” booklet. This led us three weeks later to attend a Lay Institute for Evangelism, lasting four days. My, how that changed our lives!

Combined with attendance at Basic Youth Conflicts seminar, and getting some family tensions eased, we went back to Mombasa filled with zeal, and repeated the Lay Institute in our small waiting room chapel to 30 people, and our church began to grow.

Soon we found that we were spending 50% of our time in ministry and 50% of our time in medicine and just loved it. We repeated the Lay Institute a few times at year or year and a half intervals and accumulated a magnificent staff of devoted Christian black African coworkers in the clinic and mission. By the time we were home again for the summer of 1976, and our home church pastor suggested I take a course at Fuller Seminary in “Church Growth”, which I had never heard of, I agreed since again the next six weeks were amazingly light on my schedule. Introduction to Church Growth was a handful as a subject for a 48-year old medical missionary. I had already had a semester at another seminary and thought I knew some theology, but these people met for three hours a day, and read and wrote papers most of the rest of the day and night. We read one or two books each week, and I awakened to the fact that we had very capable staff of young men, who only needed a bit of polish and they could explode with churches.

Then we returned in October 1976, and we began Church Growth and preaching classes each week, and by January 1, 1977, opened our first two daughter churches drawing out two of our seven choicest young men from our now grown-up chapel that we call our “Church on the Roof”.

Being an average-sized third world church of 60 members, we doubled our ministry that first Sunday in 1977, as our three churches ministered to nearly 120 people. Having felt for some months that Mombasa was really

ripe for the Gospel, and already having cooperative prayer meetings with other missionaries and pastors as to how we might saturate Mombasa with the Gospel, word reached us of the “Here’s Life” program of Campus Crusade. None of us, including now Director of Affairs for Africa, our old friends Don and Sue Myers, how we might go about the project, but we decided to see if we could train 1,000 people in Mombasa during the next year, give them, “I found it!” t-shirts in English or Swahili, which a friend and supporter in Tennessee had supplied free for us, and so planned another Lay Institute for the last few days of February and early March 1977 in the Church on the Roof and two mini-seminars in two other very active churches in Mombasa.

In all, over 150 people were trained in the first exercise and we planned more to come. Two weeks before the Lay Institute, I was playing tennis against a backboard on our roof, and I leaned over to pick up a tennis ball and felt a tearing pain in my left thigh. I could still walk, so quit and showered. That night, just before going to sleep, I felt a lump nearly the size of a rectangular tennis ball in my left thigh. I figured it must be a hematoma (blood leakage into the muscle) from my tennis play that afternoon.

On Sunday I drove Don and Sue Myers to the Mombasa airport after our week of much effort and training. As I was driving home in our VW Microbus, I noticed my left leg becoming numb and felt in my thigh, and there much to my surprise was the same lump of the same size as it had been a month before. Before bed, I again palpated the lump and mentioned my concern to June. We agreed I should see a doctor the next day.

Mondays we usually do our surgery for the week, and I again noticed that for months I had been lifting my left heel while operating since it seemed the stool upon which I sat to do the delicate surgery using the operating microscope, seemed to cut off my circulation in my left leg. I had been unconsciously doing this for months. That afternoon, I saw Dr. McVickers, orthopedic surgeon, in Mombasa and he told me that it was most likely a fibroma, a benign muscle tumor, but that I should have it surgically removed, “just in case”.

We had received word that our eldest son, Chris, whose fiancée we had met and heartily approved of, the summer before, planned on being married April 15 and could one of us come? June and I had been discussing who should go. This clinched it. I telephoned my good friend, who had prayed with me to receive Jesus just 2 ½ years before, Dr. Earle Acker – a general surgeon – across the continents by satellite telephone, and he said he would set up the whole procedure at his end, and time it just three weeks before the wedding, so I would be all healed and ready to return shortly thereafter.

Now many other things had been happening in our family. Two and a half years before, my widowed mother had been operated on, and she had a radical breast procedure for adenocarcinoma, cancer of the breast. And 15

months before she had an axillary lymph node biopsy, and while home during the summer of 1976, I had spoken at length with Dr. Cunnell, her cancer specialist, and had been told that she probably had one to two years of life remaining, depending upon her response to the palliative chemotherapy. The Christmas time just past, December 1976, she had been confined to the hospital for a week, when after more than a year of one very difficult but effective chemotherapy drug, she had been switched to another, and there was real question in both June and my minds if we should maybe come back to Glendale for a while to help her. However, we mentally faced the question of how we would leave after three weeks, knowing what her condition was, especially if she did improve, which she did. After much prayer in which, without telling the other, we each separately prayed that God would allow us the privilege of ministering to my mother during truly her last days, I felt strongly led to agree to telephone her once a week to just let her know how much we loved her and cared for her and would be ready to fly home if and when it seemed really necessary. One can make many, many telephone calls for the price of an airline ticket, even three-week excursion fare – round trip from Mombasa to Los Angeles, 11 hours time difference and nearly half-way around the world.

This system really worked very well, and gave much encouragement to both Mother and us and we could keep a close tab on how she was really feeling, what activities she was doing, and be a close part of her life. She was continuing very capably, and able to take care of herself in her large family home in which she and Dad had lived for over 50 years.

Of course, our 12-year old daughter, Bonnie, attended school in a multiracial school in Mombasa where the emphasis, though British, was quite good. Our two other sons, Doug, age 20 and Tim, age 23, were both attending Reformed Episcopal Seminary, from which, our original pastor at Calvary Presbyterian Church, Dr. George Fincke, Jr. had graduated.

Beginning with our oldest son, Chris, we had asked each boy to take a year at R.E. Seminary, like giving the first tenth of one's education to the Lord. It is a most unusual graduate school in which one is allowed to take the seminary training either before or after the usual four years of college. The Reformed Episcopal people, who are quite evangelical, reformed and Bible believing, had found that the subjects were so entirely different from what any college student would receive, that there was little necessity in requiring college first, and that though more difficult for a high school graduate, if one applied themselves, could master the subjects in the same three years before or after college. If taken before college, only a certificate is given which upon completion of college is turned in for the graduate degree. They do this believing that many young men are turned away from the ministry during their college days, who could be well-groomed in the faith by attending seminary right out of high school.

Chris had taken one year at “R.E.” and felt it most worthwhile. Tim, our second born, had actually spent his last two years of high school at a Christian Academy and we felt his training was nearly equivalent, and so he skipped the year at “R.E.” and went through four years at Cal State, L.A. in business, deciding early he wanted to be a Christian minister anyway, and would take R.E. Seminary courses when he completed university.

His Grandfather Brownlee, my father-in-law, had sagely noted that too many ministers today have no knowledge of business yet operate churches with huge budgets. In the meanwhile, our youngest son, Doug, had graduated in Kenya at Rift Valley Academy, where each of his brothers had also attended, and at our suggestion, took his first year at home at Reformed Episcopal Seminary. However, a surprising thing happened in September 1976. Doug enjoyed the training he was receiving at “R.E.” so much that he asked me if he couldn’t take the remaining two years before continuing on in college, possibly in pre-med. We agreed and so as Doug began his second year of seminary, his older brother, Tim, having graduated from university, enrolled in the first year at the same seminary.

There was still another very significant difference between our two sons. In July 1976, Tim, our second son, was the first of our sons to take unto himself a wife – the lovely and talented, Toni Hand. We had met Toni during our time home in 1974 and by our departure for Mombasa in January 1975, after a term at Biblical School of Theology (seminary), we knew that Tim and Toni had eyes for no one else, and they agreed to await marriage until our return in the summer of 1976. So we returned that summer to the almost immediate marriage of Tim and Toni, and they spent the summer as Youth Pastor and wife in our home church before driving back to Philadelphia and “R.E. Seminary”.

It was really a great arrangement for all three in Philadelphia. Doug lived in the seminary and Tim and Toni lived just 1 ½ blocks away. The brothers loved one another, and together with Toni, repaired the old apartment into a spic and span, colorful and beautifully decorated home. Doug spent many evenings with Tim and Toni and was Tim’s assistant in the work of Youth Pastor, which Tim and Toni had in the church the Seminary President attended. By Christmas 1976, we received word that Toni was pregnant and a baby was expected in June 1977. The only problem was that Toni began showing symptoms of pre-eclampsia (toxemia of pregnancy), and had to withdraw from all activities, and by March 1977, had been in and out of Booth Maternity Hospital to control the toxemia.

Therefore as I considered going to America, my mother was doing poorly, but at home, Chris, a junior at Cal State, was soon to be married to a lovely pastor’s daughter, June Ellen Cook, also a junior at the same

university. Tim and Toni were in Philadelphia along with Doug with Toni confined somewhat to bed at home while the two boys attended seminary.

My plans for departure from Mombasa, were however hurried by the necessity of some good friends, southern Baptist missionaries in Mombasa when the wife, Mrs. Jo Scales, who had been sickly ever since we began with the Scales thinking of a gospel saturation project for Mombasa. During the few weeks before our witnessing seminar, Jo had begun having strange seizures that made the doctors here consider a brain tumor, and as she deteriorated, the family and other missionary friends, came and plead with me to leave early and accompany Jo as her personal physician all the way to the Dallas Medical Center. What could I do? It would be a privilege to be of help to such strategic missionaries in the midst of their famous "Giriama Project", in which scores of new churches were being started by Reverend Louie Scales, and Louie and Jo were so very interested in winning Mombasa to the Lord. Now with Jo in real need, I had great peace knowing that God had chosen me for the difficult job of accompanying a woman having blackouts and neurological seizures every few hours, on a trip halfway around the world with stops in Nairobi, Copenhagen, New York City, and Dallas.

After a flurry of packing and a short night's sleep amidst many missionary well-wishers at Mombasa airport, Jo and I were off on the one-hour flight to Nairobi and soon arrived to be taken care of by a lovely Southern Baptist missionary couple living and working the capitol city of Nairobi. The wife being an R.N., nearly turned her home into a cottage hospital for our benefit and for our 10-hour stay. Conveniently they did not live far from the Nairobi International Airport.

Temporarily relieved of my proximate responsibility, I slept soundly in a nearby room while Jo was being watched over by her mission sister.

Soon the hour approached midnight when it seems that most all inter-continental flights from this mile-high city depart, gaining extra lift and payload from the cooler and denser air at that time of day. We were taken to the airport and immediately taken in hand by a most friendly and efficient Scandinavian of SAS airlines. We were soon in the special hospital section of Nairobi airport where a nurse was in constant attendance, and about four well-kept hospital beds were in readiness. My patient remained in this bed for nearly an hour until an ambulance arrived to take us to the waiting Boeing 747. Little did we realize that this third world, nearly obsolete airport, had the finest transit hospital facilities to be found anywhere on our journey, through Copenhagen, New York and Dallas.

We had an uneventful flight to Copenhagen with one stop in Zurich, but were able to remain comfortably ensconced in the curtained-off area provided for Jo resting on a stretcher bed along three seats front to back and the two seats provided for me next to her. Our every wish was quickly met by the alert flight attendants. An ambulance was again waiting for us upon arrival at Copenhagen, where we had a three-hour layover until the next flight to New York.

There we were taken into a very small spartan “suite” with one examining table bed for Jo and the next cubicle a tiny office with desk and chair for me. No toilet, but a mop washroom, and as intransit passengers with possibly a “dangerous African malady”, we were securely locked in! As departure time came, there was a knock at the double-locked door, and soon it opened to the young scrubbed faces of two ambulance men who took us to the next flight with similar aircraft accommodations.

After the long tiring flight across the Atlantic in which Mrs. Scales had only a few of her strange seizures, we arrived back to the “good old U.S.A.” and were thrilled to see the stars and stripes flying high. Even going through customs and immigration was made simple by the most helpful SAS agent assigned to us in New York, Kennedy Airport. Most apologetically, he explained that their responsibility ended at the curb of the airport. We had no choice but to hire an ambulance and seek the intransit lounge or hospital. We were amazed to find that there was no such thing at the huge Kennedy International Airport. The only hospital was for workers injured on duty, and the patients could only be admitted by a New York state, licensed physician. The ambulance attendants were really most kind and helpful, and one was a born-again Christian. I had opportunity to read a witnessing booklet to the other one who was interested but not willing to make a commitment. They transported us from the SAS incoming passenger area to the U.S. carrier’s departure lounge where we were horrified to find the most modern and up-to-date seating of “bucket seats” filling the entire lounge, which my patient could absolutely not rest in. We had no choice but to continue hiring the ambulance at \$100/hour while we waited for our next flight.

Though we had confirmed reservations for economy flights from Nairobi to Dallas with stretcher, we were soon presented with a choice of paying an additional \$600 on the spot for first-class seats from New York to Dallas on this well-known international U.S. carrier, or else seek seats from another airline, with my patient resting on a \$100/hour ambulance stretcher. We knew we were in the capital of raw materialism, New York City. How I praised the Lord for my international credit card that day. Soon we were off, first-class passengers, with almost ignoring flight attendants who found it difficult to handle our stretcher situation.

More hours later we arrived at Dallas International Airport and were met by Jo's brother-in-law and charming wife who helped us much in locating yet another ambulance, and followed us through the evening traffic to Baylor Medical Center, where after meeting Mrs. Scale's parents and contacting her doctor, my own responsibilities were finished. Weeks later we were greatly relieved to find that no brain tumor was found with the "cat scan", although she has never recovered fully.

Soon I was driven back to a lovely motel near the Dallas Airport, so that the next day I could proceed to Philadelphia according to plan and visit our Tim, Toni and Doug. Though I was worn out, I decided to telephone our eldest son, Chris, in California and inquire about my mother. Soon Chris was on the line and his news was shocking! "Grandmother is in the hospital and may not live past a few more days. I think you'd best fly directly here if you want to see her alive."

Though tired, I spent a restless night in prayer and sleep. The next morning I telephoned Tim explaining how I couldn't come that direction yet, and caught the first flight to Los Angeles, was met by Chris and taken directly to my mother's hospital room. As both son and doctor, I was shocked to see how wan and battered mother looked. But, oh, how happy she was to see me, to receive my love and affection and to weep together for joy at our reunion.

A few days before, while being walked about her room, an unthinking nurse had heard an emergency call, and rather than sitting mother in a nearby chair, or even on the floor, just precipitously left her standing. Mother fell, fracturing her pelvis and blackening her left eye, hence her battered appearance. And to think this could happen in the very hospital to which she and her husband had given so many years, and so much of their fortune to found. Any of us can cause much suffering by one thoughtless moment.

During the next few days, many hours were spent talking with my dear mother and she began a slow but great recovery.

Plans were rapidly progressing for Chris and June Ellen's marriage in just three weeks. I saw my good friend and skilled surgeon, Dr. Earle Acker, and we had an ultrasonic scan made of the muscle tumor in my thigh, with every assurance that it appeared discreet and benign. After a few days, I entered the same hospital, in fact on the same floor, as my mother, just a few steps from her own room and spent much time in prayer. When morning came the medications soon began to work and my last remembrance was seeing my "cousin", "Uncle Don Bradish" in the hallway wishing me well and promising to pray too. You know, in retrospect, God really knew what he was doing, though I did not. Dr. Acker's sub-specialty is vascular surgery and his assistant was

another close friend, Dr. Fred Turrill, who too is one of the best surgeons in Glendale, and giving me the anesthetic was my old friend, Dr. Jim Durkim, whose son's eye I had been able to save years before. We four doctors with our wives had even made a Hawaiian cruise together, but we were not singing the "Huki Huki Hukilau" that morning.

Awakening many hours later I saw my friend Earle Acker looking very concerned and telling me with a choked voice and real amazement, "Bill, it was a malignant fibro-sarcoma, but having a frozen section right on the table, made it possible to remove it widely and get every bit of it."

Mercifully I was still dazed from the anesthetic and couldn't put my medical brain to work to remember what all this meant. I was quickly out of the hospital, having no American hospital insurance, although we have it in Kenya. But I was soon to realize that wide, thorough, tumor surgery –in more than one way- takes a lot out of you! Recuperating at Dad and Mother Brownlee's apartment, having Chris come to dress my extensive wound, seeing Earle periodically and with each visit a more dismal picture, until finally the final diagnosis of fibro-histic-sarcoma, or as I had shudderingly studied in medical school, "rhabdomyosarcoma" was my condition. It was a real effort to struggle and walk even partway around the block, and I telephoned June in Mombasa and told her the news. She asked, "Do you want me to come?" I could only cry and ask her to pray for strength for me.

CHAPTER THIRTY – C. THE LUMP THAT LASTED A YEAR

When one's style is victory, laughing at oneself, and others, of seeing the ridiculous and hilarity in one's experience - how does one write in truth and tenderness about concern, calamity, terror and eventually lessons learned in the schoolroom of trouble piled upon trouble?

I look at this chapter in our lives as one of contrast. You don't notice the brightness as much without the shadow and this year was a real shadow.

In the weeks following my deadly diagnosis, a physician friend in Africa sat down and wrote me a kind and loving letter of farewell. I received much appreciated tender loving care (TLC) from June's parents while the large sutures were in that held my backside on. I did find it somewhat painful to walk, although I was encouraged to do so. One day when feeling a bit sorry for myself, I was walking to Carr Park not far from my mother's home, when the words of Job were a great comfort to me. "Though He slay me, yet will I trust in Him!" What else can a Christian say when it is a certainty that we will die eventually.

Soon Earle suggested I see Dr. Gunnell, the youngish looking, but highly qualified chemotherapist, who had been fighting a losing battle with my mother's cancer for 2 ½ years. Man, was that tough – to be willing to embark upon the same and similar “sickening shots” as my mother had received to prolong her life for maybe two years.

Good friends who know nothing about medicine except what they have read in a few popular books, came to me in great Christian love and affection, wanting me to try Laetril or some favorite diet designed to starve cancer cells. Finally, in my indecision, Dr. Gunnell suggested I go to one of the world centers of cancer treatment, the M.D. Anderson Cancer Hospital in Houston, Texas.

I well remember passing this light pink building many times as an eye resident in the Baylor program, and being nervous about entering its doors. Now I was to go as a patient, not a doctor, and I was scared. God gives us strength, through friends who rally around in time of great need. My friend, Dr. Tom Proctor, recently returned from Bethlehem, was now practicing near Nashville, Tennessee, awaiting certain necessary changes in Israeli conditions for his return as a missionary to the Palestinian Arabs. Dear Tom called to encourage me a few times and even said, “Bill, if I can help you in any way, just let me know.” I phoned him to ask concerning certain radiation that was being considered, and he himself volunteered, “Bill, would you like me to come with you to M.D. Anderson in Houston?” I choked up, well knowing what expensive “hand holding” he freely offered. I later called him back and asked if he would meet me there to ask questions from my standpoint that I would be too afraid to ask – “a friend in court” so to speak.

June and I flew to Houston the afternoon before our appointment the next morning and stayed with our friends from residency days, Dr. Percy and Betty Lowe. I was gripped by a fear of the unknown, and only after much prayer and Bible reading was I able to sleep soundly. A ridiculous thing occurred the next morning. Mrs. Betty Lowe drove the long distance to the Houston International Airport. Knowing my friend Dr. Tom Proctor and how “casually” he dressed in ten-year old baggy suits, I told Betty to look for a 250-pound tall and large man dressed in an old wrinkled suit, but with a grin that could only be found in a Christian.

What I didn't know was that Tom had been given the outstanding physician and radiologist's of the year award for Tennessee, the week before, and his wife, Kat being forewarned, went with him and he had a brand new tailor made suit. Further, he had intentionally lost some weight so it took Mrs. Lowe some time to find debonaire “Skinny” Proctor. But the smile was unchanged

Tom met us at M.D. Anderson, where I had come bearing my tumor in a cardboard cylinder – rather a gross exercise! With Tom there, Dr. Benjamin, a most personable and warm Jewish doctor, examined me, and as we left only to return at 3:30 p.m., after which they would have studied their own slides of the tumor, digested all my reports, surgical and laboratory and x-ray, and they would suggest the proper course and estimated chance of success.

Dr. Benjamin did say they were not sure enough surgery had been done. Tom later that evening told me that he knew they had meant that probably the entire left leg would have to be removed at the hip joint. Mercifully, I didn't think too much about that.

When we reconvened, Dr. Benjamin said he had good news for us – that Dr. Acker had just exactly done sufficient surgery, and just as importantly, had clearly described what he had done. Then he told us – June, Tom and I - what were my chances if I declined the many months of a sandwich of chemotherapy – radiation – chemotherapy – 25% possibility of a cure. And what my hope would be by following their advice – 75% likelihood of cure.

I asked “Don't you mean five years survival rate with cancer?” Dr. Benjamin drilled me with his kindly eyes and said, “Dr. Ghrist, this tumor is so wild that if you survive two years after the treatment is completed, you can consider yourself cured!” Wow, and I had been “tap dancing” unconsciously in the operating room for over six months because of it.

Well, there was much more that they are obligated to tell the patient, just to scare the pants off of me, just to satisfy “informed consent” rules, which didn't help my peace of mind, but with “a plan”, we departed, giving heartfelt thanks to this son of Jacob who could be so very warm, human, understanding, and scientific all at the same time. He is a “real pro” in what must be a very difficult job. I was beginning to learn compassion from an expert.

By the time we returned to Glendale, California, June and I – Tom had jetted back to Nashville the same night – mother was feeling better, and I quickly began my first series of Adiamycin and D.T.I.C. sickening shots. I would report on Monday for the first I.V. medication and have 90 minutes to get home and in bed before the vomiting began, which would last for 5 to 8 hours. A bit weaker, I would return on Tuesday morning for the second “cocktail” of medicines having the same lag before sickness and so on, Monday through Friday, with decreasing intensity of sickness each day. Sometimes Fridays were not so bad. I would then “rest” for two weeks and begin the next cycle again on the third week.

By peculiar circumstances the elevator in the “540” building which took us to Dr. Gunnell’s third floor office was a slow lumbering machine, and often June and I would be the only passengers, either up to get the sickening shot, or down afterwards, knowing what was coming. When we were alone we had a funny little habit of singing a certain little chorus, exhibiting our knowledge of Romans 8:28, and how we knew that God loves us more than we love ourselves. “Rejoice in the Lord always and again I say rejoice. Rejoice in the Lord always and again I say, rejoice. Rejoice, rejoice and again I say rejoice. Rejoice, rejoice and again I say rejoice. Rejoice in the Lord always and again I say rejoice.”

Half way through the many such cycles, there was a pause and I began twice weekly linear accelerator radiation treatments. I was certainly in the land of friends and loved ones. My grandfather, Dr. D.M. Ghrist had begun the x-ray department, and many of the radiologists had come to work for Dr. D.M. and remembered me as his chubby very interested grandson.

Though somewhat scary to be left alone in a deadened lead lined room, while the lights dim from the energy being expended, with great cannon buzzers at your thigh, at least I had few ill effects, and the cycles of sickening shot were deferred for a while.

The purpose of the shots was to destroy any cancer cells that might have escaped the tumor and would be lurking somewhere, especially the lungs, waiting to begin growing again. Whereas, the purpose of the radiation to the thigh was to kill directly any cancer cells that might still be present in the area nearby to where the tumor had been.

Of course, I had sent for June and Bonnie as soon as I knew of the malignancy. So now we were all home for the happy event of Chris and June’s wedding. Tim, our second son, and his wife, Toni were living in Philadelphia along with our third son Doug attending seminary.

Well, of course, all three Tim, Toni and Doug were invited to Chris’s wedding and dear Grandmother Ghrist had offered them each free return tickets for the weekend, the wedding being a Saturday night. By then I was able to walk with hardly any limp. An added complication was that Toni was about 6 months pregnant with their first-born and was suffering from hypertension due to toxemia of pregnancy. The doctors in Philadelphia said that not only should she not travel, but must be admitted to the hospital for management of the toxemia. So about a week before the wedding, Toni was in the hospital and there seemed no danger, so Tim and Doug both flew out to Los Angeles on Friday afternoon.

Providentially, we took Tim directly to the hospital to see my mother and they had a nice long visit. The wedding supper was that evening, and we had no sooner reached my mother's home where we were all staying by now, than the phone rang. It was the doctor in Philadelphia, ringing to inform Tim, that due to suspected problems in the baby and the mother, they had just decided to induce labor and Toni was being transferred to the University of Pennsylvania hospital, expecting minor complications, and that Tim should catch the next plane back to Philadelphia. Poor Tim had one of the shortest round trips on record, being in Los Angeles just over three hours, and "at home" less than 30 minutes. But he did see Chris and June, Grandmother and us, and being of cheerful disposition, he guessed having a baby was worth it all.

A few hours before the wedding, Toni "up-staged" us all by delivering tiny 3-pound two ounce, baby Jason, our first grandson. As Tim excitedly said on the phone, "Because Jason was so small, it was an easy delivery for Toni, but Jason really has problems having a single cleft-lip and palate, having had a Rh incompatibility requiring complete blood exchange and suffering from a 'preemie problem' of hylie membrane disease of the lungs." He was a very sick little guy and was in the intensive care preemie ward but in one of the best teaching center hospitals in America.

That night we had a lovely wedding in which Reverend Cook, June's father, graciously allowed me to have a minister's part too. I guess that's rather "heavy" – both fathers being ordained ministers – ha! The next day we were relaxing at June's parents house ,having just completed a traditional Sunday dinner when the phone rang and it was Tim speaking from the University of Pennsylvania hospital. Forty hours after delivery while Tim was visiting Toni at her maternity bedside, she suddenly became unconscious, was now nearly in shock, and the doctors said she had suffered a major stroke. "Daddy", Tim cried, "they don't think Toni will live more than a few hours!"

Doug had left by plane a few hours earlier and was at that time aboard a trans-continental jet and could be of no help to Tim for some hours.

"Hang on Tim", I counseled as he began to cry in his utter desolation and loneliness, with this thin telephone connection his only link with family and loved ones. "Tim, let's talk to the Lord Jesus about Toni" and we prayed with tears streaming but fervently. We hung on to the phone and passed it around to June, Mother Brownlee, and I each praying with Tim for comfort and intercession for precious Toni's life.

Eventually as a father I told Tim to stand tall and be prepared to "take it like a Christian man" – that whatever the Lord gave us, we know that Jesus loves us more than we love even ourselves. We talked and prayed for

maybe 20 minutes, got his number and promised to call back within two hours to cheer him, and promised to get as many Christians here praying as we could.

Tim and Toni had been married ten months before in our church, and had been summertime youth pastor. We made about three or four strategic phone calls and each one called many others, and soon literally hundreds of people were praying for Toni's life.

June really empathized with Tim's aloneness, and soon had a student resident at the seminary on the phone, and got him to promise to contact one or two professors and get a gang of seminarians together, and just put their arms around Tim and pray with him.

By the time we called back to the hospital in an hour and a half, Tim had plenty of support, and a student was fetching Doug from the airport to take him directly to Tim's side. Toni hung on to life, mostly because it had happened in a super efficient highly quipped teaching center, and because of prayer.

By the next morning all was the same, except now Doug was firmly there for loving family support. By then we had all called Mombasa, and Christians in Kenya began to add to the prayer support. During the day as Toni held her own, gradually the doctors began reassessing the diagnosis, and with a C.A.T. scan discovered that she had not had a stroke, but rather the major vein had given away between Toni's skull and brain, which is called a sub-dural hematoma. They did emergency neurosurgery, relieved the pressure, and repaired the burst vein and immediately Toni began doing a little better but was still deeply unconscious.

Tim was so crushed that it was all we could do to get him to finish his last five to six weeks in seminary. Everyone was most kind to him and encouraging. Tim grew miles spiritually in the next six months. God enabled him to study hard for an hour at a time – then cry to the Lord in prayer, pick himself up again and study for another hour.

Doug moved in with Tim, and they ate, studied, slept and prayed as a team. Tim spent much time by Toni's side, reading the Bible to her, "just in case she could hear and understand", which to some degree she did. He was also busy seeing little Jason in the same hospital so he really had his hands full.

During that same period, Satan threw me one more fiery dart. Suddenly one morning I awakened and noticed some pressure in my left groin. When I checked it, there was no doubt that I had small tumors or enlarged lymph nodes. I saw Earle and he confirmed what I had suspected. I was not just scared, but terrified. To me it

meant that the tumor had reoccurred locally and was spreading through my body. Our pastor, Dr. Phil Clark – bless him – came that evening and we just prayed together. It’s hard to explain, but I was not quite as afraid of death, as being finished as a missionary, having any further ministry for Jesus halted. It really seemed like the end for me. After much prayer and Bible reading again, I did get to sleep that night, scheduled for exploratory surgery the next morning. Then God looked down and said, “Let’s give Bill Ghrist a physical and spiritual treat” and the phone rang and my Christian brother ophthalmologist and friend from Miami, Florida, Dr. J. Lawton Smith, said, “Bill, we’re putting on the first meeting of Christian ophthalmologists ever assembled here in Miami in a month. We’ve heard of how God is giving you the special privilege of suffering with joy and we’d like you to be our banquet speaker – would you come?”

Well, in fact, I still had a one-way valid ticket to Philadelphia and so I said, I’d love to, but I don’t know yet about finances. Lawton said they would fix me for a special rate at the hotel and to let him know within a week. The next day, Dr. Roger DeHaven of Tyler, Texas called and said, “Bill, could you and June come share your testimony with us here at our church in Tyler?” I said I might be going to Miami and he asked if it was to the Christian Ophthalmologists meeting. When he found out it was, he said, “Let me pay the way for you and June to Miami and back, and stop off here in Tyler for a few days too.”

Well we had some trip! We even worked in an airline special triangle, at no extra cost, to visit Tim, see Toni and Jason, and talk to Toni who could then answer “yes” or “no” by one or two blinks of her eyes. She was what they called “locked in”. She could hear and mostly understand, but couldn’t express herself except by eye blinks, but she was alive and ever so slightly making progress.

The meetings were top notch and they really were very interested in my banquet speech. But the real blessing kind and foxy Lawton had up his sleeve, was when I finished, much to my surprise. He got up before a very hushed crowd as I finished, eased the mike from me and said, “Brothers and sisters in Christ, here is an ophthalmologist who has been doing exactly what we ourselves would most like to do, but for one reason or another, just haven’t been able.” You’ve heard his testimony, his faith in Jesus and I well know that we’ve got about as diverse a group of Christians as could be found anywhere – Baptists, Methodists, Episcopalians, and Pentacostals – but I just know that most every man here is a deacon or an elder in his church and James tells us in his epistle, chapter 5, verses 14 and 15, ‘Is any sick among you? Let him call for the elders of the church and let them pray over him...And the prayer of faith shall save the sick, and the Lord shall raise him up...’. We’ve heard tonight what Bill and his family face, and the beauty of his testimony in the midst of it. I’m going to invite every man, every church leader here tonight who is willing to lay hands on Bill Ghrist, and beseech God the Father in the holy name of His Son Jesus, to restore and raise Bill back up the power of the Holy Spirit. I’m

going to ask you to leave your tables and your wives behind, and gather around with me to pray for this brother's complete healing. Will y'all come?"

I believe to a man, they all came, laid hands upon me as I knelt, and Lawton led them in a beautiful and moving prayer. Wow! What power and what an honor and what a blessing. I'll never forget it, and neither will they.

June and I had each secretly prayed asking the Lord for the privilege of comforting and ministering to mother during her last days, and amazingly God answered by allowing her to get well enough to leave the hospital and come home for 5 ½ weeks, during which time we had sweet, memorable and loving fellowship, before she suddenly worsened, returned to the hospital, and died in just a couple of days.

Very shortly after, Tim, Toni and Jason returned to California and mother's house – though Toni first - went directly to the famous Rancho Los Amigos Rehabilitation Hospital before coming to stay upstairs with us in the large old Ghrist home where I had almost been born.

Weeks turned into months, as Toni and Jason, with their painful setbacks, continued improving and eventually my Dr. Gunnell, announced to my surprise, "Bill, only one more cycle; you'll be finished on the 8th of December." That was the last sickening cycle and when completed, all agreed we should stay around yet for a few months for Christmas, to get people organized to care for Toni while Tim pursued Talbot Seminary in California. We began the long preparations that finished with our returning to Mombasa exactly one year to the day after I had left to see about a "lump".

During the 21 months I had to wait, mostly in Mombasa, to persist through the two year period of diminishing possibilities of a recurrence of the cancer, I learned that Satan had assigned his own special devil to my case, just to throw me into a "stew" of worry and try to neutralize our effectiveness here in this former stronghold of the evil one. Mombasa, a formerly Muslim town, which many even today are slow to recognize, has been wrested from his grasp.

When a man is busy seeing, treating and consoling patients, preaching, teaching and healing, plus witnessing and planting churches, anytime he can be neutralized for a few days by a needless frenzy of concern, this is a partial victory for Satan. One classic reason doctors should not treat their own families or themselves, is that it is easy to lose one's perspective and objectivity. Of course, when he only has already had a one in 100,000 type of tumor, odds don't mean much.

Times when the three months were nearly up and another chest x-ray was necessary were especially traumatic. I had made the mistake once of dropping in for a chest x-ray at the local Hindu hospital, where they could do it quickly enough and let me read it myself. But, though I can recognize broken ribs, a distended heart, or active tuberculosis – “what are those little white dots?”, a voice seemed to whisper. Then I would wait 36 hours for the report and the young hedging radiologist would give me an inconclusive diagnosis, so I located an older excellent black African radiologist, explained my circumstances and he could take the picture – when his section of town has electricity – and take one rapid detailed look and say, “It’s okay, Dr. Ghrist, completely clear.”

One such due date came when we were on furlough in California in August 1979, staying up at our family house at Lake Arrowhead. I realized it was due and Glendale, where my usual sources were, was 65 miles of heavy traffic away. We began the journey and reached San Bernardino, 20 miles away and were passing a large clinic when I was really worried so just stopped and went into the radiologist’s office “cold”. The receptionist was not at all helpful, thinking of reasons why it could not be done and I asked (as a doctor) to see the doctor. I explained my need and he said, “Just step in here” and he did it and reported it, “all clear, Dr. Ghrist”. As I was thanking him, he said with a smile, “Doctor, I know the feeling. I had cancer myself twelve years ago and require now only a yearly film”. We learn compassion in a thousand ways.

But many nights during that two-year period when I would awaken, turn on the light and just begin reading the Bible, I am not sure this is valid for everyone, but three times as I was reading between July to October 1978, a great comfort came over me – almost as though God, the Holy Spirit was saying “this verse is for your special comfort”.

Psalms 91:15-16, Psalm 61:5, 6 (God speaks to me in my need), Psalms 30:2 and 3 (conversing with God)

To understand that I make no pretense of being a king in the first verses, one must recognize that I had also been reading in the book of Revelation just before, and had been impressed by the similarity of Revelation 1:6 and 5:10, that we are and are to be considered Kings and priests to God. As we believe in the priesthood of all believers, so the kingship too.

Psalm 61:5-8, “For thou, O God, hast heard my vows: Thou hast given me the heritage of those that fear thy names. Thou wilt prolong the King’s life: and his years as many generations. He shall abide before God forever: O prepare mercy and truth, which may preserve him. So will I sing praise unto thy name forever, that I may daily perform my vows.”

Psalm 30:2-3, “O Lord my God, I cried unto thee, and thou has healed me. O Lord, thou hast brought up my soul from the grave: Thou hast kept me alive, that I should not go down to the pit.”

Psalm 91:15-16, “He shall call upon me, and I will answer him: I will be with him in trouble: I will deliver and honor him. With long life will I satisfy him, and show him my salvation.”

Of course it is possible to deceive oneself in personal words of Scripture, but the comfort and peace I received, and the thrice reiteration of the same thought, caused me to believe the spirit of God had spoken to me, not that I was thereafter immune to Satan’s fiery darts – ha!

CHAPTER THIRTY ONE– D. HERE’S LIFE MOMBASA

Preparing for “Here’s Life Mombasa” was the first giant step in putting a name towards winning Mombasa for Christ, at least by our minuscule mission. It began 3 ½ years before the “I Found It” event, when the Lord impressed upon my mind the possibility and necessity for an event to crystallize the churches of Mombasa toward working for a common goal, of seeing thousands of people become Christians, as a result of hundreds of winsome Christians trained to be skillful evangelists for Jesus Christ.

With this in view, I had been talking to friends thinking how this could be done, when my friend Don Myers, Director of Affairs for Africa, for Campus Crusade, called me on the telephone from Nairobi, 300 miles away, and said he had Mr. Marvin Kehler, director of Canadian “Here’s Life” efforts, as his house guest and wondered if we could set up a meeting at our Church on the Roof, of other pastors and missionaries in Mombasa, to let Mr. Kehler present “Here’s Life”. This was done and we met in February 1976 – 3 ½ years before the event. At that time “Here’s Life: was taking America by storm, but for us was only one of various options. Yet gathered for a weekday afternoon prayer meeting, were pastors and missionaries from five denominations or missions. Little did we know the joys, pains, victories, and frustrations that were being appropriated that day, as we picked up the challenge.

The strength of “Here’s Life” is in the building up and activating God’s own people into a way of life of witnessing for Jesus. It is no stronger nor weaker than most methods in very difficult follow-up. But it’s greatest weakness – as with any prolonged effort that at last reaches a two to four week climax - is the feeling of “burn-out” that inevitably comes. Of course, it is an excellent recruitment tool for such a para-church organization as Campus Crusade, but it so catches by surprise the heavy inertia of most church leaders to find many young “pipsqueak” Christians outshining themselves, that there is a) some resistance by church leaders,

b) not a great harvest of young talent into church channels – new Sunday school teachers, Bible school students, or church oriented Bible study leaders.

We began every six weekly Win Mombasa for Christ prayer meetings, with a view toward preliminary prayer support, and possible organization of more churches and missions into committees for an “I Found It” campaign. That August 1976, while home on our usual four month furlough, my home church pastor, Dr. J. Philip Clark, suggested as an informed missionary with one church viable on our roof, that I should attend a most worthwhile summer school course at nearby Fuller Seminary – just five miles from our home by freeway. I enrolled and took the 6-week course that required an immense amount of reading.

Having read portions of Harold Lindsell’s book, “The Battle for the Bible”, and being highly aware of Fuller’s strengths and weaknesses, I classified myself as a “reluctant church growth student”, not entirely convinced of either its “theology”, being a five point Calvinist, or its methods, not being either a devoted pragmatist nor subject to Jesuit causistry (the end justifies the means).

I did notice that poor marks were given for most all evangelistic efforts from Billy Graham to “Here’s Life”, and that only their personal favorite, Dr. Luis Pilau rated high marks. But I noticed that many of their men helped in Reverend Pilau’s campaigns. I felt that by injecting church growth principles with a church growth seminar about five months before the climax, we could grow churches thereby - the old saying that forewarned is forearmed, that knowledge of pitfalls and approved methods must result in church growth.

Nevertheless when we returned to Mombasa at the end of 1976, I reproduced the “best of church growth” to our eager young African men who worked at the mission or whom we were sending to Bible College.

One thing that is taught by Dr. McGowan, is to have church growth eyes – to consistently be on the alert for tried or untried, for usual or innovative ways to plant daughter churches. By 1976, our Lighthouse for Christ Chapel had gone through its fledgling stage of six to twelve people only – had grown to a regular attendance of 30-50 each Sunday with a Sunday school of 150% that size. We had moved upstairs and were now meeting in our church on the roof with a comfortable capacity of 125, yet still had 35-60 in church with the same Sunday school of 1 ½ times the size of church. Therefore when I returned from furlough, Fuller and filled with furlough fat and fancies “with church growth eyes”, I immediately noticed that we had two Bible college graduates working for us and teaching Sunday school and preaching the occasional message, we had two Bible college students taking the same Sunday activities, and we had three other lay church officers accepting our even lesser responsibilities.

We had three Campus Crusade Lay Institutes and probably at least half of our congregation and 1/3 of our Sunday school had been training, and had led at least one or more others to the Lord. Even though we seemed so very small as churches go – with church growth eyes – and with faith that the spiritual potential we had need of only be unleashed, I began urging Henry Ajuja, one of our bible college graduates, to launch out on a Bible study which could become a church.

At about the same time, the Lord caused an American missionary lady working with Child Evangelism Fellowship, Miss Louise Moore, to come for a visit to Mombasa and offer to teach a course in witnessing to children at Pwani Bible Institute where we were sending two of our young men. God calls men and women into different areas of service and gives them varied talents. Alex Obundo, one of our two students, really became excited about using the wordless book, during the first week of instruction from Miss Moore and went out to his nearly church-less area of town renowned for its many palm wine drinking log enclosures where he lived with a brother, and on a Saturday afternoon, led 72 children to the Lord. Alex is kind of a “superkid” himself and children just naturally love and trust him.

The next day, Sunday, he told me of his great harvest and asked, “What do I do now?” Immediately a thought came to me. “Next Sunday you stay in Mikindani and begin a Sunday school which can become a church too. So it was that on the first Sunday of 1977, Henry began a church service in Changamwe, while Alex began a Sunday school in nearby Mikindani and our first two daughter churches were born.

However, our vision of winning Mombasa for Christ – this town for so many centuries known as the Muslim Citadel of the East African coast – was never dimmed. In January 1977, we had another Win Mombasa for Christ prayer meeting with nine denominations and missions represented and began preparing in earnest for yet another Lay Institute for Evangelism. Only this time we chose two of the larger evangelical churches in town and encouraged them to invite our speakers to their churches for a 2 ½ day, instead of 4 day ministry institute, especially to train their own church people and friends.

At our own church on the roof, we had a full scale lay institute, with beginners and advanced sessions, and trained nearly 150 people from ten churches in Mombasa with simultaneous Swahili translations, utilizing electronic headset receivers.

As these nine days of meetings ended, we could count over 500 people trained in our various seminars in how to walk in the Spirit and witness for Jesus and were setting as a goal for “Here’s Life Mombasa”, 1000 to 1500 people trained, and a target date of February, 1978 for the continent’s first “I Found It” campaign. But God had

a better plan for us, some long weeks and months in his school of suffering, worry, trust and spiritual growth, which was to delay, for a while and nearly extinguish hopes of Mombasa “Here’s Life” for 18 months.

When at last we did return to Mombasa we began Win Mombasa for Christ prayer meetings again, as we ourselves attended and took friends to Campus Crusade Executive seminars and joined as associate staff. By this time, part of the initiative was taken from all our hands by a plan of other evangelical Christians to have cooperative Evangelistic meetings called Mission ’78, in August, September, and October of 1978, with various special speakers coming. Life Ministry was thereby forced to either plug in early – aiming for July 1978 or delay for yet another year.

Though it meant composing, writing and translating and printing many training booklets and materials, yet Nairobi, the headquarter city, was the logical place to have the trial run and model. It was a pressurized, shortage filled, whirlwind of activities, with some projects just too complicated to succeed and abandon, yet others arising which could be widely applied. It was a fun, original, yet exhausting campaign, of which we only took a peripheral part.

We learned much from the Nairobi “I Found It”, and soon became involved in administrative, personnel and financial problems, that I suppose must accompany every work that stretches your faith.

As I said, getting ready for Here’s Life Mombasa, was a 3 ½ year affair; to be successful we wanted to create intense curiosity and awareness of the “I Found It” campaign to cause most of the people in Mombasa to wonder what have you found? To do this, we had bumper stickers, window stickers, buttons, 1000 “I Found It” t-shirts and various Mombasa radio spot announcements. The actual two-week period, when all media were to be utilized, would begin on June 19 when special signs would suddenly “appear” in most of the city busses and many shop windows. But to give greater exposure, two huge banners were going to span the two main streets – Dido Road, opposite the general post office and Moi Avenue near the 80 foot tall tusks. Then as a climax of awareness, we had planned Mombasa’s first Christian parade.

All was progressing well with only the usual logistical problems of supplies, finance and volunteers, and we had begun quite early enough to obtain routine permission for the banners, and unusual permission for the parade. These could all be easily obtained from the lowest Kenya government officers in Mombasa, called district officers, of the men in charge of publicity - Ronnie Deans, Agape Life Ministry and the well-known Dixon Wanje of the First Baptist Church are efficient and able.

About that time our office received a phone call from Mr. Mahihu's secretary. This very important public servant, equivalent to a state governor, called Provincial Commissioner, had a number of children.

I had been under much pressure a couple of years before to examine an older teenage daughter, impressed with her own importance, who had a mysterious reduction of vision, for which we could find no organic cause. Without further explanation other than Mr. Mahihu's daughter, I naturally thought it was the same girl. The "P.C." wanted me to examine her that early afternoon, and would be there at 5 p.m. to find out her trouble.

There were many problems, among which, was a fully booked afternoon, a large meeting scheduled at 4:30 p.m., and a dinner party with eleven guests immediately after. We saw the daughter, a different one – 8 years old – but in need of complicated tests taking many hours. We began them and begged off from speaking with the P.C. until the next day with tests completed.

Even the next day, the tests were unable to be completed until 3 p.m., when finally I agreed to meet the "bwana mkubwa" (big man), to discuss his daughter.

By the time he arrived, Ronnie and Pastor Wanje had also arrived and saw me first to confess their complete lack of success. The "D.O." had denied their requests and had refused to see them. It looked like both the banners and the parade were hopeless.

I went next to see the "P.C.'s" daughter, reviewed the test results and concluded that the girl's eyes were completely normal except for mild irritation. With full confidence I could then assure the worried parent that there was absolutely nothing serious. He was greatly relieved; not only at the news, but at the detailed and lengthy examination she had received before arriving at such a conclusion. I then gave him some of the special medicine I had worked on for the year I was home in 1977 for minor eye irritations. He, in an exuberant mood, said it would nice if we could meet under circumstances of non-concern to his daughters' health.

I remembered his position and our problem, so asked him if he had heard of the "I Found It" campaign in Nairobi last year. He smiled and said, "Oh yes, I remember it well." I told him we were about to have one here in Mombasa, but had some difficulty with both the District Commissioner who would not accept our letter, and of the District Officer below him. I showed him the letter Ronnie and Pastor Wanje had written, and introduced them as they were conveniently standing in the waiting room. He took the letter, said, "Do not be concerned", walked out to his long black Mercedes with army guard. Do you suppose that God had arranged for that meeting? WOW!

As the days approached, we discussed our parade; none of us had ever produced one and our main incentive to come walk three miles through the heart of town, was to receive a free “nimepata” (Swahili for I Found It) t-shirt. We had special parade banners printed on 24 hours notice with scraps from others, and decided that each church group would form their own unit. But where would we get a band to lead the parade?

God even delivered that! All the way from Germany, two days before the parade, came 40 West German young people with trumpets and guitars who came to our clinic headquarters to serenade us, and thereby be given first place in Mombasa’ first Christian parade.

What a sight as we gathered all the people, passing out brand new “I Found It” t-shirts and assembling them by churches – each with its own brilliant yellow 3 x 12 banner reading in black ink, NIMEPATA – I FOUND IT!, with a pair of six foot poles to march with it aloft.

When Ronnie came with the parade permit, we again saw the work of a Muslim official stating, that though permission had been granted for the parade, we must not in any way obstruct traffic or walk in the street. We were confined to walking only upon the sidewalk. How do you manage a parade with 400 people through town and keep only to the sidewalk? We had no answer, but then since none of us had ever run a parade in any form, on or off the street, what did it matter?

Soon the entire motorcycle police unit of the Mombasa police arrived to shepherd us, be sure we obeyed the law, and give us authority. He soon had us ready to start – Yes, there was only one motorcycle policeman in town.

Very carefully and obediently we all stayed to the sidewalk for at least two blocks until the officer began seeing children walking around parked cars onto the road, asked who was in charge, found me and complained, “With so many people, why are you using only the sidewalk? A passing car will hit some of these children. Please order everyone out onto the road so that I can better be responsible for them, block the traffic and carry on!”

One must obey the police so the Lord even over-ruled our sidewalk restriction and the parade filled the street, lasted 45 minutes and succeeded in provoking intense curiosity into what we had found!

CHAPTER THIRTY TWO– A Final Request

During that most difficult of years in 1977, with death breathing down my neck and trying to recover from one of the worst cancers a person can have “fibro-histic-sarcoma” or “rhabdomyosarcoma”. I prayed a secret prayer

to my heavenly Father. The thought of death was not really that terrible to contemplate. How can it be that bad when you get to leave all pain, suffering, and problems behind. When you get to meet face to face with your most precious friend, Jesus Christ. When you get to meet all those who have gone before you, my younger gentle brother Orrie David, as well as my mother and so many other friends from all parts of the world. To reach the end of your earthly story, and yet find that in heaven it is only the first chapter of eternity! But beyond all of that, I had a sense that my life's work was not complete. That to leave, just then, was leaving a partly finished life. So I prayed and asked, my most gentle and great Father, please- could my daughter, complete her high school before I leave, and could I pass the baton of the mission to someone else so that my life's work could continue. Then the Christian Ophthalmology Society anointed me with oil, and prayed for healing, and yes, I was healed! "If the cancer does not return in two years, you can consider yourself cancer free" is what my cancer doctor said, so as the two years went by it was with great rejoicing as well as with greater commitment that I continued the work of the Lighthouse in Mombasa.

Hezekiah was one of the good and great kings of Judah. He trusted God when the King of Assyria besieged Jerusalem and saw God destroy that great army by sending his angel of death so that "when the people got up the next morning- there were all the dead..." Hezekiah latter became ill and was told by the prophet Isaiah "put your house in order because you are going to die". He prayed earnestly with tears to the Lord and was then told that he would be given an additional "time". I too was given an additional time. Over five years have passed, many eyes have been treated, many souls have come into the Kingdom through God's Spirit and our little ministry in Mombasa. The churches have now grown 7. My daughter Bonnie, is now in her senior year of high school. My second born son, Tim has completed his seminary training and is an associate pastor at a church in Burbank. His wife, is greatly recovered from the severe "stoke" and has even gone on to have a second son- Joshua! They are thinking of coming out to help us here in Mombasa as missionaries as well! And now, the lump has returned and it is the same rabid cancer that usually takes those without a cure in less than a year. But, He heard my cry, He placed his hand upon my leg and said- "be still" "remain until we answer this prayer and allow Bill more time". Time for Bonnie to grow up, time for your son to prepare to keep the work going. Time to put your house in order. That is what I have done, what I have been doing since I was 38- working to build God's house-

John 9:3b-4 but this happened so that the work of God might be displayed in his life. As long as it is day, we must do the work of him who sent me. Night is coming, when no one can work.

What about your life?