

# MY MEMOIRS

(Over the span of 90 years, so far)

## I N D E X

### PREFACE.-

1<sup>ST</sup>. PART.- From early childhood to our second departure to Spain.

2<sup>nd</sup>. PART.- From our second departure to Spain to the present.

## P R E F A C E

Rather recently I have been encouraged to write my memoirs or autobiography, seeing I have now reached the rather venerable age of fourscore and ten.

My first reaction was to be reluctant to do so. On the one hand, I do not mind making known my many failings and shortcomings over the years. On the other, however, to give a fair and balanced overall picture, it would be necessary to narrate the many honours and blessings the Good Lord has seen right to bestow on me, particularly over the last four or five decades.

And how to do this without sounding self congratulatory, conceited, or as one interested in blowing one's own trumpet, as we sometimes say?

That's the great question I have been asking myself.

However, I believe the right course is to go ahead, trusting that when the time comes to tell about the achievements and blessings, I'll be given the grace to do so with wisdom, giving the truth of what has actually happened, but in a way that is in keeping with the tender meekness of any true servant of the Lord.

**And so, here we go...**

**My first memory dates back to when I was only four years old.**

**My father was sawing a piece of wood in the patio of our home in the Villa Urquiza neighbourhood of Buenos Aires, the city in which I was born on Christmas Eve 1927.**

**I asked him: “Daddy, where is God?”**

**“In heaven”, was the brief and quick reply.**

**“And can God do everything?” I asked, to which he answered in the affirmative.**

**I did not say anything further, but thought to myself: “Surely there is something He cannot do – if something has already happened, to make it as if it hasn’t happened” – like if yesterday, Thursday shall we say, it rained, today, Friday, make it as though yesterday it hadn’t rained. Nobody can do such a thing.”**

**It was a significant thing for a four year old child.**

**The great, Everlasting Father waited eleven years, after which, it’s as if He had said to Himself: “It is time we let this young gentleman that doesn’t know it, that for Me there is nothing impossible.”**

**By then, being fifteen years old, although I had not had anything to do with women, drugs, or any such thing, I knew myself to be a sinner.**

**On the first of January I would vow not to sin – one year it lasted till the 6<sup>th</sup> of January; the next one to the second, but at the end of that year I got soundly converted – thoroughly born again.**

**My life was so changed, the efficacy of the forgiveness through the blood of the Lamb was such, that I knew myself to be a new creature – old things had passed away. I felt so clean that it was as if my past sinfulness had never been.**

**And there was the answer to my thinking that it was impossible to do something, so that what had already happened in the past should be as if it hadn’t ever happened at all.**

Of course, after that radical initial experience I had a long way to go, and much, much to learn.

At that tender age of four, or perhaps even earlier, my dear late mother taught me to pray and had me pray every night before going to bed.

It was a very simple prayer for all my dear ones, and ended with the words “...and make me a good little boy.”

They were words full of the candour and purity of a noble and God fearing mother, and I believe the Lord used them to instil into my little soul a desire to be clean and honest.

With my many faults and shortcomings, I never, however, have wanted to be unclean or perverted, and I owe it to the Lord, Who, as I’ve said, used my dear mother to infuse uprightness to me from a very early stage.

She was at that time a Roman Catholic, no doubt having received that conviction from her mother who died prematurely, leaving her, aged ten, and three younger sisters orphans. But my Mum only spoke of God the Father and Jesus Christ, never of Mary or the Pope.

Years later she got soundly converted to the evangelical faith, and became a woman of simple childlike faith, who kept a list of all her prayer requests, and ticked them as the answers kept coming.

Years later, when I was about seven, something important happened. A Catholic boy I played with spoke to me about venial and mortal sins.

This brought me confusion and fear, and when I asked my dear mother about it she answered very wisely. Being still unconverted, she told me that as I grew up and understood better, I should confess my sins to God and He would forgive me.

Another previous incident occurred when I was probably still only four. I overheard a conversation in which Mum’s youngest sister, who was the first of the four to be saved, was speaking to her. From what she said I only remembered the words “*I then understood.*”

This left in my tender soul a conviction that there was something very important that at a later stage in life I had to come to understand.

Moving forward briefly to when I was in my early or mid twenties, my dear mother told me something very important. When she was carrying me in her womb, that is in 1927, Roman Catholics were either forbidden or discouraged from reading the Holy Scriptures.

However, all through the nine months of her pregnancy, she had a great desire to read them, and so she did daily.

This gave me an understanding, which I treasure with much gratitude, that from the very womb the Lord had overshadowed me with the Bible, which was to be THE BOOK of my life, for the little destiny He had assigned for me.

But I must now speak about my dear father. He was born in the Argentine, but of English parents; his mother was a Londoner and his father was born in Bath, I believe. He was the youngest of four, and a brother of his was a Freemason, but thankfully my Dad never had anything to do with Freemasonry.

He started to smoke at the very early age of twelve. Years later he tried to give up by means of medication he was prescribed, but it did not help at all. In fact it made him giddy, and on some occasions he had to hold on to a tree, which made some think he was drunk.

Years later, soon after the tragic death of a deaf brother of mine named Hugh, aged twenty-three, he began to read the Bible avidly. It was a long process lasting some ten years, during which the Lord was convicting him, and at the same drawing him.

A few days before Easter 1961, when I was already married and living in England with Sylvia and our eldest child Charles, he approached the two young elders of the little congregation where he and my Mum met.

One of them, significantly, was my younger brother Ronald, who must have been about twenty-eight at the time. It

was to request baptism. He had been christened by aspersion as a child I believe, but now he wanted to do it in the really scriptural way.

Both elders knew that he was still smoking, and the normal thing would have been to put him off saying that a convenient date would be arranged in due course, in the hope that in the meantime he might overcome the vice.

However, and against the norm they had, they agreed, seeing he was very determined and wanted to go ahead and do so as soon as possible. It must be said too that for him it was a big step – he was a highly respected citizen in the rather little village in which he lived, and it meant identifying himself with the tiny group of evangelicals who met not far from the central square.

So he was baptised on the following Sunday – Easter 1961 as mentioned – and when he came out of the baptistry he found the Lord had done a great miracle for him. Not only did he stop smoking altogether, but never again in his life did he have any desire whatsoever to do so.

He went on to witness to others, telling them what God had done for him, and thereafter he also preached from the pulpit not a few times, to the delight of my dear mother and the rest of us, who had been praying for his salvation fervently and for many years. He died at age seventy-nine, having fully embraced and persevered in *the faith which was once given to the saints*.

Going back in the story to when I was nearly thirteen, I had two little distinctions within a period of six months or so one from the other.

The first was in the last year of primary school, when I was chosen as the best companion of my school. The Buenos Aires Rotary Club arranged on a Sunday a special event in which a copy of a book by the famous Argentine statesman Domingo Faustino Sarmiento was given to those who had been chosen in the many schools of the vast city.

Each book bore the inscription “*The Buenos Aires Rotary Club to... (followed by the name of each one concerned) as a prize for his/her altruism, which is the foundation for great success in life.*”

The second came some six months later as I said, when an exam had to be sat for entry into secondary education, for which I had chosen a commercial college. The exam was in two main subjects, Spanish and maths, with a total of forty-five (twenty in one and twenty-five in the other) as the highest mark that could be achieved.

A few days after the exam, a fellow student and friend, who reached the board giving the results before I did, came to me with the great surprise that I had obtained that maximum of forty-five, which only five others got out of some twelve hundred who sat the exam.

Another curious thing was that at age twelve or thirteen I became fond of *a racing horse by the name of Killarney*, which initially was unbeaten, although eventually he was overtaken by others.

So on Monday mornings, as soon as the newspaper arrived, the first page I would open was the one featuring the results of all the horse racing of the weekend. My dear mother viewed this with alarm, thinking I would be turning into a gambler at the race courses, or hippodromes, as they are called out there.

Of course there was none of that – I never gambled or went to a horse racecourse.

Coming to my conversion now, it happened on 27<sup>th</sup>. December 1942, three days after my fifteenth birthday. It was quite unexpected really.

By reason of his deafness, everybody felt special love and pity for my brother Hugh.

At the same time, as I was very fond of sport and fun – not in a vicious or harmful way, however – in general perhaps it could be said that I was considered the baddy.

And so my turning suddenly to the Lord in quite a radical way, reading my Bible every day, and with an obvious transformation in my whole life, came as a great surprise to everyone.

Before that, I remember on one occasion making friends with a boy from a family recently come to our neighbourhood. At first I liked him, but when he started using bad language I was disappointed – there was something unclean about it that made it quite unpleasant to me.

In comparison, the day of my fifteenth birthday some new friends came which were Christians. The day after Christmas, Boxing Day as it's known in England, they invited me, my elder sister Lorna and my brother Hugh, to a picnic in a place by a riverside, suitable for swimming.

One of these, Douglas, was aged twenty-four, his sister Gwen nineteen, and Douglas' girlfriend, Alcira by name, eighteen. There was plenty of fun and lots of jokes and laughing, but what struck me was the fact that it was all clean, with no double meaning or anything unpleasant about it.

When we departed to take the train to return home I was invited to come to their meeting next day, which was a Sunday. This I did gladly, and we travelled from where they live – Ing. Maschitz – to the next town on the railway line, known as Benavídez, about five or six miles southward.

We did the trip in a lorry belonging to a certain Luis Palau, the father of the well known evangelist bearing the same name, who was only about eight years old at the time.

The preacher at the little place where the meeting was held was a converted waiter, aged thirty-two at the time I believe. About half way through the message, or a little more perhaps, unnoticed by everyone else, two or three successive waves of what I could best describe as a combination of awesome fire and high voltage electricity ran through my innermost being.

It came with a strong sense of both omnipotence and holiness, and I knew of course it was from God and Christ,

Who had been presented simply and clearly, with the need for repentance and faith.

That very night, after supper in my home, I went upstairs to my bedroom, and responded to the Lord, which marked the day of my second birth, December 27<sup>th</sup>. 1942.

As to the waves of fire and high voltage electricity, I later understood that it was a baptism of fire that sealed me for the Lord, who unknown to me at the time, already knew me when I was but a tiny embryo in my mother's womb, and overshadowed me with the Holy Scriptures, as previously related.

Years later, at a stage when I was being viciously attacked by an evil spirit, at a given point I perceived that this spirit was longing to cancel or destroy that sealing. Most thankfully, it couldn't, since that which is done by God Almighty is both indestructible and invincible.

The following Sunday, early January 1943, Douglas, referred to above, came to lead the meeting, which this time was to take place in our own home. The heat was so great that we decided that each one should their own chair, and we'd go and sit in the shade, under the many figs trees there were in that part of our garden.

As a child, at Sunday school I had learnt lots of C.S.S.M. (Children's Special Service Mission) choruses, which were then submerged under the surface. Now they came to mind, and I began to ask for one, and another, and another, until Douglas, rather exhausted and feeling the heat a great deal, said "*that's enough*" or something to that effect.

When he got home he must have said to his parents "*something's happened to Dickie (as I was known at the time) he can't stop singing.*"

But I had a long way to go and a very lot to learn indeed.

Soon after that I was tempted on two significant occasions, which I feel worth recording.

The first one came one night, when all of a sudden, when I was asleep, an image of an attractive young woman in her



underwear appeared vividly before me, with the obvious temptation that went with it.

I am so grateful that I turned my back on it, and shortly after fell fast asleep. It was important, and I believe that choice I made resulted in the fact that in terms of sex I have kept clean and clear, and blessed to know no other woman than my dear wife. Reciprocally, she has never known any other man.

In the second temptation, however, things went wrong. It was an urge – satanic I know – to go and buy a magazine featuring all the results and comments on the matches played by what was then my favourite football team – Boca Juniors.

This may appear strange and unjustified to some. However, it must be understood in the context of my very obsessive nature, well known to the Lord, of course, and the fact that the main football matches were played on Sunday afternoon, just at the time meetings took place.

So giving way meant that I had a battle with two loyalties warring within me – the Lord and football. The first year I managed, more or less, to keep my head above water, so to speak, and ironically, that year Boca Juniors were champions, which made it all the harder.

About September time I read “*C.T. Studd – Cricketer and Pioneer*” which made a deep impression on me.

Soon after that I had the privilege of leading to the Lord my younger brother Ronald, who was only ten at the time. He very much wanted to have a Bible, but as money wise things weren't too good at the time, it wouldn't have been right to ask our Dad for the wherewithal to buy one.

Ron had a pair of football boots which he very much treasured. However, his desire to have his own Bible was stronger, and so he sold his boots, and with the proceeds was able to buy his first Bible, and save a little towards a hymn book, which he also wanted.

This somehow became a prophetic pointer. Many years later, when he was in his fifties I believe, he was appointed Executive Director of the United Bible Society, at a time when more bibles were sold in the Argentine than ever before.

Among other achievements he arranged to have portions of the scriptures translated into indigenous dialects, which served the very important purpose of grounding converts of their tribes firmly in the faith.

At the time we were both very keen. We prayed together for the town we lived in at the time, Escobar, where there was no evangelical church whatever, and also distributed tracts and witnessed to others as opportunity offered.

Rather recently I had an email from him telling me that at present there are no fewer than fifty evangelical churches in Escobar, and some of them number a thousand or more members. That was very encouraging news indeed.

At that time too, much influenced by C.T. Studd's biography, I wanted to be a missionary and actually gave up my studies at the commercial college I went to, completing my third year, I am glad to say, with very good marks, but no desire to continue.

Of course, I was in no way fit to become a missionary - this only materialised in 1971, twenty-eight years later.

After a few months, my parents, seeing my intentions of becoming a missionary had fallen through, and I had quit my studies, quite rightly told me I was to look for a job and start earning a living.

So I began to answer ads in an English newspaper published out there – The Buenos Aires Herald. As we lived rather far, it was decided I should move to the home of my Grandad Mac Culloch, which was near the centre.

I answered various ads and on two or three cases, after being interviewed I was sent to have a medical exam. As doctor's asked me what health problems I had, I felt I couldn't lie, so I just said asthma and high blood pressure, which were my two problems at that early age.

My Grandad couldn't understand it, and said to me *"It's for them to tell you, not for you to tell them."*

He also commented that if I went on like that, I would be taking some very heavy knocks in life.

**Thankfully, this never happened, and actually in the jobs I took on later in life I never had to undergo a medical exam.**

**However, at the time, as I couldn't get a job, I was taken to the British Hospital to see what could be done about it. I was there for some four months undergoing numerous tests, some of them quite painful, but no concrete conclusion was arrived at.**

**As one of the doctors had suggested it might be necessary to remove one of my kidneys, my Dad reacted against it and begged a doctor by the name of Fergusson to discharge me immediately.**

**This was duly done, so I returned to my home in Escobar. There I turned once again to my old addiction, not only following football matches, but also playing in open fields, although I had been warned not to do any violent exercise owing to my high blood pressure.**

**Eventually I did get a job with the British and American Benevolent Society, with no medical exam required, as stated above. I started in a secretarial role, assisting the superintendent in handling correspondence, mostly in English, as well as various other secretarial duties.**

**After only ten days, he – the superintendent - took ill and I was landed with the whole responsibility of doing both his job and mine all on my own.**

**It entailed among many other duties, cashing large amounts of money in the bank, putting the right amount into envelopes for each beneficiary of what was called the White List, plus payments for pensioners, eventual and emergency ones, and sending a few by postal order to folk who couldn't come to collect them.**

**Apart from that it meant seeing to the salaries of the staff running the Men's Hostel and Employment Bureau, both adjoining my office, and my own too of course.**

**Also once a month I had to go to Sunset House, the home of the old ladies, which was situated in Quilmes, a large suburb to the south of Buenos Aires, to settle accounts for salaries and**

expenses incurred. Of course, to this should be added answering the 'phone with the numerous enquiries involved.

The only help I had was an accountant coming in for a few hours once or twice a month to check the accounts. Thankfully I can say they always balanced OK, and he never had anything to object.

So I was helped wonderfully to cope with the whole situation. There was an Executive Committee which met every week, with two or three members of the British Community serving in a voluntary capacity, as well as one representing the American side.

They were very pleased with me. Some time later the superintendent returned, but he only lasted a few months, as he suffered from tuberculosis. A few months later he died, and I was confirmed officially in the position of superintendent, acting single handed, but by the grace of the Lord coping quite well.

I was only seventeen years old at the time, and whilst job wise things were going very well indeed, some short time later I did something very foolish and utterly wrong. I set my eyes on a poor girl, leading to what couldn't even be called courtship, since it lasted barely over a month and I never kissed or caressed her.

She was a Catholic and we had nothing in common, really. It brought me much sadness and I couldn't but break it off, feeling the guilt of having raised her affections and then jilting her so soon.

However, there was a man somewhat older who loved her a great deal, and they married later and I believe it was a happy marriage.

Years later, when the Lord was moving mightily in the Argentine and many were being saved, I prayed that by His goodness the word of truth might reach her so that she too might be saved.

On my part it served me as a lesson and a chastening – never again was I to play with love, for that's what it had been.

Many a reader must wonder how the Lord managed to show such patience and perseverance, and not put me on the scrap heap, and find someone else instead of such a wobbly and erratic one.

As I believe I said in the introduction, this autobiography's main purpose is to exalt the incredible mercy and patience of the Lord, and not in any way to ascribe the least merit to myself.

However – and I don't think this is a lame excuse – I believe the fact that I had been sealed in that special way, made me much of a target of the wicked one, who took advantage of my great immaturity and many weak points.

The next period running from then to October 1947 was marked yet further by my addiction to football hindering me considerably. I often missed Sunday meetings, either to listen to football match comments by wireless (TV had not come yet) and occasionally I'd even go to watch matches on Sunday afternoons, which shows how far my spiritual life had deteriorated.

Then in October 1947 I was called for the military service. The chairman of the Benevolent Society, a Methodist minister by the name of W.C. Poole expressed the desire that once I was released from the army I should return to take up again my position as superintendent.

However, I declined, feeling it wouldn't be fair on the person taking my place to be relegated once I came back.

When I left to catch a train very early in the morning, my dear Dad escorted me to the station. Knowing about the corruption I'd be surrounded by in the army, he gave me the good advice that I should not defile myself with women, which by the grace of the Lord I never did.

It lasted in all only ten months, as I was released with the first batch in August 1948.

Not long after that I got a job with a large firm – Alpargatas S.A. – which was situated very much on the south side of Buenos Aires. As it meant a very early start in the

morning I moved to the home of an aunt and uncle, who lived much nearer the city.

But after about six months, in March 1949, my desire to serve the Lord having revived, I resigned, and joined the New Testament Missionary Union as a student, for a three year course in their Bible Teaching Centre. It was in Temperley, a large suburb on the south, and there I settled with a few other male students in what was known as the bachelors' home.

All began well, but soon the devil got in, and there was much gossip, contention and even ill feeling among some of the students, myself very much included.

This lasted for quite some time, right into the second year. As it came to an end, I was feeling very heavy and burdened about it all, so in a testimony meeting at the end of the period I stood up and confessed having spoken very much amiss about others, and asking their forgiveness.

This brought a great release to my soul, and I was able to leave for the summer recess, to join a missionary couple in Rivera, a Uruguayan city on the boundary with South Brazil.

Our teachers had been keenly aware of the situation, and no doubt their prayers were largely responsible for the happy outcome, as far as I was concerned.

Although I had certainly spoken very much out of place on not a few occasions, there were others who had also done so. As far as I know, none of them apologised, either privately or in public, perhaps thinking that as I had admitted and confessed my guilt, they were not to blame for any of it.

As far as I know, none of them really prospered spiritually in later life.

My time in Rivera lasted from early January until about mid March I believe. I often went out distributing tracts, witnessing to folk, and inviting them to our meetings, sometimes alongside the dear missionary, Cornelius by name, with whom I had a special bond, and sometimes on my own.

Most of the people we visited were very poor folk, but in general we were well received and never mocked, persecuted or evil treated.

There was some fruit in terms of conversions, but the extreme heat took its toll on me as well as my old problem of insomnia, so I returned home thoroughly exhausted and unwell.

However, after some ten days at home with my parents I recovered and returned to Temperley for take the third and final year of the course, which was uneventful and free from gossip and contention, at least as far as I was concerned.

We were required to write on the subjects we had been taught, and also add a testimony of our personal experience with the Lord over the three year course. This I did, omitting one subject in which I was in disagreement with the teaching we received.

But I must now go back to the early part of the second year of the course. There was a widow by the name of Mrs. Orphant who invited me and one or two other students to her home, and sometimes treated us to a square meal, seeing we lived in the bachelors' home, where we had to cook and fend for ourselves.

At a given moment she mentioned that she knew there was a right girl for me, saying it was Sylvia. I rather laughed at it and dismissed it, but when I got home the thought of it began to haunt me, so that I said to myself "*This old witch has put queer ideas into my head*" or something like it.

However, the next few weeks, with a bit of an inner conflict, I finally came to accept it as the Lord's will for me, and when I told Him so I felt a deep peace.

Memories of two important things of the past confirmed it strongly. At the beginning of my first year I was moved to pray that if the Lord wanted me to marry, He would bless the one he had appointed for me and begin to prepare her to serve Him by my side.

Then I remembered that shortly after that Sylvia was baptised in the N.T.M.U. church in Temperley which I attended.

As a child she was christened in the local Anglican Church, where she was also confirmed as a teenager, sang in the choir and taught in Sunday school, but had not been born again.

She had only really come to know the Lord in a girls' camp a few months previously.

Then during the summer recess I went to join an American couple of missionaries in the interior at their invitation. They were very fond of talking about courtship and marriage, and it somehow brought heaviness and a sense of burden, so I prayed again to the Lord again, this time perhaps with more fervour, along the same lines as before.

Soon after that Sylvia gave up her job and started on the same course with the N.T.M.U. that I was doing. The Lord provided faithfully for her keep, as she was a public translator, and practically every day a Polish soldier who had fought for the U.K. and U.S.A. during world war II and had been granted British nationality, appeared at her door to have his passport translated for residential purposes.

This confirmed to me unmistakably and definitely that she was indeed the one God had for me. It marked the beginning of what could well give rise to the writing of a long love novel, with heartbreaks, disappointments, misunderstandings and lots of unexpected turns, all spread over eight long years, but thankfully coming to a very happy end.

Soon after the end of my third year I proposed to her in the very home of Mrs. Orphant. Frankly, I went about it the wrong way. The proper way would have been to go out together, get to know each other better, and progress from there. There were reasons however why that would not have been quite suitable, not least the risk of gossip and wrong comments.

Be as it may, I believe in the wisdom of God it had to be that way.

My proposal was quite unexpected and came to her as a bombshell, and she understandably refused me. So I went out of the door and said to the Lord: "*Lord, what have you done?*"



*You speak to me so unmistakably and emphatically, and you don't say a word to her.*

Soon after that, being very exhausted I took a holiday of about two weeks joining some relatives by the sea on the South Atlantic coast of the Argentine. After that I went to the hilly region of Córdoba province, where I stayed with a Christian family that were happy to put me up.

Then I returned briefly to my parents' home, and then again to Temperley, where I worked alongside two missionaries, evangelising and feeding the new converts in the two different places where they operated.

One of them, by the name of Ewart Jones, had studied in the Swansea Bible College under the well known Rees Howells. The other was a distinguished Irish man – George Albert Rice – a very special man who blessed my life in many ways. He had a touch of the freshness of the Spirit that I did not quite discern in others, worthy as they were.

I used to join him in prayer once a week and laboured under his guidance, as a young apprentice indeed. I think I can truthfully say about him that I never heard him say a word out of place, which left in me a precious seed and a wonderful example.

However, I must add that the results of the ministry bore no practical comparison to the theory we had been taught in the three year course about soul winning and church planting.

By the way, it was expected that students ending the course satisfactorily would apply to be recognised as missionaries of the Union, but I never felt inclined to do so.

Spiritually I felt depleted, much like a leaking vessel that could not be replenished. I had read accounts of the lives of men such as Pilkington of Uganda and Charles Finney, who bore witness to being baptised in the Holy Spirit.

In the N.T.M.U., whilst full surrender and being filled with the Spirit were acceptable terms, being baptised in the Holy Spirit was taboo.

By the abovementioned testimonies and the study of the Scriptures, I had come to the conclusion that it was a genuine

experience to be sought and received by every believer. However, I never shared this with others, since it went against the teaching of the good missionaries I was concerned with.

At any rate, feeling so dry and depleted I cried to the Lord to get hold of my life and do whatever he deemed best, as long as He would turn me into an anointed servant, with life and power running through my service for Him.

The answer came in the most unexpected manner one could possibly imagine. I soon began to be fiercely attacked by an evil spirit, and lost all interest in serving the Lord, retreating to the home of my parents, thoroughly disillusioned and returning to my old addiction to football, to which chess was added. I had been fond of the game in the past off and on, but over the next two or three years it became obsessively so.

This retreat to my parents' home must have been in March 1953. Some time later a sister wrote telling me that Sylvia was planning to sail to England in March the following year.

Shortly before she sailed I felt free to contact her and invite her to come home and meet my parents. They were delighted with her, of course.

I saw her back home that night, and our parting at the door of her home was both ludicrous and bizarre. Then I went to the docks to see her off the day she sailed, and off she went to England, whilst I went back home.

We continued to correspond, but it was full of misunderstandings and ups and downs – sometimes encouraging and kind, others not at all.

In previous letters while she was in the Argentine she had said things like *“Your letters sound like a pompous young man who takes himself very seriously”* and in another that she found me *“irritantly humble.”*

It all took its toll on my nervous system causing me both hurt and loss of sleep. I decided not to answer her last letter, and so there was a period of nearly two years I believe in which there was no communication whatever between us.

Years later, when we were already married, she told me that during her time in England, which lasted three years – from March 1954 to March 1957 – on some occasions young Christian fellows contacted her, presumably with a view to become friends and perhaps follow it up into courtship.

However, she found it strange that she reacted harshly, putting them off altogether. Later she realised it was the Lord that was keeping her from going the wrong way, since it was His will that we should be joined in marriage to serve Him together.

On my part, there were, of course, opportunities with attractive Christian girls, but I never considered any of them, as I knew Sylvia was the one God had for me.

Now to my life while she was in England. I got jobs handling English correspondence for a firm once a week, as well as for a Mennonite pastor, and also taught English to beginners in private lessons.

This gave me a reasonable income, from which I was able to contribute honourably to my parents for my keep, and at the same time save some money, which in later years was to be very handy.

It gave me plenty of spare time for other activities. I kept three bee hives and grew carnations, and above all I was able to give myself to the two main addictions I have already referred to, i.e. football and chess.

As to football, on the one hand there was my keen support of my favourite team, Boca Juniors. But I also played, although I was not much good at it.

In one tournament play had to be at night, in a flood lit venue, since the summer heat was extreme. The side I played for one the championship, but my only contribution was to serve to a team mate one of the two goals scored in the final decisive match, which we won by 2—0.

I also played in another tournament for a lower level team. We also won the championship, during which I scored in all one goal from a free kick, one from a header, and one from a

tantalisingly weak shot that slowly found its way to the net of the other side's goal, on a very muddy pitch.

In this tournament we were rated as third division, but in proper ratings starting from premier and nationwide we should have been rated twentieth division, or thereabouts!

As for chess, I'd follow the results of great players' tournaments and study their games, which always helps to improve one's game. This I did in 1954 and 1955 and may well have played in an odd tournament – can't remember.

But my best year was 1956. A grand master by the name of Michael Najdorf played simultaneously against a number of us in a club just in the outskirts of Buenos Aires. When that was over he awarded two scholarships for his chess academy, and I was favoured with one of them.

The lessons were sent by correspondence, with hints and advice on general principles, together with practical examples, and one would have to write back giving the answers to the questions or problems.

I worked on them promptly and regularly, greatly enjoying it, and it served to enhance my game considerably. Then I took part in various tournaments. The first one spread over two or three months, because there was a preliminary stage when the first three players of each group qualified for the final stage, and a gap of a few weeks before the latter began.

In the preliminary stage I came out first winning every single game. Then in the final stage I won all five games with white, but lost two and drew one with black, which gave me a score of two and a half, so that I came out second, which was far better than I had expected.

In fact I could have done better – in a game that was heading for a draw, through playing hastily I made a silly, quite unnecessary move which cost me the game. Had I drawn that game it would have given me a score of three points out of five with black.

A second tournament I played in was in the immediate vicinity of where I lived. I won every single game, although it

must be said that with two or three exceptions, they were weak players.

Then there was a third one with some seven teams participating, with six players in each. As I was in good form I was given the responsibility of playing as first board of our team. At first in particular my play was somewhat disappointing, but I made amends in the last game of all, in which I beat none other than the first board of the champion team, and was showered with congratulations from my teammates.

My overall score was three wins and three lost, which, considering that I had to meet the top player of each one of the other sides, was not too bad at all.

I fully realise all this football and chess stuff will make very boring reading for most. However, may I point out that these are My Memoirs, adding that it could well be that two or three may find it of some interest.

Many years later, when I was already married, and not having played chess for years, Sylvia and I were in South Wales visiting a doctor friend of ours and his wife. Suddenly the subject of chess arose, since our host had a computer that played chess. It was not so advanced as the very sophisticated ones that were developed later.

Anyway, I was put to play against it. It was like the cup of wine given to an alcoholic after he has been delivered. The game was played with a clock for each – computer and whoever played against it. I had only used half an hour of my allotted time, and the computer much more.

It was getting late so the game had to be abandoned, although I had a winning position. That night my mind was spinning round and round, thinking when I might be able to play again against the computer!

Soon after that I was at an evening meeting where ministries I was familiar with were present. At the end of it I

felt I should make a vow before the Lord to the effect that I would never again in my life play one single game of chess.

Humanly speaking, the love for the game is still there, and I would love to take on a strong player on a winter day with the fireplace burning brightly and plenty of time to spare. But I know I must not ever again do such a thing, which would mean breaking my vow and in a sense, betraying my dear Lord Jesus.

Before proceeding further with the story I must record another addiction I have had to contend with – tennis.

I played in my younger days but was never much good at it. My addiction though has been to become a very keen admirer of the great Swiss player Roger Federer, which began some years ago.

It's a known fact that many top class players would love to be a Roger Federer. Last summer he won the Wimbledon title for the eighth time, a record no-one else has ever achieved. It will be long before it is equalled by any other, if it ever does happen.

Many consider him the best player of all times, although of course there are many other great tennis stars, like the Spaniard Rafael Nadal.

As, owing to my obsessiveness I have to watch with much care that nothing impinges upon my focus on Jesus, for two days after the Wimbledon final – that was in July last year – I neither bought a newspaper nor listened to the news on the wireless. It was rightly to avoid the risk of becoming over excited about the result, and so straying from my correct spiritual orbit.

A few weeks later, I was touched by a gesture of tender condescension from the Lord. He saw to it that, quite accidentally, without my looking for it at all, I bumped into a newspaper picture showing him at play again, confirming that it was his first appearance after achieving the all time record of eight Wimbledon wins.

**So the reader can see that it has not been a smooth and easy path by any manner of means. My proneness to obsessiveness has had to be kept at bay at all times, to ensure our precious and wonderful Lord Jesus is the real central figure in my life in every way and at all times.**

**Now back to Sylvia and the long period in which there was no communication between us, she being in England and I in Argentina. It came to an end and correspondence was resumed, but (yet again) in a very strange way.**

**Being attacked by the enemy, I was prompted to write to her a letter fully intended to be a final goodbye, which I ended, however, by wishing her the Lord's very best. I sent it to the London address I had from previous correspondence, and it was forwarded to St. Ives in Cornwall, where she was doing part time work**

**Some two or three weeks later the postman – a friend from a local football team – met me in the street and took out a letter he had for me. I noticed it was addressed on the envelope in pencil, which made me think “*yet another nasty one.*”**

**But I was wrong. She gave me to understand that she was lonely and missed me, which revived somehow my love for her. So the letter intended to be a final good-bye turned out to be the one that put things on the right track again!**

**Thus we went on writing to each other, but there were still misunderstandings and a few nasty exchanges, mostly on my part.**

**By Christmas time of that year – 1956 – she was again in London, working this time at Selfridges. The news came that her mother had sent her money for her return passage to the Argentine – she had not saved for it.**

**And so she returned in March 1957 – a year to be remembered – as forty years later something significant and worth recording took place. But we must wait quite some time till we reach that stage of the story.**

**Soon after her return we began to go out together, generally on Saturdays, and she received my affection and began to love**

me. Things ran smoothly then, and eventually, we got married in April 1958 – exactly eight years after I had come to know she was the one God had for me.

But it was not without yet a very odd turn to be added to the love novel!

Somehow I had the idea in my mind that just as I had waited for her all that time, it was now her turn to wait for me, while I travelled to England *all on my own*. At the same time I thought in the intervening period my spiritual life could be restored, so as to enter marriage on a better footing.

You may well imagine the hurt and grief that this inflicted on Sylvia. But I soon realised it would have prolonged things far too much, and also been very unfair to her, so I laid down the idea and agreed that we should get married and do the trip to England together.

And so we had our wedding on the 5<sup>th</sup> of April, significantly the fifth day of the fourth month of the thirtieth year of my life, as per Ezekiel 1: 1, which, on more than one occasion I have used as a starting point when taking up the subject of courtship and marriage.

We spent our honeymoon in Mar del Plata, known as the Pearl of the Atlantic. Then after a few days in my parents' home, we sailed about the 20<sup>th</sup>. April roughly on a cargo vessel with berths for passengers named Highland Chieftain, from the Royal Mail Lines, as they were known at the time.

The sea voyage was enjoyable on the whole. There was a nice group of Anglo Argentine passengers travelling and we made good friends, enjoying games of deck tennis, etc.

When we were crossing the really tropical zone we somehow managed to keep cool, and there wasn't any sea sickness, at least on my part – may be Sylvia got a touch of it.

We landed at Tilbury on 5<sup>th</sup>. May I believe, and Willie Robertson, a dear brother in the Lord and close friend, had a most kind and helpful gesture. Being the manager of the London Branch of the Argentine Airlines, he came with a driver and company van to meet us, and convey us to our destination, the Honour Oak Fellowship in South East London.



**This made things much easier for us and also saved us the heavy expense that coming by taxi all that long way would have involved.**

**We were put up temporarily in the H.O. (Honour Oak) premises. It was hinted to us that finding accommodation in the immediate area might be very difficult, but the Lord helped us and we managed to rent a suitable flat at a five minute walk from the fellowship and on the same road.**

**So we paid the rent for the initial four weeks, and leaving our belongings in the flat we set off on our journey westwards. The first stop was Bovington Camp, where Sylvia's eldest sister Fairy, her husband Darrell and their children lived.**

**From there we went on westwards to Exeter, and then to Newton Abbot, Plymouth and into Cornwall, eventually reaching Land's End. From thence we returned to St. Ives where we had an unexpected but blessed experience.**

**We attended meetings on a Sunday, morning and evening, at a local church, where the visiting preacher was Don Summers; perhaps some reader may have heard of him. He struck us as an anointed servant with a sound and living ministry.**

**But the really striking thing was that at certain stage of his messages, without anything he said pointing to it, we both trembled visibly in our seats. We later learnt it was the Lord, Who knew us well and gave a further seal, this time for both of us together.**

**By the way, at this stage my spiritual life was still not restored, but Sylvia, being very discerning, perceived clearly that my life was in His hands, and it was all part of His dealings with me.**

**From St. Ives we went on in the south west, but northwards, reaching Weston-Super-Mare, and then Bristol. The green of the countryside and all the beauty of the scenery were very wonderful, especially to me as such greenness is rare in Argentina, at least where I lived.**

**We had intended to go on from there to the Lake District, but by then Sylvia was feeling the symptoms of early pregnancy, and I was troubled by some awkward spots and**

boils. Besides, we were beginning to feel tired of some much travelling from place to place, so we decided to return from Bristol to London and settle in the flat we had rented.

This we did, and after a more or less short period of time, I accepted an offer from my brother in Christ and friend Willie Robertson to join the Argentine Airlines. He wanted me to work by his side in a secretarial role, assisting him in English correspondence and other duties. He knew of course that he could trust me as a brother in Christ, which to him was important.

My pay wasn't very high, but as we had no large financial commitments, every week I was able to pay out of my wages two or three pounds into a Post Office Savings Account I was encouraged to open by a friend.

At the same time, it was good that Sylvia, owing to her pregnancy, was able to rest as much as necessary, free from any concern about money matters.

The job with Argentine Airlines had some interest and even exciting sides to it. There was the Farnborough Air Show, either in late August or early September. An air commodore who was the president of the Argentine Airlines was a special guest, since he had recently purchased six Comet aircraft. This meant that A.A. would be the first airline to fly jet aircraft on the South Atlantic route – before that they were all propeller aircraft.

I went to the fair as his interpreter, and spent a few days there meeting some interesting folk.

London was in those days a world quite different from what I had known. There was a strict honesty with which I was struck in more than one way.

For instance, travelling in a double Decker bus and a passenger who had to get off before the ticket collector arrived, so he left his fare to another passenger, who in due course paid for his own adding *“and this is from a gentleman who got off before he could pay you.”*

Then there was the newspaper vendor who would leave the papers and magazines with a weight on them for them not to be blown away while he went to have a coffee. Those purchasing either the one or the other would leave the exact amount, and there was no question about anyone making off without doing so.

On a given occasion rather soon after we arrived in England, travelling by tube Sylvia and I got on the wrong train, which was taking us well away from our intended destination. A young man, realising the mistake we had made and aware that we were foreigners, came to offer us help, saying he would help us get on the right train to redirect us, and he would accompany us to make sure we didn't go wrong.

From my experience in the world I had lived in before, I began to wonder what kind of charge he would make, or at least what reward he would expect. I was refreshing to see there was none of it at all – he was doing it out of sheer kindness and helpfulness.

However, I doubt if the same sort of thing could be found prevalent in London nowadays – things have changed a great deal since 1958, sixty years ago!

As the time went by, Sylvia and I saw that it would be much better to buy a property than to continue renting indefinitely, especially with the birth of our first child approaching.

Because of my job I couldn't go house hunting, but Sylvia very bravely did so despite her pregnancy. After a few disappointments, she eventually went to an estate agent who asked her what was the maximum sum we could afford.

When she replied, the answer was that it would not suffice for anything in the London area, adding *unless you are prepared to live in Borough Green*.

She bravely took up the challenge and was taken out by the agent. It was a new housing estate, the building firm of which was owned by what we found to be a very helpful and sympathetic person.

Some days later I was able to take the afternoon off, and we went out together to view the property. It was a two bedroom semi detached in the process of being built, with a large garden front and back, an entrance hall and kitchen with a large lounge/dining room downstairs, and two bedrooms and bathroom upstairs.

We liked it and decided to go ahead. Our friend and brother in Christ Willie Robertson, being very fond of fellowship with us, rather tried to discourage the thought, since it would mean living very far from Twickenham, where he lived.

However, putting together some savings, plus an amount raised from the sale of Sylvia's wedding dress, and also of some Wedgwood china she had bought as rejects, but in very good condition, at the time she worked in Selfridges, we were able to pay enough for a deposit, and obtained a suitable mortgage from the Abbey National, Chatham Branch.

And so we moved in early January 1959. A Mr. John Daldry, Commercial Manager for the firm in London, was extremely helpful, at that time and on further occasions too.

He drove us with our few belongings in his car. We had ordered a new bed and mattress, and the rest of the necessary things – cot and pram for the baby we were expecting, and various other odds and ends - all came in due course.

Soon after we moved in I remembered a song my father had a record of – *Bless this house, Oh Lord, we pray*. He used to have it played from time to time. It now came to me with a deep significance: I was now the owner of a new home, the husband, bread winner, and soon I would be a father, so how I remembered the words of that song!

The birth of our first born Charles George had a lovely prelude to it. The day before – Sunday afternoon of 15<sup>th</sup> February - Sylvia and I went for a walk in the pleasant countryside near to our home. We sat down for a while, and I felt a deep, tender love flowing from my heart and kissed her profusely.

Then very shortly after we returned the labour pangs began, and the precious child was born the following morning, at something like 07.50 or thereabouts,

To us it was a precious sign that just as love had called Charlie, as he is now known, into a new world of life which he knew not, so the love of God shall call him back into a new life in the world of the Kingdom of God.

He did move towards the Lord in his childhood and perhaps adolescence too, on more than one occasion, and so did our second child Grace, but subsequently they cooled off for different reasons. Our sure confidence is, however, that they are both destined to be heirs of salvation, and in due course they will be gathered safely home.

It must be said that they are both most kind and helpful to Sylvia and me, and are also very clever, and are both doing extremely well in their respective spheres.

Shortly after Charlie's birth I experienced a *nasty one* from the enemy, on which I prefer not to comment or enlarge. On the other hand, there were to occasions in which I was encouraged.

One was as I knelt in prayer, leaning on an old trunk with some odd belongings in the back room upstairs. I prayed that the Lord would bring my life to where it should be, and I did so with tears. I don't think I had ever prayed with tears before. At a later stage it was to become my daily bread, so to speak, to weep and weep before the Lord.

The other was reading in the book of Hosea, possibly somewhat later – not quite sure. Wading through chapters mostly of condemnation for God's people's unfaithfulness brought to my soul a sense of frustration and hopelessness.

Thankfully, when I reached the last chapter, the words "*...I will heal their backsliding*" and all the precious promises that followed, came to me as a precious balm and encouragement when I really needed it badly.

At that time I took an interest in gardening, taking comfort in the fact that it was the first job given to man before the fall.

I borrowed a book on the subject from a public library near Victoria Station, to and from which I travelled on my way to and from work.

I learnt how to drain the soil when it had had excessive rain, and also sowed seed to grow a lawn -(teasing me, a brother passing by remarked "*feeding the birds*"!)

I also grew flower borders, decorated with boxes with nasturtium on the ledge below the front window of our room upstairs, and grew potatoes and runner beans in our back garden. Also learnt to keep a compost pit in our back garden, where I had a garden shed, with a solid bench and carpentering and gardening tools.

At the very end of the garden we had several damson trees, and every autumn Sylvia made jars and jars of damson jam which we very much enjoyed.

On other lines, I also became very interested in cricket, a game I knew nothing about in the land of my birth. I never played, but followed results and went to watch international matches, one with Sylvia between England and New Zealand at Lords, and some time later also at the Oval, but not with Sylvia, against West Indies and South Africa.

I also followed county cricket and Hampshire were my favourite team. I remember they won the championship as it was played in those days – in 1961 I believe – having Colin Ingleby Mackenzie as skipper, Derek Shackleton as medium/fast bowler, Roy Marshall and Peter Gray as opening batsmen, and a spinner by the name of Sainsbury, like the supermarket.

Travelling from Borough Green to London Victoria, and from there to Bond St. where the airline's office was, meant a journey of about an hour and a half, plus another hour and a half to return in the evening, which made a very long day for me.

However, I did well in the job, and John Daldry, the commercial manager of the branch, perceiving that my qualifications went further than the secretarial role I was in,

requested that I be transferred to what was known as the Traffic Department.

There I learnt the whole business, which included reservations, fare construction, cargo, dealing with complaints and many other ins and outs, such as sending telex messages using a coding system known as airimp, etc. This was to serve me in very good stead in later years.

At that time a dear brother known to many in our circles, and who was called home some years ago, David Wetherly, would visit us from time to time, and we very much appreciated having fellowship with him.

He had a loving way of making each one feel he or she was his best friend, and then one discovered that all others received the same treatment! Just like the Lord – *Every one His special child, everyone the same.*

On a given occasion he came to visit us with a missionary who had served the Lord sacrificially in Africa, also well known in our circles – Edgar Parkyns.

We had good fellowship, and he – Edgar – invited us to a conference to be held in Devon in late September of that year – 1961 – convened by the late Arthur Wallis and David Lillie.

We agreed to attend but I must go back a little in time. Having such benefits as concession travel and even free fares, we flew to Bermuda about April or May 1961.

Our first landing was followed by the announcement: *This is Sydney, Nova Scotia* and as I looked out through the window I saw there was snow every where. I wondered if we had taken the wrong flight and landed in Sydney, Australia, but then it couldn't be because of the snow.

We later learnt it was to avoid the famous Bermuda Triangle, where it is said that at a certain time of the year entire aircrafts and all their contents are mysteriously swallowed up and disappear.

It was a good time and we had the experience of bathing in the aqua marine waters of the Caribbean.

I was invited to share a testimony in one of the meetings we attended, and some folk expressed appreciation of what I had said, but I still had a very long way to go before I could share anything really solid and substantial.

Shortly after we returned, when I got back from work one afternoon, I found my mother-in-law met me with the news that Sylvia had been run into Orpington Hospital, and our GP told me it was to be an imminent abortion.

I went to visit Sylvia next afternoon after office hours, and she told me the Lord had shown her very plainly that she was to have that child and not lose it.

I didn't want to be like a wet blanket, so I politely said that the Lord was well able to do so, although I had no personal conviction or word from Him about it.

However, the next morning as I travelled in the train on my way to work, I read an article in a magazine known as *A Voice of Faith*, which Edgar Parkyns had given me in his previous visit.

It was based on the story of the Shunammite's dead child, raised by the prophet Elisha, as recorded in 2<sup>nd</sup>. Kings chapter 4.

The words "*God had not promised a dead body but a bundle of life*" stood out clearly in my spirit as coming from the Lord, and that afternoon I went again to see Sylvia, and shared the glad news that He had spoken to me to the same effect – i.e. that the child would live.

As there was no further loss of blood Sylvia was discharged, but told that she would be coming back soon.

It was a difficult pregnancy and whenever Sylvia felt any hint of bleeding she would retire and lie quietly resting in bed. A neighbour suggested that she could just go about doing her usual things normally, and if she lost that child she could always have another later. Moreover, our GP had hinted it could be a subnormal or defective child by saying "*Mrs. Hussey, when the womb refuses it generally has a reason.*"

However, we both felt strongly that it was to be *that very child* and went on holding on firmly to the Lord's promise.



On another line, some time later – it must have been July of that same year – feeling low at a given moment, I thought to myself that after all I would not go to that September conference to which we had been invited.

Nevertheless, the next morning, reading before breakfast the portion for the day of Daily Light, the words “*but so did not I because of the fear of God*” from Nehemiah 5: 5b, came through as a clear warning that I was not to go back on my word and stay away from the conference.

How important and timely that word was! In that conference, or rather in a follow-up meeting, I was to receive straight from the heart of God a key word that was to open up decisively the beginning of my spiritual restoration.

Had I not gone, I would have continued in my little life with Sylvia in our home and with our children, gardening, taking walks in the Kentish country, etc. but missing altogether God’s purpose for my life.

So come September we did go to Devon. The conference was held in a venue at Belstone, near Okehampton I believe, and lasted from Wednesday to Friday evening. There was good ministry of the word by different ones, but nothing of great significance came through.

On Saturday I was feeling very tired, and longing to get back home to rest on Sunday, before going back to work on Monday, and had actually booked a taxi to take us to the railway station for our return to London.

However, David Lillie invited me to stay on for a follow-up meeting to take place at Countess Wear, I was reluctant, being very tired and depressed – I lay resting, and Sylvia, who was very conscious that *we should stay*, felt as though I was a heavy weight of lead impossible to be lifted up.

Notwithstanding, I was persuaded to stay and we cancelled the taxi and went to the evening meeting.

Cecil Cousin, a servant of the Lord now in His presence, ministered the word, and towards the very end –*and how very fine did the Lord cut it!* came those precious words from His

own heart to mine: *“The chains that have afflicted you for years I have broken.”*

They were an interpretation – by Edgar Parkyns, by the way – to an utterance in tongues. They may seem ordinary, perhaps even oft repeated, or else expressed in similar ways, but how real they were to me!

Those cruel chains had certainly afflicted me – albeit off and on – putting me against God and all others for eight long years, and from my innermost being there rose a quiet but very real *Praise the Lord*.

As I shared with Sylvia – that very night, or perhaps the following morning - those deep gushings of weeping by the Spirit flowed out copiously, and were to continue doing so for many years, at times with an intensity such as I had never thought possible.

In the N.T.M.U. (New Testament Missionary Union) we had been taught to be wary of emotionalism, as something that could lead to unsound or counterfeit results.

However, I found that after every time it happened to me, I was left with a deep sense of peace and release. I learnt with time that it served the purpose of flushing out of my system so much bitterness and hatred with which the wicked enemy had flooded me so often.

I also came to understand eventually that, particularly when the weeping was very strong, that it was in fact undoing wicked knots and horrible chains with which I had been enslaved.

After the return from the conference, every evening, after supper and settling our little Charlie, Sylvia and I gave ourselves together to the word of God and prayer. We went through the whole Bible from Genesis to Revelation, looking up every single reference to the Holy Spirit.

It was from a clear feeling that there was still a great need in our lives, and that need had to be met in some way by the Spirit of the living God.

At a later stage we understood that it was like laying a solid foundation, so that all that was to follow by the working of the Spirit was to accord with the Holy Scriptures, and not run out

of its right course through emotionalism, spurious prophecies or visions, and the like.

Despite her difficult pregnancy, Sylvia was very much with me in it all, sitting up in bed whilst I was generally kneeling by the bedside.

The night we finished that study having reached the end in Revelation 22: 17 – I remember it so well, it was the 31<sup>st</sup>. of October that year 1961 – I closed my Bible and started to pray. I shall never forget it; I felt I was really touching the Throne, and a feeling came to me that we were embarking on a new way we had never trodden before.

However, this was, shall I say, but the beginning – we still had a very long way to go.

I would pray early in the morning before breakfast, and also in the lunch break at work. Immediately after a quick snack I'd go to an Anglican church in the vicinity, and pray and pray until it was time to go back to work.

On alternate Saturdays we began to have prayer meetings in our home in Borough Green. At first they were attended by the local Baptist pastor, as well as two other pastors from nearby towns, through the invitation of a member of the local baptist church, Arthur Hollman by name, who was much in sympathy with us. David Wetherly and one or two others also joined us.

Our main focus was on revival. It never happened, but nonetheless it was good to wait on the Lord together. Eventually only David and Arthur continued, but although few in numbers – just the two of them, Sylvia and myself – we used to have some great times together.

I must add now that our second child was duly born on 2<sup>nd</sup>. December 1961, thankfully quite normal. In the early stages of her childhood, to be true, she would awake disturbed in the night and gave us some broken nights.

However, by the grace of the Lord we endured it, and we are so glad to say that she has turned out an outstanding daughter, an excellent climber, a good skier, as well as a brilliant university lecturer.

How right we were to hang on to the Lord's promise!

The following March my parents arrived from the Argentine. It was good that they were able to fulfil their desire to come to the land of their forefathers. My father's parents were both born in England, and my mother's father, James Mac Culloch by name, was a Scot born in Perthshire I believe. They, by the way, also joined us in our Saturday prayer meetings. They were accommodated in a bungalow across the road, where Nain, Sylvia's mother lived, but they came over to us for their meals.

My Dad hired a car for some part of their stay and toured with my dear mother, visiting places of interest for about two or three weeks. In the summer, at the recommendation of a colleague in my firm, we spent a short holiday on the Hayling Island (which we didn't enjoy much, by the way) and at the end of it my Dad drove over to collect us with our two children – Charles and Grace – and bring us back home.

On Good Friday my parents went out with Sylvia and our two children on a bus tour in Kent. Dear Sylvia was in much need of an outing and I believe she and all others enjoyed it.

There was a funny side to it, as at a given stage my dear mother – I forget the reason – missed the bus and was left behind. So messages had to be sent to help her catch the next service, which she did, and they reunited and got back home safe and sound.

And I? Well, at that time I was so tired of daily travelling to work into London and back, that I decided to stay at home. But my rest was to awake about 4 or 5 a.m. that morning, and spend a good while on my knees pouring out my heart unto the Lord, with copious but refreshing tears, which were my daily bread, serving the important purposes outlined previously.

Some time later I received the gifts of tongues and interpretation simultaneously. They came together, as little twins, and the brief interpretation was: *“Rejoice, for this day the Lord has loosed thy tongue.”*

**From then I went on exercising the gift of tongues, but it was something like a toddler taking two steps at a time, and then stopping to hold on to something.**

**For a few days I went on like that, till I felt an inner urge to step out and let loose. The result was that more and more new words began to come forth, and this went on and on, till to this day I can say that when speaking in tongues – to the Lord and myself of course – out of every ten words at least eight or nine I have never heard myself say before.**

**I hold this as a precious token of the great infinitude of our wonderful God.**

**Before going further I must record that at this stage we had left the local Borough Green Baptist Church, as I was invited to pastor a little Elim assembly in Meopham, Kent. It was a convenient arrangement for them, as there was no need for financial remuneration as I held a well paid job with the airlines. They were a precious little flock.**

**At this time too I began to take driving lessons, and past my driving test first time on 31<sup>st</sup>. August 1963.**

**Returning to tongues and interpretation, I began to exercise the gifts, either in private fellowship with others or in meetings. They were well meaning predictive ones, foretelling blessing and good things, but I had to learn that they were not genuinely from above, but soulish and prompted by one's own feelings and good intentions.**

**This has helped in subsequent years to counsel tactfully, and when opportunity offers, others who have fallen into the same trap I had fallen into – that of giving predictions that were not truly of God.**

**However, on two occasions I did get it right!**

**The first I recall was when we were still living in Borough Green, Kent. A young sister by the name of Jenny Lamb, known by many in our circles, came to share with Sylvia that as the end of her course approached and she had to face her final exams, she was both physically and emotionally**

thoroughly exhausted, at the very end of her tether. She felt totally unable to face those vital exams,

Sylvia brought her to me, and after waiting on the Lord together for a few moments I was moved to give a word in tongues, with the gist of the interpretation being that it was to be like the crossing of Jordan, when the priests were to move forward until their feet were dipped in the brim of the water, and so a way through was made for Israel to go right across into Canaan.

Jenny acted on that word, and the Lord faithfully saw her through her exams successfully, As a result of it, a lasting bond of fellowship was forged, and in later years she was closely associated with us in Liverpool, and also in North Wales and in the South West of England. She was called home some fourteen years ago when she was in her mid sixties.

In the other particular instance, it was to encourage someone to embark upon the step he had been considering “*...for if thou askest the Master, will He not come to thy feast and pour out His best wine? Lo, I have told you, and is not this the sign that thou didst ask of me?*”

This was at a later date in Liverpool, and at the end of the meeting a dear brother came to tell me it had answered exactly to what was in his heart, so that he went ahead and got married shortly.

Their marriage, happily, has been a very blessed one, and to this day they live together in loving harmony as husband and wife.

One of the things I had to learn was that there is a law governing prophecy, and that it must be according to the measure or proportion of faith, as we are taught in Romans 12: 6b.

In other words, we are not to prophesy things that go beyond what we have lived and experienced – or to put it another way - we are not to exceed our measure – if it's one yard, for example, we are not to go beyond, to two or three.

**And some times, erring from ignorance of this principle, I in those times, and many others to this day, have gone and are still going, miles and miles beyond their measure!**

**As time went by, we came to spring 1965, when David Wetherly suggested we might want to attend a conference in the Longcroft, in the Wirral. We agreed to go and arrived the Saturday afternoon.**

**It was the second summer conference, which from then grew on increasingly.**

**The first meeting that Saturday evening was held in Barnston Dale, very close to the Longcroft, and was chaired by Norman Meeten, whilst Mr. North was the speaker.**

**Sylvia was unable to attend as she had to settle our children. I was deeply moved by Mr. North's ministry, and went back telling her I had heard a man speak as I had never heard any other. I'm sure there are very many up and down the land, and also in many places abroad, who would say exactly the same.**

**It was a blessed week in which we were, so to speak, immersed in a baptism of love and holiness. Having been born with the fire of God running right through my bosom, as described previously, there was something in me that responded deeply.**

**When we got back home the following Saturday, I received a 'phone call from a sister who served more or less in a secretarial role, booking speakers, etc. in the little Elim assembly I was pastoring in Meopham. She was quite friendly as usual, but after the love that flowed in everyone's speech those days, it felt quite cold by contrast.**

**We were greatly drawn in love to all the dear folk we had met in that conference, and from then on the Lord began to overrule in our circumstances in a special way.**

**I was still working with the airline in London, and a sales representative who operated from Manchester had to resign owing to ill health.**

**John Daldry, the Commercial Manager, suggested that I be given the job, but Willy Robertson, my friend and brother**

in the Lord who was the General Manager of the London Office, wasn't too keen on the idea. He knew it was a position in which one had to be a man of the world, drinking, telling the right kind of joke that some like to hear, and other things that a Christian cannot fit into, as it would make him much of a square peg in a round hole.

However, I was given a try, and after some weeks Willy Robertson had an ad published inviting applications for the position. He interviewed the applicants himself, but none turned out to be suitable, so I was confirmed as Sales Representative, covering a large area in the North of England, which later I chose to expand, travelling as well to the Midlands and Scotland, and eventually to Northern Ireland and Eire too.

So this meant moving from Borough Green in Kent to the North West. Our first step was to go to the Longcroft, which we did in November 1965.

We were placed in the annexe. Mr. and Mrs. North were also living in the Longcroft - in the Lodge - but he was often away ministering the word elsewhere.

As there were no meetings Sunday morning, we suggested gathering around the Lord with the few other residents, namely dear Mrs. Milner, her daughter Mary, a Miss Fisher and one or two others.

This marked the very small beginning of a fellowship, rather a backwater at the time, in comparison with the Liverpool one at Queen's Road, where we met Sunday afternoons and one or two nights in mid week. There was much blessing there, with many young folk brought in, attracted by Mr. North's outstanding ministry and dear Norman Meeten's.

As is well known, in later years the Longcroft grew substantially, and is at present one of the largest fellowships in number.

After some six months in the annexe we moved to a housing estate in Bryn, Ashton-in-Makerfield, near Wigan, which was more or less equidistant to Manchester, where my office was, and Liverpool, where we met every Sunday and



once in midweek, except when on business I overnighted away from home, in such places as Newcastle, Glasgow, Edinburgh, etc.

But I must go back to the birth of our third child, John, which took place in June 1963.

One evening in the autumn of 1962, when I was to turn to the epistle to the Thessalonians where we were up to in our evening reading after supper, my Bible opened in the first chapter of Luke. The words to Zacharias that his wife was to have a child to be named John, with all the precious promises that followed, came through to both Sylvia and me very distinctly and powerfully.

Sylvia found she was pregnant soon after, and John was born on 13<sup>th</sup> June, as above, in Pembury Hospital, Kent, if I remember rightly.

His birth was slightly tardy, so he was very well formed, and the nurse that first saw him called the other nurses to see the beautiful baby that had been born.

Now, to return to our time in the annexe of the Longcroft, we had asked our daughter Grace when she would be giving her heart to the Lord, and she replied she'd do it when she was four.

So on the day of her fourth birthday, 2<sup>nd</sup>. December 1965, she did so, and immediately after, John's voice was heard from the top bunk he slept on, saying in a very serious tone:

*"I also want to receive the Lord",* or words to that effect.

Sylvia then told him that as I had already gone to work, when I came back, as his Daddy, I could explain things well to him, so he could do it that evening. But his reply was quite definite – he understood quite well and wanted to do it there and then, that very morning.

And so he did, at age two and a half. He is not a preacher, but has gone on with the Lord ever since. For about four years he served as a missionary in a place known as "Maforga", in Mozambique. He did so in an agricultural role, growing food to feed hungry children.

On his return, which I believe was via South Africa, he contracted a type of malaria that does not recur, but attacks the head and can be fatal. Sylvia was in touch over the 'phone and told to pray much for he was very unwell.

By the Lord's grace, a Japanese brother who met with him just then, happened to have a Chinese vaccine precisely for that type of malaria, so he took it and it worked effectively. He returned to England feeling very weak, but was able to rest and recover.

He is now a fifty-five year old, happy and confirmed bachelor, and has been living in Christchurch, New Zealand for nearly five years. He is planning to visit us in England this coming August.

Back to Queen's Road now. The work grew, but at a certain stage it was thoroughly tried. An individual who joined kept on seeing evil spirits in most folk and caused much havoc.

Not a few were hurt and left, but a main group of faithful persevered, and it was felt that an eldership should be appointed. Under Mr. North's headship four of us were chosen: Norman Meeten as the leader, David Wetherly and Ken Moffat - both deceased some years ago - and me.

This gave the fellowship a more solid standing. Some time later Mr. North removed to Exeter but he continued visiting us in Liverpool from time to time.

The individual that had caused so much harm was eventually disciplined, in a rather lengthy and painful process, but it was part of our learning and equipping for the future.

The premises at Queen's Road were becoming too small, and so we removed to 14, Devonshire Road, in the Toxteth area of Liverpool, where the fellowship still meet to this day.

The property was in very poor condition, and an offer of £ 4,000, which was all we could afford, was initially turned down, but eventually the vendor gave way and accepted it.

In the basement there were some tenants who lived in the most abject conditions as regards hygiene, but by prayer we managed to get them to remove.

Many brethren with practical skills laboured with love and zeal to clear up the mess that was found in most quarters, and then began to decorate and refurbish.

Once the tenants in the basement removed, the most unpleasant job of clearing up the filthy smelly mess they left had to be seen to, and in a great gesture of self denial dear Norman insisted that he was to do that job and no-one else. It was a noble example which gained him an increased love and high esteem from us all.

By the way, Norman and I, by the Lord's grace, are the only two survivors of the first eldership of the first fellowship that was raised, before many others soon began to spring forth.

But I must now turn to something important that happened about that period – June/September 1968 I believe it was. As I think I mentioned previously, I was working for the Argentine Airlines, based in Manchester. There was the custom of holding a monthly lunch with all the other managers or representatives of airlines once a month, convened in an alphabetical order.

The second time it was my turn, knowing that when coffee time came at the end of the actual meal, one after another would start telling dirty jokes, I asked the Lord that this time it should not be so – being His servant, I wanted it to be a clean one, without any such thing. But He had quite a different plan.

Before coffee time, when we were still on desserts, one and another began to tell filthy jokes. My immediate boss, Mr. John O. Daldry, the Commercial Manager of the London Branch, referred to previously in the narrative, came to Manchester especially for the occasion, and so including myself we were twenty sitting at one big table.

After each joke, all the other nineteen would roar with laughter, whilst I sat quite serious, like a stupid ass, so to speak. The fact is that with the exception of one, they were all so foul and disgusting that I couldn't laugh at them at all, and more importantly, it would have meant celebrating the devil's filth, which would imply betraying the Lord.

Once the lunch was over, the representative of Olympic Airways, the Greek airline, Geoff Hudson by name, came up to me and in a rather mocking way said to me “*they’ve played it rough to you today, eh?*”, or words to that effect. We’ll come to that again later in the story.

I do so thank the Lord that He gave me grace and valour to stand firm. Had I not done so I would have at least been retarded, if not disqualified for His holy calling.

The outcome of that lunch should have been that I’d be told I was no good for that kind of job, dealing with the public, and offered perhaps a backwater job in a desk doing clerical work. However, nothing of the sort was done nor did I hear any more about it.

Soon after, it so happened that the final game of football world championship at club level was due to be played shortly. Of the two qualifiers, Manchester United were one, and Estudiantes de la Plata, an Argentine side, the other.

Two representatives of the Argentine club came over to London with a view to making the arrangements necessary in such cases, and Willy Robertson, my London Manager, sent them to me asking me to take them to Old Trafford to meet the Manchester United directors to that effect.

So I received them in my office and we went together and met the well known and famous Matt Busby, and his chairman Louis Edwards. I went simply as an interpreter, not as an airline representative, which would have been unadvisable.

After a few minutes, Matt Busby asked me my name and was quite friendly. A couple of days later, I rang up to say that my management in London had authorised me to offer my services as interpreter and liaison in the trip that both of them had to make, in order to see to all the arrangements for the accommodation of their side when they went out to Buenos Aires.

I added, of course, that there would be no strings attached to it, and that I felt fully qualified, owing to my

knowledge of Spanish, as well as my experience in the world of football at that end in previous years.

Soon afterwards I received an answer in the affirmative, so I travelled with them, something which I dare say all other airline reps. would be prepared to run a mile, if only they could be privileged to do such a thing.

All the arrangements for accommodation were duly made at the Hindú Club, ideally suited and situated in a quiet place not far from Buenos Aires City.

There was lavish entertainment, including barbecues with choice argentine beef, and I still have some 'photos of Matt Busby, Louis Edwards and the chairman and other directors of the argentine side, all enjoying themselves together.

Louis Edwards referred to it more than once as *the trial run*, since the all important one of the travel of the entire party with all players, journalists, etc. was to follow shortly, in late August or early September if I remember aright.

It goes without saying that every airline serving that route very much wanted to carry the party on their services, and they all tried very hard indeed. But by the Lord's great help, and the wise cooperation of our London Office, we were able to secure it on our services.

The match had to be played in midweek, on a Wednesday, and it was of the greatest importance that the Manchester United party arrived as soon as possible after their previous Saturday afternoon match.

London Office arranged for a charter flight to carry the whole party to London right after that Saturday match was over, in good time to board our flight to Buenos Aires that evening, and land at the other end early Sunday morning.

No other airline could match that, so we got the business with all the revenue involved, plus the great publicity that may well be imagined.

The day before the match I was at a barbecue in which I made friends with Raymond Glendening, the famous BBC

football commentator. The match took place next day, and when it was over, while travelling in a coach to our hotel with Raymond and various other journalists, he said to me:- *“I’ve given you a plug, Dick.”*

He then explained what had happened at a given stage of the game, when due to an incident involving a Manchester United player by the name of Nobby Styles, I was called to the ground as interpreter.

At that stage Raymond said:- *“Here goes Dick Hussey, who travelled with the Manchester United party, coming on to the ground to make sure we get fair play.”*

In those days television had not spread fully worldwide as at present. However, the whole match was retransmitted next day by Telstar via Santiago de Chile, and seen by millions in the U.K., including many travel agents and business contacts who knew me well.

It was also seen by our immediate neighbours in Bryn, Ashton-in-Makerfield, and the wife, named Brenda, came running to tell Sylvia:- *“Come quickly to see it, your husband is on TV.”*

Soon after came the return match, to be played at Old Trafford. The president of the club and other directors were received by the Lord Manchester City, and some of the occasions were featured on television.

Again, acting as interpreter and liaison, I appeared a few times, and a travel agent who knew me well said to me:- *“You’ve turned into a TV star – we keep on seeing you appear on the screen.”*

Of course, I never wished such a thing, it just happened and I do not count it of any importance.

However, what I so thank the Lord for and appreciate as really worth while, is the fact that He enabled me to keep my garments from being soiled, in the midst of all that business world, and often surrounded by fairly worldly folk.

And at the same time I had the bonus of being able to serve my firm successfully, for in the forthcoming months the area for which I was responsible beat all previous revenue

records. That was by the Lord's blessing, of course, but only using the simple method of friendship and good service, without resorting to any other usual worldly means.

To put an end to the story, I now move forward temporarily to some two years plus. At the time I was stationed in the South West of England, and living in Chard, Somerset, to which we will come later in the narrative.

It was then time to take leave of all my colleagues, as I was to present my resignation and give myself to full time service, so I travelled up to Manchester for the monthly managers' lunch.

I was given a couple of farewell presents, for which I thanked them, explaining briefly that I was leaving to served Christ, Whom I wished to honour by so doing the rest of my life, or words to that effect.

This time it was convened by the Pakistan Airways representative, who had some kind words for me, more or less saying that I was moving on to a higher sphere in the future, and adding that the occasion served for another farewell.

This was for the Olympic Airways man, Geoff Hudson, who had spoken to me in a rather mocking manner, as previously mentioned. Sadly, this was because he had been dismissed by his firm, as it was found that he was often drinking in pubs instead of doing his job.

The poignant words of Psalm 1, verses 3 and 4, were very applicable: -*"The ungodly are not so: but are like the chaff that the wind driveth away. For the Lord knoweth the way of the righteous: but the way of the ungodly shall perish."*

By December that year – 1968 – our fourth child Richard Lawrence was born – on the 3<sup>rd</sup>. of December, to be precise, so his birthday came just one day after Grace's.

I continued with my job, and as I was known in Scotland as the representative for Aerolíneas Argentinas, I was invited like all other reps for the annual dinner of the Scottish Passenger Association, held in Glasgow.

After the traditional Scottish haggis ritual, a sumptuous meal was served with drinks galore. Many, of course, drank to their heart's content. Towards the end, they stood up, and holding hands, some probably half drunk, began to sing.

It was an awful experience for me, to see them, as it were singing on their way to hell, and being totally unable to help them. I asked the Lord that I should never again have to come to such an event. A year later I declined the invitation and went about doing my job somewhere else.

The time for my resignation to move into full time service was drawing nigh. We had been drawn to the South Chard Fellowship, where we met, among others, Uncle Syd and Auntie Mill, as they were known, Harry and Pam Greenwood, Tony Nash and others.

So we decided, before leaving for Spain, to settle for some six months in Chard. When I told my manager, friend and brother in the Lord Willy Robertson, he very kindly suggested that during that period I should continue serving in the South West of England, where at the time the firm had no representative.

The job was of a slightly lower status and less pay, but still quite adequate.

And so we were there for about six months, and derived some good from it. In retrospect, however, the spiritual level we had known in Liverpool was on a higher plane.

At the end of that period, by early spring 1971, we went back to Liverpool, where we were prayed for and committed to the Lord for our missionary calling to Spain.

From thence we went to Rora, in Devonshire. At the time Sylvia was unwell – can't remember what it was she was suffering from – so our young son Richard – nearly two and a half years old – was being looked after by Jenny Lamb, who for some time had been close to us and very helpful.

The day came when my duties with the airline came to an end, and so Jenny let me take over in the care of Richard.



**That was my first day, no longer on my secular job, and starting on full time service.**

**Someone not knowing the circumstances might have asked: *And what happened on that great day of your debut? Where did you preach?***

**None of that! It was caring for Richard, who had a very good appetite, and changing his nappies, often loaded with heavy motions!**

**But I must go back to the days when we were in South Chard. I had to fly to the Argentine to represent my firm in a British Industrial Exhibition, staged in Buenos Aires at that time.**

**During my stay my Dad had a chat with me in the back garden of his home in Maschwitz.**

**Things had not gone well with my youngest sister Alice, so he asked me if upon his and my Mum's death, the proceeds of the sale of their home could go entirely to Alice. In other words, that I should give up the share of it that was due to me. It seemed quite reasonable and right to me, so I agreed immediately and wholeheartedly.**

**Then shortly after my return, on a Sunday afternoon, Sylvia's eldest sister, her husband and her mother came over to Chard to visit us.**

**Years previously, after Sylvia's father's death, some land he owned in Patagonia, in Southern Argentina, was sold, and the shares for her mother and two sisters were duly passed on to all three, but Sylvia's, who was the youngest, was not, and was held pending, in a bank account I believe.**

**Darrell, Sylvia's brother-in-law wanted to enlarge his business, so the purpose of their visit was to ask that she let him have her share to that end. It was a cheeky and selfish request indeed.**

**However, Sylvia and I looking at each other, knowing full well what was happening under God's overruling, nodded to each other in approval, and told Darrell, I dare say to his amazement, that yes, he could have all her share.**

**We knew it was a burning of all the bridges behind us. The Lord was disinheriting us, so to speak, and shortly after I received from His word the promise that whoever leaves for His sake houses, property, etc. would receive in exchange a hundredfold.**

**Over the years I am glad to say I have found this promise fulfilled right up to the hilt.**

**On her part Sylvia had an understanding that from then on the Lord would be giving us the key to the heavenly treasury, and whatever we desired, in keeping with good reason and the will of God of course, was freely available to us.**

**So we duly set off for Spain in May 1971. We had already sold our home in Bryn, and all the proceeds went towards the purchase of a property situated slightly to the West of Madrid City.**

**The purchase was made jointly with a Spanish family, who also contributed substantially towards it. Their eldest daughter had stayed in our home in Bryn for several weeks on two occasions, and the parents had come over to England too. If I remember rightly, the mother was put up in the Longcroft, at least initially, and the father at 14, Devonshire Road.**

**In the previous summer – that is 1970 – I travelled by air taking the mother back to Madrid, where I met a few folk who knew the family well. They were keen Christians, who were rather unsatisfied with the Christian church they had attended, which appeared to be rather lacking in life, and knowing little or nothing of the infilling and the gifts of the Holy Spirit.**

**Later in that same summer Sylvia and I travelled with our youngest child Richard to Malaga, in south Spain. As it was an exploratory trip, lasting only some ten days, we left our other children at Rora, as far as I can remember.**

**We were met by Christians who lived in La Línea de la Concepción, just opposite to Gibraltar. They had ties with the Madrid folk, and also with the family that was to live with us**

in the property in the process of being purchased, and were like minded.

During that visit I was invited to speak at a local Baptist church, both morning and evening. After the meeting, the mother of the family, who was there at the time, invited members of the church to come to a house meeting to be held in their home, and at which I was also to speak.

A fair number came, and as the ministry was well received, further meetings were convened for every single night of the remainder of our stay.

In general, it must be said that the dear folk got a new and richer vision of the Christian life, but, as we had to learn later, we had gone about it the wrong way. As some of the members of the Baptist church did not come, eventually it resulted in a division.

We were raw and immature at the time, and it served us as a lesson. Never again were we to draw church members out of their own church.

Instead, whenever doors have opened for ministry we have done so within the church concerned, and in the presence of the pastor or leadership. This way, over the many years we have been operating in Spain, thankfully we have never experienced any difficulty, and the doors have always remained wide open.

To return to the narrative, before we went out to Madrid as a family – that is with the four children we had at the time – I also took a preliminary trip with a brother by the name of Roy Jones, who is now with the Lord. It was to take our caravan so as to provide extra accommodation, since the property purchased was not very large.

Once we settled there, our little Richard, now nearly three and a half, soon became the pet of the community.

The sisters witnessed to an immediate neighbour, by the name of Esperanza, telling her that to be right with God she had to repent, receive the Lord Jesus Christ and become a new creature in Him.

This was new and strange to her, and she decided to put it to a test she herself devised. If she could get Richard to say that he loved her, it would be a sign that all was well, and she could forget about it.

So she prepared a great meal and invited Richard, who devoured it, including the ice cream for dessert, with great delight. Then she asked him: *Do you love me?*

To her amazement and dismay Richard answered quite bluntly – NO.

That left her quite perplexed and a few days later she attended one of our Friday evening meetings. The word was based on the story of Zacchaeus found in Luke 19.

She was very much touched and at the end of the meeting, getting on her knees, with deep repentance and tears she received Jesus as her Saviour and Lord.

Richard knew nothing about this, since by then he was sleeping, either in his cot or bunk, I forget which. But early next morning he got up, and in his pyjamas crossed the fence and knocked insistently at the door of Esperanza's kitchen.

She opened alarmed, wondering who it could be so early. And there was Richard, immediately going up to her with open arms to give her a tight hug!

There was the answer: now that she had received the Lord Jesus, and only now, was God really pleased with her. *A little child shall lead them!*

All was not easy though, and a month or two later Sylvia had a miscarriage, so I took her for a rest to La Línea, where we stayed with a dear couple whose home was always lovingly open for hospitality.

With time things began to get stressful, and to make matters worse the father of the family was a disturbed man, who at times had nasty outbursts of anger and depression.

At least two of our children were in a room adjoining his, sleeping in double or triple bunks. Our eldest son Charles was being affected by it, and he very much missed life as he had known it in England.

One day I touched the lowest point financially. I didn't have any money at all, and needed to give our children for their bus fares to school. However, I found some dirty old bottles, washed them and traded them in a shop for an amount which covered that small but important need.

We had to send our three children oldest children – Charles, Grace and John – to English schools, and the fees were quite substantial, but the Lord faithfully provided.

At one stage we received gifts from brethren and sisters in England, and this enabled us to purchase our passage for a journey home. It was about June 1972, and we travelled with our four children and luggage by train from Madrid to the French border, from there again by train to Calais, crossed by ferry to Dover or Dunkirk – forget which – and from there to London.

I can't remember whether we overnighted in London or went straight on to the South West. Even as I record it I wonder how we managed what now appears to me a real feat, or an epic journey.

Anyway, once in the South West a dear brother now with the Lord, who had two cars, offered me one, so I went to Leicester where he lived to fetch it. It was an old vehicle, but it served us well and we had no breakdown or snag.

So we began to travel about visiting friends and fellowships. Curiously and funnily enough, Sylvia's eldest sister was rather indignant at the time. We were travelling all over, she thought, and living in the grand manner as it were, giving the appearance of a well to do couple, when in fact I didn't have a proper job or any salary whatsoever.

She couldn't understand that we were moving in the will of God, and in what Paul writes in 2<sup>nd</sup>. Corinthians 6: 10b - *"...as having nothing, and yet possessing all things."*

In our journeys I believe we started in Rora, went on to Exeter, and eventually to the summer conference. I remember at one stage going up to the platform and dancing before the Lord, which I believe was well received.

After that we went to Manchester, where I recall as an incidental detail that being in need of clothing, I bought a fairly good suit at a very reasonable price, and nowadays, some forty-six years later, it is still in good condition and I wear it from time to time in my travels to Spain, or as a Sunday best when in the U.K.!

Liverpool was our next stop, and at one stage I was thoroughly exhausted after hugging so many brethren who came up to me to greet me lovingly.

From there we went to Llanfairfechan, in North Wales, to visit two sisters – Mrs. Bailey and her daughter Joan – with whom we had longstanding ties of fellowship.

The first night we spent there I slept like a log, a sign that we had arrived at what was to be our next destination. They had felt of the Lord to have the partition between the lounge and dining room knocked down, to give a large room just right for holding meetings, and also had the floor carpeted and bought sufficient chairs, feeling that the Lord wanted the place used for His service.

We recognised that the Lord was calling us there, and wrote to the brethren in Spain telling them about it. Our letter wasn't well received, but it was inevitable – the situation in Madrid was unsustainable.

So we settled in Llanfairfechan, in the large property owned by the two sisters, and were there for almost seven full years, from August 1972 to May 1979.

We still had a long way to go before being able to set forth as truly approved workers. There was much of great importance we still had to learn, some of it the hard way, over that lengthy period of time.

At first many folk who were close to us, and had heard that we had returned and settled in North Wales, began to visit us and I also received invitations to visit fellowships in such places as Ledbury, Leominster, Birmingham, etc. Once when I rang Sylvia in midweek to find out how things were going, she told me I'd better come home for the following weekend because some forty guests were expected!

It also happened that folk decided to purchase property and come and live in our immediate vicinity. The names of all of them were preceded by BRYN which I believe means *mount*, and so there were three such – Bryn Tirion, Bryn Derwent and Bryn Celyn. Bryn Goleu was slightly above, but very close to all three, and apart from the main premises, we had just across the road both The Lodge and The Stables (a place formerly for horses but conveniently adapted for lodging guests).

On one occasion, after visiting a fellowship in Birmingham, on departing on the Monday morning, a dear couple brought me their little baby who had been born with a hole in his heart, with the request that I pray for him. This I did taking the dear babe in my arms, and then returned it to the parents and set off on my homeward journey forgetting all about it.

Some six months later the dear couple, with which we had had close ties in the past, came to stay at Bryn Goleu and gave us the glad tidings that the child's heart was found to be quite all right soon after the occasion.

We were going through a rather trying time, so the news came as a very welcome balm and encouragement.

During our time there all sorts of odd, unexpected things took place. On one occasion, an elderly grey bearded man appeared who was supposed to be Moses (!) accompanied by an elderly woman who was supporting him in what was considered to be his ministry.

I was away at the time, but my wife handled the situation quite wisely, telling them there was no chance of putting them up in Bryn Goleu, but down the road there was a hotel or bed and breakfast where they might be hosted, and to keep them happy she arranged for someone to get them a cup of tea before they left.

Another time when I was present, two men arrived – a father and an adult son -purporting to be servants of the Lord. After listening to them for a couple of minutes I told them quite straight that I had enough experience to tell, both

from their speech and conduct, that they were clearly not real servants of God.

They went off in a huff; had I not cut them short as I did, who knows what they would have been up to – perhaps they might even have wanted to take over the whole place.

There was a time when we were having visitors from many quarters, in particular Leicester, but also quite a few other places. Apart from receiving our ministry, some sought counsel and even spiritual cover. They also invited us to visit them in their own places, so things were developing as though we were almost becoming a separate movement shall I say, with our own particular identity. In one or two cases they even sought to follow our pattern, with church life built upon a local community offering hospitality.

However, with the passage of time, this idea of being as it were a separate spiritual movement with our own identity did not crystallise, although we continued receiving guests from different places, including some from abroad, such as the odd one from the U.S.A., Spain, France and quite a few sisters from Germany.

We never made any fixed charges, leaving it to our guests to contribute for their keep as they felt right. Some made honourable contributions, others didn't, and some even gave nothing, but we gave it to the Lord and trusted Him. Thankfully, we were never in debt.

Many of our visitors went back blessed, and now and again in the past we came across one or another who would tell us how much Bryn Goleu had meant to them. However, from the standpoint of establishing a local ongoing church nothing really accrued.

Towards the end of our stay, or at least one year plus before, tensions began to arise with other members of the community built around us. There was an occasion when a dart of the enemy via a brother who was unfairly upset with my dear wife, went through to her soul in a vicious way.



Soon after, when we were alone in our own bedroom, Sylvia threw herself into my arms, telling me she felt completely destroyed and could not go on any longer.

Aware of the gravity of the whole situation, I immediately rang up Dennis and Theresa Maguire, two dear friends who lived in the extreme north of Anglesey – Holyhead, I believe – asking if they could please have her for a few days for her to be away from the battlefield – for that is what it was at that stage - and recover.

They very kindly agreed immediately, and so I took her without delay and left her to their kind care and hospitality, whilst returning to Bryn Goleu to hold the fort.

It was one of the most trying stages, but the Lord graciously saw us through. I used to visit Sylvia regularly and on one or two occasions I spent the night with her before returning to Bryn Goleu next day.

In one of those visits, at a given moment I felt a rising in my spirit to confront the wicked enemy, telling him he was in no way whatever to succeed in his hateful design to destroy the wife and life companion God has given me.

It was with such authority as I had never known before, coming through the blessed Spirit of God indeed.

It marked the beginning of her recovery, which happily proceeded slow but sure, and in later years she often travelled with me to Spain, and was greatly used to the blessing of many, as we are to see later in the narrative.

There were some good and happy times too at Bryn Goleu. For one of the Easter weekends, rather early on in our time there, we had a musical group who called themselves the Eleven Fifty-nine, and it was an enjoyable occasion with much blessing in every way.

It was also an extremely busy time and soon after we took a break as a fellowship, locked up Bryn Goleu and went to the Clarendon Hotel in Aberystwyth, owned by a dear brother now with the Lord by the name of Gerald James.

There were also unsaved guests in the hotel at the time. We used to sing the grace before starting our meals and on

one occasion when we didn't – probably as we arrived at different times and each one said his own grace – the other guests remarked that they had missed our singing the grace as we had done previously.

This brother Gerald also took us to a few different welsh churches, and on one particular occasion I remember how we were so blessed by their singing in welsh, which brought reminiscences of the welsh revival early in the twentieth century.

We were also privileged to have some very good pianists, a brother who played very well on the piano accordion, as well as guitarists and a trumpeter. Occasionally we had what might be termed musical evenings, very much enjoyed by all present.

We also had two weddings in the time we were there, and in the first one the bride was escorted up the garden by our musicians until she came close to the meeting room, when the wedding march was played and the marriage ceremony conducted by yours truly.

During some summer seasons we went to Penmaenmawr Beach, with our trumpeter, piano accordionist, and also one or two guitarists I believe, and sang bright choruses and preached the gospel. None was saved as a result of it, as far as one can tell, but some believers who were visiting the area came up to us, and a young sister became attracted and joined us in the Bryn Goleu community for some time.

The Penmaenmawr Tourist Bureau certainly felt that we were an added tourist attraction, and sent us a letter of appreciation with a £ 10 gift.

On two occasions we experienced a miraculous blessing regarding the feeding of our guests.

In one of them, a group of about twenty from Birmingham arrived unexpectedly, Sylvia seems to remember. The staff running the kitchen had only catered for far less. Sylvia watched the sister serving out and it was interesting to see the way it happened. Once the food

prepared ran out, as an empty plate was put before her, more of exactly the same food somehow appeared, and went on so just enough for one plate at a time, till the last plate was served, and then the flow stopped.

A miniature version of the two times when the Lord multiplied the loaves and fish.

The other was the morning of an Easter weekend, when a number of guests were with us. The food had been prepared beforehand, but soon after breakfast Sylvia came with the news that Christa Kiesling, a precious German sister who was in charge of cooking at the time, had just told her with concern that the food was off and not fit to be eaten.

We found ourselves between the devil and the deep blue sea, as we sometimes say. To tell the dear folk that there was nothing to eat and they would have to go out and find something somewhere – on an Easter Sunday morning when all shops were closed – was quite unthinkable.

On the other hand, to give them off food could have serious repercussions, and we could get into deep waters for doing so.

We decided on the latter, laying hands on all the dishes in the Name of the Lord Jesus, and trusting Him to do the miracle. We kept it to the three of us, without breathing a word to anyone else. Then the food was heated and dished out, and thankfully nobody was affected at all.

Moreover, this provided the theme for the ministry of the word in the evening, based on the passage found in 2<sup>nd</sup>. Kings 4:31.

When folk rang up asking if they could come we would never turn them down because of lack of space. We somehow felt our door should be always open to anyone desiring to come and enjoy fellowship and receive our ministry, and sometimes dear ones were even willing to come and sleep on a Lilo, or in a sleeping bag in our dining room or lounge.

During the summer once or twice we went over to France for our holidays having been invited by Robert Perrin

to his property in Corbel, near the Alps. This gave us the opportunity of meeting a few other dear French believers and enjoy fellowship with them.

At one stage I felt it right to invite Mr. North to Spain, acting as his interpreter, although on one or two occasions we preached separately, someone else interpreting for him. Sylvia was also with us all the length of the tour.

At the end of it he expressed his conviction that Spain was really the place of our calling, and Norman Meeten, who had on a previous occasion met me and heard me at Seville, said roughly the same thing. This and other indications made us decide we should quit Bryn Goleu and go to Spain for the second time.

Incidentally, neither Mr. North nor Norman Meeten did at any time require that we should be in submission to them, for they did not, neither did we, embrace the principle in vogue in not a few quarters that each one is to be in submission to someone else. However, we regarded both as very worthy and wise servants of the Lord, and were glad to take their advice on board, having too a witness in our spirits that it was time to return to Spain.

Regarding the submission principle referred to in the previous paragraph, it is noteworthy that an American brother by the name of Bob Mumford, who originally had embraced it wholeheartedly, at a later stage had an announcement featured in an American Christian publication, apologising for not having heeded the warnings he and others had received from experienced elderly ministers, about the dangers and drawbacks that could result from the system.

Two obvious ones were the strong possibility of lives being controlled unduly and manipulated, as well as the inevitable result of coming to the top end or vertex of a pyramid, with the rising of yet another pope!

But returning to our main thread, we accordingly arranged to leave Bryn Goleu, handing it over to the Liverpool Fellowship, leaving no debts and with books in

order. In fact, in taking over and checking the accounts a surplus of £ 10 was found in the kitty, and it was sent on to us to Exeter, which was the first place we went to when we departed.

So what did we leave behind when we left?

Nothing in the nature of an established local church, and sadly, some ill feeling on the part of some, for all our efforts to be conciliatory and find a remedy to the whole situation.

And yet, most paradoxically, at long last – yours truly having reached the age of 51 and Sylvia 49 - we were sent as approved workers!

*“So also is the resurrection...It is sown in corruption; it is raised in incorruption; it is sown in dishonour; it is raised in glory: it is sown in weakness; it is raised in power.”*

This is what Paul writes in 1st. Corinthians 15: 42-43, and this is exactly what happened to us. We were now to leave for the second time for Spain, the beloved country of our calling, but as fully approved workers!

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2<sup>nd</sup> Part.- From our second departure to Spain to the present.

I think it was Mr. North I heard saying that for every true worker or servant of the Lord there is a first sending, with some fruit and success, but not really having quite made the grade, and a second, when one is fully qualified and approved.

**Although strictly this cannot be said of Old Testament worthies such as Elijah, Elisha and others, it was so indeed with the Lord's early disciples, and so it was with us too.**

**And now the doors began to open, invitations to minister were received, and none of the bitterness and ill feeling that we had experience at Bryn Goleu came our way at all - it was all quite different and on a very blessed level of grace and plain sailing.**

**A brother by the name of José Luis Gómez Panete, whom I had visited, and in the church he pastored in Palma de Mallorca I had ministered on a few occasions during my trips from Bryn Goleu, hearing that I was now resident in Madrid, made contact with me.**

**We had visited together a church he had been supervising in Ibiza, and he now wanted me to come over and join him in appointing elders. His choice was that of two young men – at the time, of course – by the name of Ricardo del Árbol and Guillermo Vargas.**

**This we did, and over the years his choice has been proved a very sound and wise one. Having weathered together not a few storms – which is indeed the allotted portion of every true servant of the Lord – to this day they both remain faithful, staunch and mature.**

**We also developed further links we had established with others, such as the pastor of a large baptist church in Zaragoza named Felix Fontanet, visiting regularly, as well as another church he had links with in the city of Lérida.**

**Then there was a retreat convened for preachers and leaders in a place known as Tibi Dabo, in Barcelona. I was privileged to minister the word on one or two occasions, and further precious links were also forged there and then.**

**But I must now go back to our landing in Spain. We travelled by ferry, I believe from Plymouth, to Santander, in North Spain. We travelled with our two youngest – Richard and Evangeline, as she was called then, now better known as Frances – in a car that was extremely heavily loaded with lots of suitcases and other belongings.**

We had thought of stopping for a couple of hours in Santander before pressing on to Madrid, so I wrote to an English missionary who had long standing ties with many, asking if he could please give me an address of some fellow servant who could help us to that end. He only knew of a gypsy leader nicknamed Chiqui – his real name being Benigno Duval León - and kindly gave us his address.

We wrote to him to that effect, and got no reply, but when we landed there he was awaiting us together with another gypsy brother. That morning he had left his wife selling in the market while he came to the docks, and she did so well that in less than an hour she had more than enough to shop and buy all the necessary to treat us to what was a real banquet.

Moreover, rooms had been booked in a hostel to accommodate us for the night, and I was asked to share the word in their church that evening, which turned out to be a magnificent occasion.

Even as I write this I am deeply moved, remembering the occasion as a very clear token of the Lord that these were to be our real brethren, with whom we were to have a very precious bond of fellowship. To this date we are so glad to testify that our fellowship remains strong and living, and whenever I visit one of their churches I am received with a warm welcome and much brotherly love.

Of course, in saying *a clear token that these were to be our real brethren*, I do not by any means exclude the precious ties one holds to this day with many great non gypsy brethren up and down Spain.

Going back a little further to Bryn Goleu, after we left, one remembers a leading brother who is now with the Lord, asserting that they would be making the place one of strong daily prayer, thereby implying, I suppose, that they would really be getting things going the right way. The very evening we handed over I remember Mr. North saying that there was already a different feel about things, or words to that effect.

Different brethren were brought over to preach and give teaching, endeavouring to build up a church. However, after some time, with the passing away of dear Mam Bailey, the property was eventually sold and instead one in the village was bought with the proceeds.

A new leader took over for a time, but before too long he and his wife left, so that only a brother who had been with us from the beginning, Roy Crabtree by name, was left with a small group of elderly sisters.

Eventually it was decided to close down and sell the property, and from the proceeds a more or less discreet amount was passed on to us - Sylvia and me - in recognition of our labours in Bryn Goleu for all but seven years.

It all goes to confirm that it is the Lord Himself that builds His own church, as, when, and using whom He chooses, and at least at that time it was not in His plan and purpose to do so.

Perhaps one of the reasons was that it would have been, as it had during our time there, a church comprised mostly of English or foreign people, having really no links with the native Welsh people.

But I now return to the main thread of the narrative. In very late 1980 we were approached by a group of young believers who had more or less been expelled from their church, after it was known that they had received the baptism in the Spirit. I can't remember how they got to know about us, but they had obviously heard concerning us and wanted to receive our teaching ministry.

Somehow, Sylvia and I were conscious that there was something very important about this invitation, so we decided to fast that they. After we were introduced we asked them all – there must have been about 12 or 14 – to share their testimony and tell us where they were up to.

This they did, and after a time of prayer together, we asked them which subject they would like us to take, offering the choice of one, which I cannot remember, or the New Covenant. They chose the latter and so the following week we



began, and they took notes and received all we had to share with open minds and avid hearts.

Then in early January a retreat was held in a place called Horeb in the Guadalajara province, not too far from Madrid. The ministry was shared between an elderly Argentine brother by the name of Vangioni and myself, and apart from the Madrid group already referred to, there were a few others from different parts of Spain.

It was a good time in every way, and the following Easter a further retreat was convened in a resort in N.W. Spain on the coast, to the South of Vigo. This was attended by a larger number, with many from North West Spain – that is Galicia – plus all those from Madrid and a few others. Brother Vangioni was not present – I forget the reason.

It was a memorable retreat in which we experienced a good measure of a baptism of fire and love, which really marked the birth or beginning of what some time later came to be known - right up to this day - as *the Good News Churches*.

One incident worth recording is that of a young girl more or less in her late teens, who was very friendly with all the rest of the Madrid gang, but spiritually had gone away from the Lord and become very worldly. However, she decided to go to the retreat merely to be with all the rest, as she was, as mentioned above, close to them. She did make the proviso, though, that she would have nothing to do with spiritual things.

Towards the very end of the retreat, possibly in the last meeting, there was a pause at a given moment, and Sylvia – not knowing anything about it - expressed her conviction that there was someone who was hardening their heart.

Immediately this lass began to tremble and came under deep conviction of sin, and in the return journey by car to Madrid –some 500 or 600 km. -she spent a good deal of the time weeping and sobbing her heart out over her past worldly life.

So she came to love and follow the Lord wholeheartedly, and went on to marry some time later a brother from Galicia who was studying medicine at the time, and a few years after

graduating became pastor of one of the many churches of the Good News Chain. It is situated at some 40 miles West of Madrid, and they both continue there faithfully to this day.

Our links with them continued, and retreats attended by members of all the Good News churches were convened regularly. Apart from myself, other ministries were also invited, such as a brother by the name of Costa Deir, now with the Lord, who belonged I believe to an Elim institution in New York, and who travelled abroad extensively.

At a later stage we heard encouraging news from the Argentine. A brother by the name of Carlos Anacondia was being mightily used in large evangelistic campaigns. Many souls were turning to the Lord and we began to feel it was time to return to the land of my birth, the purpose being, not that of raising up new churches – there were almost too many one would say! – but rather to nourish and strengthen or confirm the new converts.

So we left, in late summer I believe, of 1987, being bidden farewell by the Madrid Good News Church at the airport, and took with us a letter of commendation from the pastors of all the churches in Córdoba City, with whom we had had precious links, which, moreover, remain so to this day.

In the Argentine we soon made many contacts, and doors were opened both in the great area of Buenos Aires City and its vast surroundings and in the interior.

There was one sector where the principle of submission to someone above one was very much in vogue. There I had to face some misunderstanding on their part, as I operated shall I say free lance. If I had taught say under the auspices of a Bible Teaching Organization that would have been OK with them – not the way I did it.

The way I always knew was to share God's word, whether preaching or teaching, wherever I was invited or made to feel welcome. Operating in this manner I always felt subject to the pastor or leadership of the church I was visiting, and glad to take their recommendations if any special subject was desired, as well as to the duration of the ministry, although

**in general in the great majority of cases both were left to my discretion and the leading of the Spirit, which turned out to be the ideal. Many times I found they said that the word given was just what was required for the occasion.**

**To me this way of being subject to the authorities within the church visited, is simply a matter of good manners, since one is moving in their own territory, and it is right on all counts that it should be so.**

**There are those who think that because of their seniority, or high standing shall I say, they needn't do it that way, and instead act as if they were in command. To my mind that is an authoritarian way, not at all in keeping with the spirit of meekness that should be the hallmark of someone sent by the meek and lowly Lamb of God and Head of the Church.**

**I already referred to the whole subject when outlining previously the case of Bob Mumford. Suffice it to add that we had very many close links with a great variety of other churches in many parts of the country. With them it was plain sailing and some very precious opportunities for both rich fellowship and ministry kept coming our way.**

**As for Sylvia, those nigh on five years we were in the Argentine were the busiest in her life as far as spiritual ministry goes. She was often invited to share on radio programmes, women's retreats, counselling, prayer groups. etc.**

**On more than one occasion, after going to spiritual retreats in separate places for a long weekend, on returning we would remark to each other that we had never before felt so loved by the dear folk we had been with; they were mostly poor ones, but with a heart for God, and they received and absorbed the word of the Lord most avidly.**

**I must record here that financially the little offerings we received fell far short of covering our needs, and I lapsed by appealing to our brethren in Spain and the UK, explaining our situation.**

**This was against the principle I had always held of only trusting in the Lord, but in weakness I gave way to prevailing**

circumstances. However, brethren both from England and Spain responded generously, and so we were even able to school our daughter Evangeline – now known as Frances – in an expensive fee paying school in the North of Buenos Aires City.

While all this was happening in the Argentine, a pastor from the North East of the country began visiting Spain frequently and showed a special interest in the Good News chain of churches.

As founder of the movement, if such a thing can be said, I had always wanted their pastors and leaders to mature and run things on their own, only making myself available to them when specially required, and to minister and teach when invited.

With the passage of time a pastor from North West Spain visited Argentina, and no doubt impressed by the way the Argentine pastor's labours had been blessed, decided to put himself under his spiritual covering or supervision.

On returning to Spain he shared this with his colleagues, and eventually, after much deliberation most of the churches decided to join him, so said pastor was recognised as their apostle, whilst an English one by the name of Peter Stott became their prophet.

However, one of the pastors of the Good News Chain, also from the North West of Spain, and deceased some six or seven years ago, had previously put forward a motion to the effect that the movement was to have no dependence from abroad, either spiritual or financial.

Some time later there was a retreat on the East Coast of Spain, in which the pastor that had put forward that motion of no dependence from abroad, had a rather angry exchange with the Argentine one who was now the apostle of the movement, and he left and soon after withdrew his church from the movement.

This was followed by two churches shepherded by his brother in the flesh and in the Lord. I forget the actual reason or reasons, but I must say that this latter brother is one of the

closest links I have in Spain to this day, and I hold him in very high esteem as a man of integrity and exemplary in every way.

It is all a rather sad story, but some time later other churches also withdrew from the movement, although it is true to say that a good number still continue and are thriving spiritually.

More recently, the Argentine pastor who had become the apostle found his health was deteriorating rapidly and he passed away some two or three years ago. I don't know whether the English brother recognised as a prophet is still associated with Good News Churches, but a plural leadership of three or four Spanish brethren has been set up and is in charge of the oversight of the movement, which is, after all, the right outcome.

On my part, returning to Spain as I did with Sylvia in 1992, I had no part whatever in all the disagreements and upheavals that took place, and to this date I keep visiting churches both from the movement, and others which have left, but continue functioning successfully, either independently or with other links forged more recently.

Our return from Argentina wasn't a goodbye for ever. Some precious bonds of fellowship had developed over the night on five years we were there, and many expressed the desire that we should return and even continue living at there.

In fact we did return, but not both together. I was the first to go back from late December 1992 or early January 1993. In a way it was a convenient way of escaping from the northern hemisphere winter, although it had the drawback of having to endure some fairly hot weather at that end in January.

Anyway, it was a long tour lasting into about late February or perhaps even early March if I remember aright. Not only did I visit churches in the greater Buenos Aires areas; I recall going far afield reaching distant places in the south and west of the country.

The following year Sylvia went on her own. There were many precious ones that remembered her well, and she made

contact with them, mostly in the Greater Buenos Aires area, and I gathered subsequently that she was of great blessing wherever she went, and came back safe and sound, as well as happy and fulfilled. Among other reports I heard was that of someone saying that I had a very good helpmeet indeed.

A year before returning I had received an invitation from Mr. North and one of the leaders responsible for organising the Rora Summer Conference, to come the following summer and have some part in the ministry of the word.

Some weeks before the time, somehow I developed an addiction to golf. Once I played in the local municipal ground and that night I slept very badly feeling something was wrong. It was quite clear to me that the Lord was displeased about it, and I rather complained, feeling that he allowed great ones like Billy Graham, pastor Yongi Cho and others to indulge, and yet He would not allow a tiny midget like myself to do so.

But obviously He knew and knows full well my obsessive temperament, which makes me go flat out when I like a sport, and that of course would be bound to become a spiritual hindrance.

The best way to describe it I find is to refer to a book by a certain Edward Lasker entitled "*Chess for Fun and Chess for Blood.*" Suffice it to say I could never play for fun!

Anyway, I pressed on with golf to the extent that at a certain stage I was given a great spanking by the Lord. He allowed two burglars to break into our home, and one of them knocked me to the ground while the other went upstairs with a gun in his hand, expecting to find money.

It gave me such a shock that it was a wonder I didn't have a stroke; my heart must have been beating at a terrific rate, and the fact that I screamed I think helped in giving vent to all that great inner tension.

They went away frustrated finding no money, but unwittingly they had fulfilled the divinely appointed mission of giving me the very jolly good thrashing I so deserved.

In recording this I wonder at the amazing grace of the Lord in still persevering with one so wobbly and disobedient at times as my very own self. Humanly speaking one would think He should have cast me on the scrap heap and found someone better and more consistent – yet He did not, and to this day He still presses on with me in incredible grace and loving kindness.

Soon after that we travelled to England, and I believe our first stop was Birmingham. I remember on a Saturday morning sitting in a park on a lawn of lush green, and feeling so utterly useless, a real good for nothing, a total failure in every sense of the word.

I think it was the working of the Holy Spirit, using what had happened re golf and other failings, to bring me to that place of utter inability spiritually and in every other conceivable way.

We arrived at Rora – Sylvia and I of course – on the Wednesday. I was told that before we did Mr. North referred to me as “*the most gracious man he had met*. (Little did he know me!)

Anyway, his word always carried such weight, that from then I became the admiration of not a few.

I was given the opportunity to share the word both on the Wednesday and Thursday evenings, with Mr. North by my side on the one occasion and Norman Meeten on the other.

Without wanting to be boastful, it is true to say that the Lord moved both on me and on others very powerfully both evenings, and many responded and came forward for prayer. I was even told that some were giving loud shouts of deliverance as general prayer was made for all.

On the Saturday, at the end of the conference, we travelled to Madrid, where the Spanish brethren had arranged a semi vacational retreat. I was asked to share the word – mornings only - whilst the rest of the day was for rest, leisure, swimming and other sporting activity.

Among those present was a young boy aged thirteen, who, hearing others praise the Lord in love and gratitude found in his heart a great desire to do likewise. However, he

had many questions and I learnt, no fewer than twenty-three years later, that every morning from my preaching and teaching he received the very answer he needed to each one of his questions.

At present, aged about thirty-nine, he is pastoring a thriving church in Leganés, a suburb of Madrid, with mostly young folk, although there are some elderly folk too.

It is good to hear, often years after the event, of good things the Lord has done through one, unworthy as one may be.

I was at the Rora Summer Conference on two or three more occasions, but I began to feel it wasn't my place really. To use a comparison, as a footballer I played as inside left, but with the passage of time one was no longer good enough, and so *inside left* turned into *left outside!*

For a time after our return from the Argentine we lived at Boadilla del Monte, near Madrid. Before that, while in England and travelling in a coach I remember as we passed by a golf course seeing two or three players putting on an ever so smooth green – it looked like a billiards table.

I thought to myself : “*Lucky beggars, I would love to be playing there*” or something near enough to that.

Then a few months later, before returning to settle again in Spain, I was waiting on the Lord, and speaking in tongues I believe, I visualised the face of Jesus, but strangely, it looked completely unattractive to me.

Rather alarmed I enquired of the Lord, and I was made to understand that precisely that would have happened to me if I had persisted with golf. That day golf died as far as I was concerned, and incidentally, I saw the difference between law and grace – the former by punishment deterring me from doing so, but yet longing after it, whereas the latter, by the wonder of the face of Jesus, dealing it a death stroke.

In Spain I resumed doing the rounds, visiting many gypsy and non gypsy churches, but after a year for reasons there is no need to go into, we felt it was time to take up



residence in England again, but still holding fast Spain our calling to Spain.

For a short time we were in Epsom, but then moved on to Reading, where we spent in all just short of eighteen years. It was a very blessed time indeed, with rich fellowship in the Earley Christian Fellowship, commonly known as 153.

Our visits to Spain continued, Sylvia very often joining me as we travelled up and down the land.

At one stage we decided we wanted to visit Toronto, and also Pensacola – forget which of the two was first. We had heard critical reports about them both but wanted to see for ourselves.

Frankly we did not receive much blessing personally, but we did not feel we could fault them, and it was evident that many folk who went there were refreshed and renewed or enriched in their ministry.

While in Toronto we had a day off in which we visited the famous Niagara Falls. Sylvia and our son John had been in previous years, while we were in the Argentine, on a tour with a largish party to the Iguazú Falls, which are probably equal to Niagara in grandeur, but for me it was a new experience – had only seen Iguazú in a film.

The Earley Christian Fellowship, by the way, moved in more or less the way we did at Bryn Goleu, which we had learnt from South Chard; that is, leaving the meeting wide open, for anyone who felt moved of the Lord to share as they deemed right, unless of course there was a guest speaker specially invited.

I remember one of the elders telling me, early on in our time in Reading, that for some twenty-two years they had had only one instance in which it became necessary to stop someone who was openly out of place.

In general it could be said that it is a good way of running meetings, much better than when it is all organised beforehand, which often leads to a dry routine. There is always the possibility of someone saying something not quite right, but then love can overlook a mistake, and if necessary

one of the elders can privately point out tactfully and lovingly to the one concerned where he was wrong. My wife once pointed out that the only mistake that must not be made is a *long mistake!*

Perhaps here it is right to share what my views are in respect of running meetings.

First of all, before the meeting starts, instead of a bustle with most folk greeting others and catching up with them, a reverent silence in which each one, quietly seated in his or her place, seek the Lord in prayer for the manifestation of His presence, and that the Holy Spirit might indeed be Lord in the meeting.

Then, not necessarily start by singing six or seven songs, hymns or choruses - there could be an urgent need for prayer, or someone sharing a very pertinent testimony, or some precious truth that the Lord has given him or her, which might well point to the line of truth that the whole meeting is to follow, with perhaps songs of praise following later.

All this early on, leaving things open for participation of anyone, in other words, *body ministry* as it is commonly known, and in accordance with 1<sup>st</sup>. Corinthians 14: 26:- *“How is it then, brethren? When ye come together, every one of you hath a psalm, hat a doctrine, hath a tongue, hath a revelation, hath an interpretation. Let all things be done unto edifying.”*

And another important thing:- that four or five brethren recognised as having a solid, weighty ministry, should meet beforehand to pray together and find out which of them has the word for the particular occasion.

This word needn't necessarily last a full hour – frankly, if one really comes to the point, a great deal can be said in half an hour or even less.

Of course, on the other hand, someone may be given a rich word, worth listening to for more than an hour, and it should be easy to tell whether he is moving in the Spirit and not overreaching himself.

Then the end of the meeting should not be dictated by the clock, but by whether the meeting has really finished or not, regardless of the time.

Of course, these are my views, but one knows full well that to get the ideal church, and keeping it going is no easy straightforward matter. Only the Lord by His Spirit can raise up such a church, which, it is quite self evident, we would all like to belong to!

Changing course completely, I now come to what I said we would – forty years after our courtship in 1957. A close friend of Sylvia's had come to visit us from the Argentine, so partly to let them catch up on their own, and supposedly for a spiritual retreat of three or four days, I removed to the Longcroft.

By one of those "coincidences" I took with me a file with lots of correspondence, including letters we exchanged while still unmarried. Among them I found the one in which she expressed her deep sorrow at my intimating that I would be travelling alone to England after she had returned – remember?

I was then drawn to pray much for her, and something happened in me that made me return like a youngster in his early twenties, madly in love with her. It gave us some exceedingly happy days, so much so that as we so other folk leading more or less routine lives, we felt sorry for them – such was our gladness.

It lasted through the summer of that year – 1997 – and we understood it was the Lord, compensating us shall I say, for the fact that in our courtship we only saw each other weekends, and also because the emotional strain somewhat affected my sleep and I was forced to be restrained.

Mind you, we did enjoy some tight hugs and a fair amount of kissing, and at least once I lifted her up and held her in my arms under a tree in our back garden in Maschwitz, but obviously the Lord didn't consider that had been enough!

The whole event shows on the one hand the Lord's well known perfect memory, going back exactly forty years, and on the other, His appreciation that courtship love is a gift that His own are not to be deprived of. It is, shall I say, love in a rather incipient stage, which with the passage of time is to be matured and enlarged as joys and sorrows, storms and battles, as well as triumphs and fulfilment, come one's way.

As I write all this, more than sixty years of married life, although now and again we have our little tiffs, Sylvia sometimes tells me she loves me more than when she married me, and I reciprocate in similar terms. She is the wonderful wife God has given me, bilingual, loving the gypsies as I do, and with many sterling qualities, including the very important one of a sharp spiritual discernment.

Leaving out a lot, we now move to the year 2000, marking the end of the century and of the second millennium A.D. There were many predictions that the millennium bug – *el efecto 2000* – as it was called in Spanish, would cause great disruption and chaos all round. Fortunately, it turned out totally unfounded and things went on more or less normally.

Again leaving out a great deal, we now move forward to March 2006, when Sylvia and I experienced the most devastating blow of our whole lives through the tragic death of our dear son Richard.

He turned to the Lord early in life and was baptised in Rora during a Summer Conference when we were in Spain.. (Before baptising him the brethren had the right courtesy of contacting us for our approval since he was a minor, only in his early teens)

There were times when he would really dig his teeth into the Scriptures, and received the gift of tongues through the laying on of hands by the late brother Costa Deir, already referred to previously. Once in watching a film on our Lord's passion according to St. Matthews Gospel, he was melted to tears and wept and wept as he saw the scenes of our dear Lord Jesus' great sufferings for us all.

However, owing to mistaken decisions and choices at a later stage, things began to go wrong, and he ended up by taking his life. It was a shattering blow; I was in Spain at the time, and as Sylvia gave me the news I immediately cancelled one or two pending commitments, and booked the earliest flight home that very day

The Lord comforted us with a very clear word from the Scriptures on the actual day of the funeral. It was from 2<sup>nd</sup>. Samuel 7: 14-15a –*“I will be his father and he shall be my son. If he commit iniquity, I will chasten him with the rod of men, and with the stripes of the children of men: But my mercy shall not depart away from him...”*

I don't think there is a passage in all the rest of the Scriptures that could have spoken to me so specifically and precisely. The rods and stripes had certainly chastened him very sorely in his soul, but Oh! The unspeakable balm and comfort from those blessed words:- *“but my mercy shall not depart away from him.”*

Losing him at that comparatively early age – he was thirty seven – was heart rending, but to know that the mercy of the Lord, which is not something partial and half measured , but rather all embracing, superseded it by far. The effect on me may sound strange and even jarring, but I was so happy to know without a doubt that all was well with him.

Refreshments were arranged for all attending the funeral, and as people came to comfort me, some must have wondered, seeing me so happy, full of smiles as I was playing with my young grandchildren who were present.

On her part Sylvia also received an assurance from the Lord that all was well, but owing to the rather intimate nature of it I prefer not to record it in detail.

Shortly after we sent a circular to all our brethren and friends who received our regular prayer and newsletters telling them about it, and it was very precious to receive so many words of tender sympathy and understanding, which were also a great balm.

The gaps between the last three events narrated – 1997, the millennium bug, and Richard’s death – are so great, that I may at some stage recall something important left out, and record it, but for the time being I leave it at this.

As time went on, the stairs began to be too much for Sylvia. We lived on a second floor in Windsor Court, Reading. There was no lift, and our attempts to have a chair lift installed were disallowed by the Fire Prevention Authorities.

We looked for alternative accommodation in the Reading area, trying every possibility we heard of, but found nothing satisfactory. Eventually we tried in Liverpool, and found what is our present home, 35, Turner’s Court, 59, Halewood Road, in Woolton/Gateacre area, to the south of Liverpool City centre.

From every window of the flat we can see trees, with birds often flying about and the occasional squirrel. Moreover, it’s on the second floor, on the wing at the end of the West side of the building, with no rowdy neighbours, and although our South windows face a busy road, we are not bothered by the noise of traffic, since all our windows have double glazing.

There is public transport to Liverpool John Lennon Airport, the stop being a ten minute walk from our flat. It only takes twenty minutes to get there, and the bus drops one at only fifty yards or so from the Departure Gate entrance.

Of late, with a problem developing in my right hip, the walk to the bus stop has been too much. However, I have been greatly helped by the kind services of dear brother Daniel, a Ghanaian who is a taxi driver, or when he has been unable, by some other brother, or else by taking a taxi on arrival in a homebound flight, especially in the late hours of the night.

We have now lived here all but six and a half years, and it’s been like the salmon returning to its place of origin, as it was at the 14, Devonshire Road Church, in the Toxteth area, that we were prayed for and commissioned for the mission field some forty seven years ago.

Apart from meeting regularly at 14, Devonshire Road when not otherwise engaged, a few new ministry links have

come my way. Besides visiting David Latham, at City Church, and Alan Finnegan, at Emmanuel Baptist Church, both long standing links, new precious ones have been forged, such as the Philippine Brethren of J.C.I.M. (Jesus Christ International Ministries), both in the Kensington Area of Liverpool, and in St. Helens.

Summer last year, and this year too, I have spent a weekend in London visiting Spanish speaking churches – one in North London known as Shekinah, and another in South London, named Maranatha, both pastored by Pedro Pablo Arias, a dear fellow servant of Christ I have know for many years, only I had lost touch with him.

And in addition to that, of course, C.E.L. (London Congregation of Evangelicals) founded well over forty years ago by the beloved Claude Shepherd, who was promoted to glory some years ago.

I no longer visit Auchenheath Fellowship, in Lanarkshire, Scotland - my last time there was Summer 2016 I believe. In Manchester twice a year I've been going to Gorton Evangelical Church founded by brother Percy Gutteridge many years ago, and now presided over by brothers Steve Mc Intyre and Fenelon Broquart.

So all in all, adding to that my tours up and down the land in Spain, plenty to keep me fairly busy.

As to Sylvia, some five and a half years ago she was diagnosed as having heart trouble, which if not seen to would mean she could only live between one and three years more.

On examination, normal heart surgery was ruled out as she was considered too frail, but instead another procedure was recommended commonly known as TAVI, which is the abbreviation for a rather lengthy name, i.e. Transcather Aortic Valve Implantation. It consists of inserting a thin tube through the groin and threading it right through to the heart, bearing a new valve, clean and clear, which supersedes the faulty one.

This was done successfully in September 2013 I believe. However, since then in other areas dear Sylvia's health has

deteriorated considerably, and now she is on Warfarin, an anticoagulating or blood thinning medication, as well as another – bisoprolol, which I understand is intended to regulate the heart beat aright.

She uses a walker for support when she moves about in the flat, generally from bed to her seat in the lounge or to the toilet, and we hope she will be given an NHS wheelchair shortly, for use when she goes to hospital appointments or for any other necessary occasion.

We are now at the very present - August 2018, and we have the visit of our dear son John, who has been living in Christchurch, New Zealand, for almost five years. It's a treat to see him – the same as ever, kind, helpful and incapable of doing any harm to anyone.

He has been seeing different relatives, such as his nephew Tadgh and Anna, his mother, in Nottingham, and at present is with us, doing all sorts of jobs he sees want doing. He hired a wheelchair for Sylvia on the occasion of her cataract operation some twelve days ago, lugging it by bus all the way from Liverpool One, and then all the way back to return it next day.

He leaves on Friday next, that is 24<sup>th</sup>. August, bound to Devon where his eldest brother Charlie is awaiting him to treat him to some boating and other fun. He has already seen Frances, her husband Aras and their little ones Leon and Ayla, although it had to be a short one, as Frances was due to leave for London. Finally he will spend some time with Grace when she returns from France with Wil, Chris and Emma Jane.

His return flight to New Zealand is on 5<sup>th</sup> September and it will be a wrench indeed to see him go, probably never again to see him on earth, but thankfully, with the certainty of spending eternity with him, and very many others, of course, praising and loving the precious Lamb of God, the Father of glory, and the blessed everlasting Spirit.



Over the ninety years plus one has lived, very much more has happened that I have not recorded, but with what I have I feel satisfied.

So I'll now end with a comparison or analogy taken from the end of the book of the Acts of the Apostles. It relates to the apostle Paul, and before doing so I make it quite clear that in contrast to such a great one among the great, I feel and know myself to be as a little insignificant midget.

Having made this proviso, I now go on to say that the narrative in the Acts ends as a story not concluded and ongoing. We know not precisely how much longer he lived, but some assert that he did achieve his desire to travel over to Spain, where he is supposed to have sown the seed of the gospel in many places.

Be as it may, by the same token, yours truly does not know how many years on planet earth lie ahead for him. His prayer and desire, however, is that, be they many or few, he will never do anything out of place or inappropriate that could be a bad example and make others stumble; quite the contrary, that the rest of his earthly pilgrimage he will conduct himself in true humility, holiness and disinterested love, which he understands to be the true credentials of every real servant of the Lord.

**THE END**