



I chose to set the original book on this background for the online publication, why? At the time I was an unsuspecting sheep while the storms in my life were brewing and finally descended on me to nearly end the life out of me. The book stands as it was originally written at the onset of my journey in the Presence of my

Loving Heavenly Father. He has brought me through the worst storms to the calm waters of His Presence within my being. His purpose for my life? That all may see His work within my being and honor His name.



Welcome To My Life

Welcome To My Life by Thia Licona

Welcome To My Life

This is my life story as it was and as it is...

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Welcome To My Life

Dedication

This work is dedicated first and foremost to my Heavenly Father.

He is the essence of this book and without Him I am nothing. I dedicated it to all searching Christian who have left the system in the search for the truth that only our Heavenly Father is able and willing to produce.

I dedicate the book to my beloved children and grandchildren, especially to Diana and Mike and to Denise and Ross for all the moral and financial support they have given to me throughout all my crisis. And to Warren and Robin my gratitude for bringing me to these mountains. To Roxana and Richard for being there for me.

I dedicate it in the most especial way to the late Norman J. Martinez for teaching me what love is all about.

I dedicate it to Joyce and Raymond Martinez for the loving care they have bestowed upon me on behalf of their late Uncle Coo.

I dedicate it to Sergio Licon, his enthusiasm after reading the book has giving me all the encouragement I needed to get it published.

And also to Juanita I appreciate her work of love she put into this book, my love and gratitude.

I want to make special mention of my friends Sara W. Ashley, Jennie Bare and Carolyn Halsey. I thank them for their support and trust in me.

To my Senior Companions: 3 Little Ladies and my Little Man, all my love.

My love to all my beloved friends whom have loved and supported me through the years; especially to Wilma Blevins,

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my dearest neighbor and friend; and to J. C. and Fay Norton, my gratitude for their friendship and support.

To my dearest friend Pastor Homer G. McKeithan, Jr., my love and undying gratefulness for his patient endurance in the thorough reading of the first draft of the manuscript, it shall never be forgotten.

And last but not least I don't want to leave out my friend Jan Cadell and all the people of these Mountains, they have embraced me as one of their own; this is an small contribution from my heart.

Welcome To My Life

Encouraging Words from one of Thia's Pastors

While reading this manuscript I became impressed that it contains a message that can be used of the Lord to give the child of God insight into their own spiritual journey. In this volume is to be found the ups and downs of the author's own pilgrimage through a life that has taken many turns.

Everyone of us, who are on our own spiritual journey, know that life is filled with many pitfalls that at times may cause us to be side-tracked and even to at times fall. Yet, in the adventure of this author's life, one can see the grace, mercy and love of our Father God for one of His own. We are reminded in these writings of just how faithful He is to see us through the darkness of hell that may come against us, and bring us to the marvelous light of His love.

I commend this book to all who may find strength for the journey from the insights here given.

May it all bring honor, glory, and praise to our Lord.

Homer G. McKeithan, Jr. Pastor Preface

Welcome To My Life

It is my hope and prayer that as you read on my story, dear reader, the Almighty Holy Spirit of God may enlighten you to perceive that the purpose of my writing is not just to write an story about the interesting and somehow exciting at times yet tumultuous life which I have lived so far.

But rather the motif and message of this story are to exhort and give hope to all who read it. It has been written about my carnal self's life to make us all realized the wickedness and futility in such a life regardless of the attractions and excitement in it.

And it has been written with the purpose to exhort us all to examine our lives and turn to the Almighty God Who created us.

The Author

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Encouraging Words from Juanita...

I had the pleasure of reading this autobiography as a work-in-progress. I saw it grow from a few thoughts on the page into the work you now have before you. As I read it, I waited with anticipation for each subsequent addition.

Thia's journey is fascinating. She takes us through her life in a captivating way. She bares her heart and soul in this work. You will find the message of her growth with God and our savior, the Lord Jesus Christ as she tells of everything she has endured. She shows how He guided her, held her up in His precious hands and saw her through tough times. He never failed her.

This work is not only a journey through Thia's life but a journey of faith. I truly believe that anyone who reads this will be blessed to see how God's love and mercy can sustain us and see us through anything that life throws our way.

I am sure you will be richly blessed by the reading of this wonderful woman's story of her life. As you will see, if God brings you to it, He really will bring you through it.

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A Sober Message from Thia...

A sober message to a country caught in the revelry of success. An introduction to the life story of an unknown writer willing to strip herself naked to expose her utter shame as well as her utter dignity. May this country pause, in the midst of its success' revelry, to hear, to heed the warning coming from above.

For the writer has exposed her utter shame as well as her utter dignity through her life's story. This the writer has done as testimony that, by the power of the Holy Spirit, Jesus Christ remains our Messiah, the Good News from heaven, and our only hope for glory. For God, the Almighty God of the new and Old Testaments of the Holy Bible, gave us His very life to save us even from our own selves. Ah! Testimonials like this are not written for naught.

For once the Author, like a worm, crawled wingless in these earthly grounds. Now, like a butterfly, her beautiful wings among men she can display. To God be the glory!

Chapter 1

Change only God could effect...

A remarkable change began on the 20th day of June, 1985, which I chose as the first chapter of my Autobiography. The change started on that glorious morning. It was slow, it was a change from within that goes on perpetually.

The following is a preamble to my beautiful writing on that morning.

I was so full of gladness, as the dawn of the day was peeping through my window. My heart was full, to the bursting point. I needed to share. I remembered Jean.

Jean had been my first Bible teacher. Yes, when a young Baptist minister and his beautiful young wife ministered the Word of God to me and I had began my Christian walk, Jean had been my first Bible Teacher. Jean never taught us on her own. She always gave the glory to God, and simply shared the Word of God with us.

Jean and I became bound in the family of God, fitted together, from the beginning of my Christian walk. She had coached me in my Christian walk all of these years.

We had shared a lot of tears, and a lot of laughs. I knew Jean would want to hear what I had written that morning, because,

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she knew that the Lord had given me the gift of writing. I knew she would appreciate what I had written.

I picked up the phone, and dialed her long distance number, for she had moved to Lake Charles shortly after I had met her, back in 1974 when I had just started walking with the Lord.

"Jean," I whispered on the phone, "are you awake?"

"Hi Thia!" Jean answered cheerfully as usual even when I ring her up in the wee hours of the morning, "yeah I'm awake. How have you been?"

"Oh Jean, you would not believe what has just happened!" I burst out.

"Tell me, please," Jean said, ready for the wonderful news, because of the excitement in the tone of my voice.

Jean knew that, usually when she heard my voice in that phone, it was not for any nonsensical reason. Usually there was something extraordinary going on in my life. And this time again, she was not going to be disappointed.

"Well, listen Jean, listen to what The Lord gave me this morning," and I read to Jean my beautiful writing.

"Oh Thia," Jean said, "that is truly beautiful, did you write the whole thing just this morning?"

"Yes! yes! Jean, it all came my way just this morning!" I said proudly. "Thrown at random in your pathway, eh?" Jean said knowingly. "Oh Jean, you are so smart, you catch on so quickly to everything!" I boasted about Jean's bright mind. "Thia, that is not smarts. You know that I'm not that smart, but because of

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His love, I know where you are at and where you are coming from; and that came out so pretty, like some kind of poetry, it is truly beautiful, He is really blessing you and I'm so glad for you!" she said with her typical simplicity.

I shared with her a while longer, but the time was running fast, so I said, "Tell you what Jean, I could go on for hours on this phone, I have so much I could share with you, but for the bill, we better cut this call short, lest I get into financial troubles again. As soon as I have some new development, I shall call you. I love you, talk to you later, Ok?"

And as I hung up the phone, I had the awareness that I had just collected the gem of Jean's understanding, and genuine encouragement.

"Oh, I must get ready for work," I said to myself, hurrying along to the bathroom, feeling hunger for something for breakfast, wondering how I got along without buying groceries, when I heard the knock on the door and I rushed to open it.

"Honey!" I said as I kissed and hugged him, "How did you know that I didn't have anything for breakfast, and that I am starving? I tell you, I am so hungry, I could eat a horse."

"I know," he said, "it is truly beyond me how can you get along without buying groceries. You are going to have to do something about that."

"Oh Honey," I said, "you just worry too much."

"Well," he said, "I have to worry because you certainly don't seem to care." He fussed. "Of course I care, Honey, I have a job, don't I?" I protested mildly. "Yeah, I guess you do," he said, get-

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ting ready to walk out the door, "and hurry up, or you are going to be late!" He admonished me.

And as he kissed me, and walked out, I started towards the kitchen chomping on the chicken leg he had just brought me.

I was so happy to know that somebody cared for me. Somebody cared for me even to the simplest thing as a fried chicken leg for breakfast.

"That is another tree along my pathway," I said aloud, talking to my own self.

I hurried up, and finally got out the door, on to the car, and off to work. I could hardly wait to see what wonders were awaiting for me out there.

But as reality goes on in life, apparently nothing wonderful happened to be seen. The wonders happened within me, for I was aware of the gems around me that day: the fine, good things in others.

That day, that very morning, I had seen the gems in my boss' understanding attitude. My boss bore with me; even though, I had such personal difficulties as lack of confidence in myself, insecurity, little training, and hardly any experience at all.

He didn't let me quit, as I wanted to do so many times. Better yet, he did not fire me as I had wished he would.

I had been eager to get to work that morning and I was expecting some kind of wonder to happen, for I wanted to put on my display of appreciation for my boss.

Yet, everything went on seemingly as usual. Only inside of me there was the awareness of the pure and lovely things, the fine

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good things in others, and all that I could praise God for and be glad about. . . .

And because I was aware of those things, those gems, I had a different attitude that day. And a transformation had begun within me that was to make a remarkable difference in my life. Thus, the wonders happened within me, in the secret place of my being.

Philippians 4:4-9, AMP.

4 Rejoice in the Lord always -delight, gladden yourselves in Him; again I say, Rejoice! [Ps. 37:4]

5 Let all men know and perceive and recognize your unselfishness -your considerateness, your forbearing spirit. The Lord is near -He is coming soon.

6 Do not fret or have any anxiety about anything, but in every circumstance and in everything by prayer and petition [definite requests] with thanksgiving continue to make your wants known to God.

7 And God's peace [be yours, that tranquil state of a soul assured of its salvation through Christ, and so fearing nothing from God and content with its earthly lot of whatever sort that is, that peace] which transcends all understanding, shall garrison and mount guard over your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus.

8 For the rest, brethren, whatever is true, whatever is worthy of reverence and is honorable and seemly, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely and lovable, whatever is kind and winsome and gracious, if there is any virtue and excellence, if there is anything worthy of praise,

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think on and weight and take account of these things -fix your minds on them.

9 Practice what you have learned and received and heard and seen in me; and model your way of living on it, and the God of peace -of untroubled, undisturbed well-being- will be with you.

On June 20, 1985 in a transitory and brief moment my life was recapped and flashed on the screen of my imagination.

I had seen how and why I had learned as much as I had come to learn about any subject; even though, I had been born, raised and lived under adversity most of my life.

In the Book of Philippians, in the above Chapter 4, verses 4-9 is written the reason why I learned. In the Book of Isaiah, Chapter 59, is written the reason why I lived under adversity most of my life, and why I had been groping along all of my life, lost in broad daylight.

And yes, as it is written in the Book of Isaiah Chapter 59, verse 16, the Lord Himself stepped in to save me through His mighty power and justice, that morning in June.

On the morning of June 20 of the year of the Lord 1985, I got up at 3 am to study. I was immersed in a writing lesson, for I was learning the techniques of writing and I had avail myself of much reference material to study.

All of a sudden I realized how much I was learning and how tremendously I enjoyed learning. I set down my lesson and I allowed my thoughts to drift to myself. That's when I came to realize what had been happening in my life.

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I remembered when I first learned how to read. I remembered all the key persons that had contributed to my education.

In the screen of my imagination I saw my home, where I was born and lived for the first ten years of my life.

In a moment of time I saw how much I had learned and how I had managed to learn.

I saw all of the places where I have been to get an education.

I also saw the school of "hard knocks," where I got most of my adult education.

And I saw the key persons, "the understanding hearts" that I met, who led me through that most intriguing institution.

As I remembered those places and I saw those people, I discovered the secret by which those people reached and cultivated my mind, and comforted my soul and body.

For I sensed that beyond the cultivation of my mind and the comfort for my soul and body, there was something greater.

Something much greater that had given me life. Something that had given me the ability to receive those things. Something, beyond words to describe.

I sensed the Spirit of God! The secret by which those people reached and cultivated my mind, and comforted my soul and body.

Yet, I did not understand it at that moment of time. It all went right over my head because I did not know The Word of God! I had not meditated on the Word of God, I was ignorant of it.

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I had gone through life unaware of the secret saving power of the Spirit of God, taking everything and everybody for granted without consideration of anything other than my own understanding of life, and the raw feelings of my emotions.

But, that morning, on the screen of my imagination, a beautiful Garden of Eden was displayed. In that Garden I saw those people that had helped me throughout my life, as trees.

From those trees hung as precious gems, the things or the "good traits" they possessed.

And all those gems were part of the treasure of their love and understanding.

And those things that were as precious as gems, were the pure and lovely the fine good things in others, the things you can praise God for and be glad about as it is written in the Book of Philippians, Chapter 4, verse 8, about which I had never thought before.

In that Garden of Eden I walked, bedazzled by the marvelous treasure of the love and understanding that had followed me all the days of my life, which I had taken for granted.

I picked up my pencil to write it all down. I did not know at the time that what I was about to write was in the Word of God! I was only describing what I was seen in that transitory moment, but, a year later, when I read the Scripture in the Book of Isaiah Chapter 59, it all fit together.

At that moment though, when I was walking in that field saturated with gems, I picked my pencil and my tattered tablet with my heart pounding in my head, loaded with emotional excitement, and I simply described what I saw when I wrote,

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All of my life I have walked in the Field of Knowledge, with my eyes closed. I have been lost in that field, groping along, almost unattended.

And now, suddenly! I have opened my eyes and WOW! . . . What a wonderful, beautiful, and fabulously wealthy field that is! I see now that, the field is covered, in fact, saturated with gems: "The gems of the knowledge of goodness."

Well, My Goodness! There are all kinds of gems! There are some that float, and they float in the very air that I am inhaling. . . .

There are others that hang from the trees across, and along the pathway. . . .

Some hide under the decayed roots of trees that have ceased to produce. . . .

Some are at the bottom of the ponds collected from the streams.

Some are within the waters of the streams that satiate the thirst of the earth. . . .

They are even thrown at random in my pathway where I stumble upon them. . . .

Oh! those gems, those beautiful gems! They are everywhere in that field!

I know now, as I stop and look around, that there is no possible way that I can collect them all.

And the more I collect, the more I see the ones I have not yet collected.

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And by seeing the ones I have not yet collected, I have, actually, collected a big gem: "The gem of the Knowledge of my Ignorance".

I finished writing. I knelt down by my bed side and I praised God. I thanked God for his infinite blessings. And in deep communion with my Lord, I went again into a reverie.

I remembered, in a magical recollection, all the prayers that I had uttered. I remembered all the cries for help; all the inquiries, the whys that I had made unto the Lord.

I came to sense myself in a magical spot. In that magical spot gems were floating. I was inhaling that air flowing in that spot. And with each breath of air that inhaled, I inhaled the gems.

The gems became part of my very being. And when the gems became part of my being, I was able to see, as if by magic, how all those prayers that I had uttered had been answered.

All the cries for help had been taken care off. And at that moment, that very moment, even my inquiries and my whys were being reconciled.

It was at that moment that God stepped in the direct actuality of my living experience.

But, it took many months for me to really understand what had actually happened at that moment. For it was not until a year later that God chose to show me in His Word the magnificence and splendor of the Giver of the gems, the Gem of all Gems that gave me the sense of being in a magical spot.

The Gem that lit up my whole being and transformed me in that instant of time:

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JESUS CHRIST HIMSELF stepped into my life at that very moment!

It took me almost a whole year to cease from my wandering and my works of pride and rebellion, throw myself on the ground and truly say: "I give up. You alone are God and You alone I trust, Oh God Almighty, HOW GREAT THOU ART my Lord and my God!" Why?

Read on what I am writing, that the God of mercy, Creator of heaven and earth may enlighten and open your eyes. That you may not be deceived yourself and sin against THE GREAT I AM harboring pride and rebellion in your heart.

That you may be encouraged to know that THE GREAT I AM is indeed OUR FATHER and the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, Who loves and never leaves nor forsakes His children.

Isaiah 59:1-12 (LVB) (My underline.)

Listen now! The Lord isn't too weak to save you. And he isn't getting deaf! He can hear you when you call. 2 But the trouble is that your sins have cut you off from God. Because of sin he has turned his face away from you and will not listen anymore. 3 For your hands are those of murderers and your fingers are filthy with sin. You lie and grumble and oppose the good. 4 No one cares about being fair and true. Your lawsuits are based on lies; you spend your time plotting evil deeds and doing them. 5 You spend your time and energy in spinning evil plans which end up in deadly actions. 6 You cheat and shortchange everyone. Everything you do is filled with sin; violence is

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your trademark. 7 Your feet run to do evil and rush to murder; your thoughts are only of sinning and wherever you go you leave behind a trail of misery and death. 8 You don't know what true peace is, nor what it means to be just and good; you continually do wrong and those who follow you won't experience any peace, either.

9 It is because of all this evil that you aren't finding God's blessings; that's why He doesn't punish those who injure you. No wonder you are in darkness when you expected light. No wonder you are walking in the gloom.

10 No wonder you grope like blind men and stumble along in broad daylight, yes, even at brightest noontime, as though it were the darkest night! No wonder you are like corpses when compared with vigorous young men!

11 You roar like hungry bears; you moan with mournful cries like doves. You look for God to keep you, but he doesn't. He has turned away. 12 For your sins keep piling up before the righteous God, and testify against you.

That morning in June, the Lord Jesus Christ had stepped into my life, and began to direct it, but I, was unaware and still unmoved, walking in a lost path of deception.

That morning in June though, was to be forever indelible in my being, regardless of my condition of deception which was to continue not only through that day but through many days that turned into weeks and months after that memorable day.

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And so, when I finally got home that night I was unaware of what had actually happened and still unmoved, but I was excited about what I had written that morning.

Hopefully assured of the quality of what I had written, even though that I was ignorant of the purpose for what I had written it, I wanted to brag about it and show off; so, I called Peggy, a dear friend whom I admired.

"Listen Peggy," I said all excited, "this is what I wrote this morning." And I read to Peggy my beautiful piece.

"That is beautiful Thia, but what is it?" said Peggy, puzzled with my sudden display of literary exhibitionism.

Her reply surprised me because of my expectations to hear an unconditional approval of my literary talent. A talent of which I was so sure at that time, and of which, at the present time, I am not so sure any longer.

"Well, is it an allegory of a woman's walk of life? I guess it is a major thought for some kind of work I might develop yet. To tell you the truth Peggy, I have not given it a thought as to what it is. I am just excited about how good it sounds; doesn't it sound good?" I said hopefully.

"Yes it does sound good. It is really good, and you'll figure out something to do with it." Peggy said, trying to encourage me.

Well, when I hung up the phone, my ego was shattered to pieces. I was disappointed! I thought I had just written an immortal piece of literature, a classic. I had figured on everybody falling over in awe of my talent. And here I had my first feedback, and I had hardly made an impression!

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I held my note pad on my lap for a few seconds and I reconsidered my plight. "Well," I reasoned, "it is going to be harder than I had figured. But, something good is going to come out of it. This is too good to dismiss or to give up. It is going to be some hard work; but, something good is going to come out of it."

The day was gone and it had turned into the hour of the night when the strength of my flesh had diminished, I was well tired, in fact exhausted, and I couldn't worry about it anymore that night.

So, I picked up my Bible to search for the Scripture to read to pacify the alarms in my mind and soothe me into sleep to regain the strength of my flesh, for I was not aware of anything else but my flesh at that point of my life.

I picked up my Bible to read but at that point of my life I did not know 2 Timothy Chapter 3:16 where it is written that the whole Bible was given to us by inspiration of God and is useful to teach us what is true and to make us realize what is wrong in our lives, no, I did not know that Scripture in my heart.

Yes, I have read it, in more than one version of the Bible I have read that Scripture, but, I did not know it in my heart, I was not aware of it, and I did not read and use the Bible for the purpose that God intended the Bible to be read and used, as it is written in that Scripture.

The Bible to me, at that point of my life, was not the "Pond of The Book of Knowledge of God" given by His inspiration, and profitable for all of those things that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.

I was not aware of the Bible, at that point of my life. At that point of my life, the Bible to me was not the "Pond of the Book of

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Knowledge of God" because I didn't know that Scripture in my heart, or any other Scripture for that matter, to be aware of the Book of Knowledge of God, the Bible.

Therefore, without giving it a second thought, many times I would read the Bible only to regain the strength of my flesh, to pacify the turmoil in my emotions, to lift up my soul, to quiet my mind down, and to soothe my body into rest, for my own satisfaction and comfort.

My priorities were all twisted and in the delusion of my mind I thought that the Bible was a soothing agent for self complaisance.

In the alliance of my flesh, the Devil was glad to oblige and answer all of those miss directed needs, to keep me from the anointing oil of God's Word.

The anointing oil of God's Word would had brought me into God's rest, instead, to read the Bible with God's purpose for me to walk perfectly as a man of God thoroughly furnished unto all good works.

The Devil had rather tend to the satisfaction of my flesh to use the Bible as a soothing agent for self complaisance than loose his hold on my deluded mind.

So, this night as other nights before, the reading of the Scriptures worked for that purpose of satisfying my flesh.

Soon I fell asleep, with ideas of fame and fortune, even when my ego was shattered to pieces. I woke up the next morning startled by the sound of the alarm at three am. As usual I started to study, reading my lesson, jotting down different things, making an effort to concentrate in my study.

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My efforts to study were earnest, but my writing was on my mind and I couldn't think of anything else. So, I picked up my note pad and began to analyze what I had written.

When I wrote down my thoughts that morning, I described the beautiful display in my imagination. Yet, beyond the pretty wording in that description lay a meaning for everything described.

I imagined myself walking in that beautiful garden again. In wonder seeing all those beautiful things that had been there all of my life.

Yet, I had gone through life without the awareness of such magnificent wealth, because, I simply had been lost in my own little self filled world.

I had indeed grown up into a self centered individual, full of misery and tragedy. But on the morning of that day before, I saw, in the most fantastic way, how lost I had been, and why I had grown up into a self centered individual, and why I lived in the midst of misery and tragedy.

I also saw the things that had helped to bring me as far as I was in life in the midst of that misery and tragedy. The things that God says to think about and to dwell on. The things that bring life, as opposed to the things that bring death.

So, picturing myself back in that Garden that I had called the "Field of Knowledge," I began to analyze line by line and I described what it all meant.

Although the analysis has been revised, because, at the time that this all happened, I was not quite aware of what it was all about, basically it is the same analysis that I wrote early that next morning of my writing.

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LIST OF SYMBOLIC CHARACTERS AND PHRASES:

`I': Myself as a child like woman.

The spiritual knowledge in her walk is located in the `Air that I am inhaling'.

The intellectual knowledge, her life as everyday happening, is located in `the pathway'.

`The trees': human beings, including herself, and the persons from whom she collects the gems of knowledge, her friend and companion, her friends, her teachers, her co workers, even her acquaintances.

`The decayed roots of trees that have ceased to produce': the poisoned reasons or excuses of all human beings, who have ceased to care. Hidden under those roots there are gems of goodness to be found.

`The ponds': are the books that increase one's understanding, the collection of the waters from the streams.

`The waters of the streams': the knowledge, the information that flows in the streams.

`The streams': represents the Centers of Education like Schools, and such where she gets secular knowledge, and the Centers of Spiritual Knowledge like Churches, and similar institutions where she gets knowledge concerning the things of the spirit.

`The thirst of the earth': the desire for learning of humanity in general. `Thrown at random in my pathway . . .' are the gems that she collects at unexpected moments, as she observes, studies or when she simply talks to her Lord in prayer.

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'I collect': when she becomes aware of learning, when she learns that she knows. When it clicks not just in her mind but also in her heart.

By the time I had finished setting down the analysis of my writing, it was time for me to get ready to go to work.

Yes, get ready for work to start on another day, with my heart filled with hope and gladness; and yet, with my mind and emotions still unaware of that hope and gladness.

Only as God would begin to show me my condition and begin to uproot the decayed roots of my pride and rebellion, was I to become aware of that hope and gladness in my heart.

But for the time being, the month of June had ended. Days had gone by fast. Things were happening with the precision of the Master Mind that was making those things happen . . . only I, unresponsive, still entwined in buried pain and hurt, only I, was unaware of that Master Mind.

I was even unaware of his love and care. Just three years ago, I had gone through a very rotten divorce that tore me to pieces, and only God knew how bad off I really was. I hardly gave it a thought. I just hurt inside of me. I was sick to my heart.

I figured that taking my mind off my problems, burying them good was the only way I could survive. I had no idea why I didn't draw nigh unto God. I had no answer or excuse for my sin, I just didn't; therefore, because I didn't draw nigh to God I drew away from Him and I went my own way. I had figured that I was a child of God. That I had been wounded. That I was hurting so bad that only God understood why I was indifferent and insensitive.

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"After all," I thought, "I have walked close to Him before; I have known Him before; I have never felt He has forsaken me, or I, have forsaken Him; we are together, God and I, in my pain and hurt. It is simply a waiting period, until wounds shall be healed, and I shall be restored to fellowship with God again."

I lived in the realm of my raw emotions and a deluded mind. I had paid a high price for going my own way, but the worst of all was, that I was sinning against my Lord and I was completely indifferent about it; my heart was cold.

And yet, the Lord, in His infinite mercy, never forsook me nor left me; He saw me through it all, and right in the middle of the muddy filth of the world and my wicked sinfulness, He comforted and protected me, even from death itself.

Thus were the actual circumstances on the morning of the 20th day of June of 1985, when the Lord Himself stepped into my life and saved me from that hell I had fallen into, and brought me back into His fold.

And such was the reason why, I was unaware that it was the Master Mind of the Lord Jesus Christ revealing Himself to me, and directing the scenario of my life.

There were different incidents that were indicators of the working hand of a Master Mind directing the scenario of my life to effect the change that had taken place in my inner being that morning in June.

The first incident that I noticed was the matter of my writing. I had continued working on my writing and I was stuck. Originally I had written, "The decayed roots of trees that have ceased to produce: The poisoned reasons or excuses of some of her friends

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who have ceased to care. Hidden under those roots there are gems to be found."

I had written, 'the poisoned reasons of excuses of some of her friends...' for I knew that the trees that have ceased to produce were the people that have ceased to care.

But I did not include myself in that kind of people, I only included some of my friends. And I could not put my finger on exactly what those friends had ceased to care about.

It did not occur to me that I could be a tree that had ceased to produce. I was stuck.

Days and days went by. I was very busy with different things that were happening, but I kept thinking every time I had a chance about the trees that have ceased to produce.

So far, I had only seen the decayed roots of other trees, like some of my friends and acquaintances with problems; but it did not occur to me to see my own self, and look into my own problems.

I knew that the gems of the trees that have ceased to produce were hidden under their decayed roots. I knew that the decayed roots of those trees meant the reasons or excuses that they would give when they no longer cared.

I had seen those things, I had the insight about those things; alas! though, my insight was only partial! For I was looking at the people that had a little mote in their eye, and I was very concerned about those people.

I had taken upon myself the responsibility to help them and take that mote out of their eye. But I could not realize at that time the

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huge beam in my own eye, much less figure out how to help others or myself.

So, I wandered around for a while stumbling on the way; continually sticking my foot in my mouth talking about things that I didn't know, almost everyday.

I was beginning to get discouraged because the momentum of my writing was dying off, and I had not been able to make anything out of it.

Here I was, stuck with the 'decayed roots of the trees that have ceased to produce.' I was frustrated! At my wits end, I called on the Lord for an answer,

"Lord, what have these trees ceased to produce? What really have they ceased to produce? It seems to me that everybody that I know, or become acquainted with does produce care. Everybody I can think of does care at some time or another. Even if they are not gainfully employed, even thieves and criminals do care. Lord, tell me what is it really, that these people have ceased to produce that they are so unhappy and sometimes downright miserable? What is it, Lord?"

"You are asking the wrong question," the Lord spoke to my heart, "the right question is, Who is it? and not What is it? Have you taken a look at your own decayed roots? Have you been able to consider the gems hiding under your decayed roots? Have you seen the gems of my love and compassion that I have put in your heart for others? Have you considered the decayed root of your pride?"

And after a pause He continued, "Yes, the question is 'Who is it?' Who is the tree that has ceased to produce? And the answer is, 'You are the tree that have ceased to produce. And like you,

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the many others that have allowed their roots to decay, with the poison of pride, bitterness, resentment, and all the filth from the World of darkness."

By that time, the ears of my understanding were beginning to perk up, and I heard the voice of the Lord quite clear. I found the whole thing so amusing.

Here I was, I had been excited to no end because I was able to perceive all these goodies about others. I had been even thinking that I was receiving some kind of instruction on how to help others to alleviate their sorrows.

I had been feeling so privileged to see those things about others, and anticipating all kinds of glory, and signs, and wonders.

I had been thinking that I was on the verge of learning some great truth that was going to practically eradicate all the misery at least around me and my circles.

Thinking all of these things, and feeling so proud to know that at last, this betrayed child of the King was going to be avenged from all the wrongs that the world had dealt her, and the world was going to see that truly she was being avenged!

I had said to myself, "If the Lord would give me all of this glory, and would bless me with a 'best seller', and plenty of finances to promote some kind of ministry to alleviate the wrongs of the world, it would stand to reason that my example, would attract so many to the Lord, and most probably I am going to be the greatest soul winner in the world."

Oh God! My Lord of infinite patience, and unending mercy, and love! If only I had drawn nigh to God, the Devil would have not been able to instill upon me, such grossly deceiving lies. My

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soul laid there bared, and my wickedness was repulsive. How ridiculous have I been!

Then came the matter of the computer, which was God's gift with the cooperation of my Honey. My attitude exposed the decayed root of my pride and arrogance.

It was the month of July. I had continued to be unaware of the Master Hand directing my life. I thought, and I figured, and I made plans, and I prayed, and I fasted, and I studied, and applied myself the best way I could. Yet, I remained unmoved inside of me.

I did, did, and did; but I was just doing, doing, and doing. I was just doing on my own, and I was not paying any attention to the Master.

I was not listening. I was taking a course in Word processing, and Clerk typing at Vo-Tech since the previous September. I had been interested in getting a computer to do clerical work at home.

I had investigated (without success) different ways in which I could have been able to get the computer. Then that morning in June, somehow, in my inner being, I knew that I was going to get a computer to use in my writing career sometime in the near future.

I misunderstood that inner knowledge to mean that, I was supposed to make all efforts to get a computer with my power and the help of the Lord.

Since the divorce, I had given up all financial responsibilities and I considered myself a failure in those matters. I just did not want anything to do with money, and only because I was too proud to beg, I worked to pay my way. When I met my Honey,

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he kindly took me under his wing. He made it his business to manage my money; for which, I was not appreciative at all.

In fact, I resented it because it reminded me continuously of my failure. Nevertheless, because my Honey kept a tight lid on my money, he had managed to save me a nice sum of money.

I tried as hard as I could to get the computer with that money that my Honey was holding for me; but, it was not enough, and he, my Honey, was against draining all my savings, on what he considered to be just a whim of mine.

I begged my Honey for help. He flatly turned me down, and tried to show me that I couldn't afford such extravaganza.

He also tried to dissuade me from my frivolous spending by admonishing me to hold on to my savings for a rainy day in case something would happen to him and he could not help me if I got into financial difficulties again.

Well, I took offense to his admonition to control my spending, and I re-enforced my efforts to get that computer in spite of my Honey's objections.

I had read a lot about positive thinking, success stories through self hypnosis, and the power of prayer, so, I decided to put into practice some positive thinking and self hypnosis in my prayers.

I figured it this way, "He won't help me, but, I am going to ask God to let ME get it by myself."

I cut out a picture of the computer, the printer and the whole outfit and glued it to a poster board; I figured to the penny what that outfit was going to cost and wrote it down in big print at the bot-

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tom of the pictures; then I placed that whole thing in front of the spot where I used to kneel down to pray.

Then I knelt down, and in a very pleading tone and mustering all the mind power that I could think, I asked the Lord to supply my need.

After a couple of days, the ritual became obvious and I put that contraption down for I felt like a pagan praying to a god, like I was praying to an idol, which is in fact I was doing.

I put the contraption down but I figured that I had made my point and I had made my requisition and all I had to do now was to wait for the mail man to bring me the money.

Then I was going to go straight to Radio Shack and buy my computer, for I figured if that sort of prayer worked for everybody it was going to work for me for sure for God had to give me a computer, because, I needed it to glorify HIS NAME. (Of course!)

Anyhow, I said to my self, "My Honey is going to see how God takes care of my needs! I have it all under control, I can't wait to show him off for being so cruel to me."

How arrogant and ingrate was I! After all of what this beautiful gentleman had done for my comfort, I had to take offense and use the mighty name of God in vain as my weapon to retaliate.

In the course of events, I had talked to a friend of my boss, about getting a computer. He had giving me a good lead on the one that I thought would be the best to get.

A couple of days later, my boss' friend walked in the office and I don't know how the computer subject came about again.

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I think that I mentioned that I couldn't afford to get the computer just yet, because I didn't quite had all the money that I needed.

"I'll let you have mine for a price you can afford" my boss' friend said.

"How much?" I said, quite interested. He mentioned some ridiculous amount,

"And I'll throw in everything including the tables." He boasted.

The amount was ridiculous comparing it with the actual value of the package, but I still could not afford it.

"Oh well," I said, and with hope I added, "I still can't afford it, can you give me terms?"

"No way," said he, "I want to take it off my account, that's the only reason why I'll give it to you for that price; I don't really need to sell it."

"Well," I said disillusioned, "I'll mention it to my Honey, maybe we can come up with something."

I mentioned it to my Honey right away.

"Do you have that amount of money?" He asked me.

"No." I answered.

"Well," said he, "there you have your answer."

"Thank you, Scrooge!" I thought to myself.

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A couple of more days went by. My Honey asked me out one night. When he brought me back home as we were talking, he asked me to add up the money he was holding for me.

I had been waiting for him to mention the money situation for I was full of spite because of what he had told me about over spending money that I didn't have, which was the truth and he was only trying to help me and teach me to save money.

"You are not holding anything for me anymore, I cancelled it all out!" I blurted out with an arrogant tone of voice, "I don't have any money because I considered what you are holding as payment for whatever money you have been spending on me. I don't ever want anybody to give me something that they can throw at my face!" I blurted out some more to make it clear that I had been insulted with his talk about my spending habits.

"Cut out that foolishness! Add up your money or I'll will add it up myself," he said, and he reached for my purse and took my booklet where he made me keep track of what I gave him and what he gave me.

"Tell that fellow to bring that computer tomorrow." he said after he counted and figured out exactly what he was holding for me.

"And how long do you think is going to take you to pay me back the amount that you are short?" He added.

"Oh I guess just a couple of months, that's all." I said, trying not to show my excitement, still thinking that I was getting the computer between me and God.

My Honey had held on to that money for me. He had given to me generously all this time, but in my arrogant attitude I did not take any of that in consideration because I had taken offense,

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instead of recognizing my fault, my weakness where money was concerned. If anything, God gave me the computer, between God and my Honey. I had it all wrong, my whole attitude stunk!

Chapter 2

Autobiography Continues

The remarkable change that only God could effect.
The writing fever.
God begins to prepare me for His service.

My Beliefs

Yes, I believe in a Great God, He is real in my everyday life. I believe that God is greater than what it is ordinarily believed. I believe in Jesus Christ, He is also real in my life.

I also believe there is an evil personality in this world called Satan.

In the course of events to break a servant for the Kingdom...The next incidents that came to pass were,

The visit to my girls in Wilmington, North Carolina where a family reconciliation began to take place; and a writing fever that consumed me to share the super abundance from the Lord in my heart to my girls and my friends.

While I was occupied developing my writing of that morning in June and the computer matter, one of my daughters had written me a letter to tell me that they were offering a super savings flight to Wilmington, for only \$178.00 round trip, and perhaps I could manage to get the money and come to visit.

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At first I figured that \$178.00 was still a lot of money for me, specially since I was finagling all kinds of ways to get the computer and I figured that I couldn't squander my money away in a plane ticket to visit my daughters.

"If the Lord wants me to go, He'll provide" I said to myself, convinced that I had to hold on to the money that my Honey of a friend was holding for me, to buy the computer, for I didn't know the way that the Lord was working things out for me.

But then I thought that the Lord would only helped those that helped themselves, and since my Honey had refused to let me use the money that he was holding for me to get the computer, I decided to use some of it to pay for my ticket to Wilmington.

After all, I had prayed and it was sure that the Lord was going to help me get ahead enough with my own money sooner or later to get that computer.

But my Honey insisted on buying the ticket for me as a gift, for the Lord had already put in his heart to get the computer and he, my Honey, knew that I did not have enough for the computer much less for the computer and the trip.

Thus, the Lord had already provided for my trip because it was the Lord that was directing the whole thing. But I did not know it.

My understanding was still dulled and darkened with pride and I was ignorant about God's ways and how true repentance works.

Nevertheless, the Master directing the scenario of my life was working and the time came for me to fly to Wilmington to visit my two daughters.

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My son and my youngest stepdaughter were already at one of my daughter's spending some of their summer vacation. It was a significant development because for about three years I had not even talked to my stepdaughters (three of them) and I had refused to seek any communication with them since the divorce.

I had lived, for the past three years, completely withdrawn from anything that had to do with my ex-husband, including sharing my son's custody.

On the few occasions that I would pick up my son, I forbade him to mention anything connected to his daddy, I emphatically refused to allow myself to even mention his daddy's name.

For the hurt and bitterness were truly unbearable. My son understood and so did the girls, as far as the hurt from the tragedy of the divorce situation.

But they were at a loss concerning my bitter reaction to it, for my miserable bitterness stuck out like a sore thumb.

When I look back and I recall the gruesome experience, I realize that my children really were the children God was talking about in Isaiah chapter fifty seven, where our wickedness is described, in verse five something like this is written,

You who burn with lust among the oaks, under every green tree; who slay the children in sacrifice in the valleys under clefts of the rocks...

But of course back then, I would have never thought that I was sacrificing my children, if I would had happened to read that Scripture I would had thought, "That must mean all those people that are aborting children!"

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Or I would had wondered "How could they do 'human sacrifices' and specially little children! Man, that was some wicked people!"

And I would have closed my Bible and I would have felt very knowledgeable about it.

I would have never once considered myself in that wicked number. Talking about wicked people!

But for now, the Master directing the scenario of my life was working and it was by his grace that I spend that last week of July in Wilmington North Carolina with my daughters and my son. For that week, my Lord brought us together and began the family reconciliation. And it was a good week.

And the Master was working when I came back and the Computer had been delivered at the office and set up on the desk in my bedroom just a couple of days later.

And the Master was working and by His grace my oldest daughter and her husband came to visit before they moved away from Mississippi.

And the Master was working and by His grace that Friday August 2nd I graduated from Vo-Tech and received a Word processor and Clerk typist certificate.

Truly God is faithful, and his promises are not in vain. His promise in Isaiah 59:21 had begun to be fulfilled.

"As for me, this is my promise to them," says the Lord: "My Holy Spirit shall not leave them, and they shall want the good and hate the wrong, they and their children and their children's children forever."

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And I, was still unmoved, my heart was still buried in pain, darkened by the mire of bitter resentment. BUT THE MASTER WAS WORKING!

And because the Master was working a different situation began to develop in my life. My attitude began to turn, I began to tune up to the voice of God, and I began to write it all down and to share with my girls and my friends everything that the Lord was giving to me.

I wrote it all in letters to my daughters, my instructors at Vo-Tech. Then I wrote about College, my Honey's Birthday, walking out of my job the day that my first grandson was born, and I wrote every insight from the Lord on the daily basis.

I was a busy Christian in the dawn of my renewal, and I had the writing fever that left me with a repertoire to share in the following pages.

For I was excited when I came back from Wilmington, refreshed in the love of the fellow believers. The gems of The Word of God were beginning to shine light in my mind and I had begun to turn.

I began to write my experience in letters to my daughters and my friends, and the following are excerpts from those letters which reflect the change that was taken place within myself.

"My Dearest Daughters: I am so refreshed after my visit with you all, I really needed that! Circumstances here are pretty much the same, but my inner being has certainly taken a leap forward and I can now truly shout JESUS IS LORD. My Honey Children, I can finally say with Job in Job 42:2-6,

"I know that you can do anything and that no one can stop you. You ask who it is who has so

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foolishly denied your providence. It is I. I was talking about things I knew nothing about and did not understand, things far too wonderful for me. (You said) 'Listen and I will speak! Let me put the questions to you! See if you can answer them!'

(But now I say,) 'I had heard about you before, but now I have seen you, and I loathe myself and repent in dust and ashes'."

And in that same letter I also shared what the Lord spoke to my heart on the morning of August 8, 1985.

"The Lord sayest to me at this moment: 'I have been shaping you into a vessel, a beautiful vessel to hold flowers, beautiful flowers of love. These flowers are not yours, they belong to Me and I give them to whom I please: you are only holding them as they sit in the water of My love with which I have filled you.

'You can not give out these flowers on your own, because you are only a vessel holding them; but I will send you those to whom I have given the flowers you are holding; some will pick just the flowers from you, and some will pick you up, and use you to bring good news and cheer to others. Rest in the Lord and hold My flowers.

'Do not put your own flowers in that vessel of yourself; because they are the flowers that wilt and don't last; but the flowers that I am letting you hold will last forever.'

'And what kind of flowers are those, Lord?' I asked.

The Lord sayest to me: 'You are only the vessel to hold these flowers and you need not to know what kind of flowers they

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are, again I say, rest on the Lord and just know that you are holding MY flowers and not your flowers."

The above is only an excerpt of a long letter that I had written to my girls, the first letter that I wrote in the computer.

The next letter that I wrote was for one of my dear and beloved sisters. I had called one my closest sisters in the Lord and I learned of certain trials she was going through.

I was burdened with her trials when I was praying the next morning while I received a Word from the Lord, so, I wrote a letter to her to share my blessing.

"My dearest sister," I wrote, "the Word of the Lord came to me this morning, and as I finished writing it, I have wished you were not long distance because I wanted to share it with you.

"So strong was my feeling that it is a miracle I didn't call you.

"I said that it is a miracle that I didn't call you because I can't attribute it to self restrain or discipline or whatever you want to call it, because I don't have any of that.

"Yet," The letter continued, "now that I have come to accept that I am a regular human being, undisciplined, rotten to the core I realize now more than ever that it is not by my will power or self restrain that I do what ever little thing I do that it's the right thing to do, but my the grace of our Lord, when I simple yield my doings to Him and trust that whatever good or bad decision on my part He uses it for His glory.

"I trust He will convict me of sinful and bad decisions and work within me to confess my sin and I let Him do the rest..."

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I wrote to my sister from the bottom of my heart and I ended my letter sharing the word that I had received that morning.

"And it's my prayer" I wrote in closing, "that this sharing, will bring some comfort and encouragement to you. And now to share what came to me this morning:

"`Lord? Are you trying to tell me to quit looking at what I do and what I say and just rely on You that what I am saying comes from You and what I am is what You are working with and that You are in control and to quit doubting everything because it doesn't fit exactly with what I think and what I reason to be OK, Lord?"

"The Lord sayest: `I am not trying to tell you. I am telling you. I am telling you just that. You look, you wobble, you go back and forth like a see-saw because you are taking your eyes off ME.

"`Even in your typing that is what is happening to you, you take your eyes off the master copy to look at what you are copying. You are being self conscious.

"`Fix your eyes on me, I am your Lord, I am in control, relax, I have taken your yoke and done away with it, now take My yoke, for My yoke is easy.'

"`Lord, help me, would You?' I pleaded. `I am helping you, I am talking to you plainly, and you know I have touched you and made you whole.

"`Quit trying to perfect My work. Relax and do your work and know that you are doing well. When ever you remember something you have forgotten, realize that I reminded you of

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it, and that I allow you to forget about certain things for my own reasons, even if you don't understand my reasons.

"You are not to know everything now because you can't take it, it will blow your mind. Picture yourself as a Vessel, but in your human nature you have a narrow mind, the body of your mind is tremendous, but your mind is narrow at the entrance, there is only so much that can go in at one time, that is why I have to pour slowly and gently in order to fill you, and that is why I have to shape you to enlarge your opening so I can fill you." "Relax about your writing. You will write and you will get published and I will use you. That is why I gave you the gift of writing, for you to be used by it.

"It is not for you to use your gift for your own purposes and gains. I'll do the work, as a matter of fact I have already done it. So don't worry about anything. Take everything in this day and know that My name will be glorified because you have obeyed and trusted Me and placed Me in the center of your being.

"Every little flaw in you has been taken care of. You are a finished work because I am finished.'..."

Closing that letter with love I was then led to share with my oldest daughter and husband who were in the process of a life change.

"My Dearest..." I began another letter in the peak of my writing fever, "I had you in my mind all day today for some reason I do not know... There are so many cliché being bombarded at us from all directions now days that is nearly impossible to determine what is what.

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"Yet there is a way out of this whole mess. I found it. You will find it too, just wait for it. For Jesus, Our Lord is not a cliché..."

And I went on, sharing with my daughter the most precious gift of my new self in Christ, quite different from my old domineering and demanding authoritarian self. Truly my whole attitude was changing.

Among the things in which I was busy, busy and busy about, before I went to visit my family in Wilmington, was the unsuccessful search for a Church to fellowship and the setting up of a worship program in my home.

I was unaware of the decayed root of resentment against my fellow Christians. In the midst of pain and hurt, I had forgotten even how I had come to forget about love.

I was not aware of my self-centeredness. I was not aware of the lack of love within me. I was not even aware of seeking love out of selfishness, just to get rid of the pain and loneliness in my heart.

I was seeking for love without commitment. Seeking to be blessed without blessing...

And in the screen of my imagination that morning in June, I saw all the streams of the good and invaluable information acquired from volumes past read; information that was collected within me in ponds of living water hiding a treasure of gems.

The gems that were at the bottom of the ponds for some time forgotten, that morning in June in the screen of my imagination, those gems, came back to my memory.

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I began to remember how precious they were. I remembered lots of gems long, long forgotten. And a longing to behold them again invaded my soul.

I remembered the gems in the pond of THE WORD OF GOD. I remembered the gem of love. "To love one another as He has loved us."

I remembered how real and precious that gem had been once in the fellowship of the believers, but alas! I had separated myself from them.

A longing for believers fellowship came upon me and I set out to find a Fellowship. For the last three years I had withdrawn from Church for what I thought to be lack of fellowship.

I blamed the believers for not providing me with the care and love that I so desperately needed. I blamed them even though that I had been the one that quit going to Church instead of asking of them.

I blamed them even though that many times a dear sister would take time to invite me to the JOY fellowship. The truth of the matter was that they did not agree with my far off ideas of Christianity.

Struggling to ignore the resentment for the believers I went back to one of my former churches but I did not find what I was longing for because my heart was darkened with bitterness and resentment.

I visited a couple other denominations and was also unsuccessful. In what I thought to be justified anger, which was nothing else but contempt for the local assembly, I set up my own Worship Program at home.

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I was satisfied with that arrangement for a while. But after a while I began to feel a certain unrest about the set up.

It started out as an unrest, but, because I was living a mixture of the life of sin and righteousness I became a trophy in the spiritual battle ground, and that unrest turned into a torture of my mind with condemnation.

The Holy Spirit was tugging at my heart for conviction and repentance. But Satan was driving me with condemnation. I became confused.

I was not troubled by the unrest from the conviction of the Holy Spirit. But the driving of Satan was torturing me, resulting in a mad confusion of my mind.

I thought I knew the Devil for back in 1974 I had experienced his attack when I lost my mind for three days and I knew what it meant to be in his grip.

I knew what it was to lose touch with the visible world and inhabit the invisible. It wasn't a pleasure trip. That was precisely the reason why I had started obliterating my mind with alcohol for the fear of losing it, for I did not know how to resist the Devil, because I did not know the ways of God, for I had not read the Word of God with the right motive in my heart, therefore, I was ignorant of the Word of God.

I thought I knew the Devil but in reality I was utterly ignorant of his treachery and I did not realize that I was already trapped in his grip because of the sin of my pride.

I was in ignorance of James 4:7-8, actually I was ignorant of the Word of God period, wasn't it the reason for all of my troubled life?

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It is written in His Word in James 4:7-8:

So give yourselves humbly to God. Resist the Devil and he will flee from you. And when you draw close to God, God will draw close to you.

I did not need alcohol I needed to trust God and to believe His Word. But my pride! I sinned and I could not see it. Therefore, I was in the grip of Satan and I did not know what to do about it.

In desperation I dialed Jean's number.

"Jean," my voice quiver on the phone, "I am hurting, I can't stand it anymore, I think I am going to lose my mind again."

"No you are not!," she said with a firm tone of voice, and with genuine concern she asked, "what's the matter?"

"I don't know, Jean, I am hurting, I can't sleep, I am confused, I am depressed, I am miserable, and I don't have any reason to be, I am walking with the Lord, he's been blessing me all kinds of ways; well, you know that yourself, it's been from glory to glory lately, I just don't understand it!"

Jean was quieted for a minute because she knew the circumstances. She knew that I was not walking in obedience to the Word of God, but she could not minister to me when I would only called her, most of the time, when I was already so deep in deception that I could not understand a single word she would tell me, because my mind was already deceived and confused with the lies from Satan.

"Thia," she said the best way she could, "that's the enemy attacking you, because of your blessings, that's how it works, don't worry about it, you belong to the Lord and He will pro-

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tect you no matter what, He'll show you what to do, get in the Word."

"But, Jean," I said, "I am in the Word, I read it and the Lord makes it real to me, that's just the problem, the Lord blesses me and the Devil is attacking by confusing me, and making me feel guilty for loving the Lord. I know the Lord has placed me in this situation that I am with my Honey and his family, and allowed me to meet all of the people that I have met for a reason, I don't know what reason, but there is a purpose for it, it might be a ministry he is given me, I don't know, but I do know that I am to love this people in His name, I know that He has filled me with love for them, and I can't turn my back on them, it will be like turning my back on the lost and sick, and the Lord said that's the ones he came to save."

"So, what can I do, Jean? If I physically go to a Church, I can't be with my Honey on Sundays, and I don't think the Lord will do that, He said so Himself, and I am supposed to do as He did."

Jean was quieted again, for a second, but when she spoke, The Word of God came forth, even that at that moment it did not availed in my heart for I still did not heard the Word because my ears were itching for what I wanted to hear, and for I wanted to do only.

"Thia, that's not the way it is," she said, "in 1 Timothy 5:22 the Word says to abstain even from the appearance of evil"

And she went on and on explaining to me the Word. But, I did not grasp it at all.

Welcome To My Life

Even when I thought that I had grasp the Word of God because of my 'itchy ears' I set out to do what I thought it was the right thing to do, not what the Word of God was telling me to do.

I only heard what I wanted to hear and I made up my mind at that moment, to clean up my act somehow, that way I would not give the enemy reasons to condemn me, and I would be relieved from the torture of condemnation that I was going through.

Sure enough, I quit certain practices I had fallen into, I curtail my drinking and to the best of my knowledge I did what I was supposed to do, except going to Church.

And except making a commitment to obey God all the way. Except to repent.

Satan left me alone, the torture left. But the unrest caused by the gentle tugging of the Holy Spirit, persisted because of my unrepentant heart.

I figured I would remain unmoved and wait until the Lord Himself would literally give me a Church and an address before I went anywhere or made any commitments.

"After all! The Lord has been speaking to me, I am not forsaken, I am alright!" I comforted my own self. And I set my mind at ease about the unrest in my heart with the excuse that I did not know which Church I was supposed to go.

Jean had always explained to me the difference between conviction and condemnation, but for the life of me I could not understand it.

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I was trying to justify my sin. I was looking for excuses to justify and make myself look and feel good. It was nothing for me to reason things out to my convenience.

It was easy because in my estimation of things I reasoned in this manner, "I am a poor old victim of circumstances. Everybody has done me wrong, good as I am!"

Yes, according to my centered self and pity-pity self's reasoning everybody had done me wrong, and specially that pompous ignoramus of my ex-husband!

"And he living in peace with that woman! And me suffering shame and disgrace because of his cruelty! Hm! don't you even mention his name to me. God is going to show him!"
Was my inner motto.

It was easy for me to reason things out because in my self pity I felt that, nobody cared for me. Nobody ever came to visit me from Church. Nobody ever called me. Nobody wanted to associate with me.

"All those ignorant 'holy than thou' Church people will see! God is going to restore me and show them!" I felt that, I had repented! I had paid for my sins! So now God was going to restore me! He had punished me enough! And what was my conception of God's mercy?

"Well, that ain't got nothing to do with it. You sin, you get punished for it and now you deserve to be restored. That's it! There is no mushiness of mercy and love about that!"

And Satan? "Well, you have to ignore those things, you don't pay any attention to the Devil, you don't set your mind in

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thinking about the Devil, because then he is liable to get your mind again."

One was justified in drinking alcohol to block out Satan out of your mind so he can't get you. You fight fire with fire.

"If you are wise you should know that if you are a Christian you have authority over the devil. Why? Because if you are a Christian you are more than a conqueror!"

Only problem was that I could not hear that I was a deceived Christian. I was totally and completely blinded and deafened by pride. I could not see that I was not in fellowship with God.

I was one of the "witches" sons, the offspring of adulterers and harlots! I was a child of the "feather brained, lazy, dreamer, greedy and stupid shepherds" of Isaiah 56:10-12.

That was so because we are all to be shepherds of our souls in Christ Jesus our Lord and not follow our own inclinations, and I was following my own inclinations.

It is not that my Pastors had deceived me, for my Pastors were not any of those shepherds. I am not referring to my Pastors. I am referring to myself, because I followed my own inclinations.

I am also referring to the shepherds that I adopted at large! Any preaching or book that would tickle my ears. "Inner Healing Ministry" "Deliverance Ministry" "Positive Thinking Theology" "Possibility Thinking" "Christian Counseling" "What you say is what you get" and etc. etc. any thing and everything that would indicate the possible "Magic Cure" that I was looking for.

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My Pastors and my dear fellow Christians did their best to warn me about those things. But my pride! The ones that would do it with gentleness were "mushy" and the ones that did with bluntness were "rude and ignorant"!

And God forbid! The ones that fed me some of my own medicine they were "demon possessed!"

I am not even referring to the Ministers of the Word and the authors of those books that I read, for God knows each and every one's hearts, we are His anointed and His servants and only He has the right to judge us.

And His ways are higher than my ways and His thoughts higher than my thoughts. It was not them, it was THE SPIRIT OF REBELLION within me.

I was living in sin and I had not any power or authority because in the bottom of my heart I had the "abomination" THE PRIDE, the bitterness and hate buried deep within me.

My sin was not the carousing and sexual immorality, that was only the results of the hidden "abomination." That was not even my sin at all! That was my punishment!

Can you imagine the humiliation and embarrassment of a 'holy than thou' creature when she finds out that she is not so holy after all? When she hears her own child spit at her face: "You are nothing but a slut!!"

But it was not that I was consciously thinking those things, and confessing my guilt. No, it was not that way at all, for I would not have dared to talk like that in public! I had better sense that showing off like a sore loser!

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But that was the attitude of my heart! and with that attitude, I justified my life of sin.

Because of the sin of pride I did not know the Word of God! I did not keep my conscious clear. I had lost my faith in Christ and I had been given over to Satan.

I did not heed the Word written to Timothy but applying to us all:

Now, Timothy, my son, here is my command to you: Fight well in the Lord's battles, just as the Lord told us through his prophets that you would. Cling tightly to your faith in Christ and always keep your conscience clear, doing what you know is right. For some people have disobeyed their consciences and have deliberately done what they knew was wrong. It isn't surprising that soon they lost their faith in Christ after defying God like that. Hymenaeus and Alexander are two examples of this. I had to give them over to Satan to punish them until they could learn not to bring shame to the name of Christ." I Timothy 1:18-20. (My own underlining.)

I was deceived and fallen away! And I did not know that I was in the very grip of Satan. I did not even know how to call on God.

I did not know about the filthy rags of the righteousness of the flesh. I did not know about the mercy of God. I did not know the following Scripture in Isaiah 64:5-7,

You welcome those who cheerfully do good,
who follow godly ways. BUT WE ARE NOT

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GODLY; we are constant sinners and have been all our lives. Therefore your wrath is heavy on us. How can such as we be saved? We are all infected and impure with sin. When we put on our prized robes of righteousness we find they are but filthy rags. Like autumn leaves we fade, wither and fall. And our sins, like the wind, sweep us away. Yet no one calls upon your name or pleads with you for MERCY. Therefore you have turned away from us and turned us over to our sins.

Because of PRIDE I could not repent! Because of the Holiness of God I had to be punished! Because of the mercy of God, He brought me to repentance, and I had to be pardoned!

But in the final analysis it is and it was and it shall be only God and GOD ONLY.

I was a "witches" son, an offspring of adulterers and harlots! The Prophet Isaiah described me only too well!

Isaiah 57:3-11

But you -come here, you witches' sons, you offspring of adulterers and harlots! 4 Who is it you mock, making faces and sticking out your tongues? You children of sinners and liars! 5 You worship your idols with great zeal beneath the shade of every tree, and slay your children as human sacrifices down in the valleys, under overhanging rocks. 6 Your gods are the smooth stones in the valleys. You worship them and they, not I, are your inheritance. Does all this make me happy? 7,8 You have committed adul-

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tery on the tops of the mountains, for you worship idols there, deserting me. Behind closed doors you set your idols up and worship someone other than me. This is adultery, for you are giving these idols your love, instead of loving me. 9 You have taken pleasant incense and perfume to Molech as your gift. You have traveled far, even to hell itself, to find new gods to love. 10 You grew weary in your search, but you never gave up. You strengthened yourself and went on. 11 Why were you more afraid of them than of me? How is it that you gave not even a second thought to me? Is it because I've been too gentle, that you have no fear of me?

But thank God for the end of the chapter,

Isaiah 57:15-21

15 The high and lofty one who inhabits eternity, the Holy One, says this: I live in that high and holy place where those with contrite, humble spirits dwell; and I refresh the humble and give new courage to those with repentant hearts. 16 For I will not fight against you forever, nor always show my wrath; if I did, all mankind would perish -the very souls that I have made. 17 I was angry and smote these greedy men. But they went right on sinning, doing everything their evil hearts desired. 18 I have seen what they do, but I will heal them anyway! I will lead them and comfort them, helping them to mourn and to confess their sins. 19 Peace, peace to them, both near and far, peace to them, both near and far, for I will heal them all. 20

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But those who still reject me are like the restless sea, which is never still, but always churns up mire and dirt. 21 There is no peace, says my God, for them!

Yes, thank God for His mercy and loving-kindness, thank Him forever and ever, for His mercy is everlasting.

Otherwise, I wouldn't be writing this story in triumph, but I would be still crawling beneath the yoke of Satan.

For crawling beneath the yoke of Satan is what I was doing, driven away from God by my lustful and bitter pride in the flesh and searching even the gates of hell for other gods to whom I could sacrifice my lust for bitterness and resentment.

Thus was my condition when the Lord Himself step into the direct actuality of my life that morning in June and rescued me.

And even when I was not aware of it at the time, the Master directing the scenario of my life was effecting a new episode, an unchangeable episode to last me for eternity.

But this unchangeable episode, the new life within me, was evident in the spirit of love that filled my heart to the brim.

My cup was full of love for everybody, even when my emotions and my mind were still entwined in the mesh of ignorance.

But, then I began to break from my willful ways and I began to attend church!

During my week in Wilmington I had the opportunity to fellowship with Spirit filled believers. The forgotten memories

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came back again and my longing for Fellowship became stronger than ever before.

At a home meeting, among a small group of brothers and sisters in the Lord, I mentioned my longing for a Fellowship.

To my surprise a brother asked of my location and then told me that he had known of at least six groups meeting in that area, and promised to mail addresses.

Here I was, almost a thousand miles away from home to find a Church in my back yard!

I had been longing for a Fellowship and sitting at home filled with anger and bitterness because I thought that nobody was fellowshipping at all.

Only God in His patience and longsuffering love could have been as condescending as to grant me my request for a Church to the exact address, even though I was in such state of bitterness and resentment.

When I came back from Wilmington in the midst of my activities I had started seeking God and my attitude had begun to turn, even though, I was still going on my own way and I was still not going to Church on Sunday.

Until the Lord convicted me in such a way that I'll never again shall quit the local congregation.

Whatever may happen I shall always be under the cover of a local congregation. For I had continued in my worshiping program I had set up for my own self at home awaiting for the Lord to send me the address of a local Church to attend, and things were going quite satisfactorily until the address came.

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Oh, I was so happy to receive that address. I got on the phone right away and called the Pastor and told him that I been directed to him all the way from North Carolina.

He invited me to the fellowship breakfast that Saturday and it was great!

I was so glad to have found a Church, at last, I figured I had found the place I was going to be able to fellowship to my heart's content.

I wasn't thinking about commitment or involvement or the like. I don't even know what in the world I had in mind, I was just as happy as I could be, minding my own business and letting the Lord mind His business in me.

I though things were going to be just fine until the Sunday after the Saturday's breakfast came. I figured it was too soon to be rushing to the Church just yet; I figured I was going to feel it out first and then I was going to ease into it.

But as I walked around the house that Sunday morning, I felt the unrest again. The same unrest I had felt before I went to Wilmington.

I listened to my programs on TV. The unrest drew me to the Word...The Holy Spirit ministered. Did I listened and went to Church ? No.

That morning, the word `sifting' kept coming to me, as I was troubled not knowing exactly what to do, feeling guilty for not going to Church.

Fear started to enter in my heart at the thought of trusting my own judgment and not being what I ought to be.

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But I listened to the promptings of the Holy Spirit, I remembered Peter and remembered the Scripture and I went to the Concordance to locate it.

The Word came alive to me, and the tears rolled down my face. As I look back I remember distinctively how the Holy Spirit was convicting my soul.

I saw that I, too, with Peter, had told the Lord sometime ago, "I'll die and go to hell with you, Lord" and now the rooster crowed for me. I felt the 'look' of Jesus and I wept.

Then I witnessed the trial of my Jesus, and I followed the way of the cross and crucifixion.

I listened and understood what Jesus told the weeping women on the way to Calvary. I went through the whole thing and I wept some more.

With Peter, I went to the tomb and looked... and as I read on the reactions of Peter, I realized that I too had reacted like Peter through my Christian walk.

Like Peter, who knew and walked with Jesus in the flesh, so have I. It seems to me that Peter did a lot of wandering and doubting on his own, and so do I.

All said and done I tried to ease my conscious about my lack of Church attendance, without any success at all, the unrest persisted. By Saturday 8/24/85, I was a wreck!

But I called Jean and she convinced me that I must attend Church on Sundays.

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Sunday 8/25/85 Today I am carrying by body to Church as a living sacrifice, sanctified by the Blood of the Lamb. The gems on the first service I attended.

I came in the church, there was a hustle and bustle of the Pastor and everybody getting ready to start the service.

I greeted the Pastor and I found myself a seat. I waited and prayed in silence. In a short time the guitar strings began to make sweet melody to the Lord, by the hands of one of the young woman in the congregation.

She opened the service and we all joined in singing and praising God.

Oh, the wonder and beauty of those spontaneous Worship Services to the Lord! I gave it my all.

The Pastor made the announcements, offering and tithes were received. And the time came for the message.

The Pastor said something to the effect that he had been seeking God for food for the congregation but the Lord fed him first, and then told him to share his food with the congregation.

And the Pastor began to share what the Lord gave him. The parable of the Sower was expounded. Those by the way side are they that hear; then cometh the Devil, and taketh away the word out of their hearts, lest they should believe and be saved. . . ." ("Well, that's not me," I thought.)

"They on the rock are they, which, when they hear, receive the word with joy; and these have no root, which, for a while believe, and in time of temptation fall away" ("Well,

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maybe, but that's is still not me," I thought, "for I haven't fallen away!")

"And that which fell among thorns are they, which, when they have heard, go forth, and are choked with cares and riches and pleasures of this life, and bring no fruit to perfection. " ("That kind of hits the mark," I thought. I wondered.)

"But that on the good ground are they, which in an honest and good heart, having heard the word, keep it, and bring forth fruit with patience....." ("That's me!" I thought, lest I thought I was doing the thinking alone.)

"Hm, that's a kick and a half, I have not been to Church, I have been carrying on in the world, I have fallen away and I have the nerve to put me in the "bring forth fruit with patience!"

That thought came through my mind as it coming from my own self. It was kind of funny, because I was sure that regardless of the circumstances that's where I belonged, in the "bring forth fruit with patience."

I didn't realize it was not my own thinking that I was doing but it was how the Holy Spirit was comforting and encouraging me in my mind.

In the other hand the Devil was using all his vile accusations to discourage and do me under!

The sermon continued, expounding the key words in that parable. I collected the gem of the knowledge that I, rotten as I was, had received the word in the soil of an honest and good heart.

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And my soul sang, `put on the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness, lift your voice to God, pray with the spirit and with the understanding, Oh, magnify The Lord!"

Then I started attending early morning prayer meetings because on Sunday the Pastor announced that there was a prayer meeting at 6:30am for anyone that cared to join.

"It is time that you start praying for others," The Lord told me shortly after that announcement.

"OKAY." I said, "It will be no trouble at all. Instead of praying at 5:30 and getting dressed and ready for work at 6:30 I'll reverse it! And I'll go to work from the prayer meeting."

So, one morning I walked in Church, and joined the praying already in progress. They never said much except for handing me a prayer guide, and I went to it with all my heart. From there on I was faithful to that prayer meeting.

There was a powerful anointing in that meeting, even though that it was only a handful of believers that were faithful to it.

One knew that the presence of Lord was there, and we interceded for every body and every circumstance that the Holy Spirit would bring to our remembrance.

And to close the prayer meeting we used to bind the strong man of the North, South, West and East, one at a time.

With the anointing of the Holy Spirit, I know that the cohorts of hell were bound and powerless, I know that, that handful of believers gave Satan what he deserves, and I was blessed to have been part of it for a while.

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The morning of the earthquake in Mexico, as we bound the strong man of the South, the people that I know from Mexico kept flashing through my mind, and I bound the enemy and interceded for them in the spirit, not knowing anything about what was happening.

Two hours later, at my office, I found out about the tragedy. It was a blessing that none of them were hurt, and when I heard the good news and I cried about it nobody understood why. Glory be to God.

Then another morning, I was praying in the Spirit, interceding I knew not about who or what, and these words came out from me, Lord, get Diana and Michael a job. And I continued interceding.

I did not know that Diana and Michael were looking for a job just that day, but that night, about 10pm, Diana called and said, "Guess what!" I said, "What".

And she said, "Michael and I got a job today!" I said, "Praise The Lord! That's what I pray for this morning. It works! That praying in the Spirit, as the Holy Spirit gives the utterance, it works. Alleluia!"

Chapter 3

A HEAVENLY WHIPPING

This chapter is about the end of the darkest period of Thia's life and the trip to Vegas. Such trip was the heavenly whipping that caught her attention!

A long time ago the Scriptures were written for us nowadays. And under the leading of the Holy Spirit we are supposed to learn, apply, and experience the Scriptures in our lives. For the incidents that occurred to each individual in the Bible are real. And those incidents were written for an example to us.

"Alas!" sighs Thia, "I did not allow the Holy Spirit to lead me. And I had read the following Scriptures under my own leading many of times; but, I never did think to apply them to myself. I thought those Scriptures were about something to be applied only to Peter or any of the old time people. I did not think that the Scriptures written in the Psalms or about Peter or about anybody else in those days applied to myself nowadays, but they do! If only I would have put my name instead of Simon Peter or anybody else it would have been perfectly valid. Alas, I didn't, therefore, I suffered in ignorance." For it is written,

Luke 22:31-34 (AMP.)

31 Simon, Simon (Peter), listen! Satan has asked excessively that (all of) you be given up to him— out of the power and keeping of God— that he

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might sift (all of) you like grain, (Job 1:6-12; Amos 9:9)

32 But I have prayed especially for you (Peter) that your (own) faith may not fail; and when you yourself have turned again, strengthen and establish your brethren.

33 And (Simon Peter) said to Him, Lord, I am ready to go with You both to prison and to death.

34 But Jesus said, I tell you, Peter, before a (single) cock shall crow this day, you will three times (utterly) deny that you know Me.

Psalms 109:30,31 (LBV)

30 But I will give repeated thanks to the Lord, praising him to everyone. 31 For he stands beside the poor and hungry to save them from their enemies.

Psalms 110:1. (LBV)

JEHOVAH SAID to my Lord the Messiah, "Rule as my regent—I will subdue your enemies and make them bow low before you"

But Thia was totally in the dark that such Scriptures applied also to herself, and she suffered a period of utter darkness in ignorance of her Savior's faithfulness to pray and to stand by to save her. And Thia was ignorant also of her Savior's power to subdue and to make bow low before Him the enemies of fear and confusion which were Thia's enemies.

Anyhow, in 1974 Thia had a mental breakdown. She fell into the trap of her enemies of fear and confusion and she was taken to the mental ward and given a dose of Terrazin that made her lose her mind for three days. During the three days when she lost her

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mind she had several visions and in those visions she had seen then, in 1974, everything that was happening to her now, in 1983. And among those things happening to her now was the end of her second marriage which was the most exhilaratingly and emotionally violent decade of her life and the beginning of a relationship with a gentleman called "Mr. Coo."

At that time, in 1974, she did not even have an inkling that this gentleman, Mr. Coo, existed. Therefore, in her visions that year of 1974, she mistook him for her second husband at an older age, because at that period of time her second husband happened to have an striking resemblance to Mr. Coo. But the man in her vision was not her husband at all, for in her vision she foresaw Mr. Coo as she found out at the appointed time of her life.

In her visions she also foresaw the trip to Vegas which she was about to undertake. It was now 1983 and by then she had divorced from her second husband and she had forgotten all about those visions. Though that for a while after the breakdown she tried to figure out what she had seen, by 1983 she had given up trying to decipher what she foresaw in 1974, and she didn't even think about it anymore.

Yet, nearing the end of that period of utter darkness and despair which she foresaw in 1974, and around the middle of 1983 when the roof cave in and she ran, she came to understand all those things that she had seen during those three days in which she had lost her mind back in 1974.

For the roof of her world's castle began to cave in around July of 1983 and she panicked and ran about two months later, when she realized that her whole castle was tumbling down around October of 1983.

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To begin with, her youngest daughter and her son-in-law were supposed to buy Thia's house because Thia could not meet the mortgage payments.

Thia was very glad when the loan was approved for them to buy the house—around July.

But, to Thia's utter disbelief, her son-in-law backed off the deal, and Thia was caught with three mortgage payments behind. Such was the first stage of the cave in!

At the time Thia was working for a pittance in Mr. Coe's neighborhood bar. But in a desperate attempt to make money to catch up with the mortgage payments she switched work to a barroom that offered her more money. Then she went back to work her Real Estate License plus she got a part-time job in a fabric store.

For Thia was desperately trying to make money not only to pay her mortgage payments but also for her car payments as well because she was also late with those; but, it was too late. There was no way to catch up with so much back-up. She was running herself to insanity and in vain.

And so, around the end of September or perhaps October of 1983 Thia decided to get roommates and work hard on Real Estate to make enough money to take care of the mortgage and the car payment with out losing her sanity. So, she quit the barroom altogether and the part-time job at the fabric store to dedicate herself to Real Estate completely.

However, to Thia's utter shock, when she came in that day to the Real Estate Company with all her eggs in that one basket, determined and resolved to make money, her Real Estate Manager called her to the office and squoosh! every one of those freshly laid eggs. Thia was told to hang it up for Real Estate was not

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productive for her or for them because of Thia's emotional situation. Thia was told that it was best that she would remove her license from the active list.

Such was the second and final stage to the cave in! Thia was shocked to numbness. Later on she confided, "I have no recollection as to what I did at that immediate moment. But afterwards, for a little while, I refused to give up. I purposed in my heart to run a good distance to make a lot of money, and from far away, rebuild my house, rebuild my life!..."

Thia decided to run to Vegas to make money in the casinos! "Oh! God!" Thia was to confess much later in her life's pilgrimage, "I can see now how I ran in a hoof of rebellion, determined to out will even God Himself! The will to survive was driving me hard but I was totally blind and oblivious to that fact!"

And God, in His infinite mercy and wisdom, just watched Thia run. About those times Thia says, "It seems like God just stood there, just like I had seen Him in the visions of those three days in 1974, as a Mighty and Powerful Giant with His arms cross around His chest, and His feet planted firmly on the ground!"

In Thia's vision of God in 1974 God stood up, just waiting for Thia to wear out and come to the end of Thia's carnal affairs and willful ways. The sad irony was that Thia's conception of God at the time of those visions, was a conception of power and power only, she never saw the tears of the loving Father through the prophet saying,

17 Do you still refuse to listen? Then in loneliness my breaking heart shall mourn because of your pride. My eyes will overflow with tears because the Lord's flock shall be carried away as slaves. Jeremiah 13:17.(LBV)

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Thia didn't think about love at all. As far back as Thia could remember Thia had one thing in mind and that was power! Mind and will power that is! Love didn't enter into Thia's mind unless... one deserved to be loved because of one's excellent ways.

Well, as things developed just about that time, right before Thia took off for Vegas, Mr. Coo's wife died and Thia was exhorted to go and give to Mr. Coo her condolences. Mr. Coo was Thia's former employer. (Coo is not his legal name but Coo he was called from childhood on up and everybody in the business called him Coo or Mr. Coo.)

Now, Mr. Coo has always been a well liked and respectable senior citizen with a heart of gold. And, of course, everybody knew how ill his wife had been for the past year or so, and it was common knowledge how much Mr. Coo loved his wife, how devoted he was to her and how well he took care of her. Thia, personally, admired Mr. Coo greatly for that reason, and Thia longed, in many occasion, to have a husband like him.

Nevertheless, it never occurred to Thia to make any advances to Mr. Coo. Besides, Mr. Coo was so preoccupied with his wife that, for a while, when Thia had started working at his place only a few months back, Mr. Coo did not even know that Thia was working for him for Thia was hired by one of Mr. Coo's regular workers who didn't feel like working for a while and who didn't want to disturb Mr. Coo with her resignation. Then, when Mr. Coo realized that Thia was working for him, he was outwardly spiteful to Thia.

Also, to top Mr. Coo's spitefulness, Thia was only working for him for a pittance in comparison with what she needed to earn. So, when Thia decided to attempt to make enough money to meet the mortgage payments, she went to work for somebody else. In

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fact, at the time of his wife's death, Thia was still working for one of Mr. Coo's competitors and she had no intentions to go and offer any condolences to Mr. Coo at all. But a common friend of Thia and Mr. Coo insisted that Thia should go, and Thia went. Because, at that time Thia was intoxicated most of the time, and Thia did things just to keep her from doing nothing.

Shortly after Mr. Coo's wife was buried Thia had quit all her jobs, the one at Mr. Coo's competitor and the one at the fabric store. And since she felt rejected by the Real Estate industry, she was on her way to Vegas—to the land of shattered fortunes and dreams.

But Thia was determined to make her own way. Yes, her car was packed and she was on her way to Vegas. Yet, I guess like a zombie she went to give her condolences to Mr. Coo, and she wound up giving a date to Mr. Coo.

Well, that date set her trip back for about a week or two for Mr. Coo took a liking to Thia and felt sorry for her. And the day when Thia decided to take off, Mr. Coo begged her not to go, but she had made up her mind, and she took off anyhow. For she was determined to rebuild her own life without anybody's help, most specially without the help from a man.

Even though she didn't want his help, Mr. Coo offered it and he told her to call him during her trip and let him know how she was getting along.

On her way to Vegas she stopped to visit her first Bible teacher, Jean, whom she had known and trusted for several years. Jean tried desperately to stop Thia from going to Vegas, even reminding Thia what the Bible says about follies and such. But in this period of her life, almost a whole year during which period she have been intoxicated most of the time, it did not occurred to Thia that God was not with her.

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As far as Thia was concerned God was closer to her than He was to most regular Christians, and she felt justified following her own inclinations for she did not trust any Christian, except for Jean. In spite of Thia's condition, Jean did not give up on Thia. She was unable to convince Thia about the trouble ahead, but she did not reject Thia, nor did she quit showing love and friendship for her.

Regardless of Jean's objections Thia continued on her journey though. She stopped to call Mr. Coe in Houston, and after she talked to him, and learned that he really wanted her to come back, she felt somehow weak about continuing the trip. So, she went in the lounge of the hotel from where she had made the call to Mr. Coe and she had one drink.

She finished that one drink and with doubtful feelings she got in the car and started on her way again only to take the wrong route. On top of that the highway patrol stopped her because she was speeding and wobbling. They accused her of drinking and searched her car for the alcohol. She was not totally innocent, but, "My goodness!" she said, "I am not carrying alcohol in the car!" (not this time anyhow).

Thia was horribly embarrassed for they took her in to take the alcohol test! Fortunately, she passed the test and did not go to jail. "Oh the beasts!" she thought to herself, "Why don't they go to do some kind of useful work like defending the battered woman and the abused children instead of relishing their wicked selves and harassing poor souls like me!" For Thia was still ignorant of the Holy Scriptures. She did not know the Scriptures written by the apostle Peter under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit which say,

13 For The Lord's sake, OBEY every law of your government: those of the king as head of the state,

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14 and those of the king's officers, for he has sent them to PUNISH ALL who do wrong, and to honor those who do right. I Peter 2:13,14. (LBV)

So, grumbling and complaining against the patrolmen she continued on with renewed determination and by night fall she arrived at what she thought to be Vegas, Nevada, her destination. But, to her utter consternation she had arrived at Vegas, New Mexico!

It was late at night when she arrived at Vegas, New Mexico, so, she found a place to park and slept in her car. The next day she took off again and finally made it to Vegas, Nevada. By this time she was scared, discouraged and flat broke. In her despair, she called Mr. Coo and asked him to lend her some money to come back to New Orleans. Immediately, Mr. Coo wired the necessary money for Thia to come back.

Thia picked up the money at the Western Union station and then she decided to check in at a hotel to freshen up, catch up with some sleep. She figured that she could then start on the way back the following day. But once she was settled in the hotel she figured that as long as she was there she might as well do what she came there to do anyhow, and that was, to look for a job in the casinos. Thia figured she could investigate the job market, perhaps secure a job, go back to New Orleans and pack things up, and then come back to live in Vegas to make piles of money.

The Lord, in His infinite mercy, provided two young men who were staying at the hotel, for Thia to be escorted in the hunt for a job. That night they went from casino to casino. These young men wise Thia up on things to watch out for. "Prostitution is legal in this part of town and it is common for black pimps to solicit white woman." They informed Thia. It was appalling to her but she had re-determined to hunt for a job, so the hunt continued.

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They found out that you have to join the union in order to work in most casinos. So, Thia decided to get all the information about the union and find out what would cost to join it. She figured she could do all of that early in the morning the very next day and start out to New Orleans in the afternoon. She filled up her car with gasoline. And they all returned to the hotel and retired to their respective rooms.

Early in the morning the next day she loaded her car. The young men drew her a map to hunt for the Union building. She gave them a ride to their work, and she started out on her way to the Union office. It was too early for any offices to be opened. She decided to go in one of the casinos to eat breakfast, and wait for the offices to open.

On her way to the food counter she figured that there was no harm in playing \$5.00 in the slot machine. "Perhaps I could win some money to pay Mr. Coe for the loan." She thought as she stuck a quarter in one of the machines. Automatically, she stuck another quarter. The machine fed her back a few quarters. She stuck those quarters back. The machine gave her a good win.

So, she began to stick one quarter after another, and another, and another, and another, and another . . . `till, there was not even one more quarter left. That was some thirteen hours later after she had won and lost better than \$1000.00 including every penny that Mr. Coe had kindly wired her for her return to New Orleans!

As Thia relates her story she says, "There was another lady next to me doing the same thing which I was doing. There was a continual pulling of that handle without ceasing.

"We never took a break. I never ate breakfast, or lunch, or supper. My hands were sore from all that pulling and black from the dirt in the handle.

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"Never once did I think about the time, in fact I didn't think of anything at all. I was fascinated with that machine. The ringing of all those quarters in every win was like a charm that hypnotized me into a compulsion that I had never experienced before.

"It was exhilarating, and exciting, and fun! I laughed, and laughed, and laughed so much that my stomach muscles were as sore as my hands.

"And when the last quarter was gone I still laughed for I did not realize what I had done `till I stepped outside. It was night time. The twinkling lights of every casino in that strip were twinkling with incredible mischievousness. The night was dark as a background for the myriad of twinkling mischievous little lights . . .

"And then, suddenly! The laugh died within me! The monstrous reality rose in front of me and I gasped in panic! In a brief moment the spectrum of 1974 flashed in front of me and I realized that what I saw back in 1974 in those days that I was out of my mind in a Terrazin trip was exactly what I was going through at that very moment.

"And, at that very instant, I realized also that the man that I saw in those visions, the man who I thought to be my husband at an older age, that man was not my husband at all. That man that I saw then was none other but Mr. Coe, my new friend.

"I was just about 2,000 miles away from home without a nickel in my pocket for I gambled even my last quarter and, I was completely alone! For I had betrayed every relationship in my life even to my new friend Mr. Coe.

"I stood there. For a brief moment I was simply petrified. And then, I began to walk. My feet were heavy, and my whole body felt like giving in under a heavy load. I made my way to the auto-

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mobile. I unlocked the door got in and just sat there behind the steering wheel.

"My panic gave way to numbness. I was numb. I could not think about anything or feel any emotions. I just sat there. After a while, my reasoning power returned somehow and I thought, 'Now, what to do? Perhaps a phone call if only I had a quarter!...'

"It was then when I saw the change in my cup holder by the driver's seat. I scooped it all up and counted it. All of a sudden I perked up a bit for I had 98 cents! I was not completely broke after all. 'Miracle of miracles...' I thought, 'God must still be with me. I can make it!'

"I started the car and began to drive away. But just before I got out of the parking lot there was a black man waving his hand. I thought that he was some kind of parking lot attendant or a valet or something like that. Therefore, I stopped.

"The man came over to my car, and I rolled down my window to find out what was the matter. The man bend over to my car window and said, 'Are you going to your hotel, sugar?...'

"Quickly I remembered how those two young men had warned me about black pimps, so, I rolled up my window and sped up my car. My heart began to beat fast, I remembered everything and forgot everything at the same time!

"It was a vivid recollection of how I felt in 1974 right before I woke up from that 3 day Terrazin trip in which I had embarked at the time they committed me to the mental ward when I had the mental breakdown.

"It was a vivid recollection of how I felt then when I ran to my Heavenly Father and said, 'I don't ever want to be separated from

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You again.' And at that moment I became aware of what it was that I had run from scared stiff out of my bones in my visions of 1974.

"It was at that moment when I found out the awfulness which I couldn't remember when I woke up from that awful Terrazin trip in 1974. It was such awfulness which I had given up even trying to think about any longer.

"I sped out of the parking lot and I drove like crazy. Then, gradually, I slowed down and began to regain some composure. I figured, 'Late as it is I better find me a place where I can rest.'

"And as I tried to figure out where to go or where to stay I realized that I hardly had enough money to pay for a hotel, 'Ninety eight cents!' I sighed.

"Sleeping in the car was not new to me but now, I was scared out of my wits! I remembered the two young men at the hotel, but, I was lost and had no idea how to get to the hotel.

"And from the depth of my being I uttered a prayer, 'Oh God, let me find that hotel! And let me remember what was the room number for those two young men. I have no other alternative but those two, Oh my God!'

"As I uttered that prayer I turned the corner and there, sticking right up above the other signs, was the sign for the hotel. I cried. I drove in the hotel's parking lot and went straight to the room and knocked on the door. The young men were already asleep, but they woke up, and urged me to come in. 'Don't worry,' they said. 'It happens to most everybody that comes to Vegas in search of fortune. We are stuck, too, we had to hack our car and that's why we are working to redeem it. But we have learned our les-

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son and as soon as we can redeem the car we are getting out of here. There is plenty work here, you are going to be alright.'

"'I believe so,' I said, 'but the first thing that I am going to do tomorrow is to go to that Church I saw in the Strip. I know that I must get to a Church before I do anything else.'

"They offered me a bed to sleep but I chose to sleep in my sleeping bag. Thank God that I had a roof over my head I didn't need a bed.

"The next day, after the farewells and good wishes, I made way to the Church of the Strip. God truly is a God of mercy. 'I need help.' I said when I walked in. 'I am a Christian and I have fallen, I am flat broke, I am from New Orleans, and I don't know a soul in this town. I have not eaten in three days and I have lost all my money in the casinos.'

"Not too many more words were spoken. But, within five minutes, the young lady—the one who greeted me when I walked in—said, 'First things first. The first thing that we must do is to feed you and then we can clear our heads to figure out what to do.'

"She brought me to the restaurant across the street and fed me. Next she told me to relax and have some quiet time with the Lord before we decided on what to do.

"'I could easily look for a temporary job to make money to go back to New Orleans.' I said when the time came.

"'Could you call on friends? Perhaps you could raise the money through some friends. Do you have any friends that you could call on?' She suggested. For she was not sure that I should stay there at all.

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"I have a lot of friends but I have betrayed them all and I don't think any body would want to help me! I said in hopeless despair.

"You would be surprised how friends can respond,' she said, 'use the phone and call. Do you recall any numbers?'

"I need to call Mr. Coo,' I said, 'but there is no way that I am going to ask him for any more money, I'll die first!' I picked up the phone, and I dialed Mr. Coo's number.

"I am coming back towards the end of the week, I ran into some problems and I am staying a little longer.' I said with a quick tone of voice to Mr. Coo.

"What happened with the money I sent you? Never mind! Don't tell me!' He said like a wise old owl. Then after a pause he shouted at me, 'I would like to send you some more money; but, I want you to get your butt right out of there now! not later. Do you have any money left to get out of there?'

"For an answer I said 'Just a minute, hold on for a minute. And I whispered to the young lady, 'Where is the next big town on the way to New Orleans?' Quickly, she consulted a map in the wall. 'Phoenix,' she whispered back. 'How far?' I whispered again, trying to figure out how far my tank full of gas would carry me. 'About 300 miles,' she whispered.

"And back on the phone I said to Mr. Coo, 'Yeah, I can get out of here right now. I have a tank full of gas and I can get as far as Phoenix.' But I was unaware that I was giving myself out.

"God Almighty! A tank full of gas! You lost all the money,' he said with resignation. Then he said, 'As soon as you get to Phoenix, call me. Make sure that you get out of there right away, you understand me?'

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"I hung up the phone and the young lady was already opening a cash box. She handed me \$27.00 and a box of Kleenex. I said, 'God bless you.' And walked to my car. I sat behind the steering wheel once again but this time I wasn't numb in my mind or emotions; but, once again I wanted to run and run fast like I did in my visions. I wanted to take refuge right into my Heavenly Father's arms.

"I cried, and cried, and cried all the way from that spot in Vegas, Nevada, to New Orleans, Louisiana. If there ever was a time that I wished for wings this was that time.

"Only problem was that instead of running to my Heavenly Father I was running to Mr. Coe. For the Scriptures read,
'So don't be afraid, O Jacob my servant; don't be dismayed, O Israel; for I will bring you home again from distant lands, and your children from their exile. They shall have rest and quiet in their own land, and no one shall make them afraid. For I am with you and I will save you, says The Lord. Even if I utterly destroy the nations where I scatter you, I WILL NOT EXTERMINATE YOU; I WILL PUNISH YOU, YES- YOU WILL NOT GO UNPUNISHED. Jeremiah 30:10-11' (LBV.
My own capitalizing.)

"But I didn't know the Scriptures. Anyhow by the time I arrived at New Orleans I had died a thousand deaths and I had made just as many resolutions.

"At one point in the road I got lost and wound up in a desert road. It was a rainy and dreary day and I had no idea of where was I or how to get out of there.

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"I kept driving though I was scared out of my wits and with only the vultures for company. There was not a single soul driving on that dessert road for miles and miles.

"I cried to the Lord, I said, `Lord, if I die over here, the vultures are going to get me before anybody can find me! Please God, get me out of here! I'll never go away from You again.' And before I knew it, I was back in the main highway.

"It seems to me now, as I look back, that it rained almost all the way from Vegas to New Orleans. It was a dreadful and long ride, the kind that one never wants to take again.

"That trip was, truly, the heavenly whipping that got my attention and delivered me from Satan's open territory. But I still did not learn my lesson.

"For I did not perceive the knowledge of God, the knowledge of the corruption of the flesh, and the knowledge of the way of the cross by faith.

"Although I changed my direction, I still turned towards the wrong way. And instead of going to Church for help, I went to my psychiatrist. Instead of drawing nigh to God's world, I drew nigh to Mr. Coe's world.

"I drew to Mr. Coe's world which is the way of the moral and good world, the good life of the world. But still, the world.

"Therefore, my mind remained in the stronghold of the enemy for a couple more years. For the Scriptures says,

My people perishes for lack of knowledge. My people are destroyed because they don't know me, and it is all your fault, you priests, for you yourselves refuse to know me; therefore I refuse to

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recognize you as my priests. Since you have forgotten my laws, I will "forget" to bless your children. Hosea 4:6(LBV).

"For a couple of years I lived a mixed life. For when I came back from Vegas I gave up the struggle to make a go of a life of financial success. I humbled myself and gave up all my pretensions. I turned in my car and my house. And I made up my mind to work and to live according to my means. I started to look for work other than barmaid's work because whether good or bad or whether I or anybody approves or disapproves of it, in reality barmaid's work and everything included to make a barroom business prosperous is against God's commandments period.

"I also started to look for an affordable place to live. But I was unable to find either work or a place to live. I could not find work for lack of self-esteem. And I could not find a place to live because of lack of work.

"I was like a "whipped dog" in the outskirts of Satan's open territory, rather than a welcomed "prodigal child" in my Father's house. I needed help and I realized that I could not make it alone.

"And in ignorance on how to get help from God I compromised all my Christian principles and I began to live a mixed life.

"To begin with I went to the Mental Health Center and turned myself in to receive assistance to acquire some skill to enable me to earn a living other than barmaid's work. But since I needed money right away and I couldn't find work I compromised and started to work at Mr. Coe's barroom again.

"Of course, at the Mental Health Center I was diagnosed as disabled to work because of emotional problems and referred to the Rehabilitation Center for job training.

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"But my emotional disability required much more than just job training. For I was far more disturbed than I, myself, had ever thought to be. And so, because of the severity of my emotional disability, when I was supposed to be learning a skill just to earn my living, I actually wanted to accomplish many unrealistic goals based on mere dreams and illusions of grandeur, which dreams were only a perversion of my true God given gifts and abilities.

"And from the false and shallow ground of unrealistic dreams, I began to read all kinds of self-improvement literature to begin with the struggle and arduous task to improve myself. I even attempted to practice mind control.

"For I wanted to improve myself to supersede in whatever I did merely for the sake of my ultimate glory. Such was the thriving pride and vanity in my carnal self!

"Socially and morally my views were very liberal. As long as I was discreet I felt that I could do whatever I wanted to do.

"Spiritually, I was reaching out to God only for my own gain and comfort. Thus, I was living a mixed life. A life of compromise.

"It was a very shallow life. I was still in the grip of Satan. Only now I was deceived into a self-improved life. A life fairly enviable. A life of liberal morals.

"A life of respectability, yet, with the comfort of a lover-friend; but, without the responsibility of a husband. With all the fringe benefits of compromise; but, without the responsibility of commitment.

"I had the world in front of me just mine for the asking. And no one could understand why I was still so miserable and gloomy

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and unable to grab on to that world. Why I could not go along like everybody else and settle down.

"Settle down to be Mr. Coe's lady friend and enjoyed it. Settle down to a productive life in a lucrative career. Settle down on the climbing ladder of materialistic success at any cost!

"Why, why, why!" I would wonder to my own self. And I cried and I searched. I did this and I did that. I would talk about this great hoped for break through today and tomorrow I would be talking about a greater one yet to be realized. For I was swimming in the great pond of secular humanism philosophy.

"I was living well in a mixed life of liberal morals and idealistic humanitarian principles. That was a period of my life from the Vegas return around the end of October and beginning of November of 1983 to the 13th day of October 1985 when I had the second breakdown. Appropriately the Scriptures read,

For your sin is an incurable bruise, a terrible wound.
There is no one to help you or to bind up your wound and no medicine does any good. All your lovers have left you and don't care anything about you any more; for I have wounded you cruelly, as though I were your enemy; mercilessly, as though I were an implacable foe; for your sins are so many, your guilt is so great." Jeremiah 30:12-14(LBV.)

Establishing and strengthening the souls and the hearts of the disciples, urging and warning and encouraging them to stand firm in the faith, and telling them that it is through MANY HARD-SHIPS AND TRIBULATIONS WE MUST ENTER THE KINGDOM OF GOD. Acts 14:22 (LBV.)

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"Yes, the wound in my flesh under the dictates of my carnal self was incurable because my flesh was not to profit anything to give life to my carnal self.

"For God was not interested in making my flesh good under the dictates of my carnal self. God's sole and only interest was in making me realize that I was no good and to cause me to lift up my eyes to Him and see and receive Jesus Christ by faith.

"By faith means to trust in God and His Word made flesh in Jesus Christ which is God's merciful provision to free us from our wicked carnal self.

"God's purpose was to convict me and bring me to accept the fact that He did the work of crucifixion or ending the life of my flesh on the cross in Jesus Christ. To that end I suffered the punishment so deserved because of my pride and stubborn UNBELIEF.

"That trip to Vegas was indeed the heavenly whipping that caught my attention. But it was not until the morning of the twentieth day of June in 1985 when the Lord touched me and began to break my stubborn ways to restore me into His kingdom. It was then when I began to receive and to hear, to perceive and to heed the voice of my God.

"Nevertheless, this was so after much tribulation. For I did not go unpunished because of the greatness of my pride and stubbornness. And as it is written we must suffer the consequences of our sins. But my true deliverance was on the way, for so it was written.

"But I did not know what was written and during the first two weeks of October of 1985 I began to suffer the destruction and loss which I had to suffer. But it is written,

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But in that coming day, all who are destroying you shall be destroyed, and all your enemies shall be slaves. Those who rob you shall be robbed; and those attacking you shall be attacked. I will give you back your health again and heal your wounds. Now you are called "The Outcast" and "Jerusalem, the Place Nobody Wants" But, says the Lord, when I bring you home again from your captivity and restore your fortunes, Jerusalem will be rebuilt upon her ruins; the palace will be reconstructed as it was before. The cities will be filled with joy and great thanksgiving, and I will multiply my people and make of them a great and honored nation. Jeremiah 30:16-19 (LBV.)

"I was to suffer a child of God's agony in the grip of Satan. That suffering was to be the beginning of my end and it began on October 13, 1985 when I lost my mind for the second time. But also I was to experience the love of a loving Father that never leaves us nor forsakes us. The Abba Father.

"I was to suffer in the grip of Satan and I was to experience the love of God because with my mind I gave up my job and everything else which I thought could hinder me in my walk with God.

"But God was not calling me to leave my job and everything else which I thought could hinder me in my walk with Him. Such was not the will of God for me. God was calling me to rest in Him. But it took a whole year before I would turn around and hear my Father calling me into His rest. A whole year before I would begin to learn what it meant to rest and rely on God alone.

"A whole year to abandon my wicked and self-righteous ways and put my whole confidence and trust in God and His plan of

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salvation for me and for the whole world, through Jesus Christ
God's only-begotten Son."

Chapter 4

On my carnal walk with the Master

First warned to avoid the belly of the whale but on a ship to Tarshish like Jonah I was running away from Godly responsibilities when mental breakdown stormed in!

Besides writing, in the midst of my frenzy to react to all of the wonderful changes that were going on within me, and in the pursuit to get money to buy additional equipment for the computer, I enrolled in Delgado Community College. How and why did I come to enroll at Delgado Community College?

Well, nothing extraordinary was happening anymore after I settled down from my trip to Vegas and the recent trip I had made to Wilmington, N.C. and the computer incident and all the other incidents up to that moment which made up the previous chapter.

Nothing extraordinary, just little things. Like the day that I was driving and thinking how great it would have been if only I had the right program in my computer to do secretarial work at home. I was not happy at work at all, the pressure was getting to me and I wanted to work for myself so much it hurt. But I needed an additional chunk of money for more equipment in my computer in order to do the work I wanted to do.

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Then, while I was driving one afternoon, something told me, "Go to Delgado." "That is not a bad idea if only I could." I answered. "Go see." I was told. I went to the office and called Delgado. I had the opportunity to talk to the kindest and most polite of the financial aid counselors, and to my surprise I still qualified for financial aid.

"Great! that's a blessing for sure," I said to myself, "now I will be able to buy the equipment for my computer, and in no time at all I shall be a success!" I filled out all the required papers and I had to submit for the entrance test. I was sure I was not going to run into any problems there, I figured, "I'll make it to at least the first course in creative writing, and the first math." But, to my chagrin, the day I came to get my results and to register, I found out that I barely made it to the remedial non-credit course of English.

"Well!" I thought, "I'll never tell anybody, I just keep my mouth shut about it, and they'll never know." Oh, I was so mortified about it! But, I didn't stay mortified too long. Soon classes started and I found out it was for my benefit, for a more knowledgeable and kinder instructor I could not have found in the whole institution, and even though it was a course to strengthen our grammatical construction, we had the opportunity to do a lot of creative writing, I was enchanted! It was sad that I had to drop out so unexpectedly as things developed.

I had enrolled at Delgado Community College with the purpose of working on a degree in Business Studies, not necessarily English or Creative Writing. For I was planning a lot of things for a successful life in general, however, my ultimate goal was the pursuit of a writing career.

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Only problem was that I was doing all my plans according to my own independent will and my own figuring, following voices that would agree with my carnal desires. The Lord had other plans for me. His concern was not my education and the improving of my flesh but the shaping of my inner man and the breaking of my outer man --my carnal self.

But, I was still utterly ignorant of the knowledge of the fullness of God. Even though it was a wasted effort as far as material success goes, I did somehow benefit from that experience, for I had the opportunity to meet some beautiful people, for the Lord is faithful to bless us even when we are most obstinate.

Also I had been admitted to the Writers' Institute of America and I was now enrolled. I had been working feverishly on my lessons and I was bursting with enthusiasm. I had no trouble grasping the essence of the subject matter. With facility I worked my writing I wrote that morning in June into an outline of what I wanted to do with it and submitted it for criticism.

It was exciting to receive my outline corrected and to read the comments from my instructor. She mentioned interest in the finished product! A gem of encouragement to me.

Unfortunately, as things developed I was unable to continue with the course, and that was the first and the only outline that I submitted, because shortly after, for circumstances beyond my control, I discontinued my lessons.

One thing was sure, I was bubbling with gratitude and love for everybody. I had finished the Clerk-typist/Word Processor program at Vo-Tech and I had collected some magnificent gems

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from my two instructors. Full of gratitude I wrote them a letter.

"Dear Mrs. & Mrs..... " my unending writing efforts continued, "Thank you for the wonderful gems of your care and understanding that you bestowed upon me, during the duration of the course and afterwards. You both have been as two trees along my pathway loaded with gems. The gems of your care hang from the branches of your understanding heart, with the brilliance of a shining light that lights the path of lost travelers, like I was at the time. Because you cared I was so fortunate to collect some of those gems, not only to enrich the repertoire of my mind but also to embalm the wounds in my heart. My gratitude for both of you shall be a lasting one. God bless you. Jesus loves you and so do I!"

I had taken that course through the assistance of the Man Power Program. The purpose of that program is to enable citizens to fulfill their working capacity to become useful citizens independent of welfare. I had finished the course and I had been enabled to work.

I secured a position with a small company dealing with oil and marine supplies. It was a modest company but I was entrusted and trained like the best, even when my emotional abilities were not up to that position for I was emotional incapable to hold any such position. As it turned out that was to be my last full time employment.

For I did not expect any of the events that later on developed, because with the encouragement from my instructors, the understanding from my boss, and the moral support from my Honey, I was carrying my own weight. But I quit that company because I was intimidated by those events which unexpect-

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edly developed and which I later on in this writing shall reveal.

Nevertheless, the Master was working and in His infinite wisdom and Master mind, my life was under His direction and all trials and tribulations that came my way were part of His Master Plan.

I kept a journal for a while, which was significant in the events that were about to happen. In my computer I began to record this journal on August 28/85. That day I wrote me some reminders of who am I in Jesus Christ to repeat every day. (Please take note this is not the way to live the Christian life, but in ignorance I was trying hard to live that life by my own power, by the power of my memory because I did not know yet what it really was to trust Jesus.)

On September 1/85, all I wrote was, Oh my Lord and my God!

September 3/85, You alone are my God and my Lord and in You do I put my trust. To You my Lord I yield my spirit, soul and body, do unto me as it is Your will. Thank You Lord that You made me willing to turn to You. Thank You Lord that You showed me my sin and caused me to repent. Thank You Lord that You made provision with Your blood to take away my sin. Thank You Lord for taking me to the Cross with You, and delivering me from my self. Thank You Lord that you made provision to deliver my mind from the grip of Satan. Thank You Lord for Your bountiful blessings.

September 5/85, As I walk in the Promise Land of the Born Again, I surrender willingly to my Lord. These words are easier said than done. With pride I have shouted those words and in good faith I thought that I was doing just that.

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Then my blessed Lord stepped in and in gentleness said, "Thia, Thia, Satan has desire to have you, to sift you; but I have prayed for you that when you come back, you will strengthen the brethren."

And I said, "Lord, I have been reading Your Word and I know better, I am wise to the wiles of Satan and I am ready for You to send me anywhere and do anything, I'll never fall!"

Monday/September 9, 1985, Somewhere around 2 am the Lord woke me up. I was wide awake and opened to His Spirit. I went to the BOOK. I was praying in the Spirit, and the Spirit was making intercession for me.

Then in the Spirit I bound and restrained the Spirit of Deception from troubling me. I proceeded to immerse my mind in the Pond of the Book and I absorbed the following Gems in the Scriptures, (at least I thought I had! Because I was applying myself to the best of my ability.)

But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. 1 Co 15:57. For all the promises of God in him are yea, and in him Amen, unto the glory of God by us. 2 Co 1:20.

Wherefore thou art no more a servant, but a son; and if a son, then an heir of God through Christ. Ga. 4:7.

But now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ. For he is our peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us; Having abolished in his flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments contained in ordinances; for to make in

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himself of twain one new man, so making peace; And that he might reconcile both unto God in one body by the cross, having slain the enmity thereby: And came and preached peace to which were afar off, and to them that were nigh. For through him we both have access by one Spirit unto the Father. Eph. 2:13-18.

In whom we have boldness and access with confidence by the faith of Him. Eph. 3:12.

And be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you. Eph. 4:32.

Giving thanks always for all things unto God and the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. Eph. 5:20.

Whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by Him. Col. 3:17.

I exhort therefore, that, first of all, supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks, be made for all men; For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Savior; For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the Christ Jesus. 1 Ti. 2:1,3,5.

In all things it behooved him to be made like unto his brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people. Heb 2:17.

Consider the Apostle and High Priest of our profession, Christ Jesus; Who was faithful to him that appointed him, as also Moses was faithful in all his house. Heb. 3:1,2.

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Seeing then that we have a great high priest, that is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our profession. For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin. Heb. 4:14,15.

And when I thought I had absorbed these gems, a sweet sleep came over me. As I sweetly slept, the Spirit of the Lord placed me in the praying line at my Church, and I being in line with the Spirit, begun to pray, and as I prayed in the Spirit, I turned around to a double glass door and saw the green grass, through the glass doors I saw the green grass and my hands were stretched in combat gesture, and I was trembling. With my hands stretched in combat gesture, trembling, I turned towards the gathering of prayers and my Spirit in the Spirit of the Lord claimed the victory over the strong man over the green grass of my Church. And then my whole body was slain and I fell backwards all the way to the floor. The prayers were leaving the line and they didn't see my slain body on the floor.

I woke up from this sweet vision and I say, "Lord, why did they leave?" "Because," said the Lord, "they received My blessings and glorified My Name. They have faith in Me, and not in the signs and wonders of slain bodies. I gave you this vision to strengthen your faith and show you, that I AM."

Tuesday/September 10, 1985, Yesterday, when the Lord told me to write the vision He gave me, I obeyed Him and as I sat at the computer to write what He told me to write, I entered an empty file without a name.

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Today, as I sat at the computer again to write what He told me to write, I entered the main menu to look for what I wrote yesterday, and I had forgotten what I wrote it under. I entered the title "Jesus". No, it was not there. I went back to the main menu. At the bottom of the titles, I saw it: "STRONGER". I am writing about it all to illustrate what I am about to write.

Oh yes, STRONGER IS HE THAT IS IN ME THAT HE THAT IS IN THE WORLD." Somewhere around 3 am the Lord awoke me up again. I did wake up but, I drifted back to sleep. The Lord woke me again around 4 am and I said, "Lord, I am so tired."

The Lord sayest, "Get up and get on your bike." I started to reason on my own, not knowing the Lord had spoken or not wanting to listen. I sat up praying in the Spirit and I thought to myself, "I just as well get on that bike, it will wake me up for sure. I do need to study my English. The Lord sure is watching out for me. I am going to be sorry if I don't read that English chapter this morning."

Reasoning in that manner, I got on the bike. All this time I am reasoning and doing on my own, I am still praying in the Spirit with my mouth. I took the bike routine for about 3-4 minutes. I folded the bike up. I sat down with my English chapter on my lap, I am still praying in the Spirit.

I thought to pray blessings on my lesson and as I did so, the Spirit of the Lord came upon me and I knelt down and I was back in my childhood and I felt the hurt to my mother from my father, and I remember that I did not really have a regular father, that my father was in reality so old he could not have shown me anything of fatherly love, nor shown my mother any husbandly affection for there was such a difference in age.

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I remembered my mother leaving me when I was around 10 or 11 years old. I remembered how I understood and did not blame her, and yet I did not seek her for seven or eight years. When she came back in my life I was already a young adult, in route to the USA, and I did not have any feelings for her. I never felt angry at my mother, but I never felt love either, and somehow I felt that my mother felt the same way about me.

And I cried unto God for I felt that somehow I was transferring that same feeling attitude to my own children. And it came to me to renounce the spirit of indifference and as I did I coughed and gagged, and I gasped for air. And I cried grievously and the healing hand of God touched me deep inside of me and I was healed. And I thought, that was deliverance an inner healing! Praise The Lord!

So, I never did studied my English chapter that morning, but His purpose to wake me up was far better than the study of my English chapter."

And so, since the 20th day of June, the days roll on and turned into weeks and months. We were now in the month of September. During the month of September my life turned. The Master reached the bottom of my heart and the conviction from the Holy Spirit began.

I quit doing on my own and I threw myself at His Feet. At some point during that time the Master began to reveal Himself to me to show me my wickedness. My prayer language had returned to me and I had been praying in the spirit almost all the time. I was receiving blessing after blessing.

My beloved friend, my Honey's Birthday forthcoming, I was short of money and I could not think of a better gift than a let-

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ter to share with him the spiritual blessings I had been receiving. I wrote in a letter to him,

"My Dearest . . . , my Honey: Today you are making one more mark in the calendar. Silver and gold have I none for your present and I am glad because silver and gold have I none; but such as I have, give I thee: in the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth rise up and walk.

"Honey, that is what the apostle Peter told the man that could not walk at the gate of the temple and the scripture says that Peter after he said that, took the man by the right hand, and lifted him up: and immediately the man's feet and ankle bones received strength. And the man leaping up stood, and walked, and entered with Peter into the temple, walking, and leaping, and praising God."

And I continued a long exhortation to my friend. I believed with all my heart that the best gift I could have ever given to my beloved friend was to share Jesus Christ with him, he'll have that gift for eternity.

It was now the 2nd day of October of 1985. I walked out of my job because I couldn't take the pressure any longer; for I was going through a period of seeking the Lord with all my heart, but, also evaluating my life and my spiritual walk and I was having a rough time. But the Lord showed me my error, and after a couple of days I went back to work.

That 2nd day of October also, my first grandson Landon was born. On the 11th day afterwards, I suffered the second and last nervous breakdown of my life. That breakdown in the long run turned out to be a blessing.

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It all began this way: At home I was going through a period of seeking the Lord with all my heart but also evaluating my life and my spiritual walk. When you begin to consider the truth, the powers of darkness begin to fight harder than before to prevent you from leaving the darkness and finding the light.

Therefore, I began to feel the pressure from the invisible world of darkness. At work, I was tense and somehow withdrawn. We had been working on a project for a few weeks. It was an important project, very important. I was frustrated because I didn't have enough information, knowledge or experience to work on the project by myself.

I was frustrated also because I thought that my boss expected for me to know all about these things and work on the project effectively and I was mortified because of my incompetence. I never did realize these things then for my pride was surmounting. So, naturally, I blamed my boss for my predicament.

"He can't expect me to know all of these things in this short period of time!" I figured while talking to myself. (Six months is not too short a period of time, but I considered it so.) "He should be the one doing all of these things and telling me what to do," I would continue with my pep-talk in murmuring and complaining, "I am not authorized anyhow to do anything by myself; and if he doesn't care enough to give me the information, what I am to do? I am going to do the best I can with what I have, and maybe he will approve it. The project has to be delivered today!" and with that pep talk to myself, I proceeded to finish the project.

When I submitted it to my boss, my boss noticed the information that I did not have and wanted to include it. He instructed me to make copies of certain leaflets, which I did. The conflict

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flared up when he rejected the copies. I did not copy the leaflets in the proper way, because I was in a hurry, and I was already frustrated and discouraged, anyhow.

"Well, he is right, I might as well do the job right," I thought to myself and I walked over to the copy machine to re-do the copies. "What is the use of having a good copy machine if it is not going to be used properly!" my boss remarked, right at the moment when I was placing the copies in the copy machine. His remark cut through my flesh like a sharp dart.

"Find somebody else to train for this job!!" I blurted out, wounded with the sharp edge of the spear of pride. Blinded with a flare of temper, with indignation I felt insulted and belittled. I smacked the papers down on the copy machine, picked up my purse and walked out!

What a relief! I thought and I felt free. I didn't have a nickel in my pocket, for I had just been paid and I had spent the whole check already. I had no prospects for any other job, because the Lord had told me to stay right there and show everybody His love. I had not planned to quit and things were going pretty well, and here, I find myself suddenly free of that responsibility, free like a bird! No more getting up so early to squeeze time for my doings and having to struggle with all those things that I didn't care for in the least! Free, free, free to seek new horizons! Ah! the Lord is good I thought.

I went over to see my Honey and I told him what I had just done. Then I went over to see my Pastor, and he prayed and agreed with me that the Lord would take over my situation. Then I remember that my daughter was in the hospital in labor. "I might be a grandmother already and they can't reach me because I am not at the office." I said all excited. My Pastor

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offered for me to call from his phone, and sure enough, Landon had been born!

"Praise God! He came in the name of the Deliverer." I said, not knowing what I was saying for I had been delivered, but I didn't know from what. But Landon really did come in the name of the Deliverer for that incident marked the beginning of a series of incidents that God used to deliver me from taking a detour on to a life that seemed right for me, but, which wasn't.

I was heading for trouble. I was shunning away my godly responsibilities. Like the prophet Jonah I was taking a ship to Tarshish, running away from God.

From the Church I went home and made some phone calls, and pranced around my house for a while, and relaxed in what I thought to be my well deserved freedom from the responsibility of a job.

The next day I figured I would take it easy and wait on the Lord. Several times during that day I had the inclination to kneel down to pray, but I didn't. I wanted to read the Word, but I didn't feel like it, nevertheless, I opened the Bible and started reading the book of Jonah.

I read the whole book and I found it quite amusing. I laughed my silly head off, for I perceived how utterly ridiculous Jonah's pride was. I did not think anymore about it, and finally the end of the day came and I retired.

About 2 am the next morning, I woke up! jumped out of bed, got on my knees and started praying in the spirit. "Jonah, Jonah, Jonah" kept coming to my mind. "What about Jonah?" I said.

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"Do you remember that I told you to minister My love at your work?" The Lord asked me to refresh my memory. "Yeah Lord, but what that got to do with Jonah? . . ." I wondered.

"Well," The Lord said, "Do you want to go in the belly of the whale?"

"You are not talking about me going back to my job, are You?" I said with hopeful doubt, "I just can't Lord! I thought you were going to take care of me and give me a nicer job, put me somewhere where I fit, come on Lord? No going back, please?"

"Do you want to go in the belly of the whale?" The Lord asked in order for me to re-consider. "Indeed not Lord!" I said quickly considering my alternative, "I'll go back to work."

I got up from my knees, turned on the computer and I wrote a letter to my boss. It was a cute letter. I got dressed and went to the prayer meeting.

Then I went to the office and I arrived at the office before my boss. I placed the letter in his letter-holder and then I proceed with my work as usual.

"Good morning!" My boss said when he came in, just like any other day. "Good morning!" I replied. "What is this?" He said taking the letter from his letter-holder in his desk. He began to read it and he cracked up laughing and corrected my spelling.

"Good thing that you apologized for your lack of Christianity" he said still laughing, "I was beginning to wonder about all those sayings that you have hung up around your desk."

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He was really glad that I came back, it was a blessing! For I did not go in the belly of the whale, not just yet, anyhow!

Beginning on that morning in the 20th day of the month of June of 1985, God had made me aware of all of these things that reflected my life, up to that point.

It was now the end of the month of September of 1985. A desire, and longing for a close walk with the Lord became a flint to light a fire in my soul. I wanted nothing else but to KNOW HIM. With a zeal I had not known before, I sought The Lord.

But I was haunted by nightmares and vision-dreams. The nightmares and the vision-dreams were driving me up the wall. I knew something was wrong. I knew about demonic attacks. I knew that I had opened the door wide to Satan not only by openly living in sin, but also by the attempts to practice Mind Control, Self Hypnosis and even Yoga.

I had come to a complete repentance of not only sinful living but also of any appearance of evil. And I had a contrite heart. But, I did not have a broken spirit yet. Therefore, when I would close my eyes at night time I was a haunted soul.

Sometimes, I would wake up and I could had swore that the Devil himself had been standing right there by my bedside, either trying to rape me or chuck me to death. The Devil can disguise himself with shrewdness. He was having his field day with me, because though I had repented and drawn close to the Lord I still did not have a broken spirit.

Also, I was still ignorant of the knowledge of God. I was ignorant of the Word of God. I was ignorant of the knowledge of

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the deeds of the flesh. I was ignorant of the way of the cross. I was ignorant of the treachery of Satan.

"I hate queers," my boss said one afternoon. "Oh yeah, you do Honey? But the Devil loves them so?!" I teased my boss, mimicking an effeminate voice. "No kidding," he said with a laugh, "how do you know that the Devil loves them so?" he asked, laughing. "Because, Honey, they walk like the Devil, so," I said swaying like one of them.

When I got home that evening, the Devil started by telling me how un-kind the whole scene about the "queers" had been that afternoon. "I guess it was unkind, but I sure had a good laugh." I thought to myself, not realizing who was talking to me.

"You know Thia," the Devil said, "your biggest enemy is the Devil of Yourself, you have got to be deliver from that!"

I got to thinking about that accusation, and the Scripture "agree with your enemy quickly," came to my mind. "Devil," I said knowing now who was talking to me, "you are right, but I don't have to worry about that because the Lord is taking care of that!" "Oh really," said the Devil "we shall see."

The Scriptures reads,

Jeremiah 30:15

Why do you protest your punishment? Your sin is so scandalous that your sorrow should never end! It is because your guilt is great that I have had to punish you so much.

I did not say "The Lord HAS TAKEN care of that" but I said, "The Lord is TAKING care of that." The difference between those two statements is DOUBT.

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For the Lord took care of my self-life in the cross almost 2000 years ago. But in ignorance of the way of the cross by faith I doubted, only to open the door a little wider to the Devil. And now I began with obsession to think about all the things that I had been involved in, and I began to consider a way out through the "Ministry of Deliverance."

I was seeking the Lord in earnest. I had come to a genuine repentance. I had a contrite heart but not a broken spirit yet. And I was lacking knowledge of God. I was lacking knowledge of the Word of God. I was lacking knowledge of the wisdom and scope of the plan of God's Salvation by faith in Jesus Christ.

Jean tried to explain it to me, but I was obsessed with the idea of the "Ministry of Deliverance" and I was not receiving the message.

I asked Jean to send to me a track on the subject of "The Battle for the Mind" By Jessie Penn-Lewis, the track that she had been reading to me in hope that I would understand the message of the "way of deliverance through the cross". I read it and I still did not apprehend the intended message, because I was obsessed with the idea of a "magical deliverance" from the many demonic spirits, that were harassing and driving me up the wall at night time.

So, I started to search for deliverance. "I think I need deliverance," I told a sister on the phone one day when I woke up from one of these rapist attacks. "What makes you think that?" she answered me.

"Well," I said feeling my way, for I was not sure if this sister knew anything about demons and deliverance, "for one thing, these dreams that I am having are not ordinary dreams, they

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are downright Satanic attacks, do you know anything about the Deliverance Ministry?" I asked straightforward.

"I am well familiar with the ministry, I am involved in praying for deliverance at Church but you can pray for your own deliverance, do you know?" she said, "only problem is that not everything needs deliverance prayer, sometimes you can get in the wrong track." she added.

"Yes I know, and I have been praying, and I have repented," I said, "nevertheless, in the last couple of years I had attempted to practice Mind Control, Yoga, Self-hypnosis and all of that stuff and even though I never succeeded, I feel that I opened a door in my mind and something got a hold of it that I cannot shake off by myself and I can not sleep, I am beginning to be in dread of nightfall."

"The first thing you have to do is to get rid of anything that is connected with that stuff like books and such," she said, "then, if you think that you still need help, we must prepare to pray with fasting, I need to talk to the Pastor so that he can pray with us too. I can pray with you Wednesday night, if you still feel that you need help, is that okay with you?" She asked.

"That sounds great, it is going to be a relief!" I said with enthusiasm. And when I hung up the phone I looked for all the books that I had that were connected with any of those things that I had been involved in and I threw them in the garbage can outside of the house. Then I remembered that I had class on Wednesday night, so I called her back and we decided to postpone the prayer for Sunday, after morning services.

The whole thing was a misconception in my part about Deliverance anyhow. But, my sister in the Lord was willing to pray with me. I figured I needed to fast myself; but, on

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Sundays my Honey used to fix a big dinner and expected me to come to eat with him after Church.

So, I decided to fast on Saturday instead. The Lord honors fasting and prayer. It is Scriptural and when fasting is done from and unto Him, with the right motives, He honors it. I knew that to be a fact, but this time it was not The Lord's fast and I did not fast unto Him. I was deceived for lack of knowledge of the deeds of the flesh.

Saturday I fasted and prayed and sought God all day long in vain. "Lord," I had prayed all day long, "what is it that I need deliverance from?" "For one thing you need deliverance from the Strong-man of Pride" I heard a voice about 11 o'clock that night and I thought the Lord was answering me, "write down the list for it is long," the same voice added. Then the voice gave me better than forty names of demons that I was supposed to be delivered from.

The next day I called my sister in The Lord to remind her that she was supposed to pray with me after the services. The Lord had put it out her mind and she had company that weekend anyhow. "Well, I forgot to fast about it," she said, "but we will pray anyway right after the services." The service was great! We had a guest-Minister and the anointing of The Holy Spirit was upon him.

After the services, I could not make up my mind on what to do. I could not see to go on the prayer line to get prayed on for deliverance. I had been prayed on for deliverance before and I knew that it can get messy. But I got up anyhow and stood in line.

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It seems that it took forever and a day for my turn to come up. "I need to get prayed on for deliverance," I mumbled when I stood in front of my Pastor, "I have my list here that The Lord gave me to be delivered from." "We will pray for the first one on the list, The Strong-man," said my Pastor glancing at the long list and at loss because of my weird request, "then we will pray for a few others as the Lord directs, and the rest you will have to pray for yourself and as The Lord directs mark them off the list, as you get delivered until you get finished with the list."

When they were finished with me I left to go to my Honey's house. On my way to my Honey's house, I was kind of disappointed. I had expected to get rid of my problems that day, and here I was, I did not even feel that I had had any deliverance at all!

Not too long after I ate I told my Honey that I had to go home. When I got home I sat down in my couch and began to read my Bible. Soon after I began to read I started praying for those things in my list to come out of me, and before I knew it I started sneezing and coughing and crying. I kept marking them off my list and pretty soon I did not have anything left in the list.

Then I closed my eyes, for a minute to praise The Lord when I heard this rustling sound of a breeze coming from the window that, was not even opened, flipping the pages in my Bible that was still laying opened on the coffee table in front of the couch! Alleluia! I sang, I am having a Pentecost Day!

Situation: I got into the spiritual world and I didn't know exactly where was I at. There was sleeplessness and lack of appetite. I thought I was still fasting. Fear gripped my very

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soul, I was physically and mentally exhausted. For several nights I had not closed my eyes.

Without philosophizing, because I haven't gotten not even a clear memory `till this day on what exactly happened during that whole week, I know in my heart, because of the evidential results, that I did not have a genuine experience of Deliverance that previous Sunday from my breakdown.

But the Devil faked it so good that I thought I had experienced "Deliverance" and I, ignorantly misled my Pastor with my enthusiasm because of my misconception of the whole thing. Because of the bitter resentment towards my ex-husband that was buried deep within me The Lord gave me to the demons of bitterness, resentment, and self-pity to harass me.

The Lord was bringing me into the knowledge of those things, but I, ignorant of the knowledge of God, doubted the Word of God. For the Word of God says in 2 Timothy 1: For God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind.

I did not know God, I did not know God The Father showing me what was within me that was keeping me from Him. So, I doubted the Word of God and allowed the spirit of Fear to get a hold of me. Fear of loosing my mind gripped my heart and I could not sleep and I could not eat to save my soul.

"Lord," I said, opening the refrigerator at work, about 5 days later, "How is it that You still have got me fasting and I have already gone through Deliverance?"

"This is not My Fast," The Lord answered me almost in an audible voice, "you are simply physically and mentally exhausted." "Thank you Lord." I cried and I laughed. I went

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straight to the phone and dialed one of my best friend's number.

"Sister," I said, "I am making progress in my spiritual walk, I just heard The Lord, I know it was The Lord I just heard." "What did he tell you?" She asked me in a concerned tone of voice because of her knowledge of my past experiences with the spiritual world.

"Well," I said, "I thought The Lord had me on a fast, but since I just went through Deliverance again, I could not understand why He still had me on fast, so I asked him about it, and guess what He answered me?" "What did He tell you, Thia?" she asked me again. "He told me that, that was not His Fast that I was simply physically and mentally exhausted!"

"Ha, ha, ha," she laughed, "The Lord is so good, you need Vitamins!" "You know what!" I said, "come to think about it, I do need vitamins, I ran out of my vitamins, and I have been too proud to ask my Honey to get them for me, because I have not had any money to get them myself."

"You see, you see," she said laughing, "you see what pride gets you?" "Well, sis!" I said with a repentant heart "I shall humble myself and call my Honey right away to get my vitamins, and I am going to go home and eat a big meal tonight!"

I hung up the phone and dialed my Honey's number and asked him if he would please get me some vitamins. He was most delighted to do so.

All of these things were happening in my office where I was sitting at my desk without anything to do but to answer the phone. Since I was not busy I decided to write. I pick up my

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pencil and I wrote in a piece of paper, the following poem that the Lord had inspired me to write,

I am a Star, to shine God's love.

When I was a little girl, out of the clear blue sky I used to tell my grandmother that I was going to be a movie star.

That idea had to come out of the clear blue sky because there were not any TV sets or movie houses or such, in fact, we didn't even have electricity in that beautiful hole in Guatemala where I was born.

It must have been God telling me even then, that I was to be a Star. God had always been one step ahead of me and I thought I was never going to catch up with Him.

Then one day he took me by the hand and gently tugged me so that I would catch up to His step. But, I, because of circumstances could not catch up with His step. So, He pulled me by the hand for it was necessary that I would catch up with Him, but, I, thinking that he was angry stumbled and fell.

So, He picked me up in His arms and carried me. Because I was angry and hurt I never noticed that He had carried me, before He placed me down to see if I could walk.

But no, I could not walk, I couldn't walk at all. So, He took me back in his arms and lovingly carried me.

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And the mountains were high, and the valleys were deep; the seasons came and the seasons went, and with the seasons along came bad weather, good weather, sunny days, cloudy skies, and the storms of rain and sleet, and ice and snow, and the flood came, and along came death to my body. Then God put my drowned body on the cross with his Son, under the flood of the Blood and my spirit he placed in the wings of the Holy Spirit.

So, out of the flood of the Blood my body came alive and in the wings of the Holy Spirit my spirit soared.

So, in the wings of the Holy Spirit my spirit soared far, far beyond the sky, and in the firmament my spirit shone with God's love like a shiny star.

So God did make me a Star, far greater than a movie star; a Star to shine His glory, a Star to display His beam of love.

I am a Star, I am a Star, praise be to God, I am a Star to shine His love!

My true deliverance was on the way, for so it was written, but I did not know it and during that week I suffered destruction and loss. But it is written,

Jeremiah 30:16-19

But in that coming day, all who are destroying you shall be destroyed, and all your enemies shall be slaves. Those who rob you shall be robbed; and those attacking you shall be attacked. I will give you back your health again and heal your wounds. Now you are called "The Outcast" and "Jerusalem, the Place Nobody Wants."

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But, says the Lord, when I bring you home again from your captivity and restore your fortunes, Jerusalem will be rebuilt upon her ruins; the palace will be reconstructed as it was before. The cities will be filled with joy and great thanksgiving, and I will multiply my people and make of them a great and honored nation.

Meanwhile I was to suffer a child of God's agony in the grip of Satan. And to experience the love of a loving Father, that never leaves us or forsakes us. The Abba Father.

When I got home that night, I did try to eat and to sleep but, I was so exhausted I was going berserk. I was in the grip of the Strong-men of Fear and as night time would come I was in dread of closing my eyes, for now, I was not just dreaming but having visions, too. And those visions were not from The Lord at all, but straight from the pits of hell!

I paced the floor most of the night Friday night. Saturday, my Honey could not make any sense of what I was saying or doing, he wanted for me to call a doctor.

"I am not calling a Doctor!" I exploded in panic. "I do not need a Doctor, I need prayer! please pray for me, Honey!" I remember pleading "If you dare to call a doctor, I shall never talk to you again!" I remember threatening him.

Poor Honey, he was at lost, he didn't know what to do. Saturday night, he ordered me a big pizza and he sat there with me, watching me eat it. I finished eating the pizza, and I stretched out on the couch and asked him to get me a blanket, and as I was dozing off he sneaked out of my house.

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I spent the rest of the night talking on the phone to my Honey and to my sisters in the Lord, Frances and Jean. Frances and Jean were also at a loss as to what to do, but they were trusting and believing God for me.

I do not remember what exactly was I talking about. I remember telling them what I was going through and how scared I was to close my eyes. I wanted to talk so I would not fall sleep. I imagine they were praying and talking to me hoping that I would snap out of the grip of Satan.

Whatever was going on that night it's only a hazy memory. I remember pacing the floor back and forth. I remember praying in the spirit frantically and almost non-stop. The pictures of my kids hanging on the wall would flash. It was like being in a haunted house.

At one time I remember sitting on the couch praying and when I looked up to the wall where one my daughter's picture was hanging it flashed and I was told "you must pray to Denise, she is a good kid." Then I would say, "Jesus, Jesus, Jesus, to Him alone I pray."

And a vision of my Honey would appear, with Jesus written on his face, and I was told "He is your Jesus, here in earth, pray to Jesus Coo."

The faster the voices would ring in my ears, the faster I prayed, and prayed, and prayed. But I was praying in vain, because I was praying in fear and doubt. I had a picture of Jesus in the Garden of Gethsemane, and the voices would echo to take a look at that picture and remember the Scripture, "Could you not pray for at least an hour?" And then, they would say "Where are your men? how come the men in your life are not praying? Couldn't they pray for at least an hour?"

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And the self-pity would arise within me and I would echo "Yeah, that is a rotten luck I have, I have no men to pray for me, what a rotten luck! No wonder I am in this predicament, none of the stupid men that I know have the common decency to pray for me, two husbands and now my Honey and none pray for me, that sure is a rotten luck!"

Then the voices would tell me that my Honey was not praying for me because I had denied myself to him and that I had to give myself to him and perform the act of marriage just between the two of us, because love was to make it right, and I was given visions of a beautiful wedding in a beautiful setting, only performed in a flimsy soft white negligee for a wedding gown.

October 13, 1985. Finally, around ten or eleven o'clock that Sunday morning, my Honey came to get me to bring me to eat. My Honey figured if he could just make me eat and sleep I would come out of it. He should have taken me to my first Baptist Pastor's Church for I kept telling him that I needed to go there.

But he did not know what was going on, and he did not know that just that morning, the last call that I made to Frances, her husband—who had been my first Pastor, had answered the phone. "Thia," he said, "where do you live at, give me your address." I imagined Frances had put him up-to-date on what was happening and he wanted to come and see me. But I, because of pride I was embarrassed about the whole situation and I talked him out of coming to my house.

I was ignorant of the deeds of the flesh and I was kept from receiving help from one of my Pastors, driven away with the lust for approval and the fear of men, the fear of rejection. "I

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am OK, Pastor," I said, "But I could come and see you after Church today, I don't want to interrupt Church services again like I did that time, remember?" I was referring to the breakdown of 1974.

When my Honey came, apparently I was not properly dressed so, my Honey, instead of taking me to a restaurant to eat, he took me to his house and cooked me a big, humongous steak. "This is enough to feed a horse," I remember saying. I took a few bites and then I went to recline on the couch to rest, that is the last thing I remember clearly, for it was then when my mind snapped!

In the Scriptures it is written,

Jeremiah 30:23-24

Suddenly the devastating whirlwind of the Lord roars with fury; it shall burst upon the head of the wicked. The Lord will not call off the fierceness of his wrath until it has finished all the terrible destruction he has planned. Later on you will understand what I am telling you.

My Honey unable to help me, calls one of my daughters in Wilmington. One of my daughters attempts to get in touch with several Christian friends in New Orleans unsuccessfully except for Margaret, who arrives at the scene to late. My Honey, unable to receive any help from anybody, calls the Police for an ambulance and sends me to Charity Hospital Mental Ward, for there was no other option.

Margaret attempted to come to my aid five minutes too late, the ambulance had taken off, but she sets prayer in motion on my behalf. My daughter sets prayer in motion on my behalf in

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Wilmington, New Orleans and Dallas. She also calls my other daughter to pray in Knoxville, TN.

My daughter Denise, unable to establish contact with anybody before my Honey sends me to the Hospital, makes arrangements for my youngest daughter, Roxana, to fly to my aid. Roxana arrives at the Mental Ward waiting room with my new Pastor and my Honey. They found me singing, walking and leaping and praising God.

As far as I was concerned, the next thing I remember from that Sunday (after eating a few bites of the dinner that my Honey had cooked me, and reclining on the couch to rest) is the horrible struggle of trying to wake up! I came back to reality.

I remember the hell I awoke up to, tied down like a wild dog. I remember the night spent in the hell of Charity Hospital mental ward waiting room. Haunted by demonic spirits, physically and mentally exhausted, yet aware of where was I at, hearing the spirits, rebuking and praying in the spirit.

And I remember the horror of waking up tied like a mad dog to a bed among male and female patients, all of them screaming obscenities and making obscene gestures! I remember, screaming and begging to be untied.

And I remember being untied and told to sit in the waiting room because there were no beds available for me. I sat there. I was shivering. Somebody brought me a blanket and I wrapped it around myself. I began to observe everybody around. I realized that I was in the middle of a Devil's den, surrounded by nothing but demons.

I became aware of the spiritual world surrounding me and I began to pray again. I began to pray with confidence and

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assurance. I was no longer afraid! I was not scared at all! I was free from fear! I prayed and I praised The Lord! And I prayed and I praised The Lord! Sometimes some of them would come around and talk to me. I prayed and praised The Lord, and I prayed and I praised The Lord. When daytime came I started pacing the floor and praying.

Sometimes I just would chase those demons away like if they were mangy dogs, in the name of Jesus! And sometimes I would go and sit besides somebody and try to witness for The Lord.

In that den, the Devil showed me my roots from the beginning of time, and led me to worship my latest ancestor in the latter of success—a very prominent Minister. He could have been showing me a true account of my ancestry, for it was all Scriptural; but, with my eyes turned to Jesus hung on a cross, I pointed to Him and told the Devil, "It all ended there."

I was physically and mentally exhausted and I could have cared less if the queen of England had been my mother. Within me, I was no longer concerned about earthly things, riches or rags—I was at peace and content, resting on my Savior. I had been unable to sleep because of fear and the physical exhaustion before, but now, I just did not want to go sleep because of caution, but, I was no longer afraid. And to keep myself awake, I started singing, "Walking, and leaping and praising God!" And pretty soon I started doing just that!

When my youngest daughter walked in that waiting room, with her heart ten steps ahead of her, and with my Pastor, expecting to find me in a DREADFUL shape, a smile lit up her face, for I was walking and leaping and praising God.

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"Hi, Honey," I said with cheer, "I am walking and leaping and praising God to keep awake. This is hell over here, but I should be able to get out of here now." I did not know that all of these things happening to me were all written in the Scriptures:

Jeremiah 31:10-11

Listen to this message from the Lord, you nations of the world, and publish it abroad: The Lord who scattered his people will gather them back together again and watch over them as a shepherd does his flock. He will save Israel from those who are too strong for them!

But I had no idea that because I was physically and mentally exhausted, the Doctors would refuse to discharge me. I was completely free of the forces that had dragged me in there, therefore I assumed that I was free to go; I was too tired to even think that anybody would want to keep me in that den of hell. I was also too tired to figure out how to get out, but when I saw my daughter I cheer up because I just knew that she was coming to get me out.

I thought that all she had to do was to pick me up and go home. Instead, my young daughter was frantically trying to get a bed for me because there was a refusal to discharge me, but I didn't know it. Still physically and mentally exhausted, on the verge of losing touch with reality again, my daughter consents for me to be sedated for she couldn't think of me spending another night in that waiting room.

The miracle of finding a bed. My old Pastor—who offered his home to my daughter—comes to visit as they were confining me to bed. Woke up still confined, but in better surroundings.

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Suddenly, my tongue became heavy and my face distorted, for they had administered to me a heavy dose of Haydol, which caused me a reaction. Antidote was administered and I protested and refused further administration of any medication.

Informed of my rights by message from a lawyer friend of mine, I requested my discharge. By the power of the Holy Spirit, at the group therapy meeting I raised my complaint at the ignorance of our rights. I did it by the power of the Holy Spirit because I had no strength or power of my own.

In other words, I was confused and disgusted! Doctors heeded the fact that I had the knowledge of my rights and prepare my discharge papers.

Hosea 4:6

My people perishes for lack of knowledge. My people are destroyed because they don't know me, and it is all your fault, you priests, for you yourselves refuse to know me; therefore I refuse to recognize you as my priests. Since you have forgotten my laws, I will "forget" to bless your children.

Jeremiah 30:12-14

For your sin is an incurable bruise, a terrible wound. There is no one to help you or to bind up your wound and no medicine does any good. All your lovers have left you and don't care anything about you any more; for I have wounded you cruelly, as though I were your enemy; mercilessly, as though I were an implacable foe; for your sins are so many, your guilt is so great.

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I had the knowledge that the others didn't have about discharge rights; therefore, Doctors admonished me not to set panic in the ward. I was too tired to realize then what they feared, and to see that God was telling me: "My people perish for lack of knowledge..." and in that people I was included.

For my sin was incurable and my flesh was dead in Jesus Christ, but I did not have the knowledge of it; I was still trying to cure my wounds, and help others to cure their wounds by my own power and understanding.

I do not know how the decision for me to leave New Orleans was made. As I recollect the gruesome nightmare, while my daughter and my Honey were making arrangements to get a bed for me (because the Doctors refused to discharge me,) I had delusions that they were making arrangements for my wedding to my Honey.

Apparently, when I woke up confined to a ward and after I realized that there were no such plans for a wedding, I felt betrayed and rejected by my Honey, and I felt also that I had to leave New Orleans.

Since everything was so hazy and I was not thinking straight, I also assumed that for me to leave New Orleans was my daughter's and my Honey's plans and what they actually expected me to do.

Therefore, after my discharge, with provision to seek out-patient care I came face to face with a complete environment change: to leave New Orleans' secular environment and seek the Christian environment of my two daughters in Wilmington.

I came home to pack and to face the separation from my Honey and what I thought to be the closing of another episode

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in my life. Not knowing what the future would be, I made the decision to leave and wait on God for instructions; and I made plans to come back in December and go from there on.

The packing. Confronted with the dilemma of giving up treasured comforts. Placed some furniture and necessary items in storage. The trip. My daughter's heroism. She was a pro. Only by the power of the Holy Spirit of love she accomplished as much as she accomplished in those ten days.

The departure. Arrival in Wilmington. Beheld my grandson, Landon for first time. Arrangements to seek help at Mental Health Center in Wilmington. Application for SS temporary disability which later on was denied. Counseling with Pastor in Wilmington. Home meeting at Beth's. Church Home Coming. Fellowship with brothers and sisters met at previous visit. Met Leo and Katie. Confrontation with Brenda. Visit to Mental Health Center. Second and last visit to Mental Health Center.

Strife between my daughter and I. Unable to invite friends over. House infested with fleas. Unable to find home for cat. Unable to obtain bed, sleeping on floor. My daughter's refusal to connect phone. Misunderstandings and disagreement on everything we attempted to discuss. Depression and loneliness set in. I was miserable. Yet, behind it all there was the Hand of The Master.

The poem I wrote for Annie, in connection with the Christmas gifts and her obedience. The Lord put in my heart not to give the usual Christmas gifts that year, but, to make an offering to the poor on behalf of my loved ones to prove Him for their blessings. Writing a letter to testify of this to my loved ones I was inspired to give them also a small book with the promises

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from the Lord to His children. But I did not have the money to purchase these booklets, until Annie came to the rescue!

I had done some alterations for Annie but, I do not even recall mentioning to Annie that I needed the amount of money that she gave me, but that amount was exactly what I needed! I was so delighted with the answer to my request from God, that I forgot to thank Annie. I took her for granted. But the Lord didn't, hence the poem.

LISTEN

December 18/85.

Listen, listen, listen for the stillness of My voice, in the midst of the rustlings sounds, in the midst of the roaring noises, in the midst of the ringing sound of nothingness, listen, listen, listen for the stillness of My voice.

I am listening Lord, I am listening.

Listen, listen, listen for the stillness of My voice, in the midst of the rustlings sounds, in the midst of the roaring noises, in the midst of the ringing sound of nothingness, listen, listen, listen for the stillness of My voice.

I am listening Lord, I am listening.

In the midst of the sounds of confusion, in the midst of the chaos of daily life, in the midst of the anxiety and strife, Listen, listen, listen for the stillness of My voice.

I am listening Lord, I am listening.

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I Am your all, I Am your Lord and God, I Am who I Am and My ways do not change, as you trusted Me with all your heart, and leaned not in your own understanding, you acknowledged Me in all your ways, so, I do direct your paths.

Father, Father, what shall I do now?

I Am your all, I Am your Lord and God, I Am who I Am and My ways do not change. Father, Father, what shall I do now? Listen, listen, listen for the stillness of My voice.

Oh Father, Father, but I do faint and despair, I doubt and suffer in dreadful unbelief, those sounds, noises, confusion and chaos, the anxiety and strife of life bring me no relief, Father, Father, what shall I do now?

Listen, listen, listen for the stillness of My voice, Annie, Annie, Annie what do you need?

What about Annie Lord? I do not know what does she need. I told Annie what you needed.

Then tell me Father, what does Annie need?

Listen, listen, listen for the stillness of My voice.

Father, Father what shall I do now?

What did Annie give you? She gave me a check, Lord. Listen, listen, listen for the stillness of My voice, in the midst of the rustlings sounds, in the midst of roaring noises, in the midst of the ringing sound of nothingness, listen, listen, listen for the stillness of My voice.

I am listening Lord, I am listening.

What did Annie give you? . . . Well Lord, she gave me a check for what You told her.

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Listen, listen, listen for the stillness of My
voice, What did Annie give you? . . .

Father, Father what shall I do now?

Listen, listen, listen for the stillness of My
voice, Did Annie give you what you asked Me
for? Yes, Father she did, Father, Father what
shall I do now?

Listen, listen, listen for the stillness of My
voice, Did you take for granted her obedience?
Yes Father, I did, Father, Father what shall I do
now?

Listen, listen, listen for the stillness of My
voice. Hearken to the stillness of My voice! and
in your love offerings to prove Me for your
love ones, prove me for Annie too!

Fasted and prayed on behalf of my daughter. Miracle during holidays. Relationship healed. Trip to New Orleans for Christmas Holidays. Expecting to find a change in my Honey's attitude towards my Christian way of living. He was waiting at the airport for four hours. Expects me to stay in New Orleans. He was aware of the inner change in me, but did not accept it. Heater in apartment not working. Extremely cold night.

My Honey insisted that I spend night in house. Disappointed because of the fear of what people thought. Not able to move about as I had planned without my own automobile. Conflict. Not able to find anybody to accept my office furniture, my Honey finally accepts it. Still undecided about what to do. Christmas presents and preparation was frustrating. Christmas Eve was a disaster because I did not care to go dancing. Christmas Day was fair.

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My gift to the family—the testimonial letter and the small book— was not scorned. My Honey made plans for New Year's Eve. Made decision to separate myself from him after New Year's. Disagreement New Year's Eve morning, I almost forfeited party. Frustrated and depressed. What to do? Boxes and boxes of belongings and no way to transport them. Almost gave away even mere necessities.

My Honey offers me his apartment in the back of his house for me to come and live free of rent. I had not any income and yet I could not accept his offer for the fear of how it might look to others. The New Year's Eve Party. Total disagreement with my Honey. Moved to my old Pastor's home on New Year's day. My Pastor and his wife marvelous hospitality. Shared many incidents with Frances on our walk with The Lord.

The Lord led Frances to pray for me, and I went through a dramatic deliverance from several evil spirits. Strange dreams. The preaching of the sardines. The Holy Spirit impressed upon me to give my best outfits to one of my sisters in Church. I accepted my Honey's offer to paid shipping charges for my belongings. Shipping of belongings. Pastor and wife scheduled to leave town. Moved to a sister's house for the rest of my visit.

Spent day prior to my departure from New Orleans with my Honey. He takes me to the airport for my return fly to Wilmington. Spent all time at airport crying.

Returned to Wilmington to start all over again and came to find all kind of financial problems. There went my plans to connect phone and place an advertisement in the paper with the farewell money gift from my Honey. I began to doubt my

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decision to come to Wilmington and to consider accepting the offer from my Honey to live in his back apartment.

Faced again with a tough decision to make, and finding no cooperation anywhere. Plan to purchase material to build cutting table impractical due to lack of money. Unable to find a single bed to swap double bed and make room to rearrange bedroom to fit some kind of cutting table. Unable to place an advertisement in paper due to lack of anybody to take the incoming phone calls.

Attempt to hang shelves unsuccessful. The Lord spoke to my heart and convicted me of the sin of bitterness, resentment and judging against my family and my brothers and sisters. I repented and turned to seek God. Began to read the book titled, *The Spiritual Man*, by Watchman Nee.

The past dreams. I had been prayed on about them. I had not dwelled on them, I kept from relating them, and yet, they persisted to come back to my remembrance. So I asked the Lord why I could not get rid of the memory of those dreams.

The Lord revealed to me what the dreams were all about and showed me the idols I had been worshipping ahead of Him. I repented and laid all the idols on the altar, for good. But still, at night when I closed my eyes, strange dreams assailed me again.

There was such a loneliness in these new dreams as there was in my dreams in the past. I became to see my spiritual state, I became to know my self. I found out that I was walking, and wandering at night because I was still bound by the enemy and I needed help to break the bondage. I called on my Pastor for help. We broke the curse. I continued to learn about myself, and I began to see God's purpose in my life.

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I made an effort to set my priorities straight and surrender completely to The Lord. I renewed my consecration to The Lord. I came to a conclusion. In obedience, I set out to finish the manuscript. But, I had done it all in the power of my flesh, and I did not trust the Lord to supply me for my needs.

I sought advice from all my dear sisters and brothers who actually did not know the situation, but because of their love and compassion and with good intentions attempted to advise me. I put them in a predicament, and I deceived my own self thinking that every blessing from the Lord was because I was walking in His will, not realizing that the Lord blessed me bountifully because of His mercy, not because the efforts of my flesh.

I did not know His word to me. I struggled to fit in a pattern of Christian life that I had manufactured myself, thinking that to live in that pattern was what was expected of me.

The Lord gave me the gift of prophesy, but in my eagerness to please everybody I was reluctant to use it. It took me a while, and because of the encouragement from my daughter to venture out and utter some of the words that the Lord had given me to utter. I had consecrated myself to the Lord, but in my zeal to fit the pattern of Christian life that I had manufactured I was not letting the Lord consecrate me. I did not realize that my part was only to offer myself for the Lord to do the work of consecration Himself.

I was following my own inclinations thinking that it was the Lord's work. Therefore, I proceeded to work in an effort to fit the pattern of Christian life that I had manufactured and I interfered in the Lord's work, not just in my life but also in the

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life of the people to whom He had commissioned me to witness of His love, namely my Honey and his family.

I had rejected my Honey by rejecting his gifts and his helping hand. But the Lord in His mercy and long-suffering kept me even when I was stumbling out of His will, and a series of incidents began to happen by His providence. My Honey sent me back the gift that I had returned. Annie takes me to lunch to comfort me in my loneliness. Dora takes me to lunch. I had made up my mind not to take a job that had been offered, but the Holy Spirit led Dora to me that day to encourage me and so, that week I started working.

That job meant more than money, it was a lesson in obedience and the Lord blessed it. The Lord gives me His Word to deliver to the congregation for the first time. I did not deliver it. That same Sunday I invited Dora and Dona to come and share our four pork chops and I received a Valentine gift from my Honey.

The Lord leads me to treat Dora, Dona and Roxana to Valentine's dinner. Dona almost got a citation for running a stop sign. I was puffed up because Roxana said that she knew that I was praying in the back seat of the car when the police declined to give a citation to Dona. The Lord convicted me of my sin and told me that the reason why He had protected us was because we were under the covenant of His love.

Then, He—the Lord—gave me His Word to deliver to His people a second time. Again, I did not deliver His Word, and I did not listen. His peace left me. There was no more anointing in my prayer life for a few days, and I kept wondering why? But I knew, I was not right with Him. I figured, "Well, I guess

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I can take a break from holiness and be just a regular human being, for a while."

The Lord was dealing with me though, and I was still seeking Him in prayer even when I did not have that anointing grace that I had had until then. He gave me His Word on a future ministry, but He did not restore peace unto me, nor anointed me to pray for those days. And in my computer, I was recording what was happening in those days. The following is a quote from my computer records.

"Have I arrived? By no means. I have gone through a lot, and yet not enough. Have I relinquished the last twinge of selfish pleasure? No, I haven't, but I am stronger now than when I first began, and I am somehow wiser. I have the knowledge of my ignorance, and the fear of The Lord. That is the beginning of all wisdom."

I was praying and seeking God early one morning. I had been on my face. I had been on my back. I had been on my knees. I had pondered on different situations like the money I borrowed from my Honey, and I thought, I surely missed God, it seems I should not have borrowed that money from my Honey, now I am in bondage.

I was thirsty and hungry, for I had been fasting the day before. I longed for a glass of lemonade from the refrigerator, or a piece of bread. I prayed, Lord, give the strength to deny myself and hold on until 7 am And then I got into the Book of Proverbs, seeking wisdom. I read:

"Every young man who listens to me and obeys my instructions. . ." "Well," I thought, "I surely have not obeyed Your instructions, and I done gone and put myself in bondage."

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I continued reading. I got to the verse that reads, "Don't withhold repayment of your debts. . ." and I thought, "Well, then, I am not in bondage, I have not withheld repayment, I am allowed to borrow and pay back!"

One battle won, and yet I did not realized that I had just won a battle. "I was preparing to read *The Spiritual Man* by Watchman Nee. I had the Living Bible in one side, in front of me, opened to the Book of Proverbs. In the other side, in front of me, I had now *The Spiritual Man*. The thought came to my mind, that I must read the Word and not books about the Word, and I remembered that at the beginning of the book, the author warns about Satan preventing one from reading this book.

So, I proceeded to read *The Spiritual Man*. It was now 4 am. I have been up for about 2 hours. My eyes began to close with sleep. I began to think, "He gives his beloved sleep." Then I thought, "I also must deny my flesh, and I sat up and robbed my eyes. Then I heard a voice say, "Go get a cup of coffee to wake you up!" And I said, "You rotten Devil, I am not going to eat until 7 am."

It was then that I realized I had been in the wilderness like Jesus, being tempted of the Devil. Once more I had defeated the Devil! Humbled by the mighty strength of God, I perceived His gentleness to me, and I inhaled the precious gem of His infinite love and protection. It made me stronger, and wiser, humbled in the strength of His might.

The question is, "How long Lord? How long before I relinquish that last twinge of selfish pleasure? How long before I quit longing for the garlic and spices of Egypt?" And The Lord answered and said,

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"My daughter, the longing shall always be there, until I come back. Pick up your cross daily, and follow Me. Remember my cross, and know that I have bought you with my Blood. See My empty tomb and know that I am alive forever more and won the victory for you. You are in Me and I in you. You are a finished work because I AM FINISHED."

MY FIRST COMMISSION. I made it to 7 am! Victory! And then . . . Yes, then my daughter got up! "Ah," I thought "I can't wait to show her what the Lord gave me this morning." The minute I got the chance I told her about it and asked her if she wanted to hear it.

And she said, "It will have to be really quick because I am running late." "Well," I said, "OK. I typed the writing and handed to her and she said, "I'm sorry mom, but I just don't have time."

"OK, I said, I understand. How was it yesterday?" What you mean? She said. "Well, I said, how was your day yesterday, because I never had the chance to see you or talk to you since yesterday." "Well, she said, it was terrible! Lisa probably needs a D & C, and Pietra wet her bed because she has a hole in her bladder, and she does not want anything to do with us anymore, and she does not want anything to do with God, she thinks God did not speak to her, and she was never healed."

And my spirit rose and said inside of me, "It's your turn to rise and shine." And I said to my daughter, "Good, now I am going to see her!" "No! my daughter screamed, you are not going to see her! She said she does not want to see anybody from Church and it is useless."

"Well! I said, I am going to see her! What do you think that you are the only instruments that God has? What about me?"

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And she said, "I am telling you, you are not going to see her! You are not going to spoil the works, you need to pray for her, and that's all!"

And she was screaming and I was screaming back at her, and then we both said, "I DON'T WANT TO ARGUE WITH YOU!" And she ran to her room. And I said to myself, "Can you imagine THAT!?"

And the Holy Spirit said within me, "No, I don't have to imagine it, can you see the devil's sign? It reads, 'I am going to get Pietra!' Can you hear the roaring of the lion, `RRRRRR! I am going to get Pietra! No, I don't have to imagine it, I see it and I hear it, and it doesn't bother Me, and it shouldn't bother you! Go to Pietra and bring her the flowers of My love."

My daughter had gone to work. We had kissed and hugged, and I asked her to forgive me, and she asked me to forgive her. I sat there for a little while, bewildered. Then, I remembered my manuscript and what The Lord had told me about holding His flowers of His love. Oh, great! I thought, that's it, that manuscript is me, and in it are the flowers of His love. I shall write to Pietra about the whole scene that took place this morning and bring her the manuscript.

I turned on the computer and wrote it all down. Then I began to print it. It takes a long time to print as many pages as I had, so in the meantime I decided to sew. I remembered that I did not know Pietra's room number, so I figured I go to my other daughter's to get it, but then I thought that she most probably was going to tell me not to go, like my youngest daughter did. "But I am going anyhow!" I said to myself.

Then, this thought came to me, "Rise and shine humbug! Go ahead, you sure are going to rise and shine when Pietra embar-

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rasses you and kicks you out of her room." And I, like a fool, actually started crying and saying out loud, "I am going! I am going it does not matter how embarrassed I'll be! I am going in obedience to The Holy Spirit!"

It does take a while for me to catch on as to who is talking to me. I did not have to cry and pitch a fit, all I had to do was to laugh at the Devil and ignore his stupid accusations. For I should know who I am in Jesus, and I should know that only the Devil talks to instill doubt and confusion. There is no doubt and confusion in my Shepherd's voice and I know my Shepherd's voice.

Just about that time there was a knock on the door. It was my other daughter and my grandson. I said, "Praise The Lord, I was on my way over to your house." And I explained to her the situation and she said, "Good! Let's go." "And we did go, and Pietra was really glad to see us. Did I see a supernatural occurrence? Was there a great miraculous sign? Did Pietra get instantly healed? No. There was nothing spectacular about the visit, and yet . . . in my spirit, I saw Pietra beholding the flow-ers of His love.

Days went by and I had going to some ups and downs. This specific morning I was wading in the down of the valley. Frustrated, disappointed, not feeling well, wandering in my mind. And I said, "What is to pick up my cross daily Lord? What is my cross. Now I see it, now I don't. I am so tired of this see-saw, Lord? When is it going to end? What is my cross, Lord?"

And The Lord answered me and said, "That, My Thia, is your cross today. If you could see the cross for tomorrow, you could not carry your cross today, so pick your cross daily. Today

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your cross is to love Me even when you are discouraged and oppressed by your own feelings and the evil day at hand. Don't give up your hope, put on your helmet of salvation and know that I don't slumber, neither do I sleep. I am with you in trouble and I will rescue you, and honor you, even though you can not see it, or believe it now. Know that I am with you, I never leave or forsake you, neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate you from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus your Lord."

He gave me the will to surrender and the faith to accept His gift. All this years of trying are ended and now I am trusting Jesus for yesterday, tomorrow and today. For yesterday, tomorrow and today it is not any longer mine, but it is His. For I belong to Him. And now He tells me, "Take my yoke for my yoke is easy."

Thia, God's new spokesman. The Lord was patient about my whys and my buts, but HE, finally said, "Enough is enough!" I spun my wheels and I did this and that. Nothing ever worked. I never knew why. Everything I tried worked for everybody else, but it didn't work for me. Nothing, nothing ever worked for me. Boo Hoo! Boo Hoo! "Why, Lord, Why?!" I blurted out at last, frustrated and disgusted for I was coming to my wit's end. And The Lord answered me and then gave me my commission.

This incident occurred one morning after a night when my youngest daughter with whom I shared quarters at the time, had let me listen to a tape that explained how God speaks to us. Also in that tape there is a talk about the gift of prophesy. The Minister in the tape said something to explain how we

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miss God. He said something to the effect that sometimes God speaks to us and we think is thundering or angels are speaking and so we miss God, like the crowd of bystanders in John 12:29. My daughter brought that tape to share with me because she knew that the Lord had given me His Word to share and I did not want to share it, because . . . well, because I didn't think it was God, amongst many other reasons.

My daughter went to sleep on the couch that night because her bed was uncomfortable. She had a bad cold with congestion in her chest, and she felt more comfortable sleeping on the couch because she could sleep with her chest in a higher position and the congestion on her chest did not bother her as much in that position. But I did not know that she was sleeping on the couch. The following morning I recorded in my computer what happened.

Feb. 18/86. "Father, You woke me up and You said to sit up." I said, "What shall I do?" And You said, "You shall write this morning." And I wrote further, "Oh Father, it has been thirty minutes now since I sat up. I did not think it was You talking to me because You always wake me up to pray and intercede.

As I was thinking such thoughts it thundered and it rained. I thought it must be You talking and I could not hear You. I got up wondering as to what to do; as I was getting up it thundered again, this time louder and sharper. I went to the kitchen and turned on the light unaware that my daughter was sleeping on the couch in the living room. She shook me up when she said from the couch to bring her something to drink because I was not expecting to hear a voice coming from the couch. I was already shook up with all that thundering, but she shook me up some more. I put some water in a glass and I went by her side and I whispered, Did you hear the thunder?! It must

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be God talking to us! She smiled and said, I was thinking the same thing. So, Father, I came to the computer and in faith started to write, trusting that You have a purpose to accomplish in me today."

"Father, I haven't got the slightest on what to write about? But I know that you honor obedience in your child, so Father in obedience here I am, speak Lord, thy servant hears."

"Father, it is now 4:45 am Two hours and fifteen minutes since You first woke me up. I searched the Scriptures You brought to my remembrance. It took me one and a half hours to locate the first one. I do not understand why it was so hard for me to find it, for I knew the Scripture. I just wanted to read exactly what You were talking about. Why, Father, these things happen to me? What is the lesson I am to learn from this? It seems to me that I waste all my time spinning my wheels. Why, Father I do these things? Why, am I not ever sure of what I am doing?" And my Father answered me and said,

"Because you are always bickering and complaining and you are forever asking why and you are fixed in analyzing everything without action. I have told you to cease from your works and struggle and to trust Me. When you quit bickering, questioning and analyzing MY work in you and MY word to you then you will be able to be what I have already made you to be, meek and lowly and an obedient child of MINE."

"Father . . . I see what you mean, and I repent in dust and ashes. I see how I am and what I am doing. Forgive me Father I won't bicker anymore nor question You. These are the Scriptures that you brought to my remembrance and told me to write down, and I wrote down from Matthew 21:23-32 and from John 12:20-43. Father, both of these scriptures have to do

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with the same thing, Your people and their hardness, what do I do next?"

"This is what you shall talk to My people about." He spoke to my heart in a quieted still voice.

"Father, I have been a sinful woman, I have not applied myself and brought forth any fruit, do you think they are going to listen to me?" I said, just about to jump out of my flesh.

"I do not want them to listen to you, I want them to listen to ME. And Thia have you not repented of bickering and questioning me? You are right, you have not applied yourself for you do not know anything, not even what FRUIT BEARING is."

You know what? This was February 18 of the year of the Lord 1986. In the month of June of 1985 The Lord told me that He had given me the gift of writing.

In the month of July of 85 HE began my family reconciliation. In the month of August He gave me a Word Processor/Clerk Typist certificate, and a computer to use in my writing commission. In the month of September He gave me much instruction in Creative Writing.

In the month of October He gave me a nervous breakdown to deliver me from deception. In the month of November He gave me all kinds of trials, and I mean hard trials to go through that I might learn to depend on Him. In the month of December He gave me . . . even more trials. And so in the month of January. In all of this I had learned that it was HIM doing all of this to me for HIS GLORY. And I was a good pro.

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I had learned how to say "I see what YOU mean". And here The Lord of Hosts turns to me and says in effect "you have not applied yourself?" "And guess what I did! I wrote about it some more in the computer, continuing from where The Lord told me that I had not applied myself for I did not know what fruit bearing was. I wrote in the computer,

After this conversation, I figured "I better quit while I am ahead and let Him have the last word." And I was glad, and happy because I understood that He meant that I had bore some kind of fruit. I laughed for a while, and did this and that and decided to print what I wrote. And while the printing was taking place I went to take my shower. Well, don't you think that I was doing pretty good? Guess what The Lord did next? I recorded that in the computer too, I recorded what follows:

God speaks to me while I am taking my shower. This is not the first time that God has spoken to me at such a time. There has been other times. This time I was thinking how neat He had been handling me all morning. And I was thinking how good it is that God cuts me to size, remembering all kind of incidents and thinking that it is not hard at all, and I was thinking how it would be to tell this in Church and laugh about it, because it is such relief to be handled by God. "Just a piece of cake!" I said to myself.

And The Lord said, "Then, why don't you do it?" And I said, "do what?" "Repent in public," He said quietly. "WHAT!?" I said, just about to jump out of my flesh again, for I thought that, that must be . . . well, I thought that that must be you know who, speaking to me?

And The Lord said, "You heard me. Remember how when you had those book shelves on the floor and you could not find the

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stud, and you bicker and complained because your son-in-law or any other of your brothers had not come to help you?" And I said, "yeah Lord, I remember. I accused them to YOU of not walking in Your Spirit, and You rebuked me and told me to judge my own self for if You had wanted my son-in-law or anybody else to come to my aid You would have put it in their hearts to do so, but if You had not done that it was because You wanted me to depend on You implicitly, without questioning or reserve, absolutely, and not to rely on anybody, or any circumstances for survival. . . .

"But Lord, I repented of that right there and then, how is it that I have to repent in public?"

And the Lord said, "Because I want you to do just that. Have you not just repented of your whys?"

Then I realized what "dying to yourself" is. For my son-in-law or anybody else had not known that I had judge them, and resented them in my heart untilI cried. I did not want to do it. My whole fleshy nature just irked me. But in my spirit I rejoiced because I purposed in my heart to obey Him. But my flesh was screaming: "you'll never do it, you can't do it." But in my spirit I said, "I am crucified with Christ, nevertheless I live in the flesh but it is not longer I that liveth but the life that I now live I live it by faith in the Son of God who died and raised Himself up for me."

"Wouldn't you think that I was a good pro? For even though that I didn't agree that I should air out my dirty laundry, for I thought my laundry to be clean already, I did repent. And I did purposed in my heart to obey The Lord and produce the works of repentance on His beckoning to do it without questioning.

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Well, by the middle of the morning my purpose had done weakened, and before I knew it I was heading to my Pastor's office. Blessed be my Pastor. Sometimes I call him Pastor. Sometimes I call him Brother. And sometimes I just call him by his first name when I am in a hurry. But I never mean any disrespect for His calling. My Pastor is a man called of God, as call of God as anybody can ever hope to be. He is a Pastor, he is a musical genius, he is the Choir Director, he is a counselor, he is a visiting the sick Pastor, he is a funeral Minister, he is a wedding Minister" he is a praying Minister, but above everything else my Pastor is a man after God's Heart and he has the gift of mercy.

I handed to my Pastor what I had written that morning, and waited for his reaction. I should have known what my Pastor's reaction was going to be, for in my heart I knew my Pastor, I knew him in my spirit, I knew how The Lord has blessed him with the gift of mercy, because God had shown that to me and to most everybody that knew my Pastor.

And I also knew that my Pastor . . . well this is what happened before I went to see my Pastor and the reason why I went. Towards the middle of the morning, I had begun to doubt. "I wonder if it will be alright to read this at Church tonight?" I thought to myself wondering, rather doubting, whatever God had spoken to me or not.

"Go see your Pastor," a gentle voice came from within my heart. "Go see my Pastor?!" I said out aloud, for I was by myself in the house, "My Pastor is no help Lord, why, he is like You, no, he is even worse than You because he could at least tell me plainly what to do and show me, but all he does is to pop the Bible to me and leave me right at where You got

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me. I just wish that my Pastor would tell me once and for all whether this is of You or not!"

"Go see your Pastor," He said again very gently and ignoring my bickering. "OK" I said, "I imagine you have a purpose for me to go see my Pastor, whatever for, I don't know, but I'll go because You say so."

"Go see him for he is your Pastor" The Lord said period. And there were no more questions about it, I went to see my Pastor. But in my heart, I was hoping that my Pastor would say something like "This is not of The Lord, you better take some aspirin for the pain and go get your head examined."

"Brother," I said with wonder, confusion and doubt in my voice, "do you think this is of The Lord?" Pastor took my paper and read it and opened his Bible Didn't I know that is what he was going to do? Why waste my time coming to see my Pastor? Oh well, I had better listened, `cause, God says so.

Well, it turned out that Pastor did not tell me to take an aspirin and go get my head examined, but he did not tell me either that it was, or it was not The Lord. He showed me in the Word of God, that it was a matter of God and me, and how David had dealt with the matter of public repentance and how other people had dealt with it. He said that I had to let the Lord tell me what to do and be obedient and do what the Lord told me to do.

"That night, the best way I could I read to everybody what I had written for that was what The Lord had told me to do. I do not know if anybody quite understood what exactly I was talking about. ButI did the best I could.

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The whole time that I spoke I had a lump in my throat. I had been bound by so many hung ups it was not even funny. One of my greatest hung ups was talkativeness. I hated myself for talking so much. I hated myself for getting long-winded. I thought it was great that The Lord had given me the gift of writing, for I figured that that way I wouldn't get long-winded. But there . . . that night, I had been faced with a long-winded writing. But I made it, the best way I could, I read the whole thing. It was a long writing! But it did not look like I offended anybody . . . in fact we all had a good laugh!

But I still was delaying the messages that the Lord had given me to deliver. Therefore, calamity came over me. The flu symptoms stroke me first of all. Then one of my friends called me with the wonderful news of my ex-husband's wife salvation day. I was appalled at my reaction of jealousy that awoke within me. In despair, I called Annie and we prayed for the cleansing from the Holy Spirit and repentance. And I did receive the cleansing and I did repent and I was healed and restored to the joy of my salvation.

Then I delivered His Word, as I was commanded and the Lord blessed. "Pastor," I said one day in the early part of my internship under my Pastor, trying to get him to tell me once and for all what to do, "How do you know what to do, how do you know what is it that God wants you to do?" "Trial and error Thia, just trial and error with a clean heart" he said with wisdom that at that time was not quite to my reach. But now when I think back, I said to myself, "How true, God has really blessed my Pastor with godly wisdom!" Glory unto the Lord of wisdom. Glory unto the Lord of mercy. Glory unto the Lord of Lords, the King of Kings, the Everlasting One, glory to His Name. His name is Jesus, Jesus, Jesus Christ our Lord! Amen.

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But, I began to get spiritual and self confident and I deliver a Word that was considered out of order causing a lot of confusion. I came to utter desperation. My attitude was, "What is the use. I have been thru hell and damnation and still have not learned!" I was so ever mortified for my lack of sensitivity towards my Pastor and the whole congregation, I felt numb with disgust towards my wicked selfish ways.

God, finally said. She has learned her lesson! He put in my hands the book, *The Victorious Life* by an Unknown Christian. That glorious day I entered in my computer, April 16/86. I have given up the struggle Praise be to God. Jesus is now in full control of my heart. He fills my being. And this is not a boasting of my own, but a gift from Him. He gave me the will to surrender and the faith to accept His gift. All these years of trying are ended and now I am trusting Jesus for yesterday, tomorrow and today. For yesterday, tomorrow and today it is not any longer mine, but it is His. For I belong to Him."

From there on I began to grow. I entered in my computer, in the month of June, June 24, 1986. "Father!" That was the first word out of my mouth when I opened my eyes this morning! At last! I am truly entering into that oneness with Jesus. "Father..." Praise The Lord! I had waited for so long to utter that word before my thinking capacity would wake up in the morning.

And so the story goes. God had done initiated me, Thia, as His spokesman and I didn't even realized it. In the subsequent weeks I delivered some dandy "Words." But they were from The Lord and He blessed us all! `Till . . . I delivered His Word at the wrong time. He then suspended me for a while, but He didn't blot me out. He reinstated me after a few months. I am still His spokesman. Glory to His Name! Alleluia!

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Where am I at now? What has happened to me since that glorious day that I gave up the struggle? I questioned myself somewhere around the 21st day of October of 1986. Why? That was the day when I finally stepped out in faith to obey the Lord and answer my call to write and trust the Lord completely in all circumstances in my life.

Chapter 5

Turmoil

I came to them in the captivity of the ways of the age and I spent a year in the belly of the whale.

A call to repent and to intercede and cry out for mercy for the Body of Christ, in the name of Jesus!

Isaiah 57:15-21

15 For thus says the High and Lofty One Who inhabits eternity, whose name is Holy: "I dwell in the high and holy place, With him who has a contrite and humble spirit, To revive the spirit of the humble, And to revive the heart of the contrite ones.

16 For I will not contend forever, Nor will I always be angry; For the spirit would fail before Me, And the souls which I have made.

17 For the iniquity of his covetousness I was angry and struck him; I hid and was angry, And he went on backsliding in the way of his heart.

18 I have seen his ways, and will heal him; I will also lead him, And restore comforts to him And to his mourners.

19 "I create the fruit of the lips: Peace, peace to him who is far off and to him who is near," Says the LORD, "And I will heal him."

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20 But the wicked are like the troubled sea,
When it cannot rest, Whose waters cast up mire
and dirt.

21 "There is no peace," Says my God, "for the
wicked."

On Sunday, October 13, 1985, the thin thread between sanity and insanity of mind popped up in my mind and I had a nervous breakdown. I was taken to the mental ward and admitted. A week later I exercised my right to be discharged, on Sunday, October 20, 1985.

On the following Sunday, October 27, 1985, I was worshipping God nearly one thousand miles away from the environment where I suffered the breakdown. My new environment was the Fellowship where two of my daughters were fitted in the Body of Christ. The Lord God allowed me to become part of that congregation for better than one year. Our congregation was a Fellowship led by a godly Pastor, a man full of the Holy Ghost, that led us with the gift of mercy. It was a good year and a very profitable one for me, spiritually.

During that year, my Pastor, my children and all members of the congregation became a nucleus where I experienced the love of Jesus Christ like I had never experienced it before. But the spirit of arguing rebellion developed in our midst. This spirit was disguised in so much appearance of light and understanding in my children and everybody else; against a cantankerous stubborn ways of a mother, and a person that did not fit into what she thought to be their ideals. When the truth of the matter was that neither my children nor my loved ones or my brothers and sisters in Christ knew me or I knew them. They really didn't know much about me except what they could see

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and hear from me, which was misleading and totally different from the real me, and vice versa.

But I, in the other hand, had the advantage or perhaps disadvantage, of seeing them and myself for what we really are in the flesh. For I was talking with the voice of experience: Once I thought that I stood—and had the same attitude that I was observing all around me—but I fell. Because I had been gone out there in the world and got muddled up and trampled on by the enemy, and God had been showing me how wicked human flesh can be, I was appalled to see the deeds of the flesh. For everywhere I turned I could see that really there is nothing good in us.

I was disgusted, frustrated, angry and argumentative in a fruitless effort to make myself understood; an effort to convey the message of the wickedness of the flesh; but, I was going about it the wrong way. For God was not finished teaching me that subject yet, far from it! But I have observed, by the unmerited favor of God Almighty, Who gives unto each of us our special gifts, by His grace I have observed that we can make an argument and disagree practically about everything in the Word of God, and every issue of life for that matter. And even when we refuse verbal argument but we harbor disagreement in our hearts for each other's situation, we are still arguing with each other for one or the other has to be wrong until things are cleared away and there is an understanding agreement in love.

I have observed also that arguments develop because we either want to impose our points of view, our opinions, and our concepts on others, or we want to keep our own points of view, our own opinions, and our own concepts for ourselves because we consider ourselves to have the better side of the issue. It

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seems to me that whether that argument be a verbal argument or in the heart conclusion of our rightness, without consideration for the other person's point of view, opinion or concept, without understanding or compassion, it is still a disagreement and an argument. Even if the matter is an obvious cut and dry matter of open sin, there should be no compromise, but there should be an agreement in love, an understanding of where the other person is coming from, not an argument.

And it seems to me that if the matter is not a matter of open sin, still there should be an agreement in love, there should be an understanding, not disagreeable argument in which one or the other has to be proven right or wrong. And of course, this is not talking about what flavor of ice cream you like or what is my favorite color to dress in. I am not talking about equality. I am talking about agreement in love, understanding where the other person is coming from, and being compassionate about that person's situation, instead of being defensive, argumentative and un-teachable like I was.

For the Word of God forbids argumentation and it also commends us to agree with each other in love, and to live a godly life, in peace with either friend or foe. But, how can we live a godly life in love and peace with any friend or foe if we cannot come to an understanding agreement?

Among Christians, how can we communicate with each other if we don't see the basic truth of the Word of God the same way? And how can we see the basic truth of the Word of God if we are spiritually ignorant, blind, deaf and deceived? How can we? Unless The Almighty God answers our cry for mercy, brakes our outer shell and touches our spirit man? How can we? How can we? Unless the Almighty God answers our cry for mercy, takes the scales off our eyes so that we can see?

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How can we? How can we? Unless The Almighty God answers our cry for mercy, takes the plugs out of our ears that we can hear? How can we? How can we? Unless The Almighty God answers our cry for mercy, helps us to see our wicked ways and brings us with mourning repentance to confess our sins and be healed? How, how, how can we? We can't. But, God can!

But God can, only if we repent. That is why He helps us to come with mourning and weeping to confess our sins and repent. "I don't agree with you! I love you but I don't have to agree with you, and I don't want to argue about it, for you are not going to convince me to think the way you do." One of my sweetest and most loving of my daughters told me during one of our phone conversations. "What in the world agreement has to do with love, Lord?" I asked Him in despair after I hung up the phone.

And The Lord answered me after a while. He said to me in a few words, "If you don't agree you don't love, you only argue." "Lord," I said, puzzled, "my child loves me, she is my best child, she is the best I got Lord, how can You insinuate that she doesn't love me if she does not agree with me? Who is talking to me? Is it You talking to me Lord? Or am I losing my mind again?"

For an answer the Holy Spirit brought me to the computer and I began to write it all down. As I wrote it down I saw! Yes I saw what He meant. There is no love in all of that disagreement, there is only strife, hurt, disrespect, disobedience, rebellion and dishonor, not only to man but most of all to God. Yes, most of all to God. Because we are so busy with ourselves, our points of view, our opinions, our concepts, our personal life, in other words our carnal life, that we miss the perfect love of

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Christ, and we wind up enmeshed in the sin of pride and rebellion against God.

It all leads to the word sin. In other words, disagreement leads to sin. It leads to the sin of pride and rebellion. That is what I saw when I started to write down all of the expressions coming from my children's lips, and from the rest of the congregation, including the pulpit and myself—the expressions that voiced our feelings and reasoning about the relationship between God, others, and us.

I was a member of the congregation, but in a sense I was only visiting for a while, and I was looking and observing them with God's purpose which I didn't even realize myself at the time, for I was still enmeshed in my own self. Sometimes we think that we are living a godly life as Christians. We think that we are being good Christians, because in our hearts we are sincere. We think that we are not arguing because we refuse a verbal argument. And we comfort ourselves with grinning and bearing one another. We definitely think that we are holy because we are not living in open sin and we do seek God, to the best of our knowledge.

And sometimes, we consider ourselves exempt from wickedness because we enmesh ourselves in a world where we only see ourselves as the victims of circumstances, where everybody else are the villains and we are the saints. We come to think that as long as we do our best, God is going to do the rest, and so we content ourselves with the struggle towards the mark of becoming "good and better Christians" status quo.

And all in all, we come to think and feel that we are OK, and have nothing to worry about. Then, we are continually hearing the disagreement from the pulpit and we are being exhorted to

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use better judgment as well as we are being warned not to criticized the anointed. We feel intimidated to discern from the mixture of preaching coming from our leaders—many of them truly sincere and in earnest seekers of God—yet they themselves engage in criticizing the Ministers that are actually preaching the Word of God, if that preaching does not happen to agree with their own doctrine or way of thinking.

And Satan and all the cohorts of hell cheer at that situation. For that is the perfect conditions for them to make havoc of the children of God, and keep us under the bondage of confusion, strife and division; quarreling and bickering at each other that the work of God, in witnessing and winning the lost souls in this world with our testimony of victorious and godly living, may come to a halt. That is the reason why God says different. The Lord God says "No, that is not OK, and you do have something to worry about."

The Lord God says, "Repent from your wicked ways, repent, come to Me with mourning and weeping and confess your sin, that I may heal You and make you whole. For I am the Lord God that heals you, I sent you My only begotten Son that through Him you may be saved."

It's not an easy thing to do and it hurts the human pride, in fact it hurts the human pride to death to listen to God and take His medicine. Thank God though, for even though that His medicine has a bitter taste and it hurts the fleshy nature of ourselves to take it, His medicine it's the only healing agent that truly heals us, and keep us spiritually, physically and emotionally healthy and fit children of the Kingdom, on the way to Glory Land.

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The saddest part is that even though that to take His medicine hurts our fleshy nature, it is so simple to take His medicine, if only we believe Him to be the Lord God that heals and saves us and surrender our lives to Him. For years and years I struggled with the battle of confusion and disagreement within me and around me in every relationship in my life, because I didn't believe Him and I didn't listen nor surrendered my life to Him. I didn't take His medicine.

But at last I have come to believe Him and surrender my life to Him and I have come to see from God's point of view, why I could never come to a peaceful agreement of living in this world. I had missed the mark, I was struggling with my own power to comprehend the mind of God, and I had missed the mark of the perfect love of Christ, because of lack of faith in God and a lot of faith in my flesh—in my understanding of life, in my intelligence— and in every occasion for self improvement.

Not only I had missed the mark of the perfect love of Christ, because of doubt and unbelief in God—and a lot of faith in my flesh— but also I had missed the mark of the holiness of the Almighty God in Jesus Christ. I was ignorant, I lived in doubt and unbelief because of the cares of this world, the lust of my flesh and the snares of the devil. I was in bondage of my flesh to this world.

I had also failed to teach my children how to aim at the perfect love and holiness that is ours in Jesus Christ. In all of those expressions it almost seemed that my children and everybody else were waiting for God to zap it to me because of my uncouth ways, and what it seemed to them the confused behavior of an emotional disturbed person. As if everything that I was and everything that I did had to be according to a

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set pattern of standards and ideals that I thought they had set themselves to look up to, to love and respect as a Mother and I knew that I was not it, I did not meet the set pattern of standards and ideals of that Mother!

In the other hand, I had been sitting around some of this period of time in my life, about one year, praying in self condemnation and full of self pity and rejection, trying to live up to that set pattern of standards and ideals that I had set my own self and expected to be what my children wanted. I was walking in the flesh.

At times, actually, confused and deceived in the obstinacy of my mind, I had been wallowing in self pity prayers and in dreadful agony of doing anything that I would have thought might have offended them—my children.

At times, I had suffered untold misery and agonized in dead prayers at the mercy of what might my kids and others would want me to do! In bondage to the fear of rejection from the love and approval from my kids and others.

And on top of everything I had to suffer the asked and unasked advise of everybody that would acquire some vague knowledge of my situation, through my lack of wisdom and ignorant talkativeness, for I was going around publicizing things ahead of time, before I would ponder anything unto the Lord to use wisdom and speak sensible.

Everybody included not my God given spiritual authorities that guided and directed me, but rather every well meaning Christian brother or sister with all the regular comments, "Well, you know God does not work like that! He didn't work like that with me!" "Oh no! I am not going to put up with that! I am a Christian and I know better! God has done baptized me

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with the Holy Spirit and I got the evidence of "Speaking in Tongues" and the fruit of my spiritual prosperity, my financial security, social position, steady job, good common sense, children that are not doing dope or prostitution (they might get some lousy grades at School but that is understandable because they are young and the environment at the public Schools is not good for them. They might be disrespecting older people, but that's because the older people has had the audacity to judged them!)"

"I can not identify with that! You reap what you sow, you know? She went out there in the world and now she is suffering the consequences. She should have concentrated in being a good wife like me, I am not divorced, because I have stuck to the Church, and I have listened."

"I don't know, but that's not my problem, that's God's problem." "Don't dwell on that! That's covered by the Blood of Jesus." "This and that is your problem." "You need to get out of the house, you are dwelling on self, you are this you are that!"

For a whole year I had been gone in this merry-go-round, of compromise and endurance. Bearing and grinning for I was still walking in the flesh; but, I was seeking God, naked before the Lord, allowing God to strip me of everything that was not of Him. And here, people that did not even have an inkling of the rotten wickedness of the flesh and the wrath of God, would approach me with such irrelevant comments, always in the defense of the carnality of Christianity, and on the defense from such an argumentative person like me.

The words were not said exactly in the open, but that was the attitude, the attitude that stared me right in the face from many

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well meaning Christians and even from my own self. They meant well, but they were just cutting me to shreds because I had exposed my own self, and at times I felt like the Samaritan in the side of the road left to die by the thieves that wounded and robbed him.

I shall record now in this writing, some more of our expressions for the purpose of illustration. By no means these expressions are meant to be derogatory of my Pastor, my children, any member of the congregation or myself. These are expressions that came out of us when the guard is down and we expose our ways and our personalities, our carnality in the set of family affairs without realizing the impression that we make in other people's life.

Further more, I have observed that these expressions are a common occurrence in a group of Christians that are seeking God and actually growing in the Lord. It seems to me like we all reached a certain attitude in our spiritual lives, very similar to the disciple's attitude when they were walking with Jesus in the flesh. The following are some of these expressions from myself, my daughters, my son, and members of the congregation where I shared better than one year of my life.

"Don't you think that God can speak to me, too?" (I didn't mean that He doesn't but He speaks to me too, you know? And it might do you good to hear what He is telling you through me!)

"I know how to read the Bible that is all I need! I don't need to read any other books!" (But this is a good book, it'll help you!)

"I read nothing but THE WORD!" (Good for you, I bet you only read the King James, too! Well, I am glad at least we

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agree on that one, because I don't understand the King James either!)

"The Bible is sufficient for me, I am saved and baptized with the Holy Spirit! I do not want to hear any 'words' from any body that the Holy Spirit has not told me about!" (Oh my God! that one is so evil, it not only hurts my feelings but it kills everything thing that I thought the Lord gave me, it makes me feel like I am nuts! I am going to pray for her deliverance! Dear God! What have I got over here? I thought I was in trouble they are even more wicked than me!)

"All those books caused you nothing but confusion and deception, I am not about to touch them! I have better sense." (They are probably right, I remember clearly all that I have gone through, but I don't know why I get so angry Lord, when they reject to receive what I thought You gave me for them, Oh Lord, I am doomed to suffer at their hands, I made my bed I guess I deserve to lay on it.)

"I don't like reading, I hate reading! Don't give me anything to read, just tape it in a song for me, only music ministers to me, because I am a musical and a young person, not an old foggy like you!" (Oh well, grin and bear, is too many of them, love them anyway Thia! You have your own problems, for you are on the furnace of affliction, Thia, for your own sins.)

"You have to reach out to me and amuse me and entertain me, not hurt my feelings with all those negatives of the wrath of God. God is love and fun! I love The Lord! I won't receive all that self condemnation that you are trying to dump on me. God is not like that!" (Keep on trying me, and I'm going to show you what God is like! One more time and you'll get it! You sassy little punk!)

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"I don't like reading, I am not as 'spiritual' as you, I don't understand! I hate all of those complicated words, tell it to me in plain English!" (Dear God! That's the height of illiteracy! Poor thing.)

"Just because that is where God has you at, it does not mean that that is where He's got me! I'll get there, when I am ready!" (God bless you child! Hope you get ready fast!)

"God has not told you that! That's your flesh because you are judging me!" (It looks more that you are judging me!)

"That's not God, you are just jealous!" (Oh God! This one really gets to me, I can see purple!)

"Get off of it, Mother, that's dead and gone, that's a dead horse!" (It sure is, but it still stinks!)

"You are just wallowing in self-pity and you want me to feel sorry for you!" (No! I don't want your stupid pity, I wish I knew what I want!)

"That's not of God, you yelled it out! The Holy Spirit is gentle, and He has a quieted still voice." (I guess you think you qualified for the job.)

"You are too loud, you hurt my ears! How can you presume that, that is of God?" (I guess I am, but if they only knew how much it hurts to be told, I guess that's how much I have hurt others myself, I'm just going to shut my mouth and not going to say anything at all!)

"Hush! Mother, if you said that too loud they are not going to pay attention to you, you have to be calm!"

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"Whatever you do, please don't embarrass me!" "You can live with me as long as you can pay your share of the rent, I can't support you!"

"You are able to work, if God told you not to get a job and write, let God support you, I can't even support my own self!"

"Oh, yes, Mother, you do expect me to support you, but I can't, I've used all of my savings helping you, now let God support you!"

"Don't you think that the people at Church are getting a little tired of all that bunch of empty promises? After all I pledged my \$100.00 as seed faith to get a new car and I am still driving that old jalopy, you know."

"Why do you have to be so angry when you speak to me? You don't have to lose your temper! That's not of God, you don't have to be so mean!"

"You have to be tactful when you speak to young people, you can provoke them to wrath!" (But aren't they provoked to wrath already when they are failing in School?)

"There is nothing wrong with Pizza outings! Young people need entertainment." (But has anybody expounded the Word of God to the young people, has anybody taught them to feed the hungry before gorging Pizza without concern for anybody's economical situation?)

"I don't go to the movies, but my wife and my children are free to go and participate a little bit in the things of the world, God has to speak directly to them, I am the head of the household but I am not going to the extreme of being a dictator, I have a balanced Christianity." (But I thought that God has

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already spoken directly to everybody, husbands and wives about not conforming to the ways of world, or hasn't He?)

"I am going to the movies because my daddy has not told me not to, he lets me go so that I can make up my own mind, and I find that it's nothing wrong with that movie that only deals with a super age of the future, who knows? That age may happen before the coming of the Lord! Nobody knows the day or the hour, I am a very bright young man of 16 and I can see that very clear." (How about the part that says "but you shall know, when you see these things happening you shall know"?)

"Why can I watch TV? Everybody else does it! There is nothing wrong with that program, it does not have any curse words in it and they hardly even mention the word sex, they only implied it."

"It's only Shirley Temple in an innocent 'cabaret charade' where little babies pose as drunkards and hookers!"

"Well my goodness! We can't take ourselves and the kids out of the world? We have to learn?" (But I thought that the Word of God teaches us all things that we need to learn?)

"But, Thia, you have to be practical, that's the world and we have Jesus, we don't have a thing to worry about! Jesus is the answer to all our problems." (Do you really know Jesus or are you just using a cliché?)

"But, Thia, you can't do that, they are going to think that you are crazy! In other words you have to be smart and use your brains." (Be smart or compromise the very gist of my inner guidance?)

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. . . And so it went on and on the spirit of Arguing Rebellion! God only knew that I was not in the least interested in convincing anybody of anything, and much less interested in being God, or imposing myself and my views on anybody, but somehow that's was the impression that I gave to everybody.

And we all had missed the point. We had failed to understand what was the perfect love of Christ. We had failed to receive the truth of the word of God to set us free from rebellious disagreements, strife and hurtful misunderstandings.

We all have missed God! We had failed to walk in obedience to the Word of God! We had failed to walk in the Spirit of Love and compassionate understanding! We ignored the Word of God, and all of us had wound up in a heap of hurt feelings, disagreements, and misunderstandings, for which this Mother thought she was to be blamed for she did not fit the pattern to accept the kind of love that she thought her children and others had set for her. She was just going in a different spree this time and they were not going to go along with her. "Sorry `bout it, Mother!"

Mother did not know what she wanted to do. She was being obstinate and unreasonable, and the children had become the victims once more of the sins of the Mother. "You called this on yourself, Mother, nobody has that kind of attitude, it's all in your head. You are just obsessed with that book! The best thing for you is to get some kind of job to support yourself, because we cannot be responsible for you. Everybody has to earn a living including you. Every writer takes years to develop and you are not different, you have to, you must get a job to make a living! We have our own life to live."

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My girls did not understand, and I, in my excitement could not calm down enough to explain things to them. I was beginning to despair, things looked pretty bleak and I was beginning to doubt again about the way that the Lord was leading me.

"But" I objected foolishly to a well meaning sister, "Paul did not have a pretty picture of himself being bound in chains, but he still went to Rome."

"But indeed, we know that God spoke to Paul but nobody knows if God spoke to you! It is plain common sense my dear that you have to work to make a living!"

"But I am working!" I insisted like an idiotic fool defending myself, "I am writing 10 to 12 hours a day!"

"My dear, let's face it, it takes years to develop a writer, you must get some sense into your head!"

As I hung up the phone after that conversation that day, I fell on my face and I cried, "Oh God have mercy on me! For I do not have the guts to tolerate much more. I am weak and made of flesh and bones, I am helpless Lord God! Help me, do the work through me and show me a sign of your favor least I perish!"

Now, that's one kind of prayer that The Lord answers, the prayer of helplessness! I had been knowing about the prayer of helplessness for years from the experience of others and from David in the Psalms, but it had not been until that last April that I had come to understand and to experience complete helplessness.

I realized then, at that moment of helplessness that I had fallen into the snare of struggling of my own to get the approval of

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men, that I had taken my eyes off Jesus again and I was walking in the flesh.

We were now in the middle of the month of November, and I had begun to walk in the flesh again, I was going around telling everybody "God told me to write and not to get a job!"

In the first place, my children, the members of the Fellowship where I was sharing that year of my life, the Pastor, the fellow members of other Fellowships, and the whole Body of Christ had been hearing from God very clear on these "last days or latter days."

I mean the whole body of Christ is hearing God and coming into the unity of the Holy Spirit, into the unity of the perfect love of Christ. And here, I was going around telling my children and everybody else "God told ME!" Worse than that, The Lord God had commissioned me to write about my own experience of the perfect love of Christ, but I wouldn't sit still and wait on the Lord to finish His work on me so that I could give a complete account of His work.

As I had been writing it, I was so excited that I was going around heralding every little bit that The Lord God was working in my experience, and it sounded as if I was heralding a great new thing that God was teaching to me only, and as if I was conceited!

Those were not my intentions, in my heart I did not mean to convey that message, I wanted to shout from the roof tops the PERFECT LOVE OF THE LORD, but I was running ahead of my Savior, I was running ahead of my Master, I was bubbling with the Joy of The Lord again, as when I first received the Baptism of the Holy Spirit, but I had forgotten all about wisdom, discipline and restraint.

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I had started in the Spirit, but I was continuing in the flesh. I wanted to shout as fast and as loud as I could, "I got it, I got it, I got it, too!" But instead it was coming out as if I was shouting, "I got it, I got it, I got it and I am weeping and suffering because you don't have it yet!"

Therefore, my youngest daughter came to me and let me have it. I had given her to read what I thought to be the completed chapter of this experience, but alas! it was far for completion.

"I have read the manuscript and it has helped me to understand better what is happening, but it still does not change things, you are still demanding respect from me and judging everybody, and it is not going to work, because you don't earn respect overnight, you have to prove yourself and show that you have changed and let God work in you. But you are just trying to be God!" She said to me in a sensible manner, for she was only expressing my own fear the best way she could.

But to me it sounded altogether different, like the rebellious shout—the same words of the past echoing the ears of my mind—and the echo that I heard was, "You are just gone off again, only this time is a different kick, 'weeping intercession' and I have no sympathy for you at all, I am totally disgusted with your kicks and I do not want any part of them! I love you and I know I love you, but I want no part of your dumb kicks. And what is more, you are hurting me and my little brother and everybody else with your selfishness, because you are sitting here weeping and acting like you are God and are going to carry everybody on your own shoulders, but you are not God. And frankly I don't understand you and I don't want to be around you. I am going to live a life of my own."

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And I felt that yes, I was weeping in intercession, but not like if I was God, but in the place of Jesus Christ, in His name, taking part in His suffering but not ascribing the glory to myself, for I knew in my heart that I was clean of vainglory. I knew in my heart that I was weeping in repentance and intercession for my own self first, asking God to deliver me from the evil of deception and vainglory, and acknowledging and confessing to God my sins, my flesh, my helplessness, my lack of wisdom, my lack of love!

But all the love of The Lord in our hearts for each other was thrown in the trash of rebellious disagreement, because we refused to consider the Word of God. We refused to consider each other's predicament and come to an understanding. We refused to walk in the agreement of love. We all insisted in holding on to our own ideas and concepts because it is impossible for men to see and save his own self. We simply couldn't. Only God could.

And God did, God did saved and delivered us all from that hell of disagreement and strife and brought us into the agreement and unity of His love, in due time, in His time when we released and surrendered our lives to Him.

I did not bring up my kids in the loving discipline of the Lord, and now that they were of age they treated me as if I was a stranger, not their mother.

In fact perhaps they would have treated a stranger better than me, because of their eagerness to entertain angels unaware. Because I did not live a godly life as a norm, I did not teach them what it was to honor and respect their Mother.

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Because I lived in bondage to self life they learned to beware of my ways rather than learning trust and belief in Mother's godly loving ways, which were not there a lot of the time.

I felt that their idea of love was to encourage me to stand on my own two feet, and be my own independent agent, because they were rebelling against my old ways. They thought that I was only feeling sorry for myself, to get away from taking the responsibilities that I was supposed to take, because that is what I had done before in the down periods of my life. Every godly principle that I taught them was ignored because of the ones that I failed to teach them with my own example, because of my inconsistent walk with God.

Also I felt that their idea of love was to stand up to what they considered to be my domineering ways, and in no way shape or form allowed me to tell them anything at all about life, because they could tell me better! For according to their best knowledge they were living without reproach, for they were sincere in their hearts. They were walking with The Lord, and in no way shape or form had I doubted for a minute whether they were or were not. For I knew in my heart that they were indeed walking with the Lord! But they were walking in the flesh, they were carnal, and they had all their priorities mixed up.

When they should have respected me with love, they loved me without respect, and that is rebellion and idolatry! Whether we want to face it or not! I, did not want to face it! I, did not want to see that bleak reality. I wanted love and worship at any cost for such a long time that when I finally realized and saw the abomination in that bleak reality, and repented of it by the grace of God: they did not believe me.

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They only saw their mother feeling sorry for herself to gain their attention; the mother that did not even want to work to make a living. Also, I gave the impression to them and to many others that I considered myself some kind of a special character, because of my impulsive and seemingly unwise behavior that resembled the behavior of my past.

For I was still carnal myself and walking in the flesh. I was impulsive and still temperamental because I was still letting my body made out of flesh and bones with a nervous system and a soul with emotions and feelings controlled me. I was still living under the dominion of my earthly tent and I was still as unwise as before, I was going around telling everybody the things that God had told me to express in the writing of a million words, with 18 words more or less, "God told me to write, not to get a job, and to weep and mourn for our sins!"

How utterly ridiculous and arrogant I had sounded, and how many dear saints did I step on? And yet . . . Had God thrown us away in the pits of hell and forgotten about us rebellious and awfully wicked people? No, indeed He had not! Indeed He will never leave or forsake His children. Despite it all He wills to heal us, and set us straight.

It is not that I had wicked children that sat there day and night figuring out how to get to me. No. It was not that way at all. It is not that I was aware of my complaining and bickering in bitterness either, because I did not mean to complain and to bicker. I knew that I was set free by coming into the Truth that sets you free, the Truth of Jesus Christ. I meant only to state the facts of the earthly life that my family, and most human families as well, are going through in these days.

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Christians as well as non-Christians, because of misunderstanding and disagreement, and most specifically because of the lack of the knowledge of God and the PERFECT LOVE OF CHRIST. For what I observed in my children they were confused about our relationship because of what I used to be and what they learned from me and others about love. What they learned about love was quite different from what real love is according to the Word of God!

They were confused about many things that they saw in the Christian world surrounding them and they did not like the idea of buckling that world, for they were still seeking and reaching out to the Living God, for the truth to set them free of so many foolish teachings and sermons!

I said it again, I saw through this whole experience, that their priorities were mixed up. They did love me, but they didn't have any respect for me; therefore, what should have been love turned into rebellion and idolatry! What should have been love in obedience to the Great I Am, became love according to the great god 'I' of self—the god of "I like or don't like this way or that way of yours," both from them and from me.

In the surface I used to be proud of the fact that my kids were not doing dope or involved in prostitution. I thought that that was a feather in my cap as if was ALL due to my good effort. More than that, they were well liked by their teachers, their friends and even among mere acquaintances. Because God gifted them with charming personalities and other talents, wherever my kids happened to be, somebody always would come to tell me,

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"What beautiful children you have." "Your girls are precious." "You have a beautiful son!" I would swelled up like a big balloon at those times, as if it was all to my credit!

And if somebody would come and tell me any of their misdeeds, I just about die of shame! I used to be so proud of the fact that they saw to it that I would have my Holyday's gifts. They used to write me such beautiful thoughts on those Birthday's and Christmas' cards. The thoughts on those cards used to fill my eyes with tears and my heart with hope that my kids did love me.

For my kids did love me, they wanted to honor and respect me, but I was hoping not just for the love, honor and respect due to a Mother, I was craving for their worship deep within my wicked heart of human nature, their undivided attention at the times that I was down in the valley of self pity, suffering rejection of self love from my husbands or from other sources.

I had never realized it before, but the love that I had been expecting from my kids, with my human nature, was an idolatrous love. The kind of love that is owed only to God! And that's the kind of love that way down deep in my heart I had expected and actually craved for, from my kids, my husband and every other God given relationship because of ignorance of the Word of God.

In fact I was so busy craving for my husband's worship that I couldn't even tend to my children's needs most of the time because of the turmoil and confusion that developed in my family because of my demands of worship from my husband were not met and satisfied because perhaps he was busy making his own demands himself.

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More than that, that's the kind of love that my kids have had to pick up from me, and they did not like it, they saw clear through me, hence the rebellion, the lack of respect.

Appalling as it might be, during the periods of time that I was under bondage of the spirit of rejection of the perfect love of Christ, the rejection from self love, I attempted to dominate my kids with the bribe of going along with them in what ever they wanted to do under the guise of love and understanding. When in reality I was afraid to go against them and provoke them to wrath, as I thought I had done with my oldest one when I disapproved of her marriage causing a lot of hurt feelings.

It did not feel good to hurt and to suffer for what you believed to be right, and to have your pride and joy child, rebel against you and buck what you consider your God given judgment. Instead of coming to an understanding agreement in love, I became in bondage to the spirit of fear of rejection from my kid's love and understanding, and I began to crave for their worship with more intensity than before.

I realized that I had no control of my kids and I became a "yes" Mother, to gain that control. I no longer stood up for what it was right, or offer any advise to my beautiful children, but I went along with whatever my children wanted. Under the guise of love I began to give my children whatever they wanted, when in my heart my cry was "Baby, please worship me, give me your undivided attention, and don't look anywhere else for attention or for love, for it breaks mom's heart and makes her jealous! And if you can't give all of your love at least give me some of it just don't abandon me altogether for if you do, my heart is going to break."

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Because my husband could not be convinced to worship me, for he could have been craving for worship himself, I would turn to my kids to manipulate their attention in different ways. Sickening as it is, I believe that to be the brutal reality of what happened in my family and the bottom line of my divorce and scattering confusion of my whole family.

In my observations, husbands and wives as well as children have a way to see smack clear through that facade of love, they see it and they don't like it, but they don't know what to do about it. Because we are naturally clever creatures the normal thing is for a spouse or a child to give to the other spouse or to the parent exactly what the other party is craving for, for self's convenience.

But, as the relationship deteriorates or when the children began to grow up, and it is no longer convenient for them to worship the other party, they rebel against that situation and then they demand that the same worship to the other party in an earlier time or during childhood be paid back.

They expect the other party to 'spoil' them, to give them some of that worship that they have bestowed upon the other party on the onset of the relationship, or in earlier childhood when they did not know any better. I observed how my children had run past the course of the normal rebellion, by the mercy of God that granted them salvation through His Son Jesus Christ, but now that they had come to the Kingdom of God, and began to observe the lack of change in me and in a lot of the Christian world surrounding them, they rebelled against it.

To voice their stand, they joined the rest of the young adults that had made their own "Christian world," with a sign that read, "NO PHONIES ALLOWED, INCLUDING MY MOM!"

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for their Mother was running the same course as other phonies for a long time, deaf to the Word of God. The Lord says, he who has ears to hear let him hear. It had been a long time since I had been reading those words in the Bible, but I never knew that I didn't have ears.

Praise God though, for at last I, as well as we, all of His children, are receiving those ears to hear as we are coming into an understanding of what He is talking about in His Word! We are coming to an understanding of HIS PERFECT LOVE. In an incident during a prayer meeting at the Fellowship, I received enlightenment about the growth of the Body of Christ and the move of the Holy Spirit in our midst.

"I cast out the spirit of rejection that Thia is feeling in the name of Jesus. And I prayed Father that her girls come around and tell her that they love her. I pray that the girls come around and put their arms around her and tell her that they love her," my dear sister was praying in all sincerity but . . . that was exactly what I did not want from my kids anymore, I did not want them to come around loving me when they were not going along with God's Word. I interrupted!

"I do not want them to come around and put their arms around me and tell me that they love me Lord, I want them to respect me, that's all!" I burst out impertinently. I interrupted my sister's prayer without apology or consideration, because I gave way to my fears and doubts about whether or not she was praying the right way and with the right words, or according to the exact way that I saw things!

And I released the spirit of confusion around me. I did want to be polite and refined. But it almost seemed that The Lord God might have had a different idea of politeness and refinery than

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what I did have. For how could He had allowed me to be so uncouth at times? What a folly! For I did not think at the time anything about the spirit of confusion lurking around looking whom he might devour, neither about love or anybody or anything else because I was emotionally drained and exhausted, and I was not thinking at all!

We all stopped praying and everybody began to try to convince me that my kids did love me and that I was judging them when I claimed that they didn't love me.

I had been traveling all day. I was tired and sleepy. And my dear sisters were trying to comfort me with this words, "You are wrong, you are judging your children, they love you with the love of The Lord, they are good kids and they are walking with the Lord, you are just confused and hurt, but is going to be Ok, because The Lord is going to take care of everything!"

There was nothing wrong in those words but the confusion was already rampart and instead of everybody comforting me with any words of friendly advice they should have realized instead that I was out of order and just sat on me or do something to correct me instead of instigating me with words of wisdom that did not need to be uttered at that time, but we were all in the same pickle of confusion, and everybody was doing the best we could to get out of the trap that I had sprung up!

"No! my kids don't love me and I don't want them to love me, I just don't want them to love me, I want them to respect me!" I guess I was screaming in utter confusion, frustration and despair, I don't know. The spirit of confusion that I had just released, took hold of most everybody in the group like a wild fire out of control.

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One of my sisters started to look for the Scripture to prove or rather to expose the spirit of confusion and everybody was getting more confused by the ticking of a second. I was tired, and disgusted to catch myself in this predicament, disrupting the prayer meeting, so contrary to my idea and everybody's else idea of what God is and how God is, Oh God! what a pickle.

And in the middle of all of this God spoke and I don't know that anybody did hear Him. I know I did not until I settled down in my bed to rest at home. And when I look back I don't think God intended for anybody to hear that 'word' that night but me, because I was the guilty one.

"But you are only suppose to worship God!" God spoke that word through a sister, and all I did in the midst of the confusion, was to acknowledge it with a shout, "That's right! we are only suppose to love God!"

But, it all wound up alright for He works all things for the good of those who love Him, for those who are called according to His purposes.

And . . . I almost missed my ride because my sister that I interrupted while she was earnestly praying for me, was my 'buddy' with whom I intended to catch a ride! She was very much disturbed about the whole thing. She explained that she needed to go home because she was already late to go to bed and she needed to get up early to go to work. She got up and said "I going home!"

Praise God for the Holy Spirit's intervention. If it wouldn't have been for my sister's wise decision to leave the gathering rather than continuing in that arguing confusion, I don't know how much more of an spectacle I would have been made out

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myself and all of us by the awful spirit of confusion that was making havoc of the whole group!

"Wait a minute, I need a ride, please," I said, jumping up to my feet and forgetting about the whole thing in a flick of an eye, "That's why I am here. I am too tired to drive myself home, would you?" I pleaded humbly.

"Sure, come on" she said softening up her troubled expression, and all was well again.

"I am sorry about the whole thing, I am just tired," I said as I walking away. One of my sisters, turned around and smiled and waved her hand at me, as if to say, "Don't worry about it, you silly goose, just get out of here, we love you anyhow!" And I knew I was forgiven for my blunder.

We drove away, and we came to an agreement of love, with my 'buddy' driving me home. We always did agree, my 'buddy' and I. That's why we are 'buddies' we spoke different words but we meant the same thing, Jesus is the only one that can open our eyes and our ears and level us into the unity of the Holy Spirit.

We don't have to get edgy about it. I had come to understand what love is, and I realized that no, my kids did not love me. No, my kids did not love me because they did not have any respect for me. God had shown me that bleak reality and commissioned me to write about it.

He did not commission me to preach it to everybody to death blows if they did not get it exactly the way I saw and understood it—my kids did not love me in the way, in the order that they were supposed to love me, in accordance to the Word of God. Their priorities were mixed up.

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But God has made provision to teach us and lead us all into all truth and that provision is the Holy Spirit, not me. I didn't have to go around beating anybody with a stick and behaving like an ingrate fool, hurting everybody because they didn't see what God had shown me exactly the same way as I did and at the same time.

There was no regret and no sorrow because my kids didn't love me in the way that I wanted them to love me. I knew that in my heart and I didn't have to prove it to anybody. But sometimes I would forget and made big blunders, because the whole thing was still not engraved in my spirit.

That night was one of those times, I forgot and I made a big blunder, but my sisters' love covered up for me, for love covers a multitude of sins, the love of The Lord that is, which, that night was not charging my blunder to my account, and releasing me as forgiven and forgotten!

There was not only no regret because my children did not love and respect me, but I also had a godly sorrow that my children were missing the blessings of God's promises because they were not walking in obedience to the Word of God.

My children were not wicked kids because they loved me in the way that I taught them to love me, without respect. For the kind of love that I had taught my kids and which I had been demanding from my kids was idolatry.

But they were not practicing idolatry deliberately, they were practicing rebellion and walking in ignorance of the Word of God. Yes, God spoke out that night, "We are only suppose to worship God!" But I had been demanding my children's worship. I had called it love but it was not love what I had been craving for all of my life, it was worship!

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And what is worst, I had taught my children to worship me! My kids knew this, they had come to see the gruesome reality and rebelled against it. I couldn't and I wouldn't pray any longer for my kids worship. May God have mercy on us all and help us repent of this abomination, and set our priorities straight! My children were not to love me in worship. God forbid! They were to love and worship God and God only.

I was not to pray any longer the abominable prayers that I had been praying, but rather stand in the gap for my children and intercede for them as for all of the children of God. I was to stand my ground in the name of Jesus Christ and show respect to them and allow them to come to grips with God on their own and see what God is all about for themselves, just as God allowed me the same priority.

I was not to dominate and impose upon my children my own ideas and my way of life. Neither was I to be in bondage to their rebellion any longer because as The Lord God revealed His truth to me, His truth set me free! And indeed! I didn't have to worry and fret about it. I didn't have to behave like a heel just because anybody at any time moves a little out my exact way of thinking pattern.

Indeed, I didn't have to behave unseemly! For I was free, free, free at last! Praise be to the name of The Lord. His name is Jesus, Jesus, Jesus Christ my Lord! For He had set me free!

My beautiful children along with every body's beautiful children are under the protection of God, under the banner of His love and mercy, according the Word of God. If they are walking in disobedience is because of ignorance of the Word of God; but, God has not blot them out, neither will He ever blot them out.

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For there could not be a chance of they rejecting God because of the Spirit of Intercession—Jesus Christ in the heart of the believers interceding for His children. For His Word promises to heal us and lead us in weeping and mourning repentance to confess our sins and turn from our wicked ways. Read His Word in Isaiah 57:13-21.

No, there is not any longer tears of hope for the love-worship of my kids. There is no longer tears of bitterness and hate for lack of their love-worship. There is no despair in my tears at all. Only a weeping and mourning, not because I sinned against God when I did not teach them about the true love of God; that sin has been covered with the Blood of Jesus, and there is no longer any despair in self condemnation because I didn't teach them the ways of The Lord. I am free from that, free at last! Free forever!

The weeping and mourning that I am going through is in confident obedience to the Word of God. A mourning and weeping because we are sinning against God—grieving His heart because of our pride. There isn't any self-condemnation, and not any self-pity. There isn't any self at all. Only godly repentance in intercession for the people of God, in the name of Jesus.

Glory unto The Lord of mercy, my Lord Jesus Christ! In the name of Jesus means to me to stand in the place of Jesus to intercede with Him, because we are One with Him. And He gave us that commandment and that authority when He rose from the dead and sent us the Holy Spirit to teach us all things that we are to do in His name.

Praise and glory to the name of Jesus that has come into our lives and sent us The Holy Spirit to teach our children as well

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as we, the parents, what love is all about, and to straighten out the crooked roads in our lives.

I have been weeping for several days now. I have been on my face before God, weeping for His people, including myself and my children. And if I am to obey God, I shall continue this weeping `till He comes in glory to gather us to Himself.

I am not alone in this weeping. God is raising an army of intercessors. We are all weeping in confident obedience to the Word of God. Why? You may wonder if I am weeping under self-condemnation for sins that are already under the Blood of Jesus. But think about it, are those sins really under the Blood of Jesus? If they are, why are we still living a shallow Christian life, without power, without abundance?

And if I have the power and the abundance, has the rest of The Body of Christ come into the possession of that power and abundance? And if I do have the power and the abundance all of the time, need I not bother about anything or anybody else? Would I have the Holy Spirit within me if I was not to intercede for the very souls which Jesus came to save?

Think about it Christian, meditate on the Word of God and LET GOD SHOW YOU WHY we should confess our sins with mourning and weeping, repent of our wicked ways, and give ourselves in intercession for His people to come back to Him!

"Who does she think she is?" A scoffer may scoff. For the scoffers are very quick to point the finger and judge wickedly the truth of the Word of God. But don't wonder, neither scoff, for I have done both myself, and I can tell you with the voice of experience that is not profitable to either wonder or scoff.

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Rather get on your face yourself and cry to our Heavenly Father for mercy.

"Mercy, mercy, mercy, Oh God Almighty!" is my cry. Yes, we must cry for mercy for the time is near and a great majority of us are still praying to the gods of 'Blessings' and 'Favor' and 'Grace' and 'Rituals and 'Good works' and 'Laughter.' I know I was!

A great majority of us are still praying to the god of "Self" the great 'I' period. I know I was, and I was most faithful to that god too! But The Word of God calls us to walk in obedience to the Great I AM. Obedience is better than sacrifice. Obedience is even before worship. The Word of God calls us to live a godly life, in agreement with each other, perfect in love, in the name of Jesus.

May God have mercy on us and open our eyes to see the Truth and set us free! I have been walking with the Lord on and off since 1974. Like Paul, I have had fantastic, great spiritual experiences. Unlike Paul I have boasted about them, and I have been severely punished for it. Like David I have committed adultery and perhaps even murder. Like David after many trials and severe dealings with The Lord, I have come to a complete brokenness of my spirit. For God has given me a contrite heart as He gave David, and promised to all of his descendents in Jesus Christ, not just to me.

But He said to me one day early in the morning, in effect, "I want you to talk to my people." "Oh my God!" I exclaimed jumping out of my flesh, "I had wrecked two marriages, sacrificed perhaps 9 kids in the altar of my wickedness, and You want me to talk to your people? They are not going to listen to me, I have been a sinful woman and I have not applied myself

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and I have not bore any fruit for your people to see that they may believe me!" For I surely did not want to expose myself in public for fear of what was already exposed!

"I don't want them to listen to you, I want them to listen to Me. And Thia," He added on a kind word of encouragement, "You are right, you have not applied yourself because you do not know anything, not even what fruit bearing is!"

Now if Moses and Jeremiah and all the others in the Old and New Testament and in our present days could not get away from their commission to lead the people of God, or to prophesy, or whatever commission one is given, how could I get away from my commission to write?

I am not a prophet, neither do I pretend to be one. But God gave me a commission to deliver His Word, and to share the Truth that set me free in writing, and write I must. Woe unto me if I don't. But to give me the very Word that would affect the very flesh of my bones?

"Oh, God! That's my kids You are talking about, I am the one that offered them as human sacrifices, I am the one that sacrificed them in the altar of my wickedness. I am the one that did not bring them up in Your ways, Oh, God have mercy on them, don't punish them because of my sin! Oh God! Oh God! Oh God! Not my children please!" I cried to God in turmoil and in blind self reproach tempted to bow to the great "I" god that I had already rejected.

"Are they your children or My children?" He loaded that question to me, with a quieted still voice that calmed down the turmoil in my soul in an instant of time. "Forgive me, Father" I cried, "Forgive me for taking them back, forgive me, Father, for taking what does not belong to me. I have released them to

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You, they do not belong to me. They are Your children, not mine. I shall deliver Your Word to them as well as to all of Your people. Thank You, Father, for your mercy and forgiveness, thank You, Father, for everything."

I suppose that there could be a multitude of Psychologists and experts in earthly spiritual matters that could venture to point their finger at me to accuse me of a guilty conscious and negative thinking for there might be inconsistencies in vocabulary or doctrine in this work. But this is not a work of instruction or a treatise of doctrine. It was written under the guidance of The Holy Spirit as I actually experienced it and I have nothing to fear.

No, I have no fear of men, who can only hurt my body. I fear no earthly accusations. I fear God only who has the power to send both my body and soul to hell. I have no desire either to worship the flattery of this world from positive comments. I worship only God and God only. And to Him I bow in humble obedience to deliver His Word.

"And Father as You have given me the ability to put this message together so also give me the ability to deliver it to your people and cause them to receive it and to see You, hear You and worship You and You alone. For You have given me this commission and it is not my work but Yours and Yours alone, for Your glory and for Your honor in the name of Jesus. Thank you Father. Amen."

And after I had done so many revisions to this manuscript, following The Lord's guidance mind you, and I finally thought that it was finished, and I ran over to my Pastor, all excited about it thinking that I was ready to launch my 'speaking career' for sure, guess what my Pastor told me!

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"Let me pray about it." he told me, yes, "Let me pray about it" he told me. Can you imagine? After all, I have read a few books and articles on different subjects, I knew this was good stuff that I had written, I knew it was good and ready to go! Or ...was it? . . .

"Wonder why my Pastor told me he is going to pray `bout it, Lord? Is he putting me off and giving me the run around? Lord, ain't I ready Lord?" . . .

"Oh how I wish I did not have such a wise Pastor, that is always seeing things that I don't see, for something is fishy but I don't know what is it!" I thought to myself.

"It is a good thing that I do not answer wishful thinking," The Lord spoke to my heart, "Go see your Pastor again." . . .
`Wonder what's going to happen? I thought to myself in a whisper, really quiet, `n case somebody might hear my thoughts again and catch any hint of...

"Forget, it Thia! and quit wondering and doubting, go see your Pastor `cause God says so!" My inner man's voice, the voice of the Holy Spirit, calmly instructed me.

Well, you would have thought that I was supposed to run again all excited because The Holy Spirit had spoken! But no, it does work like that, and I was beginning to learn. I did not run all excited to my Pastor this time. I waited `till The Lord worked some more in the experience of this work that He had commissioned me to write about, and `till He, The Lord, made some more revisions, and `till He, The Lord, made the right time for me to meet with my Pastor, much later than what I had planned on. And it did work out alright, it worked out for the good of them that love Him and are called according to His purposes. There is joy in the presence of The Lord. There

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is joy inexplicable and full of glory that the world and the flesh will never come to understand.

Things worked out alright, but not according to my human reasoning or the folly of my human pleasure. The joy of The Lord and the peace that passes all understanding became my strength. Whether The Lord had chosen that I served Him from a hut in the woods or a palace in the City. Whether I have had a 'speaking career,' or a 'helps ministry,' or no 'ministry' at all. Whether I laughed or cried. Should I had been sick or healthy, cold or warm, hungry or fully satisfied. . . .

Whatever, whenever, wherever, I knew, as I knew, in the most secret depth of my being, that The Lord was my Shepherd and I shall not wanted.

He had given me the commission to write and He was to fulfill it, in His time and for His glory and the honor of His name, not mine. It seemed that almost too quickly the whole spectrum of my life changed the moment that I surrendered my life completely to the Lord, and finally said, "Not my will Lord, but your will be done."

My priorities fell into order and I began to walk in the Spirit, no longer struggling to conform to my ideas and the ideas of everybody around me, but to the guidance of The Holy Spirit. I found that guidance in the simplicity of the Gospel, the good news of Jesus Christ.

I went back to the simplicity of the Bible and I began to do what the Bible says to do, the number one thing that the Bible says to do, "Trust Jesus to save you from your sins, have faith in Jesus for He alone can save you from your sins."

I ended all the struggle to please everybody; I ended all the struggle to do what seemed right to me; and I began to ask

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God directly, "Now, what Lord? What's next?" Whatever came to me, trials, tribulations, falling downs, cheer or sorrow, I came to The Lord with praise and thanksgiving, many times with exuberant joy and other times with a broken heart, but all the time with gladness in my heart I would exclaim, "Praise the Lord anyhow, I love you Lord, I worship You, and I trust You to guide me, direct me, and fulfill Your will in me, now what Lord? What's next?"

It had been 4 years since my divorce, one year since my nervous breakdown, better than 47 years since my birth, perhaps 37 years since my salvation, and about 12 years since I had made a decision to follow Jesus.

My life time of vain struggle, confusion, misery and tragedy, all changed in a moment of time, into a life with a purpose of order and confidence to serve the purpose and the order of my Maker for which I was born. That's the miracle, that's the change of our carnal life for the more abundant life, the eternal life characterized by abiding fellowship with God through Jesus Christ for eternity, that we cannot make ourselves.

It doesn't matter how hard or how little we struggle to make that change ourselves. It doesn't matter how many instructions we receive in how we can accomplish the epitome of successful Christian living. It doesn't matter whatever we do in the power of our fleshly human understanding. Until we let go of our carnal life and let God do His will in us, nothing, nothing can take the place of God's plan for us.

We can spend our life time searching and reasoning how can we have that abundant life, and even living in deception thinking that we already have it. The answer is and it shall be the same according to God's Word: we can't obtain that life by

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ourselves, by our methods, our ways, our human wisdom, or by none of our plans. Only God can. And He can, only when we repent of struggling to live according to our will, ignoring His will, and we come with humbleness to surrender our will, our very own self to Him.

That is why He has us to cry out to Him for mercy and intercede in the name of Jesus, that He may bring us to the true repentance, the turning around of our wills to Him, that His body may be united together and abide with one accord in Him to bear witness to the lost world of His love and His mercy. For it is Him who calls us by His name that calls us also to intercede and call on Him, that He might heal our land. Alleluia!

Chapter 6

Back into the will of God...

In the belly of the whale, I finally prayed and surrendered to God! The Lord spoke and the whale of Wilmington literally spewed me forth!

What was the conflict that had developed in my family and why it was necessary for me to leave Wilmington? The conflict that developed in my family was one of disagreement and misunderstanding. The bottom line of the disagreement was my line, for I did not belong there to begin with, for the Lord's will was not for me to fit in that Fellowship.

But, disregarding God's will, I wanted to please my children and do what seemed right to me to be accepted by Christian's circles for fear of rejection, because I allowed my emotions to overcome me.

Dear reader, let me explain further what I mean. Before I had the mental breakdown the Lord had commissioned me to give of his love at my job and in my relationship with my Honey and his family, to be a witness for Him to minister salvation to them. In other words, I was not called to go around talking empty religious words to everybody around me, but in my consciousness of God's love within my own self, I was to demonstrate that love by living a Christ-like life.

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Furthermore, it is not that I was indispensable in that commission, but the Lord had given me that privilege to glorify His Name not mine. For the honor to share God's love within me belonged to God, because I, no more could have given love on my own than the man in the moon could have travel without a space suit. Yet, I really did not have anything to worry about, for the Lord had equipped me to fulfill the commission that He had given me, things were under the Lordship of Jesus Christ and His love abounded in my heart.

My life had began to take the right direction. Even though, when the trial of the nervous breakdown came, I lost faith, I panicked and I left in haste thinking that I was doing the right thing. I allowed my feelings and emotional reactions to drive me 1000 miles away from the will of God. But God is merciful and He never leaves nor forsakes us, He does turn everything for the good of them that love Him and are called according to His purposes. His promise is to lead us, and to be our God and if we fall we will not stay fallen for He picks us up.

So, the Lord used the year that I stayed in Wilmington for the good of all of us, my family as well as our Fellowship. For the situation when I arrived at Wilmington, even from the beginning, developed into one of turmoil and disaster.

First of all my younger daughter, who had come to my aid when my Honey brought me to the Mental Ward at Charity Hospital in New Orleans, and with whom I had come to share living quarters, my young daughter, Roxana, became very much distressed with the whole situation. For she was in a transitional stage, seeking God's direction for His will in her life and making plans to move on her own quarters. But when the emergency arose, she flew to my aid, putting aside her own concerns unselfishly. It was a beautiful and heroic act that she performed with the power

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of love from Jesus Christ through the guidance of the Holy Spirit, for indeed, she is a dedicated Christian.

"The first thing we need to do is to get a bed for you," she said shortly after we arrived in Wilmington, concerned for my comfort.

"No! The first thing I need to do is to get a table or a desk or something to set up my computer to write!" I said indignantly, for I was comfortable sleeping on her couch.

I did not realize that it was a bother to my daughter for me to sleep on her couch because that gave a messy appearance to the apartment, and she is an stickler for order and cleanliness.

"In that case you find your way around, but you can't sleep on the couch anymore because it looks too messy!" She told me, aggravated at my lack of consideration.

"Well, I believe I can do just that!" I said and began to find my way around on my own. I did not realize at the time of my lack of consideration, my lack of understanding, my whole selfish attitude. I felt hurt because I, too, had been seeking God's direction for His will in my life; I had been living alone and had known that God was indeed directing me until the breakdown.

Now, I had left my Honey in New Orleans, and my heart was broken because we had become part of each other's life and he was a comfort to me and I to him. But I thought that my Honey was going to marry me to protect me from hardship, for I have never been practical in my life, and I thought that he loved me enough to give me his name and spend the rest of our lives together.

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I did not realize how impractical I was because my Honey couldn't marry because of my circumstances and that the whole thing was only a delusion in my mind from the Word of God.

Now I was confused and distressed not knowing which way to turn, without money, job or any material possession except for my clothes, my computer and sewing machine. I withdrew in self-pity and hurt feelings, embarrassed about my delusions; and my daughter withdrew herself from me.

Henceforth, the situation developed into one of turmoil and disaster. I wound up not finding a bed to sleep on, or anybody willing to find one for me. It seemed like heaven had turned bleak, and God Himself had abandoned me. I set up a pallet on one corner of my bedroom to sleep on, and I obtained a desk-table from the PTL and set up my computer in the walk-in closet. It would not have been such an uncomfortable and miserable situation but for the fact that my daughter had a cat, which was her pride and joy, an expensive cat that was given to her, and this cat was infested with fleas and so was the whole apartment.

My daughter was going through financial difficulties; therefore, she could not afford to get the cat dipped, so, it was fruitless to spray the apartment. In reality though, the essence of the matter was the fact that we were confused and in turmoil, and we could not figure out not even the simplest thing as to take care of the cat and the fleas. She had failed to consider not only my discomfort of sleeping on the floor, but also the harassment I was suffering day and night, from the infestation of fleas which was driving me insane.

But her failure was so because I had failed to be agreeable and understanding. She had come to my aid, unselfishly, willing to

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give anything to help her mother, and I responded with haughtiness and inconsideration towards her.

Of course, at the time I had not seen it like that because I was enmeshed in my own troubles and tribulations and it was impossible for me to come to an understanding agreement with my child. I was sinning, for I was a carnal Christian, walking by the spirit of the flesh.

In other words I was utterly selfish—the root of all of our sins was deeply seeded within me. Therefore, I was down and out, unable to find work, full of self-pity and hurt feelings.

"Will you sew for me? I'll pay you good money!" A dear sister told me one day when we were both volunteering our services at The People that Loves Center, which is commonly referred to, as the PTL.

"Indeed not!" I answered, "I won't sew for money, even for good money, that's hard work and nobody can pay me enough for it." I added with determination not to get into such nerve racking situation.

"Pray about it," she said, "I'll pay you good and you need money to live on, don't you?" she admonished me.

She went into another room, but her words rang in my ear, "I'll pay you good and you need money, don't you?" I thought about it but for a few minutes and began to consider that I didn't even have a nickel to my name. I quickly realize that I was wasting the ability and talent that God had given me not only to sew but to do it expertly. I was also beginning to see that I was suffering lack and that perhaps I was receiving my just reward for not being agreeable and submissive to the will of God.

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"Alright, I'll sew for you, I do need money and I do have the ability to sew, what do you want me to sew?" I told my sister, more out of fear of punishment than out of willingness to abide in the will of God. When the time came for me to deliver the garments that I had sewn for my sister, she paid me a good sum of money.

"This is too much!" I started to say, "Do they pay that much for sewing over here?"

"It is worth that much and more to me," she said, "I needed those skirts and I could not find anybody to make them for me. And yes, they pay good for sewing over here, you could make a living sewing, there is a need for good seamstresses over here and you did an excellent job in these skirts, you could make plenty money. I'll bring you some more work. OK?"

I went back to my home town, in the West bank of New Orleans for Christmas, to visit my Honey and to make a decision about what direction to take in my life, like I had promised to do when I left. I had hoped in my heart that I was going home to stay, but it did not worked out that way. My Honey was completely aware of the change that was taking place within myself and he was very much impressed before the breakdown; but now he did not approve of what was to him my new way of living, for my new way of living was beyond his comprehension and he totally rejected it.

Therefore, I had to come back to Wilmington, defeated and dejected because my Honey did not understand nor was he willing to understand that my way of living was not new, it was rather the way I lived before I met him. I thought I had discovered that he did not know the real me at all, for he met me at a period of time in my life when I was fallen down into sinful living and out of

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fellowship with God and God's people. But, actually, he understood me only too well.

Anyhow, I thought and felt that he only knew the fallen down Thia he had met just a couple of years before and I thought that he did not want me because I had come back to be what I had considered "a Christian woman." So, when I came back to Wilmington from that visit to Westwego, around New Orleans, I had made plans to work out a plan to develop a sewing business to make a living and start life over again in Wilmington, because I had lost hope to ever come back to my Honey and his family.

But once again I met with a myriad of obstacles. The chief obstacle was the lack of cooperation from my children, for they had withdrawn their help completely. They left me to fend for myself and became short of leaving me without shelter altogether, because of my obstinacy in doing things my way only.

Nevertheless, God in His infinite mercy saw to it that I did have shelter and food, and even transportation. And I found a part time job doing alterations for a refined and selected fashions' store, so I was able to come up with my share of the rent and utilities for the apartment. Also, God put it in my Honey's heart to come to visit me in Wilmington to help me out. The first thing that my Honey would do was to stock up my pantry with groceries.

It was such fun to go to the grocery store with my Honey. For we did have everything we needed and we were not starving by any stretch of the imagination but I never did realize that we did not have superabundance of groceries until my grocery cart would be so overloaded that my Honey would say, "Do you think we could use a U-Haul truck?" And automatically I would say, "Could you afford one? I believe I could use it!"

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Still, I could not take the pressure of a full time job to earn a decent living to build a future and fulfill the commission to write that God had given me. Neither I felt comfortable with the pressure of the responsibility to come up with my share of the rent money or inflict an unjust burden on my daughter. Thus I was miserable, frustrated, living in anxiety and instability, tossed to and fro, sometimes able to hear God and sometimes not knowing which way to turn.

In the midst of all of these circumstances I was seeking God in earnest, and God was ministering and working in my life both to will and to do of His own good pleasure. But I was getting more and more fidgety and impatient everyday because things were not working the way I thought they were supposed to work and in accordance with what everybody's understanding of how things are supposed to work.

And to make matters more complicated for everybody around and for myself, our enemy, the Devil and his cohorts, were working without ceasing to cause us more confusion and turmoil, to undermine our faith and to keep us under bondage, thus preventing us from receiving the blessings from the Lord.

Finally the Lord God told me in many different ways that He was finished with me in Wilmington and that He was getting ready to move me; but I did not believe God for by then I had been listening to so many voices and leadings that I was becoming confused and I decided to make an effort to use plain common sense alone, and to follow the advice that suited me better according to my own way of thinking.

I thought that I could make a go of life in Wilmington, because by all indications I had plenty of opportunities. There were several incidents that indicated to me that the Lord was indeed speak-

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ing to me, but I insisted in giving it a try at what I thought was the right thing to do.

Besides, I was sewing for my own customers now and I was making a living and I thought it to be what the Lord wanted me to do, for I did not realize that I was only doing it to please everybody, so that they wouldn't think that I was slothful and unwilling to work. My main concern had become not in what could have been God's will for me, but in what they: my daughters, son in law, and the congregation of the Fellowship to which we belonged, thought about me, and what I thought will make me look good to them to avoid rejection.

I kept calling everybody with my troubles and tribulations and asking for advice. My sisters and brothers were loving and understanding, but, the flesh is flesh and sometimes I would provoke some of them to advice me with the power of the flesh.

Nevertheless, walking in the Spirit of the Lord one of my sisters gave me a word from the Lord, "The Lord is your Shepherd, and His sheep hear His voice, you do not need to have the approval of men to do whatever the Lord is leading you to do." But at the time that my sister gave me that Word, I did not receive it, for I thought that she just didn't want to hear my problems because she was rejecting me.

"To make a career in a secular world, or to go in business for yourself, is not My will for you, what if I chose for you to be My slave, bound only to Me but free from an earthly master? I have given you a commission to write, why don't you trust Me?" The Lord kept telling me.

"Lord, You gave me this ability to sew, You gave me this talent, You provided the work for me, please, Lord, I can't do it fast enough, I can't produce the way that I am expected to produce,

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help me Lord, help me Lord. You have helped me before, why is it that sometimes You help me and sometimes You don't? Help me Lord, I can't do it on my own!" I kept pleading and arguing with The Lord, unwilling to trust The Lord and accept that it was indeed the Lord talking to me.

I kept thinking that The Lord somehow was going to turn the wheel of success for me and I was going to emerge triumphantly to the pleasing and delight of everybody. The Lord kept telling me in the Scriptures, and in different readings to trust Him, and to trust Him alone and not to trust in my abilities, whether my abilities were in writing or sewing or whatever other ability He had given me.

But I ignored Him because I thought that I was doing the right thing and if I quit sewing everybody was going to think wrong about me. I figured they would think that I didn't want to work to make a living, and since the Scripture says that if you don't work you don't eat, everybody was not going to look kindly upon me. I kept on sewing against all pressure and tension from working on my own power.

In the meantime, my son had come to spend part of his summer vacation with me. I noticed that my son didn't know too much about the Lord, and that he was not walking with the Lord as he should have been walking, but only pretending to be a good Christian who loved the Lord to gain himself approval from his peers, from me, and from others.

The Lord had been convicting me of my carnal living and showing me how wicked I was in the flesh, and how wicked I had been in the past. But I became manipulative of the circumstances to make up for my past sins, and to work out my own salvation in my living arrangements.

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It occurred to me that I had been so wicked that I had failed to bring my children up in the ways of The Lord, and that such was the reason that my son was growing up pretending to be a Christian rather than being one, and that now The Lord could give me a chance to make it up to my son, if my son would want to come to live with me.

"Oh yes, yes, yes, I want to come and live with you! I was hoping that you would ask me!" my son told me all excited. Well expected of a 13 year old because he has affection and concern for his mother and partially because he, also, was manipulating his way in a broken home.

"Well," I said, "this may be a providence from God, for with what your father sends me for your support, I might not have to work as hard and I shall have time for my writing."

"You mean he has to send you money for my support?" He said, dejected and with a sad voice.

"Of course! son," I said impatiently, "I can't support you, I can hardly support my own self, I am not making enough money, but it shouldn't be any problem for your father, he makes enough money to send me enough for your support." I added with the certainty that there were not going to be any difficulties about such basic thing as child support.

For I thought that I was acting with pure motives. "Well," my son said, still dejected, "if daddy has to send money, I don't believe he would let me come because he is having financial difficulties, and I don't think he would be able to send you any money at all."

"Well, Son," I said with a pain in my heart, "there is no way that I can bring you to live with me if your father does not give me

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financial support, we will have to wait until I can make enough money to support both of us."

But my son prayed and begged God to make a way for him to come to live with me. "I'll make a deal with you," I finally told my son, "I will not mention to your father anything about money, but God is going to have to put it in his heart to send me enough to support you, because I don't know how much to ask for anyhow, but when we divorced I was awarded \$100.00 a week for your support, so, I am sure he'll give us at least half that much."

"Thank you, mom!" he exclaimed, "that's all I asked of you, don't ask daddy for any money, just give me a chance to come and live with you, God is going to provide you'll see, you'll see!"

"Alright," I told him, touched by his strong desire to come to live with me, "I'll call your father and see what happens."

I went to visit a Charismatic Fellowship sometime in August. The Word of prophecy came forth for me. "The Word is in you but the fear of men has prevented it from coming forth, I am ready to launch you out in the deep, step forth in faith and you shall come out with the biggest catch you have ever dreamed possible."

It was the first time that the Lord gave the Word of prophecy on what He was preparing to do in my life, and I missed most of the words but the essence of the prophesy reached my spirit, even though I came back home to dwell on what the Lord meant by launching me out in the deep and misinterpreted the whole meaning of the prophesy; for shortly after that prophesy, I thought that the Lord meant for me to go in the sewing business full time, to teach sewing and design one of a kind suits for special people, for the elite.

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I had an associate with whom I have been working to get a Sewing School started, so, I called her and told her of my intentions and immediately she instructed me to find a building where we could open up. She was going to finance the whole thing and even give me a salary plus commission to start the business.

Within a week I found the perfect location for the right price, and I thought that was the sure thing that The Lord wanted me to do, except that my ability and desire to sew were not there anymore.

I was almost finished with some outfits that I was doing for this very special customer of mine, that had supplied me with work enough to pay my rent for two months and she had bragged and encouraged me dearly to go ahead and make a go out my life for she felt certain of my ability and talent for sewing. It was a joy sewing for her, and I felt certain that, that was a good sign.

But, my special customer had to leave town for a month and I decided to take some work from a friend of mine to make up my rent money for that month. Well, I did not think anything of being against God's will for everything pointed in the right direction, except my ability and my desire to sew.

I finally prayed again, "Lord, why is it that sometimes you blessed me and sometimes you don't. What am I going to do Lord, if I can't put this dress together? What am I going to do Lord?"

Somehow, I couldn't put together the dress that I was working on. I was about to pull the hair out of my head. The pattern pieces, just wouldn't match at all.

As I recollect, I decided to take a break and I opened up my Bible to Jeremiah Chapter 15. By the time I got to verse 17-18, I was

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kind of realizing that that was the way that I had been praying lately; but when I got to verse 19, I started shouting Alleluias.

Jeremiah 15:19 (LBV)

"Then The Lord replied: Stop this foolishness and talk some sense! Only if you return to trusting me will I let you continue as my spokesman. You are to influence them not let them influence you! They will fight against you like a besieging army against a high city wall. But they will not conquer you for I am with you to protect and deliver you, says The Lord. Yes I will certainly deliver you from these wicked men and rescue you from their ruthless hands."

Then I noticed the date on the side of verse 19 and the highlighting. It had been almost exactly a month since the Lord had given me that same Scripture to confirm His Word of prophecy given to me then.

"I ought to have my head examined," I thought to myself, "here, God has been speaking so clearly to me, and I am beating my head against the wall because I have ignored Him, I must be nuts, hardheaded, deaf and dumb, He has been speaking to me all of this time and I better hearken unto His voice!"

I picked up all the sewing stuff for the job that I was working on that I had laying around, I put it all in the same box that I had received it in, and I wrote a note to my friend,

"My dearest sis, Please don't murder me. I had really good intentions when I took this assignment, but I did it out of the will of The Lord and I just can't complete it! I have given it a hard-man's try, but to no avail. I tried to call you, a couple of times but couldn't reach you. So, I am putting this in UPS and hope that you

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don't kill me, not yet anyhow. Please let me know that you still love me, sometime soon. I love you. Your Sister in Christ."

It was then when I started looking for the information about the Christian Writers Workshop that my sister in the Lord had told me about a while back and I sent my manuscript as it was to the workshop. For it had been put on the shelf for many months.

Then I got back into the manuscript and the Lord opened up the windows of heaven, for my writing all of a sudden took a leap towards perfection.

I was marveling at my own ability, for I had not touched a writing manual in months, and my computer was not in use for many days. But when the manuscript came back to me with a note to find somebody that knew about paragraphing and spelling to paragraph and correct the extremely long paragraphs and the multiple spelling errors, I called my daughter who is a college graduate and extremely bright, and she turned me down.

I got my feelings hurt because I did not realize that it was the Lord who was not willing to share His glory with anybody of my choosing. I turned on that manuscript in the computer and worked it out, addressed and sent it back to the workshop leader. And when I attended the workshop and I was told that my manuscript was perfect, I understood why The Lord did not let my daughter help me with it. And I realize then more than ever before that truly the Lord was doing the writing, not me.

Meanwhile, the end of the month was only a couple of weeks away, and I began to worry about the rent. I prayed about it and should have waited for The Lord to act and move in the heart of my son's father's or my Honey, or somehow to supply the rent money, as He had supplied it for a whole year.

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But instead I lost faith and I panicked at the first sight of opposition, because it was so ordained from God Himself. But at the time I did not see it that way. My son has always wanted to live with me, but I have not been able to support him. His father has not been willing to supply adequate support for him to live with me, basically because of the fact that it is, to my understanding, a popular concept that the mother has to contribute to the financial support of the child. That is not the truth taught in the Scriptures but anybody has the right to their own concepts and only God can convict anybody of the truth.

Nevertheless, on the inspiration of Holy Spirit I wrote a letter to my son's father, quoting him Isaiah 58, because I had known that he was fasting for certain family problems, and The Lord inspired me to write that letter not only to test my humbleness but also to give my son's father an opportunity to receive a blessing.

But my son's father apparently did not receive my letter in the spirit that I wrote it because he never answered me, nor gave me the help requested, but instead he called one of my daughters he told her about the letter. My daughter, instead of talking to me about it so that we could have come to an understanding agreement, became very upset when I confronted her about why had she not told me that her step-father had called her about the letter and she chose not to discuss the matter and I thought that she had chosen to form her own opinion to reject me and favor her step-father.

Frustrated, because I thought my own daughter had turned against me and I couldn't comprehend why my daughter had turned against me, telling me that in her opinion I was receiving enough support, that it was not my son's father responsibility to support me to write that book which was only important to me and I was wrong for asking for more support, I began to loose faith. "Could

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you support your son with \$150.00 a month?! I blurted out, enraged at the preposterous assumption, "you need to have your head examined! You are utterly ridiculous and inconsiderate."

And the only thought hammering in my head was "What had my son's father told her? Or even whether or not he would send any help at all, which all remained a mystery because I felt, she refused to discuss the matter." And I became very upset, angry and hurt about the whole thing. I sinned and I lost faith! And I would have remained in my sin if it would not have been for the Lord Who worked things out the way He did.

"I don't have the rent money, I don't have any work because I don't want to work because I have to write, I am not getting any support from anywhere and I am just letting you know in advance about it!" I shouted out to my daughter with whom I was sharing the rent of the apartment.

"Well, I can't support you either and I am moving out on my own," she shouted back at me. "The sooner the better," I shouted louder, "I'm going back to New Orleans too, I don't want to be here anyhow!" In the meantime my son was on pins and needles because he did not want to go back to his father and leave his friends and me and his sisters behind. I got back to the Lord in prayer on his behalf and I thought that the Lord had answer me. I wrote my daughter a letter about what I thought to be my answer.

"My dearest, Now that our feelings have been vented out, we must, we have to come to realize that we do not live in our feelings. I feel like going back to New Orleans, I never wanted to stay here. I wanted to go back to stay in New Orleans. You feel like living by yourself. You want your privacy. You never wanted to live with me. But we do not live in our feelings. And also

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we do not live with our heads. In other words, it is not what we feel and it is not what we think. We are Christians. We are like Christ. We live according to the will of our Father which is in heaven.

"For all matters and purpose I am already packed, for I loathe your daily snicker. But God told me this morning,

'Unpack your things and send the stories that I have given you to the magazines I shall tell you, and you shall have the rent money.' Do whatever you want to do, I am going to trust God. Your mother."

After I wrote that letter I had peace in my mind because I knew that the Lord answers prayers and I knew that things were going to work out for our good, but I didn't know that, that was not The Lord's perfect will for us. I did not realize how much I was catering to my flesh, until my daughter refused my solution for the rent and insisted in moving of her own, accusing me of expecting her to support me.

After a lot of agonizing and repentant prayer I began to see what I was doing and what needed to be done. I realize that my son needed to live with his father, not me, for God has not given me the financial responsibility to raise my children, he gave that responsibility to their father. My son's father chose somebody else to raise my son and that is between him and God, I do not judge him for he is not my servant, but God's, and only God has the right to judge His servants.

I realized also that God allowed my son to come and spend enough time with me to learn or at least to get an idea that he does have a Mother that loves him and is praying for him, to get an idea of the reason and circumstances of my life and of life in general. And also to get an idea that he is to seek God for God and not

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for his pleasure; and not to blame his father, me, or anybody else for his actions. I communicated this to my son and we made a joint decision that indeed he should go back to live with his father.

But things did not work out the way we planned, there were still more trials to come; trials from the hand of God to move me quickly out of the belly of the whale whence I had been confined because of my running away from my commission to be a witness and a carrier of His love in my city of Nineveh, meaning the environment in which I was circulating at the time of my calling.

My mind was crowded with everything that I was taking in, and my emotions were shattered to pieces. I was in danger of losing my mind again, because I was so deeply hurt emotionally with both the attitude of my children and I. But it was so ordained from the Lord, for the Scripture says,

"He who loves father and mother and children more than Me, is not worthy of Me."

The Lord was stripping me from all the affections from the flesh. I abandoned myself to the Lord, and I wrote,

"Nov./28/86 Now what Lord? Where do I go from here? I am cornered like a scary cat again. I am helpless Lord! Unless You intervene and rescue me I am undone! But whatever comes Lord, You alone are my God and in You alone I do put my trust. I fear the bleak future without a job without steady income without steady support. I fear Lord all the darts of judgment coming against me. I fear Lord my own fears.

"But You are my God and You have not given me the spirit of fear and timidity but of power and love and a sound mind. You are my God and Your promises are for me, too, for I am Your

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child according to Your Word. My heart is clean, for You have cleansed me with Your Word and I shall fear no evil. I reject the darts of judgment with an understanding of ignorance and I will Your blessings on the originators of those darts with the spirit of forgiveness. Forgive them Lord and count it not to their account for they don't know the circumstances.

"As for me, Oh God, keep me from being obstinate and from evil aberrations. I will to follow Your path and Your path alone. Be it Your will Lord to give me a job or not a job, a home or not a home, a family or not a family, a Fellowship or not a Fellowship. Be it Your will that I'll go to Heaven or Hell, You are still my God, and in You alone I do put my trust!"

But my mind was in a turmoil, overcrowded with everything going on and it began to spin and an evil fear came upon me that it was going to snap out again. But God sent me a couple from the congregation. The Harvells, this godly couple came to me with their heart full of love and compassionate understanding for the situation of my whole family and they took me to their home. At their home they ministered to me in love, laying their family life down to help me out.

Truly Jesus had His way with them. The husband is an ordained minister of the Word of God and the wife is one with her husband. Together, this couple, they live out Jesus Christ, Who rules and reigns within their hearts. At their home, through their love and care the evil fear was overcome and the peace of the Lord got a hold of my heart. The light of the Holy Spirit shone in my mind and I began to hear what the Lord wanted me to do and where I was supposed to go.

The Harvells suggested for me not to stay in Wilmington and to pray about to where I could go. The Lord inspired me to call

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Neen and Skee Picone. Neen did not even let me finish asking and she said, “Thia, you are welcome to come and live with us as long as you want. Come on, we welcome you.” What a blessing!

That Sunday evening they brought me back to my apartment cool, calm, and collected and with money to pay my share of the rent. We are truly members of the Body of Christ, and when one member hurts, the Head of the Body knows what member to use to heal and comfort that member. Alleluia! Glory unto the Lord!

And so, the hand of the Lord was strong upon me, and my whole family, my very own flesh and blood and myself turned into a hellish of a turmoil in disagreement and strife. Until, like Jonah, I cried unto the Lord and said, "Mercy Oh my God! Mercy! I'm the guilty one! I'm the one out of Your will! Lead me Lord, and I shall go. Lead me Lord and I shall do whatever You will have me do. Mercy Oh God! Mercy!"

And he quickly answered me. Within a week, I was on my way back to New Orleans. From the belly of the whale in Wilmington to the shores of Mississippi He sent me, in a miraculous journey in a broken down automobile and barely enough money to cover the gas expense. Alleluia! Yes, the Lord spoke and the whale of Wilmington literally spewed me forth, for the day I left was a dreadfully rainy and stormy day in Wilmington.

It was Wilmington, like a figure of a big whale, spewing forth repentant Jonah. Before I left, I had seen my guilt and I had earnestly prayed a repentant prayer, and vowed to the Lord to go wherever He would send me, but I had no hope to come back to my Nineveh—my Honey and his family— because I thought I had lost my chance, for my Honey was tired of waiting for me

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and he was considering to give up his waiting on me and to live it up and enjoy his life, without me.

I was depressed and hopeless of human affection the day I left Wilmington, without any knowledge whatsoever of what the future had in store for me. I had broken the strongest ties that there is in human nature—the affection for one's own children and mate—it was such a heavy emotional burden; and yet, I had peace within my being!

I had written my heart out to my Honey, expressing all that was within me that I had not expressed before, and in a Post Script I wrote, "PS: I am leaving Wilmington for no other reason than I can not find help over here to dedicate myself to writing. I have no ulterior motives. I can not take the pressure of a regular job, I needed help from my kids or from somebody, which I could not find over here, because nobody wants to take a chance on me, everybody is afraid that I am going to become a burden, unless I get a regular job.

Everybody is willing to help me out with hand outs and gifts to get a job and become a useful citizen, like everybody else. But I did not need any hand-outs or gifts to help me to get a job. I do have the intelligence to get a job but I don't have the ability to keep a job, that's the simple truth. I had a job and I could not keep it."

I was totally disgusted with my whole family and although I had accepted the whole situation from the hand of The Lord and I had seen and confessed my guilt, the tears of sorrow and disgust from the sight of the ugliness of my flesh were still flowing through my eyes and I was unable to dry them up with my power.

But deep within me, I was not disturbed, but calm and confident in God alone. And in my computer 4 days later I recorded,

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"December 16/86. Today is the day that the Lord has made, let us rejoice and be glad about it. It is a dreary and rainy day, the kind of day that makes human flesh feel the grip of the bondage of depression and discouragement. But Oh, the joy of the soul that has been set free by the truth of Jesus Christ! Neither rain nor sunshine makes a difference in the Joy of The Lord!

"I left Wilmington, North Carolina 4 days ago, I have traveled better than 800 miles in the rain and sunshine, with my soul free from anxiety or worry, basking in the joy of the Lord. I arrived in Waveland, Mississippi Sunday, December 14, at 3:35 pm, my present destination."

One of my sister in the Lord called me to see how had it gone, and I wrote in a long letter to her all the details.

"December 17/86. My dearest Myrtle, How great it was to hear your voice on the phone. It was such boost of love to my spirit. How are you? How is everybody? How is Pastor? Do you all miss me? Well, I miss you too! The Lord is so good, though. Truly, there is so many blessings to count on that there is not enough room to store them up.

"It was a dreary day the day I left, eh? And yet in my heart I was singing alleluias, for the light of Jesus shone in your thoughtfulness to bid me farewell. The warmth of that breakfast, and the blessings from Pastor were with me during the small journey and shall remain with me throughout eternity, because love is forever! The Scripture says that by our love they shall know that we are Christians, how true it is.

"More and more love is bursting up in every fellowship of the Body of Christ. It is such wonderful thing to know the love of the Lord, to know that we love each other even when it seems sometimes that love is nowhere around. For as I left even though

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it did not seem to matter to anybody but a few, I know that in our hearts there was, is, and shall always be the unity of the Spirit of the Love of Jesus Christ binding us all together.

"I am getting ready right now to go meet with a possible Fellowship nearby. I do not know if this is the one, all I know is that The Lord is with me, and He goes ahead of me and behind me where ever He leads me. I shall let you know."

And I recorded in my computer, "December 24/86. Today is Christmas eve of 1986. I am a guest in the home of my dear friends, Neen and Skee Picone. I arrived here 10 days ago. The family, Neen and Skee and two of their grandchildren, Brandy and Scottie have been home since I arrived, but they left to spend the Holidays with the rest of the family in New Orleans; so, I am to face Christmas day for the first time in my life, all by myself.

"What is it that I am feeling? Loneliness? Rejection? Heart brokenness? Hurtfulness? Dejection? Frustration? Angriness? . . .

But what are feelings! What I am feeling is only an emotional state or reaction towards my flesh, my earthly life, namely my family, my loved ones, my friends. How dull and thick can emotional reactions be! How contrary to real love, giving love, the love of Christ! I didn't have to be here all by myself. There were a number of places that I could have gone, but I chose to be by myself.

"Why? I chose to be by myself and meditate on what Christ, Jesus Christ is all about. For years and years I have gone along with the Christmas celebration and listened and abided by everybody else's concept of Christmas.

"I realize now that for years and years I have done the same about every aspect of my life. I have listened and abided by everybody

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else's concept of life; whether it was the secular life or the Christian life concept.

"Now, for the first time in my life I know without the shadow of a doubt that I had my own concept of life and that that life concept is found only in Jesus Christ and I wanted to meditate about it, to dwell on that marvelous truth that set me free.

"That's why I chose to be by myself, in communion with my Maker, denying my flesh of its natural affections, and rejoicing in the joy of the Lord, knowing in my heart what Christ is all about with a knowledge before unknown, and basking in the peace that passeth all understanding.

"My life had been one life of confusion, lacking direction and purpose. A life of turmoil where I have been tossed to and fro. Truly I have lived from whirlwind to whirlwind. When did my life change? When did my life become a life with direction and purpose? The answer can be given in a few words, when I gave up the struggle to live on my own power and surrendered my life to Jesus Christ.

"But then, the how I came to give up the struggle and surrendered my life to Jesus Christ, that which is the real answer to that question, has been all the work of Jesus Christ, what The Lord has been working in me for years and years, because He is the only one that can give the answer to all the perplexities of life.

"Jesus Christ, The Son of God, The Lord, The Savior, He is the one that changed my life and gave me direction and purpose, He alone has the answer and can determine all answers in life.

"We watch with perplexity the crazy ways of life and the rebelliousness in our generation as well as in generations past, with-

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out even realizing that we live in a crazy and rebellious way of our own, not even knowing how we got to live in that way or why we are rebellious.

"I can remember the times past when . . . even as far back when I was somewhere around 5 or 6 years old, when I used to watch the workers at my father's land, my place of birth. It was such an intriguing thing to watch, whether it would be a woman armed with a humongous wooden mallet pounding over the wild rice deposited in this huge wooden bowl, or a house servant, (probably one of my father's children from a different mother than mine,) working the cooked and washed corn with a rounded grey lime stone against a flat one to produce the 'masa' to make the 'tortillas.'

"I can remember many things as far back as 5 or 6 years of age, because I remember very distinctively the talk of war and end of war when I lived in that beautiful hole in Guatemala where I was born. I was born in 1939 and when the war ended, because of what I recollect I must have been merely 5 or 6 years old.

"Somewhere around 1947-1948, when I was around seven or eight years old, we moved to another land, closer to civilization, next to the Railroad Station, and I can remember how I could not connect the talk about Russia and the USA and President Roosevelt and Stalin and President Eisenhower and Nikita Krusev, it all seemed to me like a 'fairy tale.'

"So I made up a fairy land world of my own, in which I looked at everything as mysterious as in a fairy tale. Whatever I couldn't connect with factual evidence because of lack of knowledge, I considered it a mystery that was happening somewhere else, in another time, perhaps in the land of nowhere which you only saw by magic in the screen of your imagination.

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"I grew up in that 'fairy land world' that my imagination created, and I never could figure out anything at all, everything was magic and mystery to me, and it would have been fun to remain in that 'fairy land world' if it would not have been for the 'mean step mother' and the 'bad wolf' and the 'witches' and such, that were so easily overcome in fairy tale land and altogether impossible to do so in real life.

"And so it was that my 'fairy land world' became a 'land of confusion' and I lived in that land with a citizenship of turmoil and disharmony, with a passport to the 'pit's of hell world.' That's how I came to live in my crazy ways and why I lived in rebellion. I didn't even realize how crazy my ways were and I didn't even know what I was rebellious about.

"To my family and my children, my friends and acquaintances, I was by all means, strange. To the Mental Health caretakers I was emotionally disturbed. To myself, I was a misunderstood, rejected, and disgustingly a victim of circumstances, with higher abilities than most petty human beings. And I was determined to step up in the ladder of success above everybody else, to show and prove myself to the world.

"And I would have succeeded, if it had not been for the providence of the Almighty God that kept me from worldly success. But then, I decided to follow Jesus, only to get myself into a bigger confusion and turmoil yet that what I had ever imagined possible.

"December 26/86. There is so much to tell you that I don't know which to tell you first. Let me try. Starting from when I left.

"First to first, let me tell you it was such joy to travel in the name of the Lord. I started looking for shelter about 4 o'clock that first

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day, I made it to Augusta, GA. I stopped in the first Church that I saw, a big Baptist Church, college and all.

"I thought for sure they'll put me up. Would you believe that I was able to talk to the principal of the school and that he suggested among other things that I park in the rest area or find the Salvation Army? I thanked him for the suggestions and I went to a phone book and got into the Yellow pages.

"The first call cost me a quarter because a recorder answered me. But on the second call I received my blessing. The Pastor's wife answered the phone and I explained to her that I was a Christian passing through and that I needed a place to spend the night. She put the Pastor on the phone, beautiful people. The Pastor told me to give him a little time to find a place for me, to call him back local collect because he thought that I didn't have any money.

"I am not down and out, I do have some money to pay for a hotel," I said, "I am just trying to save up my money because I am going to be without a job for a little while, and I am being conservative and besides I just want to meet and fellowship with Christians fellows."

"Sister, that Pastor wanted to pay for a hotel for me, because he did not have a guest room in his house and he had the house full of children. He and his wife came over to get me, brought me over to the Hotel and I told them, 'No, no, no I don't want to stay in a hotel, I don't mind sleeping on your couch or anywhere, but I don't want a hotel, please.' I pleaded with them, so we all laughed and they took me to their home.

"They have a beautiful home. He used to be a Psychologist, but now he is a full time Pastor. They have a beautiful testimony. We had dinner and we shared testimonies. Their little girl, Christine, gave me her bed to sleep.

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"The next day I remember my friends in Mobile AL, Yolanda, James and Jimmy Tanner, and I was going to call when I got to Mobile but Pastor Barron and Liz, his wife, made me call long distance to make sure that my friends were in town and I would have a place to stay that night.

"My friends were really happy to hear from and to take me for the night. Pastor Barron checked my car good and brought me back to the Highway. I was a great and joyful experience. I shall keep in touch with them. Then when I got to Mobile, which I made excellent time, (didn't even speed too much), I spent a good time with my old friends.

"And when I arrived in Waveland, my friends were not here, but I knew that they were not going to be, so I came in and made myself at home, but soon they arrived and it was a joyful reunion."

It was a long letter but I don't think I ever mailed it, I just recorded in the computer. Time flew, Christmas and New Year went by, and I was ready to pitch tent in Waveland. But the Lord had other plans. In a letter that I wrote to several of my close friends I wrote the details. (I did not mail this letter either.)

"Feb. 13/87. My dearest sister/brother: I love you. I miss you dearly. Let me hear from you, what's up. What's going on in your side of the arena, my dear and beloved soldier in Christ?"

"I am such a bad correspondent, but, I keep us, and all my brothers and sisters in my heart and in my prayers, lifting us up continually with the help of the Holy Spirit, to the throne of grace, pleading for the fullness of God in our lives, that our Father in heaven grants us a spirit of wisdom and revelation -of insight into mysteries and secrets- in the (deep and intimate) knowledge of Him, by having the eyes of our hearts flooded with light, so that we can know and understand the hope to which He has called

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us and how rich is His glorious inheritance in the saints-- His set-apart ones, and (so that we can know and understand) what is the immeasurable and unlimited and surpassing greatness of His power in and for us who believe, as demonstrated in the working of His mighty strength, which He exerted in Christ when He raised Him from the dead and seated Him at His (own) right hand in the heavenly (places), far above all rule and authority and power and dominion, and every name that is named--above every title that can be conferred--not only in this age and in this world, but also in the age and the world which are to come. Ephesians 1:17-21.

"Also, I keep praying that we may know that we are not wrestling against flesh and blood but against powers and principalities as it is written in Ephesians 6:12-20; and that we may know that we are soldiers in a battle that belongs to Christ Jesus our Lord, and that we have the victory in Him. Let us put on the whole armor of God, Jesus Christ our Lord and Savior and let us not get tired of doing good, and fighting the good fight of faith, regardless of the circumstances.

"And let us keep in touch and through the Holy Spirit, uplifting each other in love and understanding. For me, it has been a wonderland since I saw you last. I started to write an account of everything that has happened, to send out to each one of you, but it has gotten to be a long writing with all the details, so, let me give you all a shorter version, with less of details.

"Left Wilmington on December the 12th of 86. Destination: Waveland, Mississippi, the home of two dear friends that are like my mom and dad.

"Resided in Waveland until the end of January. I was hoping that the Lord would make a way for me to stay in Waveland, for I

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liked it over there a whole lot, and I am very close to my friends, but, He had other plans.

"My stay there came to an end and I did not want it to be so. But the Lord is patient and long suffering with me as He is with all of us His children, so, He nudged me a little bit with a trial.

"From the beginning of my surrender to the Lord, The Lord has instructed me to remain in the world, but not to get involved in the things of the world. But I, being the smart and independent person that I am in the flesh, I am always heading my own way and my own ideas. So, of course, I never agree with the Lord, I am always interpreting the things of the Lord with my own understanding. (Nothing remarkable about that, nonetheless, that's the flesh).

"Therefore, trials and tribulations come my way, `till, the Spirit overcomes my own stubborn ways, and through the Holy Spirit I'm able to fall flat on my face and repent of my wicked ways, and let the Lord lead the way wherever He wants to lead me to serve His purposes, not mine. Such were the circumstances one day towards the end of last January.

I had a disagreement with my friend and provider of the blessings of the Lord for my physical needs, my Honey, because of our different ways of living; and I had a disagreement with my friends in Waveland about our methods of house cleaning. As a result, I found myself without a nickel in my pocket, not even a full tank of gas, dressed in a dirty pair of white pants, downcast, dejected and depressed, contemplating utter seclusion from society because of my inability to live in it.

"I was contemplating something like disappearance (not suicide, such does not enter my mind, the Devil knows he can not get anywhere with me with ideas of suicide, the Devil knows my

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weaknesses, the Devil knows that disappearance is a more creative, dramatic way to enter the gates of hell for me, it is in harmony with the wickedness of my flesh, it gives my flesh a sense of worthiness).

"So, I was driving along the coast of Mississippi, contemplating some kind of inconspicuous way to disappear, when tears began pouring down my face, because I realize my wicked thoughts. I began to cry unto the Lord,

"Mercy, mercy Oh God Almighty, I know I have failed, I know I am wrong contemplating these thoughts, I know Lord that You are my Lord and my God, I put my trust in You and in You alone. I know Lord that You will lead me where ever You want me to go from here. You brought me here, You told me to come here, You have a purpose for me, I thank You, for showing me Your purpose. I am going to go to the Mental Health, as You have led me to do, I trust You to go ahead of me, I don't know what I am doing, but You used the ravens to feed Elijah, and the ravens are a type of the world, so, I give up my pride and I am going to find the food and the blessings you have for me in the world. You are my Shepherd and I shall not want."

"The peace of the Lord invaded my soul at that very moment, and I drove to the Mental Health Center. From there I decided to take a ride to the shopping center and check on different things for later on since I did not have any money to shop at the moment.

"It so happens that at that shopping center one of the shop owners was my sponsor of residence in the USA, when I first came in 1959. I had lost touch with this dear friend for about 15 years, but, recently we had renewed our relationship. When we saw each other it was like mother and daughter reunion after a long absence.

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"On this specific day, I did not want to see her, for I did not want her to see me looking down and out. I was going to go to the other side of the shopping center so that I would not be seen, but, I just could not go there and not go and at least say, hello. So, I walked to the side of her shop just in time when she was looking for a way to get in touch with me.

"Talking about the Lord answering His children while they yet speak! Guess why she was looking to get in touch with me? To offer me a home with her mother in New Orleans!

"I now live in a \$300,000.00 mansion, free of charge. The only charge is a large amount of love and understanding for my host-ess, who is a beautiful widow lady, lawyer by profession, and easy to love, for she is loving, kind and understanding herself. My room is 18x13. For cash money, the Lord supplies me in many different ways, I do not have to have the pressure of a regular job and I have been able to dedicate my time to writing for the glory of the Lord.

"My two daughters are doing fine in Wilmington. The mother of my first grandson will be a mommy again in September. I have not written to anybody yet, not even my family at the Fellowship in Wilmington, and I don't know what's happening with any of you, but I am sure that everybody is still seeking the Lord now more than ever, for we are in the last days and it is wonderful to see the move of the Spirit everywhere you go.

"I hope to hear from you soon. I am hoping to keep in touch with everybody with this sort of form letter, until I get some feed back to personalize answers. Write me, I need your encouragement, I miss you terribly, and I do desire to lift and encourage you!

"I am going to a Spirit filled Church over in Westwego, which is in the West bank of New Orleans, with my former Pastor (my

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home church) and I am telling you, it's wonderful to witness the move of the Spirit. Churches all over are moving with the Spirit.

"My oldest daughter, and my oldest and youngest step-daughters live in the West bank, too, and so does my son, and my especial friend, my Honey; so, I am close to most of my family.

"I am experiencing the peace of God within me, I believe I am walking in His will for the first time in a long time. As to what am I doing besides writing, and loving people?

Seeking and waiting on the Lord. Where He leads me I shall follow. I know that my home is not down here, and though I do not foresee any immediate move at the moment, my heart is not set down below but up above. I shall continue in readiness for that coming day we are all awaiting, when He comes in clouds of glory to gather us to Himself.

"Again, I pray for each and everyone of you. I love you with the love of the Lord. Hope to hear from you soon! Your sister in Christ,

"March 15/87. UPDATE! The Lord continues to guide me and instruct me in the way that I shall go. Praise, honor and glory to His Name.

"Situation changed as of the end of February. There were indications that led me to use my special friend's, my Honey's address in Westwego as a more or less permanent address, since I really do not have a place of my own and my friend—my Honey—(whom you all know) had given to me the apartment in the back of his house.

"And so, it came to pass that by an act of intuition from the Holy Spirit, I decided to use my friend's address because of the priv-

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illegitimate to the apartment that he had given me. Little did I know that within two weeks I was to move in here and actually take possession of the apartment, in order for me to claim it as my legal residence. Then if I want to sleep somewhere else, or visit somewhere else, this apartment remains my residence because that's where I intend to live and where I have my belongings.

"It makes no difference to me, whether my residence is in New Orleans, in the upper-crust of the New Orleans society, or, in my dearly and beloved Westwego, little town of West-we-go. But it makes a difference for legal purposes to establish a residence somewhere, and it so happens that I had to make a choice because New Orleans and Westwego are in two different parishes or counties, and it was more convenient for me to establish residence in Westwego.

"What makes a difference to me is to do what I am called to do in His will, not mine. And what has He called me to do? Same thing He has called everybody else, to be His witness.

"So, at the end of January I had no place to go, now I have double the blessing, two instead of no place at all, praise, honor and glory to His Name, His Name is Jesus, Jesus Christ my Lord! I live in Westwego in the day time and at night time I go to spend the night with my lady friend in New Orleans, because The Lord wants me to bring her the flowers of His love and understanding that I hold in the living water of His love in the vessel of myself. In the day time I hold those flowers for my friend and my sisters and brothers in Christ in Westwego, and at night time for my lady friend and her family in New Orleans.

"Isn't it wonderful! The Lord is good! Living in Westwego I am now able to fellowship with my sisters from Sunday school, and to participate in Church activities, praise the Lord! And also, I

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am under a more disciplined time for writing, which certainly is helpful for serious writing, praise The Lord! Hope to hear from you all soon! Love and blessings in the name of Jesus!"

And so, that's how The Lord got me back into His will for my residence. The next chapter shall give the details of the actual move.

Chapter 7

I came to a Conclusion

Let's enter the epilogue of this Autobiography as Thia relates the following incidents in her first person narrative. A while back to end this book Thia wrote,

Through the wilderness of life I came a long ways, groping along in broad day light, when it was not necessary to do so. But, neither it was necessary for the prodigal son to go out and spread his wings to squander the portion of his inheritance. Who can tell? And what is the use of philosophizing and wondering and expounding the ifs of life?

There is a conclusion in the book of Ecclesiastes in the Holy Bible, which amounts in my own paraphrased, "If you keep on studying and wondering about how, when, where, who, and why it all happened, you'll go berserk! For all has been done, seen, and heard over and over again. In a nut shell, Fear God and keep His commandments!"

But what does it mean to fear God and to keep God's commandments? Jesus is the only way to truly fear God and keep God's commandments. Jesus Christ is God's gift to the human race. As one becomes acquainted with Jesus Christ and accepts God's gift, as one accepts Jesus Christ as one's personal Lord and Savior, one is keeping God's commandments, because Jesus Christ is the fulfillment of all of God's commandments.

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To fear God means to know and to accept the whole of how, when, where, why, and who God is within Jesus Christ—His only-begotten Son. To know and to accept God's plan of salvation through His Son Jesus because without Him it's impossible for mankind to be saved.

Think carefully about the above statement, dear reader. And don't wait any longer, but reach out to our Heavenly Father to receive the gift which He has already given to us. The gift which our Father is patiently waiting for you to receive.

And though the Lord is patient and longsuffering, it is not necessary for us to wander around in the wilderness of life without God's presence. As far as this true life story, I would say that for about 37 years the Lord had been standing there, holding the gift and waiting for this Thia to settle down enough to reach out to Him and receive it.

Yes, the Lord is patient! And longsuffering too!...

Thirty-seven years in the wilderness! Coming to think about, it could have been forty, and then again, maybe it was forty, because Thia does not know exactly at what age she asked Jesus in her heart.

"But, who cares?" Says Thia, "The sufferings of past days are not compared with the glory of these present and future days. I am in the Promised Land now. The land that flows with milk and honey. The milk and the honey flowing from the awesome presence of my God! Hallelujah!"

A bondage was broken... How a bondage was broken and Thia was free to move in her apartment at last!

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To recap the end of the previous chapter of my Autobiography where I wrote how God in His mercy, eventually, brought me out of the wilderness in which I have been living all of my life, to rest in my Promised Land, to rest in Jesus Christ.

But in the meantime, this specific day, sitting at Frances' kitchen table I was depressed and utterly discouraged. My Honey had picked me up in Waveland, Mississippi and he had just dropped me off at Frances, my friend, my dear sister in the Lord, my first Pastor's wife.

On the way over to Frances my Honey and I had a terrible disagreement about our relationship. I had told him that I was not going to speak to him anymore and I was devastated, in the depths of despair about the whole thing, to say the least!

Now, sitting at Frances' kitchen table I began to express my depression, and my fears, and my bondages. And Frances said, "Let us pray." And I began to pray in this manner, I said,

"Father, You know my predicament, You know everything about me, You know Lord how weak I am when it comes to this loneliness that haunts me because I do not have a husband. You know Lord, that I have no respect for my body, and that I do not understand with my natural mind why I can not share my Honey's bed, You know it Lord!

"And You know Lord, that the only reason why I do not share my Honey's bed is because of what others may think and because I fear to sin against Your Word. But You know, Lord, that I do not understand why Your Word is written so, and You know that in the past I have not considered it wrong to share bed with a man who is not my husband, because I have had not any respect for my body since I lost my virginity. For my body has been

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defiled, I am no longer a virgin, and what difference does it make? Oh, Lord, deliver me from this predicament!"

And as finished uttering those words, the tears began to flow out of my eyes like a cleansing flood. And as the tears were flowing from within my being, through the lips of Frances came these words,

"You have been washed whiter than snow, your sins has been completely blotted out. You are as pure to me as a virgin woman. Your body is as if you never had been with a man. Go and treat it as such, and have the same respect for your body as if no man has ever touched you."

Nothing much really happened after we prayed and Frances spoke to me thus. I went back to Waveland, Mississippi, still depressed and not speaking to my Honey. I believe my daughter Diana came to get me. The next day is the day when I tried to clean up the mildew from one of the rooms at my friend Neen's house.

I was a guest at Neen's house out of Neen's hospitality to take me in when I most needed it. But, trying to be clever in cleaning out the mildew out of one of her rooms, I made a mess out of it and I was horribly embarrassed with my own foolishness. That's why I was driving along the Gulf Coast of Mississippi considering disappearance from the sight of society, when the Lord in His mercy reached down and once more touched me, to bring me to repentance.

And instead of disappearing from the sight of society, I had gone to apply for welfare, as the Lord had instructed me to do. But, when I had gone to the shopping center where my sponsor to the USA had her shop, I had never dreamed that the Lord was going to use her mother to coax me into coming back to the New Orleans area.

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Most certainly, I did not intend to come back to an area where I had suffered so many of hardships. But the Lord! He knew exactly what to do and how to entice me into His fold. So, I came back to New Orleans in grand style, to the best of neighborhoods, to Pauline's house. Pauline's house is a beautiful house located in one of the best neighborhoods in town.

And of course, I was ready to pitch my tent right there and then! But soon after I had settled down in my new room and I was ready to pitch my tent right there until the Lord's return, things were upset again.

"Oh Frances!" I cried on the phone, "I'm in trouble, I have lied to the social worker and now I'm going to lose my benefits, why did I do such a thing! I never meant to lie!"

"Thia, think about it! Did you really lie? Wasn't that apartment given to you?"

"Yeah, it was, it is supposed to be for me, but you know why I can not move in. You know, I just don't trust myself living so close to my Honey! But, the worst part about it is that I do not think that I am supposed to live here either. I just know I am not to stay here and that's why I gave that address. What am I to do now? I am afraid and scared out of my wits about the whole thing!"

With a gentle voice Frances said, "Well, you know fear is not of God, we rebuke that fear. Now, Thia, I know, I just know that the Lord is fixing to do a work in you and it is going to be real soon! Just wait, and don't be afraid." And after we prayed and praised the Lord, I hung up the phone.

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After I hung up the phone and settled down to bed I began to tune my ear to the Lord as I kept remembering the words that Frances had spoken to me at her kitchen table a few weeks back,

"You have been washed whiter than snow, your sins has been completely blotted out. You are as pure to me as a virgin woman. Your body is as if you never had been with a man. Go and treat it as such, and have the same respect for your body as if no man has ever touched you."

During that short period, in the middle of my upheaval with my place of residence, I wanted to start a ministry of some kind. I wanted to start sharing my books and my testimony and pray or help people, I was ready to do anything and everything! But, the Lord! Frances gave me another word from Him, she said,

"The Lord wants you to minister to Him in your writing. Do not worry about ministering to people, just minister to the Lord."

Now, the night that I kept remembering the words that Frances had spoken to me at her kitchen table a few weeks back, I also kept remembering these Scriptures: "The steps of the righteous man are guided by the Lord." "By faith shall the righteous live."

And so, I made the decision to obey and trust the guidance of the Holy Spirit in the Word of God which is so very explicit in times of trouble.

Well, after a couple days I had another trial at Pauline's house. The details of this trial are not worth mentioning but it was a significant event because through it, I saw clearly that I was to leave Pauline's house and move in the apartment in the back of my Honey's house.

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Then, after I made the decision to obey and trust the guidance of the Holy Spirit in the Word of God, somehow and for the first time I realized that, truly, I was washed whiter than snow, and I was to walk as a woman untouched by man. And somehow a power and strength came to me to do just that. It was then when I moved in my apartment.

Hallelujah! The bondage had been broken! For I was no longer afraid of myself or of anybody else. The joy of the Lord, and the peace that passes all understanding invaded my whole being! Hallelujah!

And from then on the joy of the Lord, and the peace that passes all understanding in a complete surrender to Jesus Christ my Lord, have become the strength in my life. I have quit living a life of my own and I have entered into the Lord's rest, and I have been walking with Him.

For a while now I have been walking with Jesus, I have been living a life of surrender to the will of God. And I have discovered that, truly, this is the land flowing with milk and honey, my Promised Land from the Lord!

Now, as I entered into the Lord's rest I began to minister to Him in my writing, as per God's instructions to do so, through Frances' words. Day after day for a whole year, the Lord called me to minister to Him with my writing.

And when I would sit in front of the computer I had no idea of what was in store during that time of fellowship. But, when I would read back what I had written during a certain period, it all had a certain continuity and it would come into my mind to give titles to those periods of continuity accordingly and arranged in a monthly basis.

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The ministry to God through these writings began on March 21, 1987 and it was to continue for about a year. I am including towards the conclusion of my Autobiography, the first month of meditations.

Meditating In The Promised Land -A Child's Daily Talks With God. A work of praise and worship in thanksgiving unto the Lord for bringing me into His rest. Alleluia!...

April 13/87. This is the day that the Lord quickened in my heart to share this meditations with other members of His body.

The Lord had scheduled my day: "At ten thirty on Monday April the 13th you'll have coffee with the Women's Aglow local Chapter." He reminded me and I wrote it in my calendar.

It was now Monday April the 13th. I sat at the computer for my daily meditation writing. While writing, a thought came to me to print my "Thank You Lord!" writing and take it to the coffee meeting later on that morning.

I pulled the writing from the computer file and as I revised it, the Holy Spirit led me to rewrite the background, to be explicit with my motive for writing a thanks to the Lord.

I rewrote with the anointment of the Holy Spirit, His heart pulsating through my fingers with every stroke of the keys in the computer's keyboard. What a wonderful excitement! What a joy divine! I was writing under the anointment of the Holy Spirit of God!

I finished rewriting, I rearranged it and set it to print with the bright light of expectancy from the Lord shining forth, but I didn't know what for.

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I finished my task just in the nick of time to get ready for the meeting and just at the right time I arrived at the meeting location still with the bright light of expectancy from the Lord shining forth, but I didn't know what for.

Why was the bright light of expectancy from the Lord shining forth and I didn't even know what for?

Because I was going to Aglow; and wasn't it at Aglow that the Lord from before, set in my heart to come forth?

And at the meeting, didn't the Lord set forth His child some more, as He led me to ask to share my love task, for enlightenment to afford, unto others in the mask, of darkness afore?

So His mercy in wonder behold, and with praise, and worth, and some more; in rest and peace; with reverent fear, the Christ adore?

Yes, the Lord that day set forth, His child some more, to share this love task, of heartfelt meditations, about the interchange of love, from His heart to mine.

For just as His heart communicated with mine, in each of this love pulsating messages, His heart communicates the same message, pulsating with each and everyone of His children, the members of His body. For we are all members of His body, fitted together and nurtured by His heart pulsating with love! Alleluia!

The Holy Spirit in the horizon....

In the horizon of this heartfelt meditations, some weeks before I started consistently ministering to the Lord daily in writing, I wrote my heart out to the Lord in a poetic writing that He was to use later on as the cover for these meditations! Hallelujah!

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Such writing is what I had revised that morning of April 13, under the anointment of the Holy Spirit. It was written on Thursday March 5, 1987, the first day that I woke up at my new quarters in this quaint country town in the suburbs of New Orleans, in my Honey's residence.

And in those same writings, previous to the meditation of that first day which I recorded, I wrote a self explanatory sort of poem. Then, I recorded another sort of poem on that first day both of which express my exact emotional and spiritual condition at the time. And I quote,

A Fast To Thank The Lord

Did the Lord bless you with a new home?
Did He move You where He wants you to live for
His glory and for His purpose?
Then lift up your heart to Him and thank Him, for
He is worthy of your thanks.
Did the Lord bring You into His rest?
Did He bring you into the promised land flowing
with milk and honey?
Then lift up your whole new self to Him, and in
humble obedience to His Word, fast, lest you fill
up your belly and forget Him!

The above is the first writing in the horizon of these heartfelt meditations.

And the following is the first day's meditation which I recorded and it is titled,

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Thank You Lord!

March 5/87.

Thank You Lord, for this beautiful day! As I awake to the singing of the birds and the shining of the sun, my heart is filled with gladness, 'cause You are merciful, Oh, God!

You are my Lord and my God. You are my Father, You are everything to me, I worship You! Today is the first morning that I awake in this beautiful piece of land where You have located this precious quarters especially for me, thank You Lord! Truly You have scheduled each day of my life, my name is written in Your book, Oh, my Lord! Thank You Lord, for the contentment that fills my heart, thank You Lord!

Thank You Lord, for You alone have filled me with Yourself and invaded my whole being with Your peace, thank You Lord!

I thank You Lord, I thank You Lord! Grant me Lord to go forward this day to walk in Your will. Give me the strength to follow You wherever You lead, for I am weak and easily tempted, give me Your strength, Oh, my Lord!

For there are fiery darts that come against me Lord, You know, You know, yet grant me Lord rest from my works and my efforts and help me to rely on You.

As I fast, I fast unto You, yielding the members of my body to You, and to You I yield my whole self. Not for my gain, or my vain purposes, but

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unto You, Oh, Lord, unto You alone I yield my whole self.

Grant me Lord, to walk in Your will, grant me Lord, not to look to the right or to the left, but to look straight where You call me to look and to seek for the Kingdom of God.

As I go forward this day, grant me Lord, to look up to You. Thank You Lord!

The following pages are filled with daily meditations. I would like to make notice that these meditations were written many, many months after my "Promised Land" arrival which happened somewhere around April 16, 1986. I would also like to make a notice that these meditations were also written some three weeks after I wrote the first meditation.

That first meditation was written to give an overdue thanks to the Lord not only for the arrival to my "Promised Land" but also for the rest or deliverance from my enemies--the bondages to my carnal self from which the Lord, gloriously, delivered me.

But then, a few weeks after that first meditation, on March 21, 1987, I began to minister to the Lord with my daily writings because the Lord instructed me to do so.

How did I receive instructions from the Lord? Well, I had been eager to publish my writings to minister to other people in the Church and everywhere else because I knew, without a shadow of a doubt that the Lord commanded me to do so. Alas, though that I thought that I was ready to go out there and conquer the whole world for Jesus, everything turned out differently than what I thought.

I thought that the Lord had sent me out to Aglow for a take off and launch out of my writing career. Instead, the Lord caused

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the people to refuse to hear me out. And they refused to put me on the witness stand in front of the congregation. I had gone to Aglow and shared, the best way I could, the wonderful things I had written which I thought were ready to make me a track to a successful career as a Christian writer and here, the Aglow leaders were not impressed at all! I couldn't understand it! But then one day, Frances, my Pastor's wife, gave me a message from the Lord, she said to me,

"Thia, the Lord wants you to minister to Him with your writings, don't worry about ministering to others, just minister to Him."

I kept that message in my heart but I didn't quite understand what it meant. Then I went to a Bible conference at my Church, and again, I sought the advice from the Minister leading the conference, as to what to do to minister to other people the wonderful experience of my life in Christ. At this point I wanted to have a ministry of some kind, by all means.

But, guess what? Take into consideration that that Minister did not know me nor of me because Frances had not spoken to him about me. So, that Minister had no idea of the message that the Lord had given to Frances for me. This blessed saint from God told me, "It seems to me that the Lord does not want you to minister to anyone but to Him. Yeah, that's it! The Lord wants you to minister to Him and don't worry about anybody else."

After that minister gave me that message, he didn't quite understand it himself, but he looked to Frances because Frances and I were looking at each other. My first thought was that Frances had told him what to say, but that thought went out of my mind instantly as Frances smiled and said something to the effect that what the minister was telling me was only a confirmation of what I already knew. And knowing Frances as well as I know her from

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my heart, I knew that she had not told that blessed minister what to say.

All of a sudden I understood the message and what the Lord was telling me by "ministering to Him, and not to worry about ministering to others." I knew what to do and how to do it. That's when I started ministering to Lord with my daily writings and I no longer worried about ministering to others.

Well, not quite. Actually, it was not without resistance that I surrendered completely to the Lord. Let me put it like this, I have kicked against the pricks until the Lord has worked and perfected these writings within my heart and prepared them to be shared with others.

I believe that these writings are ready now, and I believe that the Lord would have me share them not by my might or my power, but by His Spirit says the Lord. May it so be done!

Mine shall be a good day!

March 21/87/5:20 am.

Birds are singing, Lord, the dawn of a new day must be approaching, Oh, Lord, how great Thou are!

For Your Spirit is harboring the earth right now as it was that first day; in a short while Thou shall say "let there be light," and there shall appear the light of a new day!

And it shall be a good day!

Yes, a good day, for Thou has so written it in the Book of Life and what it's written in the Book of Life it's Your Word which stands true forever!

Yes, it shall be a good day!

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"But Thia, how about all the evil of the day? How can your day be good? Have you thought about your doubts? Have you thought about your ups and downs? Do you remember your failures? Do you see your inability? Don't you know that you are always a day late and a dollar short? And what about the national situation, haven't you heard the news, there is 'Aids' and something worse that 'Aids,' some unknown plague that is approaching us. And there is war and rumors of war. And you can't even travel because you might be held up as a hostage. And right here in your back yard, don't you realize how easy it is for a nut to break into your house and rape and kill you? How can your day be good?"

"Devil, my day shall be good because so it's written in the Book of life." Genesis 1:26-31. You are a liar, a destroyer, a murderer from the beginning, so it's also written. Your end it's even written in the Book of life." John 8:44; Revelation 15:2.

"I come against you and your foul words and suggestions, in the name of the Mighty God I serve, the Mighty One of Israel, I come against the evil of this day Satan, in the name of Jesus." Luke 11:20-22.

"I live in the secret place of the Most High, sheltered by the God that is above all gods, this I declare, I abide in the name of Jesus, He is my fortress, my refuge, my shield of faith." Psalms 91:1-2.

"Satan, I reject your words and suggestions, I refuse to dwell in the evil of this day and the frustrations of my flesh, for you are a liar, a father of

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lies, and a murderer from the beginning."
Philippians 4:6; I Peter 5:8-9.

"The truth is that you are speaking to my flesh,
the flesh of the Thia that die in the cross with
Jesus. Satan, that Thia is dead!" Romans 6:11.

"But I, the new Thia, resurrected in Jesus Christ,
I, come in the name of that same Jesus, to tram-
ple you under my feet!" Romans 8:1-2; Ephesians
6:11-16.

"Be gone Satan, mine shall be a good day, for I'm
a new creature, there shall no evil come near me
nor any plague come nigh my dwelling." Matthew
4:10; II Corinthians 5:17; Psalms 91:10.

"And I have the power to trample you under my
feet and vanish you from my sight, in Jesus Christ,
my Lord and Savior. So it is written." Psalms
91:13."

Yes, it shall be a good day! --So it is written in
the Book of Life. Alleluia!

Take off the shoes of your flesh

3/22/87.

"Moses, Moses, take off your shoes for you are
standing on Holy Ground." You told Moses then
my Lord, and my God. Now, at this very moment,
in the midst of the congregation, You are telling
me, "Thia, Thia, take off your shoes for you are
standing on Holy Ground. You are standing in My
presence, on Holy Ground!"

Oh, my God! How great Thou art! I humble myself
in Your presence, my shoes I'll throw far away
from me, by Your grace and by Your mercy my
God. Alleluia!

Welcome To My Life

Wonderful thought....

3/23/87.

Good morning Lord! Four O'clock in the morning and Your birds are already singing, did You make they sing to wake me up Lord? What a wonderful thought!

Truly Lord, You said in Psalm 139 that You are thinking of me continually, is that why You woke me up?

What is Your will Lord for me today? Speak Lord, Your servant listens.

"I have already spoken my Thia to you, to you I have addressed My heart."

Oh, Lord! You do love me Lord, You do love me Lord! For You have spoken and You have to me addressed Your heart! What a wonderful thought! What is Your wish Lord? Speak Lord, Your child listens.

"Speak love my Thia, speak love to all, that is My wish for you today, yesterday and tomorrow. Hear the birds that sing, see the flowers that bloom, walk in the path of love and understanding, and speak words of love, for that is my wish for you today, yesterday and tomorrow!"

Oh, Lord what a wonderful thought! To my mind from my heart You speak Lord, for You live in my heart, Oh, Lord, what a wonderful thought!

My prayer for this day, Oh my God!..... 3/24/87.

Oh, Lord my God, I praise You, I thank You Lord. You are my God You are my Lord and Savior. You

Welcome To My Life

are my Father. Almighty God above all gods, I worship You. I hallow Your Name, above all names. I exalt Your Name, Oh, Jesus Christ, my Lord and Savior.

Thank You, Father for the precious blood of Jesus.

Thank You, Father for my redemption.

Thank You, Father for my adoption.

Thank You, Father for my sanctification.

Thank You, Father for Your love and mercy.

Thank You, Father for Your discipline and correction.

Thank You, Father for the trials and tribulations that You have given me the privilege to go through for my edification into Your building built without human hands.

Thank You, Father for Your Holy Spirit that works the power of the blood of Jesus in my daily life, even when I am not thinking of You, for I belong to You.

Thank You, Father for the power of Your resurrection working in my life.

Thank You, Father that I can come boldly to Your throne of grace and make my petitions known unto You thanks to the blood of Jesus and Your Holy Spirit which makes that blood alive in my daily experience.

Grant me Lord to turn my thoughts to You this day and to be sensitive to the leading of Your Holy Spirit.

Give me the ears to hear what the Spirit says to Your churches. Open my mind to my heart to me this day and everyday of my life, Oh, Lord, that Your Word may be inscribed in the depth of my

Welcome To My Life

being to produce the rivers of living water to satiate the thirst of the earth.

Grant me, Lord, to hear what the Spirit says to Your churches. Grant me Lord to walk, to live in Your Spirit today Lord and not to cater to the wantonness of my flesh.

For my flesh is dead by the power of Your blood but my spirit is alive by the power of Your Holy Spirit in the resurrection, and I need not to cater to the wantonness of my flesh.

Oh, Lord, You receive my worship in spirit and in truth alone, nothing from the flesh You receive, search me Lord and know my thoughts that I may not be calling to You and worshipping You with anything of the flesh, that my worship and prayer and supplication in spirit and in truth be alone uttered, Oh my God, help me, the inner me, the new creature that lives in the body of my flesh made from the dust of the earth, the quickened spirit within me where Your Holy Spirit lives, help my real being to abide in You and in Your name alone call unto You, let not any sound be uttered in the power of my flesh.

You are my God, my Lord and Savior and in You alone I do put my trust. I yield unto You all my members Lord, my mind, my emotions, my will. Let Your mind be my mind today. Let Your feelings and desires be mine today. Let Your will be done in my walk of life today. Use me as an earthen vessel and fill me with You today, even today, tomorrow and forever.

Oh, my Lord, help me today to speak out of the abundance of my heart alone!

Welcome To My Life

It's Wednesday Lord! Time to intercede?

3/25/87.

It's Wednesday Lord! This is the day that You have made, I shall rejoice and be glad about it. Twenty-four minutes have been since You struck midnight when You kindly my eyes open up.

"For we wrestle not against flesh and blood but against powers and principalities in high places, my Thia." Your voice gently advised me Lord. How great, how wonderful You are, Oh, Lord, my God and my Savior! How You talk, how You confer even with the smallest members of Your body, how You confer with each and everyone of Your members.

For who am I Lord, that You should be mindful of me? Yet with me You confer, with me You talk to bring down the powers and principalities in high places, who am I that You should be mindful of me?

Yes, a member of Your body I am, the smallest, yet a member of Your body I am and You need every member of Your body to be complete! How great, how wonderful You are, Oh, Lord, my God and my Savior!

Lord God, my Father, I thank You for sending me to help Paula yesterday. You know Lord how weak and slothful I am in the flesh. You know Lord, for You know everything about me, for while I was yet a sinner You died for me.

But Lord, I thank You that You do not see my flesh, for my flesh is dead, for You drowned my flesh in Your blood a long time ago. Thank You

Welcome To My Life

Father. You know Lord that the flesh is weak, and slothful and I do not care to go to help Paula. But Father, I thank You that I do not have to walk in the flesh, I thank You that You made me willing to yield my members to You! I thank You, Father.

Father, You know all the problems with that car, You know Lord, for You know the future, the past and the present. With You there is no time, just eternity, You know everything Lord!

You know Lord, for You made the mind and the matter that put that car together, grant me Lord, for that car to run for the glory of Your name, to spread the Good News of the Gospel of Peace, to bring love and understanding to Paula today, grant me Lord for that car to run for the glory of Your name.

Grant me Lord, this day to go forth and obey Your call wherever at Paula's, Tom's, or John's, wherever it might be that You call me to serve You with gladness of heart, grant me Lord this day to go forth and obey Your call.

And Lord, You know how my body feels, You know the problems that I am having with my metabolism and my eating, Lord, grant me this day freedom from any obsession, wherever be obsession about diets or overeating, grant me this day freedom from any obsession altogether.

Grant me Lord, freedom from this sluggish feeling in my body, from this discomfort in my head. I thank You Lord, for You hear and answer my prayers, for I utter those not in my flesh but with the voice of my spirit in Jesus in the unity of the

Welcome To My Life

Holy Spirit. For You hear not me in the flesh, but me in the spirit mingled with Jesus You hear and answer, speedily You answer, for so it is written in Your Word.

I thank You Lord, how great You are! Lord, have mercy on us all, mercy, Oh, Mighty God, is my cry, mercy, Oh, Lord God Almighty, mercy. For we are a wicked and perverse generation, we grieve Your Spirit, Oh my God, mercy on us all!

Deliver us from this obsession with our self life. Deliver us Lord, and cause us to get out of ourselves and launch out to throw our nets in the deep sea of the lost world, to catch the souls of men for the glory of Your kingdom.

Deliver us Lord, from our puny self life and grant us the abundant life in You, even eternal life. Amen.

Rejoice my King

March 26/87.

Rejoice my King for I lift my voice to worship You, Oh my King, rejoice. For I lift my heart, to worship You, Oh my King, rejoice, for I lift my being to worship You, Oh my King, rejoice!

For You have given unto me to lift up my voice, my heart, and my whole being to worship You, Oh, my King, rejoice!

For You belong to me and I belong to You, Oh, my King, rejoice, for You have given unto me to You to belong, Oh, my King, rejoice!

Rejoice my King, for I lift up my whole being to worship You, and receive from You mercy, and

Welcome To My Life

joy, and everlasting peace all the days of my life,
Oh, my King, rejoice!
Rejoice my King, and grant me Your mercy and
joy and everlasting peace all the days of my life
in You.

Father, what shall I write this moment? There is
so much You have given me! My cup runneth
over.

Shall I write about the pool of clear water min-
gled with Your blood within me?

Shall I write about the free spirit You have given
me, as of the carefree little dancer in pink freely
dress, skipping in the rainy, sun shiny day?

Or shall I persevere with the work at hand that
You have engaged me in?

"Persevere with the work at hand that I have
engaged you in, My child, persevere today."

My Lord sings to me! Thought to develop from
what happened today. On the morning of Thursday
March 26, while I was worshipping the Lord, early,
somewhere around 3 am while still dark, of course.
The birds were singing just like they sing every
morning here lately around that time. Under those
musical circumstances and in the midst of the
singing from the birds, I wrote my worship prayer
for the day, "Rejoice my King."

It occurred to me that it was somehow sacrilegious to be telling
the Lord to rejoice because I was singing to Him. But at the same
time that such occurrence came to me I asked the Lord to show
me differently.

Later on, a dove was singing beautiful melodies nearby. Glory
unto the Lord! For the dove is a symbol of His Holy Spirit! And

Welcome To My Life

I remembered that I had asked the Lord to show me if indeed He heard me out and that I was not being sacrilegious. Indeed, the Lord answered me with a melody of His own! Alleluia!

I exalt Thee, . . .

March 27/87.

I exalt Thee, I exalt Thee, I exalt, Thee, Oh, my Lord, I exalt Thee, Oh, Oh, Lord I exalt Thee!
Oh, Lord, Oh, Lord, how majestic is Your name,
Oh, Lord, how majestic is Your name, Oh, my God, how majestic is Your name my Lord, my King, my God!

As the deer pants for water so my soul thirsts for You, Oh, my Lord, my King, my God! Answer me, as I call on You, answer me, Oh, my Lord!
"Because My people which are called by My name have repented from their wicked ways, humbled themselves and called on Me, I shall heal their land. Do not faint, do not despair, persevere in your call, for I have called you to be My people and to repent of your wicked ways of living for the comfort of your flesh, and to humble yourselves and call on My name that I might heal your land, and you have done so. Therefore, I shall bring to pass My Word, for My Word stands true forever!"

Thank you Lord, You are merciful my Lord, my King and my God, in You alone I do put my trust, Thank You Lord.

Welcome To My Life

Lord, it's late! I overslept!

3/28/87.

Lord it's after 5 O'clock in the morning and even Your birds overslept! They are not singing Lord! Was it truly You Lord speaking to me all morning while I slumbered in the discomfort of my aching body and my heavy heart? Was it You Lord who told me,

"Come to me all of you that labor and are heavy laden and over burdened, and I will give you rest--I will ease and relieve and refresh your souls. Take My yoke upon you, and learn of Me; for I am gentle, meek, and humble, lowly in heart, and you will find rest--relief, ease and refreshment and recreation and blessed quiet--for your souls. Rest, rest, rest on me today my Thia." Was it You Lord?

"Who else could it have been My Thia, for My sheep hears my voice and none other will they follow. Yes, My Thia, it was I speaking to you in the middle of the multitude of others voices clamoring to burden and heavy laden your heart. Yes, My Child, it was I speaking to You, and it is I, at this moment answering your prayer and teaching you now even now what it is to rest on Me. To rest on Me, Thia, it is not to cease from work, but to cease from the works of your hands, from the works coming from your self and to surrender all your work to Me."

Lord, what is the work that I am doing on my own, what is the work coming from me?

Welcome To My Life

"The work coming from you is all the impatient struggle that tempts you to yield to past memories of hurt and bitter disappointments, but I have covered You with My wings, and under the Blood of My Son I have sanctified You, for with His stripes You were healed, for you have heard My voice, and You have obeyed My beckoning to come to Me when you were laboring and heavy laden, and I have healed You, I have taken your burden and placed it on the altar of the cross which is sanctified by the Blood of My Son. I have placed your burden on that altar and it has been consumed in the fire of the Holy Spirit, forever to burden you no longer. Rest in Me with the confident assurance that My work is easy, for I have finished My work, it has been done."

Oh, my Lord, my God! How majestic is Your name! I used to think that I had to worship You, but now Lord, I don't have to worship You, I simply worship You, I worship You Lord with my whole being, from the bottom of my heart, with all my might, with all my soul with all my mind, I worship You, Oh, God, my Lord and my God, I worship You!

Just a note to tell You, I love You Lord!....

3/29/87.

Just a note to tell You, my Lord, I love You, I worship You, and in You alone I do put my trust. I live within Your secret place, and I shall remain stable and fixed under Your shadow Oh, Lord God Almighty, where no one can harm me; for who

Welcome To My Life

can be against me? Who can harm me? For You are my refuge and my fortress. In You alone I do put my trust.

You order your angels to take charge over me, to accompany and defend and preserve me in all my ways of obedience and service. Who can be against me?

For wherever I go, I go in obedience to serve You, and in front of me and behind me, You go with me. Why should I fear? For I live in Your secret place, even Jesus Christ Your Son, Oh most High, my Lord, my God, in You alone I do put my trust. Just a note to tell You, with thanksgiving, I lift up my heart to You, my Lord, my God, with thanksgiving I cry unto You, "Abba Father!"

Thank You Father that You look into my needs, thank You for Your provision, thank You, Father. Thank You Father, for You know I need to come into Your rest, You know my Father, for You are my Lord, You are my God, You are everything to me, You know I need, I MUST come into Your rest.

Into Your rest bring me, Father, into Your rest bring me, for I am weary and tired, I am wanting to finish with the works of my hands, into Your rest, You, bring me Lord, for I, cannot bring myself. Thank You Father for hearing and answering my request, thank You Lord.

Forgive me Lord . . .

3/30/87.

For like Jeremiah I have been crying,

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"Why is my pain perpetual, and my wound incurable, refusing to be healed? Will you indeed be to me as a deceitful brook, like waters that fail and are uncertain?"

And again, like Jeremiah, Your answer has come to me as it did before, thank You Lord.

"Therefore thus says the Lord [to Jeremiah], If you return [give up this mistaken tone of distrust and despair], then I will give you again a settled place of quiet and safety, and you shall be My minister; and if you separate the precious from the vile [cleansing your own heart from unworthy suspicions concerning God's faithfulness], you shall be as My mouthpiece, [But do not yield to them.] Let them return to you --not you to the people.

"And I will make you to this people a fortified, brazen wall. They will fight against you, but they shall not prevail over you; for I am with you to save and deliver you, says the Lord. And I will deliver you out of the hand of the wicked, and I will redeem you out of the palm of the terrible and ruthless tyrants." Jeremiah 15:19-21.

Lord, thank You for quickening Your Word to me, thank You Lord for bringing Your Word to pass within my heart, thank You Lord!

Forgive me Lord for my unworthy suspicions about Your faithfulness, Oh, Lord. Forgive me for forgetting even for a moment that You have cleansed me with Your precious Blood from all my acts of selfishness. You have delivered me out of the hand of the wicked, and out of the hand of the terrible and ruthless tyrants, and You have healed my bro-

Welcome To My Life

ken heart. For Your faithfulness is forever. Thank You, Lord! All glory and honor to Your name. Alleluia!

Mercy Lord, the flesh is weak!....

3/31/87.

My Lord, my God, I come to You, at this moment, placing my body on the cross as a living sacrifice, sanctified by the Blood of the Lamb, once again Lord, renewing my mind daily in obedience to Your Word.

Oh, my Lord, my God, I worship You. I worship You, Oh, my God, I worship You, for You are God, Oh, Mighty One, You alone are God! Glory unto Your name, glory unto the Mighty God of Israel, glory unto the King above all Kings, glory unto the Lord of Lords, glory unto my God!

Thank You Lord for Your winnowing fork that has swept our land, thank You Lord. Glorify Your name Lord, not ours. Cause us to repent of our wicked ways in the flesh and look up to You, cause us to see our wickedness.

Search our hearts Lord, for You alone can search us and cause us to fall on our faces in earnest repentance. You alone can call us to repentance, You alone can quicken our weak spirits and cause us the strengthening of Your Holy Spirit, Oh my God, Oh Mighty God, have mercy on us!

In the order that You ordained me. . .

April 01/87.

Father, I praise You, I worship You, I love You and adore You, glorify Your name in all the earth!

Welcome To My Life

Praise, glory and honor to the Lamb of God! Glory to His name, His name is Jesus, Jesus Christ, Lord of lords, King of kings. Glory to His name. Jesus Christ my Lord, I praise You, I worship You, I give You honor and praise and glory, now and forever. Amen.

Holy Spirit, lead me, teach me, show me in the way that I shall go, according to the will of the Father, on the promise of the Son, lead, teach, and show me this day, and everyday of my life, on the way that I shall go, walking in You, by You, with You, all inclusive in You let me walk this day.

To You, Oh, Holy Spirit, my Guide, my Counselor, my Teacher, my Lord and my God, to You be the glory, the praise and the honor, forever. Amen.

In the prime time of my day, when I first open my eyes, let me Lord to You yield my being, my whole being, spirit, soul, and body, in that order. For in that order You have ordained me when You quickened my spirit to life, when You redeemed my soul and body from hell, when You sacrificed my body and soul in the flesh, when You shed Your Blood in the altar of the cross, to sanctify, to set apart for Your service not only the altar of the cross but also the gift of my whole being, spirit, soul, and body, my new self in the flesh, a living sacrifice, wholly and acceptable unto God by the blood of the Lamb.

Grant me Oh, Lord, in the prime time of my day, when I first open my eyes to You yield my whole being, that in the midst of the world's hustle and bustle in the remaining of my wakeful hours, I

Welcome To My Life

may walk yielded to Your will, ready for Your service.

Grant me Lord, to live in Your presence all the days of my life, regardless of the world's hustle and bustle, and the toils of the day.

Thank You Lord, for You answer my prayers, for You hear my voice even while I yet speak, thank You Lord!

Wonderful Truth!...

4/02/87.

Father, Oh, Father, I worship You! I worship You, Oh, my Lord, I worship You! You are everything to me, You are my Lord, my God, in You alone I do put my trust. Praise, honor and glory to Your name.

My Lord, my heart pulsates with Yours, with Your heart my heart pulsates, our hearts are pulsating together, my Lord, for You and I are One, what a wonderful truth! With my heart pulsating with Yours, I cry this very moment, I cry with You and in You, I shed the lonely tears of Your pain caused by the hurt from the absence of Your children, Oh, my God!

Oh, merciful God, hearken to Our plea, hearken Oh, merciful God, to Our plea to quicken repentance in the heart of Your children, the very souls that You have created.

Hearken, Oh, my God, hearken, Oh, my God, hearken to Our plea to bring our lost ones into Your fold. For You, alone, are able, You alone are

Welcome To My Life

God, hearken, Oh, my God, hearken to Our plea
to bring America into your fold.

Hearken, Oh, merciful God, hearken to Our plea,
the plea from the Lamb of God and Your servants,
washed in the Blood of the Lamb.

Hearken, Oh, my God, Oh merciful God, hearken
to Our plea, for You are a merciful God, and
Your mercy endureth forever!

Keep me in Your presence, Oh, Lord...

4/03/87.

Oh, my Lord and my God, how great You are!
Glory, honor, and praise to Your name forever, for
You are God! I worship You Almighty God, I worship
You, I love You and adore You, Oh, my God,
I worship You.

Lord, You know me, You know how quickly I
want to run away from You at times when You
call me into Your presence. You know me Lord,
You know my weak flesh and my inability to pray
and watch with You even for an hour, You know
it Lord, You know that my flesh is weak but my
spirit is willing, for You have quicken my spirit
to worship You my Lord.

Grant me Lord, to sit still in Your presence, not
just for one hour but always, to sit still in Your
presence forever! Anoint me with Your Holy Spirit
today and everyday, that the power of Your blood
make my ears to hear and obey You, my hands to
work in Your service for You and by You, my feet
to walk in Your will.

Welcome To My Life

Grant me Lord, to experience the work of Your blood in my daily walk with You. Deliver me Lord, from all temptations this day, the usual ones that I know, and the unexpected ones of which I am ignorant.

I thank You Lord, for keeping me in Your presence, today and everyday, thank You Lord.

They called Me a wine bibber too!...

4/4/87.

Glory, honor and praise to the Lamb who has been slain to redeem us by His blood! Glory unto the Lamb of God. Oh, my Lord, my God, how weak and miserable I feel, for there is not any of Your meekness in my life. I go about in my daily errands always concerned with my affairs. What about other's affairs, what about other's concerns, why can I not be like You?

"Does it occur to you Thia, that you are like Me? That I live in the center of your being and you and I are One? That you are not any longer about your affairs but My affairs alone do you tend? That I, too, was accused of being a glutton and a wine bibber? That My human flesh and blood, I mean My family, was upset because I was not with them for I was about my Father business? That there is, still, the spirit of Martha in most every gathering? That Satan the accuser, goes about all day long seeking to engage your human nature in self-pity and dejection?

"Relax, rest on Me, cast all your cares upon Me, for I alone shall direct Your path, for I alone Am

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your God, your Father, your Guide, your Counselor, your beginning and your end. And you are My child and the apple of My eye, I shall never leave you nor forsake you, for I love you with everlasting love. Go forth this day, and know that you are My child, for I have bought you with the blood of My Lamb. The blood of the Lamb is forever cleansing and making you a fit child of Mine, ready for the slaughter of the flesh's concerns, ready to do My will. Go forth this day My child, and rest on Me."

Alleluia, Oh, Alleluia, my Jesus is alive! Alive, alive, alive forever more! My Jesus is alive, my Jesus is alive, alive, alive, alive forever more, my Jesus is alive! You asked me where He lives? He lives within my heart!

You made ready Your Bride!...

4/5/87.

Oh, my Lord and my God, I cast all my cares upon You, for You care for me. I thank You Lord, I praise, I glorify Your name. Alleluia. I worship You, Oh my Lord, I worship You, for You are worthy, Oh, my God.

Lord, You have searched my heart and prepared it for Your coming, let me live in that knowledge, Oh, my God. Let me remember vividly the pool of clear water mixed with Your blood, and the Bride dressed in white, sitting by the pool, waiting for the Groom, that You have place in my being.

Welcome To My Life

Yes Lord, You have washed me clean and made me ready with Your blood. Let me remember it forever! Alleluia!

Cause me to know . . .

4/6/87.

Thou are worthy Oh, my Lord, of praise, honor and glory! I worship You, Oh, my God! Thou are worthy Great Jehovah, Thou are worthy, Almighty God.

Thank You Lord, for Your mercy and Your loving-kindness, thank You, Lord. Thank You, Lord, for Your precious blood working daily in my life in You, for it is no longer I that lives in my flesh, but the life that I now live is Your life. Cause me, Lord, to know, in every step in my walk, cause me to know the wonderful work of Your blood in the secret part of my being, the secret place of the Most High. Cause me this day to go forth in the power of Your blood and resurrection.

You are the Lord God that heals me...

4/7/87.

Alleluia! Glory unto the Lord! Glory unto the King of Kings, Alleluia! My Lord and my God, You know how I am feeling, You know Lord, I lift up my being to You Lord, wash me clean with Your blood. You are my Lord, my God that heals me, in You, alone I do put my trust!

Welcome To My Life

You and I are One in love forever!...

4/8/87.

The birds on the earth and the angels in heaven sing, for You and I are One in love forever! Alleluia, praise and honor to Your name forever, Alleluia! For Your glory, for Your honor and for Your praise, Oh, God, my Lord, I pour my soul in this writing. My soul in the spirit, not my soul in the flesh, but my soul cleansed in the blood of the Lamb. And for Your glory, Your honor and praise I write sweet words from Your repertoire, for You and I are One, Oh, Lord, in love forever! Alleluia!

Mercy Almighty God!...

4/9/87.

Oh, my Lord and my God, You have had mercy on me, have mercy on us all! You are my Lord and my God, and now my soul is troubled and what shall I say, take this trouble away? No, but for this purpose You have called me, glorify Your name my Lord, glorify Your name my Lord and my God.

Mercy on us all Lord, mercy, Oh, my God, mercy on us all! You alone are God, and Your mercy endureth forever. Mercy on us all Lord, for we are a wicked and perverse generation.

We are in continuous search for comfort and ease for our flesh, in constant search for pleasure, mercy, Oh, my Lord, mercy, my God.

Welcome To My Life

Cause us to repent of our wicked ways, wash us with Your blood, for we perish unless You intervene. Touch us Lord, cause us to see our wicked ways and cry unto You for mercy and forgiveness, for unless You call us by Your name we shall perish.

For You alone are God and You alone are able, Oh, my God, we are helpless. Mercy, mercy, mercy, Oh, Lord God Almighty!

Bring us into communion with You, always, Oh, Lord, not just for an hour...

4/10/87.

Oh, my Lord, my God, teach us to live in Your presence forever. Teach us to experience intimate communion with You, every minute of our lives, not just at specified times. Bring us into that intimate communion with You, to live, to dwell in Your secret place forever, eternally.

Oh, my Lord and my God, this I declare, You alone are God, You are my refuge, my shield, my fortress. In the hustle and bustle on this wicked world in which we live, You are my God, my fortress, my shield, my refuge, and the rock of my salvation, You are my God! In You alone I do put my trust.

Glory, honor and praise be unto Your name, Alleluia! From Your secret place of Your Holy Spirit, where I dwell in Oneness with Your Son Jesus Christ, my Lord, and sheltered by Your shadow Oh, most High, from Your secret place, I worship You!

Welcome To My Life

Where, when, how, who, and not why Lord...

4/11/87.

Oh, my Lord and my God, what am I to do, where, when, how, who am I to do it for, and not why, Lord, not why. For You are the Lord my God to Whom I belong, You alone are my God, and there is no questioning You, Oh, my Lord, for You alone are God and in You, alone, I do put my trust.

Oh, my Lord and my God, what, where, when, how, who am I to do it for and not why my Lord. I have come to the end of my self life, I no longer for me live, I belong to You, Oh, my Lord, my God, in You, alone, I do put my trust.

Guide and direct me this day as You have promised to Your child, teach me Your ways alone, my Lord, for to You I yield myself today.

Let me not look to the right, let me not look to the left, set my eyes strait on You, my Lord, for I no longer live for me, but I entirely yield my whole being to You, and in You, alone, I do put my trust.

Like a child, I trust myself to You this day Lord, do Your will in every hour, in every moment of this day, do as it is Your pleasure with my life, Lord, I keep none of it for my will.

Thank You Lord, thank You Lord, for Your promises are my armor, thank You Lord, for You are my Father, and the Father of my Lord Jesus Christ, and Your Holy Spirit dwells in me, and with your blood You have purchased me, I belong to You, thank You Lord. I worship You, my Lord and my God, I worship You!

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Forever I shall praise You!...

4/12/87.

Oh, Lord my God, when I, in awesome wonder, consider all my God You have done for me, I see Your love, I hear Your voice speaking, my heart I lift, my Lord, to You at last!

Then comes the flood, the flood of blood to me, and I am washed, washed whiter than snow, for all my sins You wiped away my Lord, You gave Your life that I may live at last!

Then sings my soul, my Savior God to You, how great You are, how great You are. Praise the Lord, Oh, my soul, and all that is in me, praise His holy name.

Forever and ever I shall praise You, my Lord and my God, forever and ever, and here on earth even with my last breath I shall praise You, Oh, Lord, my God!

I am Your purchase, made into Your Bride! I fast and pray waiting for You!...

04/13/87.

With fasting and prayer I offer You my worship today in obedience to Your Word, for the bridegroom is gone and I need to fast.

I need to fast and obey You, my Lord, I need to fast unto You. I need to fast Lord, to separate myself unto You, to meditate and assimilate Your purchase of me. With Your blood You have purchased me, Oh, my Lord Jesus Christ, with Your

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blood You have paid the price that the Law demanded for me.

The Law was my master and I was sold under the power of sin, the world, and self, because I could not pay the price that my master demanded; and Satan, this world's god, became my ally and new master, a ruthless and merciless master. What a predicament I was in, sold into slavery! Who was to pay the ransom for me?

Then You, my Lord Jesus, came along. You saw my predicament, and You saw why I was in that predicament. Because You saw my wicked flesh! And You said "What is this that you have done? Because you have disobeyed Me, you are in that predicament, sold into slavery to the Law, bearing the pain of childbirth, and the hurt from lack of love. But I, shall rescue you. I shall crush the head of Satan which is the serpent that beguiled you, and I shall pay the price that the Law, your new, rightful master, demands!"

"Lord, what is that price, why can I not pay it with some of my produce?" I said in the spirit of Cain. "Because your new and rightful master, the Law, demands the life in the blood for your ransom," He said, "you cannot pay your ransom without blood."

"But, why not!" I said indignantly, "I have worked hard to grow this produce, why can my master not accept my sacrifice?"

"Because your master wants blood, hard headed, willful child," He said to me as a warning, "you don't have to pay with produce, you can have blood, why do you want to disobey again? You

Welcome To My Life

don't have to be rebellious, you can have all the blood you need to make the required sacrifice, for your obedience to offer the right sacrifice is far better than the sacrifice itself. And obedience is what I seek in you."

"Hum! After all the work of my hands, am I rejected? I'll show You off!" I thought to myself, "I'll spill the blood of Abel just for that!"

And so I became under the curse of self! Under the curse of self I lived for years and years, with Satan driving me as a ruthless master, and the Law, my rightful master demanding the payment of blood, which I was unwilling to give.

What a predicament I was in, until Jesus saw that there was no intercessor and stepped in! Clad in His robes of righteousness, and godly fury, with vengeance to Satan He stepped in! "I'll pay the price! I'll pay the price for the sinner Thia, and for all sinners under your bondage, I'll pay the price with My own blood!" He said. Thus He purchased me.

Now, Jesus took His purchase and washed it with His blood, thus He cleansed away my sin! Then Jesus took His spotless garment, robed me in it and made me into His Bride! What a joy there was! What a rejoicing day! It was not time for fast.

Then the day came, the sad day when the Bridegroom went away from the presence of the Bride, shall she then fast? Surely, surely, when the Bridegroom goes away from the presence of the Bride, it is time to fast and pray!

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Why did the Bridegroom leave the presence of the Bride? He went to prepare a place for her! A mansion in the sky, the work of the Father. He works day and night to prepare that place in the Father's house, for the Bride, for the Father's glory. Shouldn't the Bride work, too, awaiting the Bridegroom in fasting and prayer? Thus the Bridegroom and the Bride are One in the work of the Father, to glorify His name!

Because of Your mercy ...

4/14/87.

Oh, my Lord, my God, Your mercy is everlasting. I praise You, I thank You, I glorify Your name, because of Your mercy. Alleluia! Because of Your mercy, Almighty God, because of Your mercy, I shall sing praises unto You forever. Alleluia! Because of Your mercy Oh, my God, I can worship You! Alleluia! Because of Your mercy, Oh, my Lord, You washed away my sins even with Your Blood. Alleluia!

Oh, my Lord, how precious are the lips and the heart that sing of Your mercy. Alleluia! How precious are the lips and the heart that sing of Your mercy, for You have created them. Alleluia!

What is there outside of Your mercy, my Lord? Nothing but hate and destruction.

Oh, my God, Almighty God, have mercy on the souls outside of Your mercy. Have mercy my Lord, for You are a merciful God. Alleluia!

Have mercy, my Lord, is my cry, for You are a merciful God to call me by Your name, to hum-

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ble myself, repent of my wicked ways in the flesh,
and cry unto You, Almighty God, to heal my land.
Alleluia!

Thank You Lord, for Your mercy. Alleluia! Thank
You Lord, for You do hear my prayers even while
yet I speak, for so it is written in Your Word of
promise. Alleluia!

In Your mercy, Oh, my God, grant me to live, to
move and have my being. In Your mercy, my God,
cause me to go forth this day to bless and not to
curse. Alleluia!

As I fast, I fast unto You, to break the yoke of
bondage to point my finger and to scorn the godly
and the ungodly. Alleluia!

In Your mercy, Oh, my God, Almighty God, have
mercy on my soul, break the yoke, Oh, my God,
set me free, in Your mercy, Oh, my God, set me
free. Alleluia!

Oh, Potter Divine!...

4/15/87.

1:15 am Lord? What am I to write? It's been such
rich blessings You have bestowed on me this day
already, which am I to record? Speak Lord, Your
child listens.

"Obedience, My child, obedience even unto death,
the death of the Cross. POWER, My child, resur-
rection power. Priesthood and Kingship glory for
My service, My child, for you are a Priest and a
King to the Most High God. All three subjects, I
charge you to write, following My instructions as
to the time and the hour you are to write. For today,

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you have already been instructed, continue to minister in worship to Our Father."

Thank You, Lord, thank You, my Lord and my God. For You are my Lord and my God and in You, alone, I do put my trust. I worship You, Oh, Most High, I worship You.

Thank You, Lord, thank You, my Lord and My God. I praise You, I worship You, for You are worthy to be praised and worshipped, for You have purchased me with Your blood, I belong to You, Oh, my Lord, my God, my Master. I worship You, I worship You, I worship You alone!

For I am Your purchase, You bought me with Your blood! What a high price You paid for a wretch, a sinner like me. Yes You are worthy of praise and honor and glory, You are worthy, Oh, my Lord, my God, my Master. I worship You, I worship You, I worship You alone!

For I am Your purchase, You bought me with the high price of Your blood when You knew I was no good! What an act of mercy, what a love divine. Yes You are worthy of praise and honor and glory. You are my God, my Lord, my Master, my Savior, I worship You, I worship You, I worship You alone!

For I am Your purchase, You bought me with the high price of Your blood, even when You knew I had a non-returnable label, for I was no good! What an act of mercy, what a love divine. Yes You are worthy of praise and honor and glory. You are my God, my Lord, my Master, my Savior, my Redeemer, I worship You, I worship You, I worship You alone!

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For I am Your purchase, You bought me with the high price of Your blood to work in me, even when I was no good, with a non-returnable label! Yes, You are worthy of praise and honor and glory. You are my God, my Lord, my Master, my Savior, my Redeemer, my Maker. I worship You, I worship You, I worship You alone!

For I am Your purchase, You bought me with the high price of Your blood to work in me, to make me into a beautiful vessel to hold the flowers of Your love, even when I was no good, with a non-returnable label! What a wonderful God You are! Yes, You are worthy of praise and honor and glory. I worship You Oh, my God, I worship You, I worship You, I worship You alone! You are worthy, Oh, my God, my Lord and Master, my Savior and Redeemer, my Maker, the Potter above all potters, Oh, Potter divine! Alleluia!

I was the Lord's helper! . . . `cause I fasted...

4/16/87.

Bells are ringing, whence are they ringing from, Lord? "From the angels in heaven, for a sinner has come home!"

Lord? What a wonderful thing! But what is it of my concern? For Lord, You work and I don't. Lord, I feel left out!

"Thia, My child, having I been working in You? Haven't you fasted unto Me? Why do you think I have let you hear the bells ringing? My child, My dear child, you are precious to me, you have worked with Me!"

Welcome To My Life

Oh, my Lord, and my God! I can scarcely take it in! How Great Thou Art! Thank You Lord! Your mercy is everlasting, Your loving-kindness is forever! How thoughtful of You, how kind, whence Your everlasting mercy and forever kindness I deserve?

"Whence I created you for My glory and for My pleasure, My child, yes, from the beginning I have loved you with everlasting love. You are Mine, I have created you and I have redeemed you for My glory and for My pleasure. I shall never leave you, nor forsake you. You are Mine forever, for forever I have settled it with the Blood of My Son!"
Alleluia!

Teach me Lord, to sit still in Your presence, . . . to bow in Your presence and wait on You in worship, . . . To wait on You in worship instead of giving way to doubt, unbelief, fear, and panic...

4/17/87.

Sitting still in Your presence I wait on You, Oh, my God! My Lord and my God, I bow in Your presence to worship You, Oh, my God!
Yes, Lord, teach me to sit still, teach me to bow in Your presence when the waves of the storm in the sea of my troubled emotions threatens to sink down the boat that carries I and You to the other side of the lake of my life's journey, on to eternity.

For in that boat there, in the bow, Your presence lays still, sleeping in tranquility. Why should I

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fear to sink down, why should I give way to doubt and unbelief?

Why should I forget Your presence, why should I forget that it was You that initiated this journey of I and You, for it was You that said, "Let us go to the other side of the lake"?

Why should I forget that it was You that called me by Your name? For in that boat there, in the bow, Your presence lays still, sleeping in tranquility. Why should I fear to sink down, give way to my doubt and unbelief, why should I forget that it was You that initiated this journey, why should I forget the mighty miracles You have already performed in this side of the lake of my life's journey? Why should I forget the mighty miracle of my salvation? Why should I forget the mighty miracles even in my body?

For it was You that quickened my spirit to life, and performed all kinds of healing in my lamed body. Why should I forget, like Your disciples forgot, the mighty miracles that You had already performed in the other side of the lake before You and Your disciples took Your journey to the other side of it, as it is recorded in Your Word in the Book of Mark, Chapter 4, verses 35-41?

For in that boat there, in the bow, Your presence lays still, sleeping in tranquility. Why should I fear to sink down, give way to my doubt and unbelief, become fearful and panic, why should I forget that it was You that initiated this journey, why should I forget the mighty miracles You have already performed in this side of my life's journey? Why should I forget that You have the power

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to command the storm in the sea of my troubled emotions, with a simple, "Peace be still"? Why should I be so fearful, why should I yet have not any confidence in You and become fearful and panic?

Yes, Lord, teach me to sit still, teach me to bow in Your presence and worship You when the waves of the storm in the sea of my troubled emotions threaten to sink down the boat that carries I and You to the other side of the lake of my life's journey on to eternity...

Yes, Lord, teach me to sit still and wait on You instead of giving way to doubt and unbelief, fear and panic, for in that boat there... in the bow, Your presence lays still, sleeping in tranquility!

Yes, Lord, teach me to sit still, teach me to bow in Your presence and worship You when the waves of the storm in the sea of my troubled emotions threaten to sink down the boat that carries I and You to the other side of the lake of my life's journey on to eternity... Teach me to sit still, to bow in Your presence and worship You and wait on You.

Yes Lord, teach me to have confidence in You, and not to give way to panic, fear, doubt and unbelief, for in that boat there, in the bow, Your presence lays still, sleeping in tranquility with the power to command the storm in the sea of my troubled emotions with a simple, "Peace be still"! Alleluia!

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Cheer up! I have overcome the world!...

4/18/87.

Glory to the King! Alleluia! Praise to Jehovah, glory to my King, glory to the name above all names, Jesus Christ my Lord! Alleluia! Oh, my Lord and my God, I worship You, I worship You, with all my might, with all my heart, with my whole being, I worship You, my God, my Lord and Savior, I worship You!

Lord, far from Your presence I feel and yet, I know in the depth of my being that You are with me, but why do You forsake me in the moments when I am so weak in my flesh, when I need You the most?

"My child, when you are weak I am strong to hold you up to Me. Do not fear, for I will never leave nor forsake you. Remember that in the world you shall have tribulation, but never fear for I, have overcome the world.

"I am the One who directs your path, I scheduled each day of your life before you were even born, and this day of your life, even this day, is recorded in My book also. I have started a good work in you, and I am the One that shall finish that work within you, do not look into your feelings or emotions but look up to Me.

"In fact, lift up your eyes to My crucified flesh and receive My finished work in you in the blood of My cross, for when I finished the work of the cross, I finished My work forever, and as you lift up your eyes to My crucified flesh in obedience to My Word, in that work I finished you."

Welcome To My Life

Yes Lord, I have received Your work in the cross, I have been washed in Your blood, why then do I feel forsaken? Why do I feel so far from Your presence? Lord? I fear not the enemy. I fear Lord, in fact I tremble, to think that I could be capable to step out of Your will.

"My Thia, the fear of Your Lord, the fear to step out of My will is a delight to My heart for that is the beginning of all your understanding of who you are and Who am I. Remember, My child, that I am the Lord that upholds you with My right hand, yeah, I shall strengthen your heart, you shall not perish, but you shall overcome!

"For I am your God, your Lord and Master, your Savior and your Redeemer. I shall never leave you, nor forsake you. I shall be with you in all troubles that you encounter in the commission I have assigned to you, even the witness of My love and mercy for a lost world.

"Do not fear what mere men can do to you, for even when they condemn you I, do not condemn you, but rather I uphold you with My right hand and hold you close to My heart.

"My peace and My love that I give to you is not the same as the world's. In the world you shall have tribulation because they will not receive My peace and My love, but they want you to participate in their wicked ways of seeking fulfillment for a distorted need to love.

"But they are the very souls that I have created and for them I have given My blood! Do not fear what they do to you for they have done it to Me already, and I have saved them anyway even as I

Welcome To My Life

have saved you. For My mercy and My love are everlasting, yes, thus I have overcome the world!"
Forgive me, Lord, for giving way to my feelings and forgetting Your Word! Truly, You are my God, my Lord and Master, my King! Alleluia!

Glorious Resurrection Day! Why am I cast down Oh,
my soul?...

4/19/87.

Easter! Glory to my King! Alleluia! My Lord and my God, the power of Your resurrection is upon me. Alleluia!

Oh, my Lord, my God, Thou are worthy to be praised, Thou are worthy, Oh, my God, for Thou has purchased us to God by Your blood. Alleluia! I worship You, Oh, my God and my Lord, I worship You! Glory unto Your name forever! Unto You, and You, alone, be the glory forever and ever. Amen.

Lord? It is eight o'clock in the evening of this Easter Sunday, why am I so restless? What did I miss Lord? What did I failed to do or not do.

Lift me up Lord, to worship You, for I have fallen in the valley of the torture of condemnation...

4/20/87.

Oh, my Lord, my God! Lift me up to You, my Lord, to worship You! Lift me Lord, lift me up to You, for I have fallen down in the valley of the torture of condemnation again!

Lift me up Lord, to worship You, to strengthen my inner being in Your presence and inquire of You. Lift me up Lord, to worship You, to strength-

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en my inner being in Your presence and inquire of You, for I have fallen in the valley of the torture of condemnation for a fault of my own I confess, Oh, my Lord.

Lift me up Lord, to worship You, to strengthen my inner being in Your presence and inquire of You, for I have fallen in the valley of torture of condemnation and I am trapped in because of my own fault, for the careless omissions of yesterday. Oh, my God, my Lord and my Master, I confess and I pray to You my Lord to deliver me from this awful curse, to forgive me Lord and grant me the strength in the commitment to obey Your commands. For I am weak and helpless in this flesh of mine Lord, I can do nothing of my own in the wicked way of my flesh and I rebel into doing nothing at all and failing to walk in Your light, I confess, forgive me Lord.

For You have given me a command to love my brother, to love my sister, to walk in the light as You did, but I, did not, my Lord, I did not. I sinned against You my Lord, I disobeyed Your command by failing to love my brother, my sister, and even all the very souls that You have created. I failed to walk in Your light I confess, Oh, my God, I have walked in the flesh, in the darkness of the world I have walked, I disobeyed You, my Lord, I confess.

Lift me up Lord, to worship You, to strengthen my inner being in Your presence and inquire of You. Lift me up Lord, to worship You, to strengthen my inner being in Your presence and inquire of You, for I have fallen in the valley of the tor-

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ture of condemnation for a fault of my own I confess Oh, my Lord.

"My Thia, My child, go in peace and sin no more, for I Am faithful and just to forgive You quickly, to lift You up to My presence to worship Me and strengthen you to walk in My light.

"For I do not condemn you, you need not to fall into the trap of the valley of the torture of condemnation for I am with You, even in the center of your being, to lift you and keep you from that trap and all traps set to disturb Our fellowship and to lure you back to walk in the flesh in the valley of the deception of the ways of the world.

"But I am with you, I'll never leave you nor forsake you, and what is more, I Am faithful and just to forgive You quickly, to lift You up to My presence to worship Me and strengthen you to walk in My light.

"Go My child, go in peace and sin no more. Go forth this day, forgetting those things that are behind, looking forward toward the light of the world, even Jesus Christ, your Lord and Savior to keep you in that light.

"Go My child, go forth this day, forgetting those things that are behind, looking forward toward the light of the world, even Jesus Christ, your Lord and Savior to keep you in that light, for I do not condemn you. You need not to fall into the trap of the valley of the torture of condemnation for I am with You, even in the center of your being, to lift you and keep you from that trap and all traps set to disturb Our fellowship.

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"Go forth My child, go forth. Step out in faith, for I have launched you out into the deep sea of My Kingdom, to fish for the very souls that I have created with the magnetic appeal of My love. Go forth My child, go forth.

"Step out in faith and magnetize the world with My love. I am with you, I'll never leave you nor forsake you, and what is more, I Am faithful and just to forgive You quickly, to lift You up to My presence to worship Me, and to strengthen you to walk in My light. Step out in faith and magnetize the world with My love."

By faith, not by fleeting emotions!...

4/21/87.

Oh, my Lord, my God, I praise You, I lift up my heart to You, my God, to worship You! Alleluia! My Lord and my God, this I declare, You, alone, are my God, my refuge, my shield, my fortress, in You, alone, I do put my trust.

I come Lord, even at this moment, I come boldly to Your throne of grace to inquire of You, Oh, my God, to plead and supplicate, I come Lord, thanks to Your precious blood.

Thank You, Lord, for Your blood. Thank You, Lord, that with Your blood You washed me white as snow and I am clean, worthy to come boldly to Your throne to worship You and inquire of You! Alleluia!

Oh, my God, my Lord, my Father, You are worthy to be praised, for You are God, Almighty God,

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Oh, merciful God. You are worthy to be praised for Your mercy is everlasting! Alleluia!

Father, You are my Lord, my God, in You alone I do put my trust. Alleluia! I come to You, Oh, Father, to ask, to inquire of You, abiding in Your Word, in Your Son Jesus Christ, my Lord, my God, my Savior, my Master who purchased me with His blood. Alleluia!

I come to You, my Father, in unity with Your Holy Spirit, my Lord, my God, my Counselor, my Teacher, my Guide, my Helper. Alleluia!

Thank You Father for Your provision, thank You for Your mercy in Your plan of salvation, thank You, Father. Alleluia!

Father, You know my name, You know what I am going through and how I am feeling. You know the work that You are doing in me, Oh, Father, grant me my Lord, to receive from Your hand of mercy, alone, and to rejoice in every circumstance, in every step of Your project.

Grant me, Father, to receive from You today, regardless of how I feel.

"The just shall live by faith, My child, not by feelings. That is the work that I am carving in Your heart, My child, for it is imperative that your will must align with Mine, not by feelings and fleeting emotions, but by faith, for it is by faith that the righteous shall live."

My Lord, and my God, Oh, Father, Your will be done, not mine. Alleluia!

That's the end of the first set of meditations. I started each month on the 21st of the month. I continued this practice for 12 months. After that I wrote several messages but as I have grown spiritu-

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ality I think that those messages were appropriate for the place and time in which I was, but not for now.

I lived in My Honey's back apartment from March 5, 1987 to November 1, 1992. My Honey was diagnosed with Myseothelioma on March 18, 1992 and, exactly seven months later, he took his last breath on October 18, 1992.

During all the time I lived with My Honey, never, not even once, did I defiled myself. I conducted myself with dignity and respect not only for myself but also for him as the Lord gave me the power to do. And I ripped the effects of my behavior as I shall relate in the next chapter to end this Autobiography.

Chapter 8

A Memorial To My Honey...

NORMAN JOSEPH MARTINEZ
MY HONEY OR N. J. MARTINEZ ONLY TO
ME. PAW-PAW TO MOST OF HIS CHILDREN
UNCLE COO WAS OFTEN HEARD
TO HIS FAMILY & FRIENDS HE WAS COO
OTHERS WITH DUE RESPECT CALLED HIM
MR. COO OR MR. MARTINEZ

N. J. MARTINEZ stands for NORMAN JOSEPH MARTINEZ proclaimed as it is written, IN CAPITAL LETTERS, because he was a GREAT CAPITAL IN THIS WORLD. The Lord God placed him in this world to give a glimpse to this world of what love is all about. And because of love, the love of God in him and for him, N. J. MARTINEZ was a GREAT CAPITAL IN THIS WORLD.

I was blessed with N. J. MARTINEZ' love since 1983 after he lost his beloved wife. For it was not until then that he took notice of me and immediately bestowed upon me the greatest compassion I have ever known from any human being until I became a recipient of his compassion.

He was my Honey from the beginning of our relationship. Everybody else knew him as "Coo" Martinez. I was not allowed to call him Coo. I always called him either "Honey..." or exclaimed to him: "N. J. MARTINEZ! You know better than that!" If at any

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time I would say, "Coo," he would retort, "Ah, now you calling me Coo?" He made it sound like if I had committed a mortal sin. Oh, he was so full of fun and mischief!

But then, he was so full of life and decency and honor and all those things that most people struggle to achieve but came to him spontaneously. Truly he was blessed by God.

Yes, he was a vital man, never at lost for what to do. He had a way about him that would command respect on the spot from anyone who had any sense.

I had the greatest respect for him and his authority, yet, between him and I there was always a tacit understanding of something like this, "I, N. J. MARTINEZ, I am the BOSS, but I'm going to let you boss me around because I want to, period." And so, he would pamper and spoil me rotten until I would reach his allotted limit. Then he would pull the strings and hung me until I would amend my ways. He kept me in line.

His daily routine was full of activity. Early to bed and early to rise, he had more time than ordinary people to tyrannize me because I couldn't match his energy. He was 24 years my senior but you couldn't really tell and you'll never get him to make such confession either.

We always said that he was 54 because one time he took off to the dance hall without me because I didn't have the energy for all that jumping around that he would make me do in the dancing hall. Anyhow, when he came back that night he came rushing to my apartment (he always did that, he came to give me an account of his doings no matter how late it was) they had the 'change partners dance' and he started dancing with one woman when another tapped him on the shoulder and he as he started dancing with her he told me: "She grabbed on to me and said,

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"Thanks! That son of a gun I was dancing with must to been 60 years old!" And I kept my mouth shut! Isn't that a kick! If she only would have known that I was 74! From now on we'll tell everybody that I'm 54!"

Truly, he looked and acted more like a 54 than a 74 years old man. Also, he was an excellent driver, though you couldn't tell it by the way I acted when he was driving and I was riding along. Many of times I wished I would have had a tape recorder to record the most silly and ridiculous interchanges that went on between him and I. This interchanges took their peak during driving time, regardless of who was driving. But, in all honesty, he was a good driver, he had the reflexes of a teenager. He wouldn't park too good sometimes, but that was more out of his habitual "hurry, hurry" attitude than his lack of ability to park. Most of the time he would amend his ways when some ridiculous cop would slap him with a ticket, just to make a point.

Our getting up time used to be somewhere around 3 O'clock in the morning. I had a reason to get up because I am a writer and that's when I am most inspired to write. But he would get up just because he had gone to bed so early that he couldn't sleep anymore. So, he would get up fix his coffee and watch the round the clock news. During those early times is when he would learn all kind of things to aggravate the life out of me. Like the time he learned about cholesterol. Oh, how I wished that he could have forgotten that word! Every single day since then he would not give me peace about anything we ate. He would say, "Cholesterol!" As if he was saying, "Fire!"

I had promised him that I would take care of him when he got old. And sometimes when he wanted to get me to do some of his chores he would remind me of my promise which would make me jump quicker than any other time, and I would exclaim, "I

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said I'll take care of you when you get old, I mean old, you are not old enough now for me to take care of you, instead you better take care of me, that's your job. And don't you forget it!"

We had not in the least thought about him dying, not even getting old. He was so full of life and because of the history of longevity from his family we were expecting him to make the one hundred mark easily. We always talked about the day when he'd make that mark. Often, I would say, "Listen if you think you can get away with it, I have news for you: When I'll make my hundred you'll only be 124 and I don't expect for you to have that as an excuse not to take care of me!"

But I didn't have to coax him at all to take care not only of me, but also of himself and the house. If anything I had to go around telling him, "Get down from there!" Or, "Get up or out of there! Call somebody to do that job, you shouldn't be doing that!" But no, he had to cut his grass and edged it. He had to change the oil in his car. He had to paint not only the house but whatever else he could get his hands on. And he had to take care of the plumbing! The plumbing was his greatest delight. Oh, the look of satisfaction he'll get after his accomplishments!

And cook! I gave up on cooking altogether. I couldn't compete with him. So, that was another job that pertained to him alone. I had to wash the dishes though. Although, sometimes, when he would cook early, he would wash his pots and pans because he didn't approve of my washing, I didn't scrub his beloved pots and pans well enough to make them shine like he did!

Oh, well it didn't bother me at all. At first it did, because I was self-conscious about what others might think, but as I grew up in my spiritual relationship with the Lord, I became more assertive

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and I truly would enjoy and rejoice with him with all that he could do at his age.

Some things were hilarious, like the obsession he had to fix his old, old, old lawn motor. It was so pitiful that sometimes I would abandon my computer and I would sit with him for hours handing him different parts, until he'd get to the part when he would send me to get this infamous special and peculiar old little screw which kept stripping and which only could be found in one specific hardware store for 15 cents. Oh, how many times did I run that errand!

And his garden and his poinsettias and his hedges and trees! Oh, what a kick he would get to see that actually some of his tomatoes plants would produce just like if he had taken care of them. Just about the only care he would give to his plants was to water them faithfully.

And the raking of the leaves! He would take such pride in keeping everything spick and span, but the leaves and the wind always defeated him. It was a funny sight to watch him finish his raking job piling all of those leaves in a big heap when the wind would come before he had a chance to bag them up or better yet the wind would blow in a fresh batch of leaves! But he wouldn't give up, he had started all over again until he was tired out and would retreat to some other less tiring endeavor like sitting in the lawn chair and watch that the squirrels wouldn't steal the bird food.

Now, about his spiritual situation. When I first went back to Church and my religious ways I began to preach to him. He was very polite about it, but he would always tell me, "I was born Catholic and I am going to die Catholic!"

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Well, I also have been Catholic, but God touched my life and changed my old self-righteous ways into a real, a genuine Christian life from within my heart. I couldn't give that credit to the Catholic Church or any other organized body of religion. It was God Who touched me, and so, there was a character change in me that impressed my Honey immensely. Especially that, as I grew up spiritually and I abandoned my old religious and self-righteous ways, I quit preaching to him.

All of this took him by surprise. But he gained a new perspective of me and he began to prove and ask me about my new way of living and thinking and doing. I shared with him everything about myself.

He had always told me that he was never going to give up his business, no matter what. And I would tell him that it didn't matter whether he did or did not. That would make him take a double turn to my new angle of things, as he put it. This went on for a couple of years.

I didn't have any intentions to bother him with my beliefs and opinions or to convert him to such beliefs and opinions. But, for myself, he had given me the freedom to write and to distribute my writings and insights about Jesus Christ.

So, every morning I would fill a back pack with my books and tracks and I would go walking for an hour or two and give out those things to whomever wanted to take them.

Can you imagine my surprise early the morning after he sold his bar when he came to my apartment and said,

"From now on I am going to walk with you and while we are walking I want you to teach me the Bible. But make sure that

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you don't put on that ridiculous back sack when you are walking with me!"

Well, from then on, we never failed to walk three or four miles a day and talk about the Lord for that is what the Bible is all about. Many of times, if not all the time, he would say, "We had a nice sermon today, eh?" And I would feel like passing the collection plate because I thought that he was mocking me. I never dreamed that everything I was sharing with him was hitting the mark in his heart.

One morning, I was consumed with love and gratitude to the Lord as I shared with my Honey the most intense message I thought I had shared with him up to that point.

I had talked and talked and talked. We were coming close to home by the time I shut up and after a minute of silence, he said, "Man! Your jaws must hurt!" And immediately tears began to gush out of my eyes and he looked at me astonished and said, "What's the matter? What's wrong?" And I said, "Do you mean to tell me that I have shared my very heart with you for better than an hour and all you can say is that my jaws must hurt?"

And he said, "Oh, my God! I never meant it in a bad way. I got 99 percent of all what you talked about. Sometimes I don't understand some words, but I know what you talking about!"

Well, the time came, when I had a glimpse of my Honey's heart concerning Jesus and his personal relationship with Him. That's the day I found out that my Honey had been born again into the kingdom of God, because he had asked Jesus to come into his heart.

That's why when my Honey accepted the fatal stroke from that beast called Mesothelioma, my Honey was prepared to meet His

Welcome To My Life

Savior in heaven. His body sleeps in the dust within that tomb in the cemetery awaiting the Resurrection Day. But my Honey's spirit is with the Lord. But, Oh!... God alone knows how I miss him in these earthly grounds!

And fishing! Oh, how would we enjoyed fishing! He enjoyed it before he met me, but, when he met me there was no greater joy for him than seeing me hook a "big one!" We went on in many, many fishing trips, but we couldn't make that last one...

Yes, that 18th day of March of 1992 we spent it packing and getting everything ready to leave early in the morning the next day. We were on our way to Gene's in Toledo Ben Lake to fish and relax and enjoy Gene's company. Thinking back, I remember how that day he was not that much enthusiastic about the packing and all. I did most of it, but he never complained about anything and I thought that, maybe he was just pouting for one reason or another.

So, after loading everything in the car, around 7 O'clock, I decided to go to sleep so that I could get up before he did and get ready. He didn't like to wait. He said that he was also going to bed but he didn't say anything about hurting.

Around 11:30 or so I was awakened out of a sound sleep by his pounding on my door. He said, "I can't take it anymore! Take me to the hospital!" I jumped out of my bed, grabbed my purse and led him to my car, for he was doubling over with pain.

Oh, God! We didn't have an inkling then of what was about to develop. Not the least idea of the brutal stroke we were about to endure. But we took the blow with the strength of faith as I recorded it in my journal.

Welcome To My Life

June 9, 1992

What a wonderful day yesterday was. Why? Well, because yesterday we celebrated my Honey's new lease in life with pizza from Specialty Pizza. Well, what so wonderful 'bout that? Oh, God! What's so wonderful? As you read the rest of this story, dear reader, you shall see what was so wonderful about that Specialty Pizza lunch my Honey and I shared with Raymond, Joyce and Collins yesterday.

That was the day after we met Doctor Gralla. Doctor Gralla shone a ray of hope in the midst of the gloom of my Honey's diagnosis with Mesothelioma. But today... Today there is a wonder in my heart for which I have no words to describe. As I woke up a few minutes ago, I felt the wonder of a painless waking up with thanksgiving in my heart. As I rose, without a second thought, for I had not fully realized yet that I had no pain, I said, "Praise the Lord!" Honestly, it was not until I was comfortably sitting on the commode when I realized that I was thanking God for feeling good.

A desire to read God's Word bubbled up within me and I thanked and praised my God for that too. It had been so long since that wonderful feeling had come to be my second nature. Without the feeling and desire to read God's Word I felt alone and abandoned. But I knew that I was not alone nor abandoned and in spite of everything I continued reading God's precious Word, as much as I could. One thing though, never, not even for one second I gave in to doubt and unbelief. Oh, the thoughts and feelings of doubt and unbelief, unrelentingly have assailed me during most every day of this trying period of my life, but, by a power beyond my imagination, I always rebuked the nasty thoughts and feelings and quoted Scriptures I didn't even know I knew.

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Well, today I have been restored! And as I walked to my bedside praising my Savior with a heart full of thanks, it came to my remembrance that just last night, I had prayed once more and asked God to restore unto me the joy of my salvation with a heart full of thanks, just like the heart which has been restored unto me today. Such is God's power in His Holy Spirit.

Then as I sat by my bedside my eyes fell on my opened Bible to the Book of Joel 2:12 which was highlighted. I began to read. As I read the familiar Scriptures, it occurred to me that what I was going through was in a way a fast. And as such, I offered my trouble and tribulation unto the Lord. Then I wrote the Scriptures in Joel 2:12-32 and Joel 3:1-8.

July 28, 1992 at 12:30am

Things look bleak and hopeless. But my hope is in God. In Him, in God alone I put my trust and my confidence. No matter what I see in the natural, even to the last breath of air from this earth as it is now, even then I will not doubt my God's Word.

I had put away this writing and much has happened since I wrote the Scriptures from the Book of Joel. Surely the Word of the Lord shall try and test me until my words written about God's Word come to pass among my loved ones, as it was for Joseph which is written in Psalm 105:17-19.

Psa. 105:17 He sent a man before them; Joseph;
who was sold as a slave.

18 They hurt his feet with fetters, He was laid in
irons.

19 Until the time that his word came to pass, The
word of the LORD tested him.

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August 7, 1992 4:35am

To recap what is going on, my Honey was admitted at West Jefferson Hospital from the Emergency Room on March 19, 1992. I had brought him to the Emergency Room in the middle of the night on March 18. On March 27, 1992 he was diagnosed with Mesothelioma: inoperable cancer of the lining of the lungs and chest cavity. A terminal cancer with statistics of only 10% survival rate and only 3-15 months life expectancy.

Within six weeks, that man who had such a zest for life, began to deteriorate.

When I look back now it seems like it was a life time ago but it was just a little over 4 months when the death sentence was pronounced over my Honey.

After spending the night in the waiting room of ICU, I remember coming home the next morning talking loudly to the Lord and saying, "I can't accept it! I won't accept! You promised to do good for me, I can't accept this!" Then I remember a few days later saying, "Lord, I accept it all from Your hand of mercy, I know that whatever You send my way is for my ultimate good.

During all of this experience there are times when I have felt so close to the Lord I could almost touch Him. Yet, for the most part I have felt totally alone. Though in my heart, I know that I am never alone for God's Word says, "I will never leave nor forsake you."

Today is one of those days when I feel alone and scared. Yesterday we saw Doctor Gralla again and again there was hope in our hearts. But that hope was to be tinted later on with the mirage of negatives which came our way. What should we do? Should we accept the treatment proposed by Doctor Gralla or should we

Welcome To My Life

allow all the negatives swallow us into doing nothing to fight this beast called Mesothelioma?

August 8, 1992, 5:45am

We saw Doctor Gralla again today. This time my Honey's family was with us to ask the many questions which we had about the treatment. Thank God, Doctor Gralla answered all questions thoroughly. No, my Honey is not strong enough to take the treatment but, there is still hope that he'll take it later on.

As it turned out my Honey was not able to take the treatment and he took a turn for the worst since that visit with Doctor Gralla.

In the midst of everything, my Honey had me read the Scriptures every single day, as we have been doing for the past couple of years, but now we read those same Scriptures with more intensity than ever.

But the treacherous beast kept stealthily advancing within his chest cavity filling it with the deadly fluid which caused him the greatest harm. The doctors kept draining it and they gave him Radium therapy in the hope of drying it up, but, it kept coming back. I spent long moments pounding on his back in a desperate attempt to bring some of that stuff up so he could at least fall asleep, but it was all in vain. There was no way to bring that stuff up.

Nothing could be done, except to give him pain killers to dose him off because he had lost so much weight after the Radium therapy that he was not strong enough to take any other treatments. Besides, even when he was willing to take other treatments the odds were much too high that any other treatment would only prolong his misery instead of drying up the miserable fluid.

Welcome To My Life

So, the only thing we got as a result of the Radium therapy was that my Honey lost his taste buds as well as his appetite. That is how he began to lose weight to the point that, he became literally skin and bones, too weak to even walk a few steps and many of times he would fall down trying to help himself to the bathroom because he didn't want to wake me up to help him. So, I fixed a pallet next to his bed to make sure he wouldn't get up without my help. But even then, he was so weak that, when he would fall down I had the hardest of times getting him up because he couldn't help me.

Then within six months, he was bedridden. The last few weeks of his life he could hardly get up even with assistance and finally he was completely bedridden to the point that he had began to develop bedsores.

Nevertheless, we had kept hoping for the best all through the month of August, and part of the month of September. September 17 he made his 77th Birthday. There were different Birthday cards but not many presents. It was a rather sad occasion.

Sometime towards the end of September he became disoriented for lack of oxygen. Evidently the fluid was suffocating him. Genie and I took him to the Emergency Room. They admitted him to the hospital for what was to be the last time. The doctors found out that the cancer had spread and they called in the Hospice and sent him home to live comfortably until the time came for him to die.

It was then, when we came home that he told me, "I guess we best start praying different." Then at the beginning of the month of October he decided to quit eating altogether. About a week later he also quit talking.

Welcome To My Life

Now, my Honey's greatest concern was me. For that reason he resisted death as long as he could making sure that I was going to be alright. For he was suffering so much that I could hardly bear it myself and he feared for my sanity. But I kept reassuring him over and over again that the Lord was in control of both his and my life.

I told him that I couldn't take care of myself but that he was a witness how the Lord had never failed me or him. And even when he was leaving me it wasn't going to be an eternal separation but that soon we all be together and that there was not going to be any more separations. I read to him what heaven was like and finally he told me and everybody else, "I'm ready, how long shall it be?"

On Sunday, the 18th day of October about 5 in the morning I heard him trying to cough and I hurried up to give him some ice chips and a few drops of morphine. As I did that, he spoke to me what was to be his last words, he said to me, "I love you." He said nothing else.

I remember comforting him, holding his hand, reading him the Scriptures. I remember my daughters Denise and Robin calling me by phone and I remember Genie coming in and sitting with him while I took a shower.

Then I remember being alone with him while Genie went to get dressed and I remember singing many songs to him while I held his hand. On his last moments he heard me sing to him, "When we all get to heaven, what a day of rejoicing that will be when we all see Jesus and sing and shout the victory!" Then, he went into a coma. He was staring into the ceiling and Genie and I kept trying to close his eyes, but he wouldn't close his eyes.

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Suddenly! he took a long breath, and then another and with the last one... he closed his eyes, he was gone... The time was 12 minutes after 10 in the morning of that Sunday, October 18, exactly seven months since that 18th day of March when I first took off with him towards the hospital...

There was a certain numbness that took a hold of me in a most peculiar way and I remember the wake and the funeral as if I was not really there. It seems to me that to this day, that numbness has persisted.

But, as I promised him, I know that the Lord kept me from falling apart with the assurance that my Honey's spirit went to be with the Lord and my Honey was no longer suffering on these grounds but some day, when the Lord comes back to get us, my Honey shall rise first with the dead in Christ. Thank God for that assurance. Thank God for my Honey's salvation!

Then, everything happened really fast. I was packed and moved to Wilmington, North Carolina within 2 weeks. I left Westwego on November the 3rd and arrived in Wilmington on November the 4th. From thereon my new life had begun.

There are so many wonderful memories of those terrible 7 months. The faith which carried us through at first, then the acceptance of God's plan for both of us.

He said to me, when Lil'Raymond left, "I never see him again!" And when I cried about it, he said, "But one of us has to be strong..." Lil'Raymond was going to California and had come to say good by. My Honey was right, he never saw him again...

They prescribed 30 radium treatments for him and we had to go everyday for 6 weeks, but for Easter weekend they gave him off

Welcome To My Life

because we wanted to drive Betty to Genie's. He drove for better than a 100 miles.

We spent that Easter with Genie and Betty at Toledo Ben Lake. That was to be the last time out the many, many times we had spent in Genie's company. This time wasn't the most joyful time of them all, for he didn't even joined us to play cards nor had any taste for fishing or for coffee in the morning, but at least we were still full of hope and we got to spent one more time at Genie's place.

Then when the treatments were over we drove 500 miles to Victoria, Texas to go to my family reunion. He only did it because of his devotion to me. By that time though, he was getting really weak, but he insisted not only in going but also in driving part of the way anyhow. For he knew that, even when we had faith and hope in God, our chances were next to nil to continue doing these things that we so much enjoyed because, he was not kidding himself about his age anymore, the doctors had made sure of that.

What a treacherous beast that Mesothelioma is: To lay there, undetected by its unsuspecting prey, for years and years until the prey is not strong enough to fight it back!

By that time also, my Honey had lost his appetite and I remember how I begged him to eat, so, we stopped at a road side restaurant and out of all things we got us two orders of French fried potatoes.

Well, we only spent a day and a night in Victoria because he was worried about the roof in his house. We noticed a leak in the roof the morning we had left and he was worried silly about it.

Welcome To My Life

When we came back we went to see the doctors at Ochsner Clinic hoping for a good second opinion. For a short little while our hopes were raised, but it didn't last. Too soon, the final verdict came through.

For a time he didn't talk too much after the last trip to the hospital. That was the time when he was coming to grips with acceptance. Then, after a while, he would ask Tony or Ryan and Jamie or the Minister or Priest, "I'm ready to go to Heaven, how long?" It seemed that he was ready and could hardly wait any longer.

I read Psalm 23 over and over again, and when I would ask him if he wanted me to read the Bible to him, he would ask, "The Shepherd?" Oh, how I miss him and how little I understand of God's mysterious ways!

Nevertheless, just recently, one day after Patty, my daughter's sister-in-law's death, I was perplexed about it all and I thought to myself how hard it was to understand these things. At that instant the Holy Spirit spoke to my heart and said, "You must trust Me, even if you don't understand it."

And a power to trust my Lord came over me and with that power also came the peace that surpasses all understanding. I was no longer perplexed. Glory to my God. Hallelujah!

March 19, 1993

Life goes on. A whole year has ended. A whole new life has begun even before it ended. Now, even today, I must lift my eyes towards my God and worship Him with thanksgiving in my heart that I may live this life in His presence, forever.

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Psalms 107:1-6

O give thanks unto the LORD, for [he is] good:
for his mercy [endureth] for ever.

2 Let the redeemed of the LORD say [so], whom
he hath redeemed from the hand of the enemy;

3 And gathered them out of the lands, from the
east, and from the west, from the north, and from
the south.

4 They wandered in the wilderness in a solitary
way; they found no city to dwell in.

5 Hungry and thirsty, their soul fainted in them.

6 Then they cried unto the LORD in their trou-
ble, [and] he delivered them out of their distress-
es.

Mae called me about 6:30 this morning to invite me to go out to dinner with her and Thelma. I was already up but still laying on my bed and gazing to my God's sky through my window. What a wonderful view!

A desire to kneel down to pray came over me and I did. I did kneel down in the quietness of my little apartment to present myself to my God.

I can't help but to realize now, as I am writing these things down, how this kneeling down is not anything I do out of my own religious, self-righteous spirit. Rather, this kneeling down is something very spontaneous, from the bottom of my heart. A desire given to me only by my Lord. Hallelujah!

I brought all my thoughts and actions to the Lord in prayer, as His Spirit led me through. It came to me that, that is the only way to submit oneself to the Lord.

Welcome To My Life

The 12th Chapter of Romans kept coming to my mind. As I remembered this Chapter the joy of the Lord filled my heart with a desire and power to perform what God's Word calls me to perform. The joy of the Lord is my strength. Hallelujah!

Romans 12

1 I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service.

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

3 For I say, through the grace given to me, to everyone who is among you, not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think, but to think soberly, as God has dealt to each one a measure of faith.

4 For as we have many members in one body, but all the members do not have the same function,
5 so we, being many, are one body in Christ, and individually members of one another.

6 Having then gifts differing according to the grace that is given to us, let us use them: if prophecy, let us prophesy in proportion to our faith;

7 or ministry, let us use it in our ministering; he who teaches, in teaching;

8 he who exhorts, in exhortation; he who gives, with liberality; he who leads, with diligence; he who shows mercy, with cheerfulness.

9 Let love be without hypocrisy. Abhor what is evil. Cling to what is good.

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10 Be kindly affectionate to one another with brotherly love, in honor giving preference to one another;

11 not lagging in diligence, fervent in spirit, serving the Lord;

12 rejoicing in hope, patient in tribulation, continuing steadfastly in prayer;

13 distributing to the needs of the saints, given to hospitality.

14 Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse.

15 Rejoice with those who rejoice, and weep with those who weep.

16 Be of the same mind toward one another. Do not set your mind on high things, but associate with the humble. Do not be wise in your own opinion.

17 Repay no one evil for evil. Have regard for good things in the sight of all men. 18 If it is possible, as much as depends on you, live peaceably with all men.

19 Beloved, do not avenge yourselves, but rather give place to wrath; for it is written, "Vengeance is Mine, I will repay," says the Lord.

20 Therefore "If your enemy is hungry, feed him; If he is thirsty, give him a drink; For in so doing you will heap coals of fire on his head." 21 Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.

Welcome To My Life

Excerpt of a letter I wrote on

Tuesday, April 20, 1993 7:42 am

....Coo and I had a wonderful relationship and I miss him so. Truly, he taught me what love is all about. But, I have known from the beginning of my relationship with Coo that I didn't just find him, rather our brief time together on these earthly grounds was pre-planned by the Master Hand which controls my life -- only a gift from above.

He was gifted to me for the specific purpose of teaching me to love. When his task was accomplished, he was taking away, but the lesson of love learnt from him shall stay with me forever. For there is faith, hope, and love, but the greatest of them is love. Amen.

God's Word perfectly fulfilled!

2 Kings 20:5 (NKJV)

"Return and tell Hezekiah the leader of My people, 'Thus says the LORD, the God of David your father: 'I have heard your prayer, I have seen your tears; surely I will heal you. On the third day you shall go up to the house of the LORD ' "

Monday, May 17, 1993 7:48am

One time, during my Honey's ordeal, when we were praying for healing, I pulled the above Scripture and I shared it with him. We were very excited about God's Word and we had made up our minds and hearts to believe it.

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Then, since that awful beast called Mesothelioma defeated us and we had to accept the reality that my Honey was, evidently, not healed, we cried and cried until we could cry no more.

And after the Lord took my Honey home, I had been wondering, why did the Holy Spirit of God inspired me to share that Scripture with him? Had I acted presumptuous in God's and man's sight?

The fact that God did heal him when God took him home brought no real comfort to me. Somehow I was perplexed about the whole situation and whenever I pulled that Scripture I would kind of skip it. I didn't understand it until today. Today I pulled that Scripture again and I was going to put it aside when the Holy Spirit led me to read the back of the little card where the Scripture was written. In the back of the little card was written,

"God washes the eyes by tears until they behold
the invisible land where tears shall come no more."

Just what I had told my Honey about heaven over and over again right before the Lord took him there. Suddenly! everything became quite clear to me. I'm not perplexed about this situation anymore. I no longer have to put that Scripture aside because of lack of understanding.

God's Word has been, perfectly, fulfilled! Hallelujah!

It was not meant for me to live in Wilmington. I only lived there from November 1992 to October 1994.

Then I was inspired to go to Jackson, MS where two of my daughters lived. Diana found me an apartment and got it ready for me to move in.

Welcome To My Life

I lived in that little apartment for about seven months. Then the Lord blessed me and I was able to buy some property in the country with a trailer in it.

I lived in that trailer from 95 to 99. And what was to be my next stop? The Mountains of North Carolina!

I came to Fleetwood, NC an area near Boone, NC. Why the Boone area? Well, it so happened that both Diana and Robin had moved away from me and they were all concerned about me living on my own in that trailer. They did not like it at all. Even though, I was having the best of times to say the least.

But one day Robin told me that she had been inspired to moved to the Mountains in the area of Boone and she wanted me to come and live with them. I prayed about it and the Lord inspired me to accept the invitation.

So, the first thing was to sell my property and trailer. The Lord blessed me again and before I even had the chance to advertise it, somebody knocked on my door and bought everything for the price that I was asking.

Diana and Mike came over and had a garage sale and sold everything that I owned. The next thing I know is that I didn't have a place to go because Robin's house was not built yet. So, Paul and Sheryl said, "come and stay with us until is the Lord's time for you to move." I lived with them for about 3 months. Those were good 3 months.

In the meantime Robin and Warren went ahead and built me an apartment in the basement of their house. I lived with them for about 18 glorious months until it was time for me to go on my own again.

Welcome To My Life

Then the Lord moved me to West Jefferson where my friend Fay helped me to find an apartment. Every body that comes to my little apartment tell me how beautiful it is.

Diana bought me all new furniture when I first moved in with Robin and Warren and my furniture is perfect for my little apartment.

Then, I am becoming a celebrity in West Jefferson and the surrounding areas thanks to Jan Caddell and his Happy Times Show on WSKS 580. I called the show one time and I asked Jan if he wanted to hear a joke. I have been telling him jokes ever since. Jan is a delight of a gentleman, it is good to know him.

I am also a volunteer with the Senior Companion Program and I serve four delightful clients. Most of the time I am wearing my name tag and when people hears me talk and looks at my name, they say, "Thia! You are the one who tell the jokes, we love them, keep them coming!"

I love the Senior Companion Program. JC introduced me to Debbie Wellborn, the Director of the program. Debbie is great and I have to mention the Assistant to the Director, Tammy Taylor, they are both a wonderful team.

All and all it is a wonderful program. We keep company to Seniors who are homebound and need to run errands and such. But most of all we give to these Seniors all our love and attention for 4 hours a day.

About my spiritual condition, my faith is stronger now than it ever has been. Nothing, nothing, absolutely nothing can come between me and the Almighty God I serve. My love for Him is stronger than it ever has been before. I live a glorious life. Glory to God!

Chapter 9

On my Background...

How I received salvation. USA arrival. First marriage and divorce.

Second marriage. First mental breakdown. First spiritual fallen away.

Last mental breakdown. Last spiritual fallen away. Second divorce.

Yes, all things written in the Bible have come to pass and will come to pass until every single event shall be fulfilled. Man's human nature and the carnal self within the flesh of man comes to light in the Bible in the acts and behavior of the people of old times. And all of those acts and people's behavior from the beginning of time have been written for an example to all men throughout the ages.

Such revelation I did not have before because I was not reading the Bible with the purpose and intent with which the Bible is supposed to be read. But, as God corrected and lifted me up to walk in His ways I became to understand and receive the revelation of God. And I realized now that my behavior has been just like the people of Israel and Judah. It is written,

Jeremiah 5:11-13 (LBV)

"For the people of Israel and Judah are full of treachery against me, says the Lord. They have lied and said, 'He won't bother us! No evil will

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come upon us! There will be neither famine nor war!' God's prophets, they say, 'are windbags full of words with no divine authority. Their claims of doom will fall upon themselves, not us!'"

Jeremiah 11:1-3 (LBV)

"Then the Lord spoke to Jeremiah once again and said: Remind the men of Judah and all the people of Jerusalem that I made a contract with their fathers-and cursed is the man who does not heed it!"

I have been born and raised and educated in Guatemala. But my father died when I was only on my first year of high school. One of my father's sons and my half brother who was a lawyer took the guardianship over me and my five sisters and brothers.

I did not get along with my half brother at all and when I graduated from high school, of course, we fell out because he wanted me to work and I wanted to go to college and further my education. Since I was of age and very proud and obstinate and since my brother refused to help me when I graduated from high school, I felt justified to go on my own, only to get into trouble. For in less than a year I had gotten myself into a big mess.

It so happened that after my graduation, when I went on my own, I began attending the Church for the North American Community in Guatemala for I was a very devout Catholic and at that Church I had the opportunity to attend mass everyday. The priest who was the head in that Church was from Boston. And because of my attendance I became close to that priest and I clung to him for advice and for help. He was a kind and practical priest. He did not get holy and condemn me for the mess in which I had gotten myself into, but rather he offered me good and sound

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advice. He knew of the big mess I was in, and he also knew that I was fresh out of the Convent Boarding School, and that I was completely ignorant about life.

I was involved with a man who was 14 years my senior and had not any holy intentions about me; but I was so infatuated with that man that I could not see his intentions. Fortunately, my priest friend could see what I couldn't; and my priest friend secured the funds to ship me to New Orleans. When I arrived at New Orleans I was not yet aware of my emotional shape, and I thought to be OK because I thought that I was only coming to America for a short while, long enough to learn English and secure a job in the Airline Industry.

But in reality, I arrived at New Orleans in October of 1959, age 20, confused and emotionally mixed up; with a heart and mind full of illusions of love because I thought that my prince charming was going to keep charming me long distance. I thought that my departure would break his heart and quicken him to take me away on his white horse. I just knew that it was going to be so.

By God's providence a loving family took me into their home to take care of their little girl Sussete and they sponsored me to reside in the USA.

I was totally ignorant of the English language but with the help and patience from Thelma, my loving sponsor, within two months I had enough command of it to survive.

I could have then begun to undertake the pursuit for a career in the Airline Industry but the pursuit for a career ended when I started dating the gentleman who became my first husband.

This happen so because in only a matter of weeks the stark reality and tormenting agony of disillusion had taken hold of me

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when I realized that I had been jilted. And by the time the Christmas Holidays came I was a wrecked, confused, and broken hearted twenty-year-old young lady.

Therefore, my beloved sponsor gave a Christmas eve party to introduce me around and to cheer me up. That's when I met this gentleman who became my first husband. Such were my circumstances that Christmas eve in 1959 when I first met the man who became my first husband five months later.

Entangled in the net of the stark reality and tormenting agony of disillusion, I grabbed on to what I thought to be true love, and rode away on the wheels of a whirlwind of romance that whirled me into marriage.

Just about 3 years later, when I was already mother of a beautiful baby girl and expecting my second, the whirlwind of romance began to die and I realized that I was in trouble. My second beautiful baby girl was born. Eleven months later, my third beautiful girl was born.

By that time the whirlwind of romance had turned into a whirlwind of troubled emotions that blew my marriage away. About 10 years later I was divorced from my first husband.

God works in mysterious ways. I was born in a hole of Guatemala, so far removed from civilization that to get to it, you had to get on horse back for 3 or 4 hours. I was baptized into the Roman Catholic Church when I was a child. And of course, I was raised in the Roman Catholic Church and I have received all the sacraments, except for the extramauntion or death sacrament.

In the Catholic Church at that time you were forbidden to visit other churches; you were also forbidden to hear or talk to anybody about your faith; such things were absolutely forbidden.

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Yet, somehow, somebody sneaked me in an evangelical meeting one time, and I raised my hand and accepted Jesus as my personal Savior.

Never again did I hear the Gospel outside of the Roman Catholic Church, during all my growing years. Never did I ever see or dare to open a Bible. I was a very avid reader, and yet I never read The Bible.

This was so because if a religious book or a Bible did not have Nihil Obstat at the front, the book was not to be read. Nihil Obstat is the Latin words that preceded the approval of the book by the Roman Catholic Church authorities and I heeded those two words before I set my eyes on any religious book. And at that time I did not know that we had a Catholic Bible for I don't think that we were allowed to read the Bible ourselves for fear of misinterpretation.

Therefore I never read the Bible until 1974. A young Baptist minister presented to me a Bible and the Almighty Holy Spirit of God opened my heart and filled it with God's Word. The Scriptures say that no one comes to Jesus unless the Father attracts him to Jesus. When I raised my hand as a child and accepted Jesus Christ as my personal Savior, He did save me, He honored it, because it was given to me from the Father. So, even though I never did receive instruction and I did not read the Bible because of the circumstances, His Holy Spirit was with me all that time and I grew up devoted to the things of God.

But I had no conception of the whole Gospel. I was ignorant of God's words, ignorant of the Scriptures written in the Bible. Because of ignorance of the Scriptures, my conceptions of right and wrong were based only in my Catholic beliefs. As far as my conception of God, I conceived God to be all power and author-

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ity and since I could not figure things out, and I did not agree with the way things were going, I just removed myself from that relationship, I divorced God too, and everything connected with morals and religion. For in my conception of the sanctity of marriage and the holiness of God, I had committed the unpardonable sin when I divorced from my first husband, specially since it was my fault.

I was a devoted Catholic and I loved God, but I was so mixed up emotionally and so ignorant of the Scriptures that I was like a yo-yo in a whirlwind. Therefore, for about three years after my first divorce, I galloped on the hoofs of rebellious independence. I swore I would never again put my trust in any man.

Then one day, the Lord in his infinite mercy put an end to my independence and caused me financial failure to the extent that I did not have enough money to pay for the rent and I was evicted. The eviction was a frightful thing, but what was even more frightful was when certain men that I thought to be my friends proposed to me to open a house of prostitution to make money. The whole idea nauseated me and I realized how low I had fallen to have somebody propose such a thing to me.

I knew I had not been living right but I did not know the humiliation of outright selling my body for a living! It hurt to even think of such. And so the Lord put in my heart to turn away from the way that I was "free lancing." The Lord put in my heart to find steady employment to provide for my needs and those of my three little girls. "Today I am going to find some kind of a job, even if it is digging ditches" I said to myself that day.

I was resolved in an Scarlet O'Hara's sort of way in *Gone With The Wind* when she said "I'll never be hungry again!" "I am going to have steady money coming in and I'll never be evicted again

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and expose my babies to this kind of life." I resolved in my heart. And so, my life was continuing to evolve just like the life of the people of Israel. The Lord was taking me out of the life in the slavery of sin and the ways of the world, but, as it turned out I did not obey Him, just like the Israelites didn't. So it is written,

Jeremiah 11:4-5

"For I told them at the time I brought them out of slavery in Egypt that if they would obey me and do whatever I commanded them, then they and all their children would be mine and I would be their God. And now, Israel, obey me says the Lord, so that I can do for you the wonderful things I swore I would if you obeyed. I want to give you a land that 'flows with milk and honey,' as it is today. Then I replied, 'So be it, Lord!'"

Jeremiah 11:8

"But your fathers didn't do it. They wouldn't even listen. Each followed his own stubborn will and his proud heart. Because they refused to obey I did to them all the evils stated in the contract."

The day when I resolved to find a job, I picked up the paper and I saw all the addresses of these places that needed bar-maids. I had been a high-class drinker and I had never known what a neighborhood bar was. I did not know exactly what a bar-maid was. I thought that it was somebody that cleaned bars and was a maid to the bar-tender. It did not really matter what a bar-maid was, I was determined to find a job that day and clad in my mini skirt, boots and blonde hair, I walked in this dinky place and asked for the job.

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The job was taken. I turned around towards the only two men in there and asked. "Do you know if there is anybody else looking to hire? One of them took me to another bar and got me a job. The other one did not even answered me, he is the one that became my second husband later on.

Actually at that time, I had the worst kind of pride: intellectual pride. But that was the time of my life when I turned completely and began to learn. The first lesson to learn was humility; though I did not learn the lesson at that time. For I had considered myself rightfully superior to the average person with average education, because even though I only had an average education myself I was far more advanced than most because of my reading comprehension and my facility to learn.

Up to that point I thought I was an intellectual wonder, and I thought that it was only because of adverse circumstances that I had not developed my mind to the fullest. And when a lot of young women would be attracted to money, I was attracted to intellect. Material things meant nothing to me and I married into intellect.

My first husband was what I considered an "intellectual man." I was very puffed-up about that! My young daughters were raised speaking correct English, no slang. From the age of two or three they had attended school and were advanced for their age. I had been living in the world of the intellectuals: teachers, psychologists, doctors in medicine, lawyers, journalists and such. I was very puffed-up about that too!

I knew nothing of the working class of Americans, except that they were bourgeois, average, and inclined to material possessions. And here I am all of a sudden, face to face with nothing

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but working men, down to earth, good working men. Talking about a change!

Furthermore, at this particular time of my life, I was not going to Church of course, and yet... there was a godly fear in me to behave. I wanted to keep myself clean, and for that reason I was determinate not to dishonor myself and start going out with everybody. But then, my pride and arrogance made it easy to keep my determination, for I considered all these men to be beneath my class. Thus, everybody had bets against me that I would not make it as a bar-maid because I had such a "high o mighty" attitude.

I managed to fool them all, but only for about 6 months. My attitude never did change inside of me. They would tip me with extravaganza. They displayed every flattery they knew how to display. They would show me tenderness and care, and also crudeness and grossness. And I remained with the same determination and the same "high o mighty" attitude.

Then the fellow that became my second husband started courting me. I did not want him at first, because, besides all other objections, he was married. I did not want to break a marriage. Yet he insisted. I had no reason to go to bed with this fellow or date him for I was determined with the same attitude I had when I first saw him. But I was lonesome and I was beginning to learn about my inabilities. I realized that I could not make it alone, that I needed help. This was part of my humility lesson. For I had the spirit of rebellion and independence driving me hard, and I did not want any help from anybody, and most specifically not from any man. I wanted to make it on my own.

Nevertheless, the harder I tried to make it on my own the more I failed. For this reason I became friends with this fellow who became my second husband, because I was failing financially

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again, and I saw that he had the means to help me. I became his friend. He started to shower me with gifts and to help me with money, because, I never seemed to have enough money to take care of my needs.

But, out there in the world, things do not work out that simple. You don't get helped just because somebody has the means to help you. If you want to play you have got to pay. If you scratch somebody's back, you may get your back scratched, too. Everybody in this bar-room, or most everybody wanted to date me. Some of them just wanted to have the pleasure to knock me down from my "high o mighty" attitude. Some of them genuinely cared.

But at that time, not only did I want to keep myself clean from sexual sin, but also, I had no intentions of ever re-marrying, or even setting up household with anybody. I had considered the bonds of matrimony were for keeps and if you broke them once it was no sense in doing it again. I was completely disgusted about marriage. And I had sworn never again to put my trust in a man, in any way shape or manner and I would not budge.

For that reason I was nothing but friends with this fellow and to my estimation of things that was all that there was to it. But now that I had become friends with this fellow, everybody began to give up on their efforts to date me, and their visits to that bar began to lessen; regardless, I was not dating this fellow and we were only friends. I did tell him many times to go to his wife, instead of pestering me. But this was the "world" and this fellow wanted his pay, he wanted to go to bed with me, like everybody else. I kept on refusing with the excuse that he was married.

So, one day this fellow left his wife and I weakened. I gave in. Because of my giving in to him I lost most of my customers. My

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financial situation began to crumble and I began to compromise my independence. I thought I had found a man that really cared about me. But to my utter disappointment, he went back to his wife!

Oh, like a monstrous ghost I remember how livid I was with murdering rage. Never in my life did I ever dream that somebody could humiliate me to that extent. How dared he to trick me like that?

For a couple of weeks I went berserk. By now I had just about lost all of my costumers. My tips and my income had come to silt. My car had to be repossessed, and I was on the verge of eviction again.

The next thing I remember is that he called me to his office. I stepped into his office shortly after his call. He handed me the keys of his car. "I have left my wife permanently. I want to make a go out of life with you. I love you." He said with his very heart in his mouth. When I walked out of that office I was flying on the wings of happiness. I could hardly believe my ears. I was in love again!

Nothing mattered then, not the bitter disappointment of the last few weeks, not my independence, not my pride, not my hurt, not even my morals, nothing mattered then, for I was in love again! In a whirlwind of what I thought to be true love again, I emerged into a new relationship: only to entangle myself in a thick mesh of the debris from past sins, in the turbulent sea of "moving in to live together without marriage commitment."

For about three more years I wrestled, entangled in that thick mesh of debris of my past in the turbulent sea of an illegal relationship. The mesh was so thick that, it threatened to suffocate every sign of life in me and on that relationship; therefore, I wres-

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tled. The battle was fierce, much more fierce than what I realized; and I was fighting it with my own strength, for I was still ignorant of God and God's ways.

Then one day, God, in his infinite grace and mercy, reached out to me and sent me that little Baptist minister to minister His Word to me. It happened when my oldest daughter asked to go to a slumber party with her girl friend from school. This party was given at the home of that little Baptist minister by his wife.

I had never met any Baptist minister or Baptist minister's wife before; but for some reason I had the idea that such lots belonged only to very old people. And then I also had very strict rules with my girls and I never allowed them to go spend the night anywhere that I had not investigated beforehand. So, I told my daughter, "Absolutely not!" "Please, mom, please!" She kept pestering me. Finally, as an ultimatum I said, "Get that lady to come here so I can meet her and then I might consider it."

To my surprise one day there appeared in my front yard this beautiful young girl: a mere teenager, she could have been a cheer leader or a beauty queen anywhere; but instead she said, "I am the Pastor's wife and I come to ask if your daughter could come to the slumber party for the young girls of our Church." I cannot remember what else was said, but I do remember that my daughter went to that party.

From there on the Lord began His work in my home. My oldest daughter kept pestering me to go to the Baptist Church and I was opposed to it because I was raising them in the Catholic Church, and had made up my mind that even if I had lost my chance to please God my children were to have that chance. The Baptist Church was off limits for any Catholic!

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So, I found this little Baptist minister's wife once again, and again in my front yard, inviting us to come to Church just to visit. Finally I gave in. Soon after that I made a "decision to follow Jesus" and I was baptized in the Baptist's fashion and legally married to my second husband. My husband and almost my whole family made decisions and were baptized. It was such a blessed time.

But things crumbled shortly after we all had made our decisions and our Pastor as a Minister of God, married my husband and I. We were blessed, God had blessed us and given us a new life. And my husband came home and said, "I will read The Bible from the beginning to the end, I want to know it for myself."

And I rejoiced in my heart because of his awakening to the things of God. And we lay on the bed that night, and he picked up a white Bible, I believe it was one given to him by his mother, and he began to read aloud from the Book of Genesis. And I was listening with interest and enthusiasm, until he got to Chapter 2:23,24. After he read, "and they shall be one flesh." . . he shut his lips and closed his eyes.

Asilence came upon the bedroom. Oh! how distinctively I remember it now. I made a feeble attempt to say something, but nothing came out. And we lay there, apparently he was sleeping but I was listening in my spirit. It was at that precise moment when we believed the lie of Satan that we were not married, and that we were still one flesh, he with his first wife and I with my first husband.

The spirit of guilt and rejection got hold of both of our hearts, and we turned our blessing into a curse. When that silence came upon the bedroom this is what I witnessed in my spirit. This is an account of what happened. "You see, you are still one flesh

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with your first wife. That Baptist Preacher and this woman trapped you and they made a mockery out of God's Word!" I heard Satan whispering in his ears. "Yes I see it, she is not my wife," my husband said within himself. And I saw my husband shutting his eyes in agreement with Satan, and I saw my husband turn against me in hate.

"You, too, are still one flesh with your first husband and this is not your husband, you are guilty of adultery." Satan turned to me with his pointed and accusing finger. And looking back, as I saw my husband's hate and his rejection I concluded within myself, "he has rejected me, I am not his wife because I must be guilty because of what I did to my first husband."

And that is how we lost our blessing, and we both partook of the spirit of guilt and rejection and turned that blessing into a curse. Of the things that happened after that night, which are a testimony that what I saw that night actually happened, and it is not any invention of my imagination, all of us in the family knew about but have never understood.

My husband and I took for granted that, that was our fate, and foolishly we gave in to it, deceived by our past sins and the treachery of Satan.

After that night, my husband quit going to Church and he renewed his cursing and drinking. He became more vile and cruel than he had been before. And I became to be filled as I was before our blessing, with guilt, self-pity and rejection. I made an easy prey for Satan's counterfeits for the things of God.

At that time, it was my first encounter with the Word of God, and it was a powerful encounter. The Word was quickened to me by the Holy Spirit, and I understood the very essence of the Word

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of God. But, I added on to it of my own imagination; and I presumed to understand because, I had a better mind than others.

What I saw in my spirit that night, I kept it for myself, for I figured it was my privilege to be "spiritual" and see these things because, I was smarter than my husband.

My heart was darkened with spiritual pride and I was driven away into the spiritual realm by my lustful pride of knowledge. Then my situation became practically unbearable. I was under such an emotional, physical, mental, and spiritual strain that it was impossible for me to eat or sleep for about seven days.

I was emotionally abused and exploited by my husband. I was mentally and physically exhausted because of the lack of food and sleep. Spiritually, I was in the spiritual world, a world that I knew nothing about. It seemed that the entire armies of hell were dispatched to destroy not just me, but my husband as well. Under such circumstances, I lost touch with reality.

My husband put me in an ambulance and rushed me to the mental hospital. When I arrived at the mental ward I came to my senses for a moment and I begged not to be admitted.

I had figured out by that time what was going on. I had figured out that I was under a Satanic attack. I knew that I didn't need a hospital or drugs but rather, I needed prayer. But I begged in vain. In ignorance of what was happening, and thinking that he was helping me, my husband begged me to sign myself in.

They admitted me and force on me a heavy dose of Terrazin, strong enough to knock a horse down, as I was told later. Immediately the Terrazin took effect and I sailed away into the unknown, invisible world. My mind was lost for three days in that world.

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During those three days that I lost my mind I was very active in that unknown, invisible, spiritual world. I do not remember all faces or the exact circumstances. It seems to me now that what I saw then was a view of my actions, for the period of time beginning when I came into the knowledge of the Word of God, and ending with the surrender of my whole being to the Lordship of Christ.

I remember I was in this place, like a gigantic amusement park. At the entrance of it, or there about, was this tall, tall giant of a man like figure, with his feet planted firmly on the ground and his arms crossed around his chest. I knew this was my Heavenly Father. My concept of God at the time, because of my background and upbringing was one of power and authority.

I would come to Him and somehow, perhaps He had picked me up, and I would be sitting or basking right in his arms and I would say, "now I know that I am saved and I am a child of God, and I have the power of God, now I can go back there and go my own way, for I have power."

And somehow I would get down from his arms, and I would go back to have my own way. Somehow I would go out there on my own, and I would get into some kind of trouble. I would come back to Him and bask in His arms again. But as soon as I would be re-assured of my salvation through the power of God, back I was on my own. I knew nothing of the love and mercy of God. As I went along, troubles began to get quite out of hand, and my returns to the Heavenly Father became more frequent.

Finally, I got into a big one, a big trouble: It seems that I went my way, and I came to be in this great hall. I did all kinds of things in this hall. But the thing that I did right before I woke up, remained in my memory vividly for a long time. It seems

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that I came to be in a place where there were a lot of bright shining blinking lights. I had a lot of laughs and a lot of fun in that place.

But, I did something there that was so terrible, that when I got out of there, I was most terrified. I was scared to the bared bones, more than I ever had been in my whole life. I ran to my Heavenly Father and practically flew right into Him and said, "I don't ever want to be separated from you again."

I saw a lot of faces of people that I knew, come in through a door into that great hall. And when I had flown into my Heavenly Father I saw an older man like my husband, only much older. This man was pacing the floor in a house, wringing a towel with his hands, like an anxious and worried man, pacing back and forth, waiting for me to come out of the hall. And then I woke up.

The prayers of the saints availed, and I was delivered from the mental ward within 4 or 5 days. For several days afterwards, I wondered and speculated as to what all of that meant, and what was it that I was doing in that place, that terrified and scared me to that extent. I speculated that most probably the man that I saw in those visions was my husband at an older age. I figured that I was going to go through a lot of tribulation, but then, when I would come out of it my husband was going to be waiting for me and he was going to be saved, most probably because of my tribulation.

I made a lot of speculations. "It is not wise to speculate on those things" my dear sister in the Lord told me. So, I dropped the whole subject and tried for a little while to apply myself to the study of the Bible. But my sister in the Lord Jean, who was my Bible teacher, moved.

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Fear of rejection entered my heart, and I lost the joy of my salvation. Eventually, I quit going to Church myself, and I quit reading the Word. I put all of that in the back of my mind, and I slid back into the ways of the world. I figured that there was so many other things that I was responsible for, including my husband and children, that I could not afford to let my mind wonder in all of that stuff. And so, I fell out of the will of God.

But, sometime around September of 1985 I began to evaluate my spiritual condition. That evaluation brought me to examine my life and my spiritual walk and to consider the lessons learned and the lessons yet to be learned. I came to see that the mind is the stronghold of the enemy. I had known for a long time that the mind is the stronghold of the enemy but I had lost perception of how strong that hold can be. Or perhaps, I had not EVER conceived that most important knowledge of the Word of God.

God works in mysterious ways. Where and how did it all begin? I was born in a beautiful hole in Guatemala, so far removed from civilization that to get to it, you had to get on horse back for hours; hours that seemed to me, at that age, never ending time; especially, when my father would heap us all in a cart driven by two oxen to carry us to the small railroad town to catch a train. Then to another town to catch a bus that would carry us to the final destination which was Esquipulas. There we were to see the Black Christ. This was the yearly pilgrimage he had vowed to take as long as he lived, if I remember correctly.

Surely that beautiful hole was located far, far away from civilization to that young child. Even to this day and time, I recalled the misery and discomfort from the hot sun and every lump in the mean dirt road, where the cart rolled away slowly and painfully to carry us to fulfill the sacred vow that my father had made to one of his ancestors.

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That beautiful hole engraved in the memory of my infancy was called "Vega Grande". That was the name of that piece of land that belonged to my father and it means: big, large, or great fertile field.

I have no conception of how big, or how large, or even how great that fertile field actually was. But to my recollection of an imaginative child under 9 years of age, to her, it was beautiful and it was a hole. It was beautiful because of what I recollect of the river and the trees and the huts and the whole spectrum of the summer brush heaped in piles, after the spring clearing of the land burning ablaze and the many children and grandmother telling fairy tales. And at times all of us running wild playing hide and seek.

I remember the magic of "Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs." I remember the drama of Hansel and Gretel. I vaguely remember most of the "cuentos" (fairy tales) that "abuelita" (grandmother) would relate to us. But I do remember how so very wonderful they were, and so happy, and so sad, and so scary and so, well, so, . . . everything! It was magic to me. The wonderful world of fairy tales! Oh, that forever I would have lived in it! Oh, how wonderful it was!

But then, beautiful, and wonderful, and magical as it all was, the beauty and the wonder and the magic were only caught in the glimpse of time in which grandmother would sit and tell us those fairy tales and my imagination would soar to those far off lands that grandmother would tell about.

But, when the light of a new day would arrive, with the beauty and impact of un-tamed nature, I would open my eyes with the wonder and fanciful expectation of a fairy land world, only my fairy land would become just a mysterious and small hole, even

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though that in that hole the beauty of the un-tamed nature never ceased to make an impression on me.

It became such a mysterious and small hole because somehow my grandmother conveyed that message to me. It was as if she was telling us those wonderful "cuentos" (fairy tales) to escape herself from that hole where she had felt most entrapped.

Later on when I learned grandmother's sad life story, I understood why it was so, but that's another life to tell, for the details of her life would take a whole book to tell about. Briefly, my grandmother's name was Lucila Arevalo. She was at the same time beautiful, bright, sensitive but sad, somehow ignorant of the educated ways of life, and very pessimistic in her general attitude, for she had a defeated attitude, and yet she was so strong! I loved my grandmother. She died in 1974.

I could not go to her in her last days, but she remains in my heart forever. From the beginning of my life my grandmother and my father were the key figures in my childhood for my mother was far too young to assumed motherhood responsibilities. It seems that whenever something needed tending to, it was always an unwritten understanding that it was done because "don Miguel, or mama-Lucila, says so."

My grandmother had run away with my grandfather. My grandfather turned out to be a man of dissipation and my grandmother had to seek for a way to make a living. She went to "Don Miguel" who later became my father. "Don" is the Spanish word for Mister. My father was a self-made rich landowner. He had excellent qualities, a bright mind and extremely high moral standards. He did not smoke, drink or gamble. He went to Church once a year and took the whole family along with him. He was a strong powerful man that meant what he said. He had one way

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and one way only, and that was HIS WAY. He was fair and honest and he made sure that everybody around him either minded his ways or got out of them.

When my grandmother came to work for my father, she had 2 children, my uncle Manuel and my mother, her name is Teresa. I do not know exactly how long my grandmother had been at my father's land working for him when my Aunt Esperanza was born, and then my Uncle Julio. Her husband, my grandfather had also come to work for my father, but he did not live with my grandmother, he was working in another farm for my father. It was a very strange and mysterious situation to me and a confusing one, for I never understood the undertones of the whole situation.

But I loved my "papa Chicho" which was my grandfather's name, when he would come to visit and let me ride on his horse and everything! Later on, when I was old enough to ask questions, I found out about my mother and father, but not much was said about my grandfather and why he was not living with us.

Actually the whole matter was that he, my grandfather, had another family set up in another farm belonging to my father, and he was still dissipating here and there. Whatever, he was precious to me! About my mother and father's relationship, I found out that my father took a liking to my mother, who was a mere child of about 12 or 13 years old, and asked my grandmother to give her to him, rather than having her mate with one of the field hands.

From what my grandmother told me one time, she did not have too much of a choice because when my father made up his mind to do something there was nothing at all to stop him. There was no such a thing as don Miguel saying, "I want this girl because I think this is the right thing to do," and my grandmother oppos-

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ing him. No sir! If my father said, "I am taking this girl for her own protection," that was it, there was not to be any question about it. Thus, my oldest sister was born when my mother was only about 13 or 14 years old. My father must have been in his sixties.

I don't know exactly how old my father really was, and I don't think anybody really ever knew, all I remember people saying was that "he was 74 last year, this year and next year" and that was the way it was. There must be a birth certificate somewhere, but not even my mother has ever been able to tell me his age because she honestly doesn't know what was my father's exact age. It has never been important to me, some day I might look into it.

I did not know my father in a personal way. He was just a figure of power, authority and security to me. He died when I was fifteen or sixteen years old. It was so sad when he died because in some way he was sort of like a "legend" in his own right for he had made himself into a rich man with his own philosophy about life. He had sired about 40 children or more. He was "well known" at one time and yet . . . when he died, at the moment of his death, he did not have a single relative or friend along side of his bed! He died alone.

But I hope and pray that even in his death bed, Jesus rescued him! My mother is a beautiful little, little woman of about 4 feet 10, maybe less. She has dark complexion, beautiful brown eyes and a gentle beautiful disposition. And smart! My mother has more smarts than a herd of elephants. Talent? She was designing dresses 47 years ago without and inkling of instruction, baking bread without controlled temperature ovens, and cooking delicacies fitted for king's tables, without recipes or chef's instructions.

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"Mama," I said all excited one day when I had brought her over to the States to visit, "Show me how to make bread." "Give me the flour, and a bowl," she said with unending patience, for she knows my whimsical ways only too well "you take a little flour, just about this much, and you take this and that, and you kneed like this, and you let it sit `till . . . and then you bake it `till . . ." "Mama, don't you know anything about measures and timings?" I pleaded with her trying to grasp what she was doing. "Just put about as much as your hand can hold, and watch it cook until it looks done!" she told me and made it look as simple as adding two and two.

When I came back from the airport the day that she went back home, I set out to make the most delicious loaf of bread to bring back my childhood memories. "Neen," I called one of my best friends, "come and taste the best `home made bread' you have ever tasted before. It should be ready in a couple hours." Neen is one of the sweetest friends I have, and faithful? . . . As soon as she was able to get to my house she made her appearance.

"Well Thia," she said trying to bite a piece of homemade bread that was like a piece of brick, "Maybe if I dunk it in the coffee, it has such delicious taste!" Well, that was the end of me trying to follow my mother's footsteps. She has that talent, I surely don't. But it was such fun trying. One of these days The Lord is going to bring her back to visit and to make me some of that bread and give me a taste of my childhood days again.

My mama lives in a sort of "rail road village" in Guatemala. She has a country grocery store. And yes, she is wealthy, with the kind of wealth that most people would not understand. She is wealthy with contentment. As far as coming to live a prosperous life in the USA? "And what do you expect me to do over here? What am I going to do over here, I haven't lost anything at all

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over here, this is not my place to be, I have my life in Santa Inez, and that is where I belong right now, maybe some day, maybe some day, who knows!" . . . She said to me, not once, but whenever the occasion would arise and I would begin to put the pressure on her to come and live with me.

My baby sister, lives in the United States. I love her dearly but, we keep loosing track of each other. I hope that when this book gets published, I might find her again.

Thus, I was born in a beautiful hole in the back of beyond Guatemala, called "Vega Grande." My birth was recorded by hand in the books of The Registrar in Spanish, "Nombre Basilia Licona nacida en Los Amates, Departamento de Izabal, el 14 de Junio de 1939 a las 3 de la manana. Nombre del padre Miguel J. Licona. Nombre de la madre, M. Teresa Zarceno. Registrada en el libro 28, folio 275."

In that beautiful hole where I was born, I remember how my father would import a "maestra" (teacher) from the city to come and teach everybody, grown-ups and children as well, how to read, write and arithmetic.

It was like having an in-house teacher because of the seclusion of the land no worker could commute on daily basis so she had to live with us. Everybody lived in the land, family and relatives as well as field workers, servants and their families and the "Maestra" (Teacher).

School time at that time must not have been bad, because I don't recollect any bad memories about it. But there were awful memories about play time. Those grotesque memories were the first of many other painful memories that were to haunt me for many, many years. Those were the memories that bound me in the chains of rejection and fear from which no psychiatrist in 20 years could

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set me free. Those memories, as I recollect, were the severe beatings and shamming that I suffered because of sexual promiscuity among the group of children that were the nucleus in the environment of my early childhood.

We were a group of children, ranging in ages from 5 to 13 years, both girls and boys. It was not that we were so terrible wicked, as it was that we did not have adequate supervision. We were allowed to run like wild goats just to get us out of the grown-ups way, for all grown-ups had lots of work so there was nobody to watch us when we were out of school at play time; yet, when we were caught in any misdemeanor, we were whipped and shamed. We were whipped and shamed and we were left there like wicked, hopeless criminals.

Nobody seemed to know that there was such thing as the loving discipline which God approves or God's forgiveness, for nobody seemed to know too much about the Word of God. We were not brought up in God's way and I, it seems to me as I recollect the grotesque mess, was the one that became the escape goat among the whole group; because, I had, from an early age, an impulsive nature, a good imagination and a bright mind, but I lacked common sense and I was gullible from early childhood.

I could figure out more than one way to get myself into trouble but not any way out of trouble, so, I was the one who always got caught to suffer severe punishment. Punishment that caused me not just the mere suffering of physical pain but something even more painful and tragic yet, the suffering of deep emotional wounds that would remain bleeding for many, many years to come.

But above all, and in spite of the wounds that I suffered because of the treatment that I received from my parents, that treatment

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was not imposed upon me in hate, for my parents were not hateful, nor wicked irresponsible beings. My parents were moral and religious people, with good intentions, and high moral standards. And they did love us.

Nevertheless, my parents were somehow confused about The Word of God. They were not totally ignorant about The Word of God, for they were Catholic Christians and they knew the basics of the Christian faith, but they were ignorant of the truth of The Word of God. They were not totally ignorant people as a whole, for they had a certain amount of education.

In fact, my father, I understand, did speak English. Although, as I recollect very distinctively how one of his sons, Miguelito, who spoke English quite well, used to kid about papa's English and I couldn't have told you whether my father did or did not speak English, because . . . well, because I hadn't had the foggiest idea about any other languages at the time, for I was too enchanted with my own language to worry about English or anything else, even to worry about my father's education or linguistic ability. The point being that my people were not ignorant people. Perhaps un-educated, yes. But, what good education would have done!

It was not ignorance of God, or lack of godly ways either, for I grew up in a godly and moral environment, more so than the modern environment of this day and age. I remember one time, I shall never forget it. My grandmother taught us to pray. We used to have prayer meetings often. It was hard to pray because we had to kneel down in the dirt floor for a long time and go through the whole "rosary."

On top of that my grandmother did not know the exact format to pray the rosary. So they, the grown ups had to keep saying back and forth "no, not that way, we forgot to say this or that,

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let's start over again from . . ." Oh Lord! Poor old kiddos with the knees on that dirt!

So, when I went away "into the wide world yonder" of the little country town nearest to my father's land, to "Boarding School" in pursuit of an education, when I came home for break I was most enthusiastic about bringing my grandmother the "educated way of prayer."

My grandmother listened carefully and with a kind but firm tone of voice she said something to the effect, "That's very good, I am very glad that you have learned, and now that you know how to pray, would you go ahead and pray, my dear daughter, for God's sake?" I wasn't the one interested in praying, all I wanted was to teach her the format of the rosary so that I wouldn't have to pray for such a long time.

But it was a hopeless situation, she was too far gone to the judgment of a 10 year old's evaluation of her education. She couldn't be educated nor convinced to make things a little easier for us children to my judgment, so, I quit giving instructions to my grandmother right there and then, I wasn't dumb, I knew her meaning.

So, it was not ignorance of God. For my grandmother was a godly woman. But she got set in her idea of God concerning discipline because she didn't know the Truth of the Word of God. The conflict became even more severe as I grew older, because I, also, grew up ignorant of The Word of God first; and second, the spirit of rebellion that every human being is born with, which is imbedded in our human nature, was imbedded in me also and adequately nurtured with the poison of rejection and fear in the emotional wounds that I suffered in my early childhood.

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I knew why my grandmother was so mean and distrustful of me, and why she would punish me so severely. It was because she had taught me about moral values and good behavior, and even though I wanted to live up to what my grandmother had taught me, for I knew in my heart it was the right way to live, I was not able to live up to those standards and I kept falling short of her expectations. That is why grandmother would punish me.

What I didn't know was that all human beings have the same passions and problems, and that we are all born with the spirit of rebellion imbedded in our natures, without the ability to be good.

Therefore, when I failed to live up to the standards that I was expected to live as I was growing up, I felt that I was the only one to be so bad; I felt that I was the most wicked person in the whole world because I kept falling short not only from what grandmother had taught me but also from what it seemed to be the standards of every grown up that became involved in my life as I was growing up, and even what I knew in my heart to be the right way of living, my own standards.

Whence, I grew up emotionally disturbed, according to the jargon of the Psychiatrist's World; actually, the truth of the matter is that the spirit of rebellion imbedded in my nature gave way to many other evils that were to assail me during long periods of my life.

The torture from the evil spirit of the strong men of self-condemnation, self-rejection, self-pity and many cavorting demons tightened a grip on my soul that drove me to lose my mind in two occasions in my life. For better than 20 years I had undergone treatment for mental health, and even though I had received excellent treatment from many outstanding psychiatrists, not a single

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one had been able to free me from the bondage of what they called "emotional disturbance" or "emotional disability."

But the Truth of the Word of God did set me free in a matter of a moment, and now I am free indeed, to the glory and the honor only of the God Almighty, the Father of my Lord Jesus Christ. And to testify about that Truth that set me free, is the purpose of this story, the story of my life.

It was not that I did not need correction either. And it was not that it was wrong to whip and shame me for misbehaving. But it was that I was not brought up according to the Word of God, and I was corrected for the wrong reason, I was corrected so that I would grow up to be a moral woman, for the benefit of my parents and for my convenience, not for the sake of the Word of God, not because I was disobeying the Word of God and sinning against God when I misbehaved.

I was punished without discrimination under the mistaken idea that the punishment was going to make me grow up to be a good woman, a lady of refined character or good morals, to the pleasing of my father who had his own philosophy about life and about God.

And also, it seems to me now, as I recollect my childhood, I was corrected for my grandmother's pleasing too, for my grandmother wanted me to be good not just to please my father, but even more so because she did not want me to suffer the same hardships that she had suffered.

But instead I should have been taught that I was to love and obey God for God's glory and not for the glory of human flesh. I should have been taught to behave for the love of God and the fear of sinning against God, rather than to behave and to love God for

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the pleasing of my father and the good and pleasure of the human flesh, namely my grandmother and I.

My father and grandmother were the key figures from my early childhood. I was taught to place my father as a terrible god to whom I had to pay the tribute of obedience in fear or suffer a good belting. My standards were formed according to what my father stood for; which was not the Word of God, because neither my grandmother, who acted as the executor of my father's wishes, nor my father, knew the Word of God.

The whole idea of correcting me was based in making me good because of what my father stood for, and what my grandmother thought was good for me. We were raised in the old Christian Psychology of "spare the rod and spoil the child," and we were beaten without discrimination.

The rod was not spared but we were spoiled because of lack of discernment, and lack of knowledge of the Word of God. Because of ignorance of the Word of God, and prejudicial outlook on the ways of God, they failed to understand that the rod is punishment not discipline. They failed to understand the difference between punishment and discipline. They failed to understand the truth of the Word of God, but most of all they failed God because they did not bring us up in the loving discipline of which The Lord approves.

My parents and teachers believed that the rod was the magic wand of discipline and if they would beat us almost to death, they were going to make us well disciplined and good children, for the pride and satisfaction of their foolish and misguided wisdom. The modern Psychology in Christian's circles goes to the other extreme; it works something like one of my Pastor express-

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es in his sermons sometimes when he says, "Don't throw away the baby with the dirty water."

And it seems to be the compassionate and logical thing that The Lord would have us to do, especially when you have the gift of mercy as my Pastor does. But the reality of the matter is that we wind up leaving the baby in the dirty water for fear of throwing the baby with it, because of our misguided conceptions and our wrong motives.

Because we are still insisting in living a life to love and obey God for our own glory, for our good and for our pleasure, for it seems right to us in accordance with our foolish and misguided wisdom; instead of living a life for the glory of The Almighty God that created and redeemed us with His own Blood, for His glory, and for His name's sake alone, not for our fleshly gratification!

So, we wind up not punishing our children because we don't want to provoke them to wrath, when, actually, if our children are not walking in obedience to the Word of God, they have already been provoked to wrath and we have to face the fact that they need to be punished or we all shall have to face the road to further rebellion.

My parents, my father and grandmother did not bring me up according to the Word of God, because they got set in their ways and ideas about God and God's ways. And because they did not bring me up according to the Word of God, they provoked me to wrath, and I grew up in rebellion.

I, as a parent now, in these days of super abundance, when The Word of God is so readily available; I, still, had failed to bring up my children according to the Word of God, because I got set in my ways and ideas about God and God's ways. And human

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nature is still the same, so, I had provoked my children to wrath and they were growing up in rebellion. But praise be to the Almighty God I serve, even my Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, for He has the power to rescue them even from the grip of the mighty strong man of rebellion.

And God in His mercy is setting the parents free first; then through the same truth in the Word of God that has set the parents free He shall set those children free.

In the meantime the Word of God was coming into fulfillment in my life, but, I didn't know it at the time.

Jeremiah 11:9-11

"Again the Lord spoke to me and said: I have discovered a conspiracy against me among the men of Judah and Jerusalem. They have returned to the sins of their fathers, refusing to listen to me and worshipping idols. The agreement I made with their fathers is broken and canceled. Therefore, The Lord says, I am going to bring calamity down upon them and they shall not escape. Though they cry for mercy, I will not listen to their pleas."

It was now almost the end of the year of The Lord, 1977. I had become to be twice as depressed than I had been before my encounter with the Word of God, in 1974. I had gained about 60 pounds of weight, more than I had gained during the three years that I live in turmoil and strife before the legal marriage to my husband.

Because of my weight I was depressed, and because of my depression I had gained all of that weight. I lived in pain and shame. I was hooked not only on tranquilizers but also on pain-killers, anti-depressants, diet pills, cigarettes and booze.

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Because of the pain and depression, I could not live with less than four of the super strength Triavil, and four Tailwind compound # 3, daily. Because of my weight, I experimented with every diet, diet pills, every program and anything that would hint to help me out.

So, one morning, I had just gotten up. I was drinking my usual cup of tea, loaded with about three teaspoons of sugar, to down my pills. That was part of my ritual every morning, for if I did not have a heavy dose of sugar and all those pills, I could not proceed to take care of my chores.

My chores were a must, for I had a large household. There were, at that time seven children in the household. My husband had three girls from his previous marriage, I had three girls from my previous marriage and we had adopted a son. Four of the girls were already teenagers.

There was a lot to do. Not only taking care of their psychological needs, but also, the cooking, the washing, the sewing, cleaning and shopping. In the midst of all of this, I had to do something to survive. Pills, booze and food was that something.

The house where we lived, had a large living room and dining room area combination. It was a room of the same size of the width of the front of the house. We had placed the television at one end of that room, in the living room area. This specific morning of which I am talking about, somehow the television was turned on. I leaned over the counter of a bar-table that used to divide the kitchen from the dining room area, with the cup of tea in my hand. I looked towards the television and I saw this advertisement: "OVER-EATERS ANONYMOUS." And a phone number.

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I hurried up and made a note of the phone number displayed on the screen. No sooner had everybody left, I called the number and made arrangements to attend their meetings. The Word of God reads,

Jeremiah 12:5

"The Lord replied to me: If racing with mere men—these men of Anathoth— has wearied you, how will you race against horses, against the king, his court and all his evil priests. If you stumble and fall on open ground, what will you do in Jordan's jungles?"

But I was no longer reading the Word of God. The Overeaters Anonymous meetings were enlightening, but I was getting nowhere.

"Why don't you go to see a priest?" one of the members kindly suggested after a few meetings. "Are you kidding?" I said, "Do you know what a priest told me to do when I went to see a priest, a while back? Well, my goodness! He told me that I was living in sin, and that my only way out was to go back to my first husband. He was so ridiculous, I don't care if I ever talked to a priest again in my entire life." "This priest is different, he is good and I guarantee you that he can help you." My friend said with patience.

Well, I had my doubts. But at that stage of the game, I was eager to try anything, including to see a priest. So I called the priest. "Father so and so is on vacation" I was told, "would you like to go see Father so and so at so and so Church?" I thought to myself, that is just the case, as usual, just passing the buck, nobody wants to help. "What is his number?" I said out loud in the phone. I called that number. "Father so and so is out of town, would you like to live your name and number? He'll return your call when he comes back." The receptionist answered. I was so disgusted,

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I don't even know how I left my name and number. I hung up the phone and forgot all about it.

The girls were always coming home with all kind of clicks and silly sayings. Sometimes, when they answered the phone, they would say some kind of silliness. This particular time, a couple of weeks after my hunt for a priest, the phone rang and one of my daughters answered.

"City mooorgue, you kill them, we chill them!" and she hands me the phone. "It's for you, some Father so and so? she said.

"Oh, yeah" I said, and I took the receiver from my daughter. "Father so and so! I had forgotten all about you, can I come over and talk to you?"

The Lord, had reached out again and opened the door. He says, Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you. For every one that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened. I said, towards the end of our first talk with Father, "Do I have to come to mass on Sunday or commit a mortal sin?"

By the grace of The Holy Spirit, Father answered, "It doesn't have to be like that, why don't you come to the Wednesday night prayer meeting, it will help you out." I thought to myself, "hum, Catholics! It is always prayer with them, bunch of fanatics."

And to make matters worse, Father turned out to be the head of the Charismatic Prayer Group and I was dead set against the Charismatics. But, things were rough inside of me. I was desperate. And so, I was introduced for the first time of my life to a bunch of Pentecostals Catholics, that not only spoke in other tongues but also raised hands and all of that!

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"Father, I have to admit that you all have something that I have not gotten, but how can I get it?" I asked after a couple of weeks, "I am so miserable, please help me." "I think it will do you good to have 'the laying of hands' Father said, "call this lady and make an appointment for the group to pray with you." "Hum," I thought to myself again, "here we go. What on earth am I going to gain with this bunch of old ladies laying their hands on me? It all seems so dumb!" But I needed help, I was desperate, so I called the name and number that Father had given me, I made the appointment.

I had not met that sister yet, in fact I had not met anybody at the prayer meeting, because I was so stuck up in my problems that I couldn't even see anything or anybody else. At the appointed time agreed, I knocked on the door of the address I was directed to by the sister who made the appointment. I thought it was her house that I had been directed to, but it was not. I knocked at another sister's door.

"Come on in, she said, I am so and so. You made the appointment with somebody else but she decided to pray over here, she should be coming at any minute." I don't think I said much for an introduction. For a brief moment I was astonished! For some reason I had pictured these two people to be two old women, the kind that are so old that they are half senile already.

At that time, I had the most un-tolerant, haughty, and un-kind attitude towards old people. I did not like old people, among the many, many things that I did not like. Actually, there was not too much that I liked in this life, at that time. But to my astonishment, these two were two beautiful women, about my same age and background, and I was delightfully surprised.

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And so I came in looking for one sister and found another instead; looking for two old women I found two young ones; but in it all I was doing the asking, the seeking and the knocking; and it was given unto me, and I found, and the door was opened unto me. We spent many hours in prayer. My two new found friends who became my sisters in the family of the Lord, were truly saturated with the love and patience of Jesus Christ. I talked, and talked, and talked. My burden was heavy, and I had no other way to unburden but by talking. Those two did the praying, I did the talking.

There was not only talk and prayer, but also tears, a lot of tears. I talked and cried. They prayed and listened. But we were not making much progress. "Thia, there is going to be a seminar on The Baptism of The Holy Spirit, I feel that The Lord wants you to go to that seminar." One of them said finally as to the next thing to do. I think I did agreed to go to that seminar, but a few days later I had gotten cold feet about it. I was not intending to go.

By this time I had began to watch the Christian's programs on television. I kept longing for that inner peace that everybody was talking about. On this specific day, I was watching a well known program. They gave a number to call for prayer and counseling. I called the number. I do not remember what I told that counselor at the other end of the line, but I do remember his answer, "The trouble with you," he said, "is that you are double-minded. You have one foot in the world, and the other in The Lord." When I hung up that phone, I was in utter consternation.

"Oh, my God, I prayed in earnest, what am I going to do? How can I get out of this mess." Before I knew it, I was on the phone making arrangements to go to that Seminar. At the Seminar, I did nothing but cry. I cried, and I cried, and I cried from the time I

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got there to the time I received the Communion at the end of the Seminar. When the Communion table was set up, and the Priest poured the wine, (they use real wine) the smell of alcohol, threw me for a brief moment, into panic.

One of the things that I saw during my break down in 1974, was signs of good and bad smells to determine good and evil. When I came to my senses at that time, the enemy, the deceiver told me that in order for me to know when something was of God or not, I had to use my sense of smell. For a long time that stayed in the back of my mind, and often times I would remember that silly advice from the devil.

I never deliberately followed it, but sometimes because of my sensitive nose it would kind of make sense. When I smelled that wine, way across the room, I remembered what I was told, and a sense of evil gripped my heart for a few seconds. . . I almost ran out of that room. But then I heard the words, coming from the Priest blessing the wine for the communion.

"For this is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins."

"Devil," I said realizing the trick of the enemy "that is the Blood of Jesus, and I am going to drink it!"

I got out of my seat quickly and I made haste to the communion line. When my turn finally came, I put the cup to my lips and a drop of wine touched them. My whole body became relaxed. The panic left and an indescribable peace invaded my soul! Just like that my tears left and when I left that room I was at peace with myself and with the whole world. I basked in that peaceful delight for a couple of days.

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Then I called to go in for a prayer session. I wanted to share with my two sisters what I had experienced. This time we met at the sister's house that first made my appointment. We were sitting—the three of us, at the kitchen table. "Thia, I feel that the Lord is telling me for you to talk about your childhood" my hostess said with assurance.

"Sister, I have been going to psychiatrists for 20 years, don't you think that I have talked enough about my childhood and all of that? I certainly don't need to talk about my childhood anymore!" I said indignantly.

"Talk about it anyway, because The Lord says so." She said with a certain authority. "Alright, . . ." I said with resignation, and I began to relate everything that was coming to my mind from my childhood.

And as I was relating my childhood, I was grievously crying. And in my heart, in the midst of my grief, The Lord spoke, "I saved you from all of that for my own glory" I sensed a thought going through my mind. "I saved you from all of that for my own glory" I confessed with my mouth. And with my mouth confession came a lifting of a weight, a heavy weight that had laid on my chest for a long time causing me all that tormenting agony of depression and pain. At that very moment I knew I was free! Free from the grip of depression and pain, free from pills and cigarettes and booze, free, free, free! And the three of us shouted `ALLELUIA, ALLELUIA, PRAISE THE LORD!

"You got the gift of tongues, come on, use it." One of my sisters said charged with the excitement of the whole experience. "I think you are crazy, I don't have any gift of tongues" I said in ignorance. But I went home and knelt by my bed, and I began to praise The Lord with other tongues. "You've got The Lord!"

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everybody I met would say the next day, at the prayer meeting. And inside of me I knew it was so, but in the outside of me, in my body, I was pitifully sick. I thought I had some kind of flu. I was throwing up, I could not keep anything in my stomach.

The brothers and sisters would tell me, "You've got the Lord" because I had a big grin on my face, for I was so happy inside of me, that all of that discomfort of that flu, did not matter a bit and it did not mar the glory of the Lord on me. I was happy, happy, happy in The Lord. We were already in the year of the Lord of 1978. I had experienced The Baptism of The Holy Spirit. I was happy, happy, happy in The Lord and sick, sick, sick in my body. I could not keep anything in my stomach.

"I am sick, I have not been able to keep anything in stomach for the last three days, what shall I do?" I said talking to my two sisters one morning. "Do you think The Lord is calling her to a fast? One asked to the other. "What?! What in the world are you talking about. Fasts went out with the century, what is the matter with you all?" I said in utter unbelief.

"Oh no," said the most vivacious of the two, "fasting is Scriptural, I haven't fasted yet and I don't know much about it, but I know it is Scriptural. I think so and so has a book about it. Let's find out about it."

I remember that the other sister did not say much that day. They both promised to secure that book for me and I went home. The next day, I got up and fixed me a cup of coffee and then went back to bed, to drink my coffee and read my Bible. I was reading in the book of Mark chapter 9, and I came to verse 29 that reads, "And he said unto them, This kind can come forth by nothing, but by prayer and fasting." And I said, "Lord, are you telling me to fast?" . . . For an answer, I got out of bed, I made haste to

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the kitchen sink and dumped my coffee. And thus, for the first time in my life, I began a fast.

The next day I got a hold of the book "God's Chosen Fast" by Arhtur Wallis. I ate that book, and it did my soul a wonder. That fast was really God's chosen fast for me. For the first three days I did not even drink. I read The Word, and I read The Word, and I read The Word. I just could not get enough of The Word of God in me. By the fourth day, I was not sick anymore. I felt like I was floating on cloud nine. Each next day, I felt better than the day before. For ten glorious days, I communed with the Lord. It was a marvelous experience. But we were all relatively new at these experiences, and I did not know the warnings in the Word of God,

Jeremiah 12:6

"Even your own brothers, your own family, have turned against you. They have plotted to call for a mob to lynch you. Don't trust them, no matter how pleasantly they speak. Don't believe them."

And meanwhile, as I remember it now, my husband was more disturbed and troubled than he had ever been before. He was drinking on a daily basis now. I had quit drinking and smoking, and I no longer wanted to join him in all of that stuff. Rather, I would go to the prayer meeting and read my Bible.

This situation did not agree with him, and Satan got a hold of him. Driven by Satan one night, he showed up at the prayer meeting. I was glad when I saw him. He motioned me to come to him. He started to walk towards the parking lot and I followed him. When I got close to him, I smelled the liquor, but it was too late then. "Is this what you have left me for?" He said.

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He was referring to the fact that I did not drink and party with him anymore. And before I could answer anything. . . he struck me across the side of my head! It was a nasty blow, but fortunately, I was not knocked down on the concrete all the way, and I was able to run away. I ran back in the Church, and I grabbed one of my two sisters with who I had counseled and pray, "He struck me, I cannot see with this eye." I said hysterically. "Oh my God," said she, and she called others and we prayed.

"I don't think it is safe for you to go home tonight, I am taking you to my home." she said after we prayed. Oh God, was I ever grateful! I do not recall how I managed the following day to go to my house, get my son, some clothes, and some cash money that he was hiding in a drawer. I remember coming in the house quickly and grabbing my boy and the stuff, telling my youngest daughter to come with me and getting in the station wagon and driving back to my sister's house to wait for her to find somebody to give me shelter. So, I escaped for safety.

The peace of the Lord is that peace that passeth all understanding. That dreadful scene took place on a Wednesday night, during the Holy Week. The Wednesday before Easter Sunday. Holidays were a big thing in the family. I could not think of an Easter without the ham, candied yams, cheese cauliflower, potato salad, baked macaroni, all that candy from the Easter egg baskets, and the famous Easter egg hunt. I don't think that the kids enjoyed it as much as I did.

I would make preparations for Easter, a week in advance. And so, this week, the shopping had been done already, and there was, sitting in my refrigerator at home, a huge ham for Easter dinner. As far as the children were concerned, even though we lived in a turmoil, we did have a family life. But now, everybody was scattered. I had my son and youngest daughter with me. The rest

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of the girls were at home, practically by themselves, because my husband was in a rampage looking for me. And in the midst of this dreadful storm, there I was, on the eve of Easter Sunday, reclined on a bed, in a strange house, reading Corrie Ten Boon's Book, filled with the peace of The Lord!

During the following week, we saw the mighty hand of God reached over and lift up my husband. He surrendered his life to the Lord, and again received God's blessed Salvation. The Wednesday following that dreadful Wednesday, when he called me out of Church to strike me, that very next Wednesday, a week later, my husband, walked in the Church and took his place next to me. I had not expected him to go to Church with me, for he had told me that he was not going to do that.

"I have given my life to The Lord, and I am giving up cigarettes and booze, but don't expect me to be going to Church with you everyday!" He had told me when I came back home that previous day. And yet, here he was! Not only came he to Church, but he also joined in to praise The Lord in earnest. I was delighted. But the warnings in the Word of God were there,

Jeremiah 13:15-16

"Oh, that you were not so proud and stubborn! Then you would listen to the Lord, for he has spoken. Give glory to the Lord your God before it is too late, before he causes deep, impenetrable darkness to fall upon you so that you stumble and fall upon the dark mountains; then, when you look for light, you will find only terrible darkness."

Our new life blossomed into a Youth Ministry. One Wednesday night accidentally we went in the Youth Prayer Room. There were hardly any young people around. The youth director was

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playing a tape on the evil of Rock and Roll music. That message touched my husband deeply and set him on fire to minister the message to our teenagers and their peers. I joined in his enthusiasm and started a Home Youth Prayer Meeting.

But then, I wanted to take it over and wanted to run it my way because I had come up with that idea. He wanted to run it his way because he was the head of the house and he was supposed to know what he was doing. He did not like the way I was doing it.

And from here on began the strife of a carnal Christian woman, delivered to Satan. The discipline of a Righteous Father, that wills her soul to be saved. My husband was on fire for The Lord, and so was I. For we had both experienced the power of God in a very dramatic way. But then, because of ignorance, pride got hold of both of our hearts.

We were ignorant of the knowledge of God. Because we were ignorant of the knowledge of God, we presumed to be some kind of privileged characters. We were inflated because of our spiritual experiences. I became a "know it all" and very knowledgeable about "spiritual things." And I presumed to be even more privileged, because I thought I had a brighter mind than my husband. I considered myself better educated than he was.

I always have been an avid reader. At Church they used to set up a book table in the cafeteria for us to buy or borrow books after the prayer meeting on Wednesdays. Reading Christians books was a brand new thing for me. When I first started reading the Bible in 1974, I was fascinated by my apprehension of the very essence of the Word of God and I thought that the reason why I could understand it was because I had a better mind than others. I became very dogmatic about reading the Bible.

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I figured that all Christians books were simply interpretations of the Bible and I had enough brains to interpret the Bible for myself; therefore I refused to tainted my mind with somebody's else's ideas. I feared deception. It is not that I saw myself as proud and conceited. I just did not know anything about the Holy Spirit and I thought I was being cautious and watching out for false teachers.

Unaware of my sin I usurped God's wisdom given to me through the Holy Spirit and became proud and conceited, because of my "bright mind" ideas. Because of my sin, I was, in fact, deceived by the enemy and I fell out of the will of God. Now that I had received The Baptism of the Holy Spirit, a whole brand new world opened up for me, the "Spiritual World" including "The World of Faith Healing", "The World of Inner Healing" "The World of Deliverance" and such.

And I fell into a worse deception yet than in 1974. Because of my ignorance of the knowledge of God and the unwillingness of the flesh to follow the way of the cross, I thought that I was in "Magic-Land World" altogether. I thought that finally I had arrived! There was nothing now to stop me from climbing the highest mountains. I was on my way to the top! I began to devour books like, "What you say is what you get" by Capp. "Inner Healing" by Father Francis McNutt. All kinds of books about "Inner Healing", "Faith Healing", "Fasting books", "Miracle books" and etc.

Around that time I ran into Harold Hill's book "How to live like King's Kids." It is not that any of all of these books are necessarily wrong at all. It was rather that I WAS READING THEM WITH THE WRONG MOTIVES. And regardless how my sisters would try to discourage me, I would not listen. For I had

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fallen away from the will of God, driven away by my carnal lust, and I was walking in deception.

James 1:12-16.

"Happy is the man who doesn't give in and do wrong when he is tempted, for afterwards he will get as his reward the crown of life that God has promised those who love Him. And remember, when someone wants to do wrong it is never God who is tempting him, for God never wants to do wrong and never tempts anyone else to do it. TEMPTATION IS THE PULL OF MAN'S OWN EVIL THOUGHTS AND WISHES. These EVIL THOUGHTS lead to EVIL ACTIONS and afterwards to THE DEATH PENALTY FROM GOD. So don't be misled, dear brothers."

In his book "How to live like King's Kids" Harold Hill brings forth several testimonies to illustrate his message. I do not remember the book's message but I do remember one of the testimonies because it made an impression on me. This was the testimony of a saved Christian woman that got possessed by a demon and murdered somebody and was put in a mental institution for the criminally insane. Her husband had stood for her in some kind of "Deliverance Prayer Session" and the Word of Knowledge had come into operation and the woman had been delivered!

It was a short testimony but it made an impression on me because I was so obsessed with the "Spiritual World" that I was consumed with all those weird testimonies of demons, and voices and supernatural occurrences, because of my experience of 1974. Anything that would give me a cue as to how to get some more "spiritual experiences" and get rid of all "my faults" and "my circumstances" as if by magic, I would grab on fast.

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With all of this information I had accumulated in my head, I created my own "Wonderful and Mystical World of God." And when I thought that the time had come for my husband to be initiated in this "Wonderful and Mystical World of God that I had created" Of course! I was far more advanced than he was! I was already advanced in the "school of the flesh"; for I was a silly carnal Christian woman with itchy ears.

But I considered myself "spiritually knowledgeable" qualified to give him the instruction he so desperately needed according to my judgment. But he just would not receive! Oh poor me! I had such a hard life with such an obstinate husband and all those demons harassing and oppressing me.

And on top of an obstinate husband I had my three rebellious and un-manageable step-daughters that would not appreciate me! In fact not just would they not appreciate me, they hated me. I had a hard life! I pranced around the waiting rooms of Secular Psychiatrists and Christians Psychiatrists, Secular Counselors and Christians Counselors as well. I went through the "Inner Healing Ministry" and the "Deliverance Ministry" I fasted and I prayed to exhaustion.

I thought through all of this activities that I was seeking God! I was doing something worth while. I was not wasting my time! Wouldn't you have agreed? He, my husband, in return considered me to be more educated than him; for which he would brag about it at times. But when it came to the Scriptures, he became jealous and spiteful about it.

He hated for me to open my mouth about anything that pertained to the Scriptures. He would not accept anything that I would suggest. He was well able to read for himself! After all! He had the makings to be a very strong Christian because he was a MORAL

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intelligent man with only a few problems. Nothing really serious that he could not correct himself! After all! God told him that he was going to walk with kings! He must have done something good!

And all those silly miracles that I would go on bragging and getting all excited about? Oh well, I was just plumb dumb and emotional! I counter reacted in hate and disdain. I began to see how hideous he was. How awfully proud and conceited he was. Tragically though, I was unable to see that I, was even more hideous than him. My pride and conceit were ruthless. My ignorance of the knowledge of God was insurmountable. I was cruel and ruthless.

I had started to walk in the flesh and I was no longer able to receive the guidance of the Holy Spirit. Without the guidance of the Holy Spirit, I followed my own inclinations, and my ears were open to all the wrong teachings from which the Holy Spirit could have kept me.

But even though I became confused, discouraged and rebellious I refused to turn my back on God. I became self-righteous. For I was convinced that I was right, and I was determined to do the work of God, not only in myself but in everybody around.

I lost all fear of Satan. I figured that Satan could not have me, because I had already experienced the deliverance from many demonic spirits, and I belonged to Jesus. I thought that I had grasped the teaching about the demons since I had gone through a dramatic deliverance. But I knew nothing of the treachery and the counterfeit of Satan. And even when The Lord provided for me the comfort of the Ministers of the Word of God to teach and lift me up, because of pride, I did not listen.

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I did not learn anything about the deeds of the flesh either. I knew nothing about the flesh. I was ignorant of the way of the cross. I marched in what I thought to be the guidance of the Holy Spirit of God, which was only a Satanic deception because of my "itchy ears." I became my own God, and neither Satan could induce me into openly sinning against my God, nor my Heavenly Father could do his work in me. I was a wreck of a human being!

He, my husband, fell out of the will of God, wounded by the sharp edge of my conceit. Poisoned with the apple of my prideful knowledge of good and evil, for I was a "know it all." And again he returned to the ways of the world, driven away by his own lust for POWER. By the Thanksgiving Holidays, that household was hell on earth. And at this point of this writing the Holy Spirit leads me to introduce the following Scriptures.

Jeremiah 13:17

"Do you still refuse to listen? Then in loneliness my breaking heart shall mourn because of your pride. My eyes will overflow with tears because the Lord's flock shall be carried away as slaves."

Jeremiah 5:14-18

"Therefore this is what the Lord God of Hosts says to his prophets: Because of talk like this I'll take your words and prophecies and turn them into raging fire and burn up these people like kindling wood. See, I will bring a distant nation against you, O Israel, says the Lord-a mighty nation, an ancient nation whose language you don't understand. Their weapons are deadly; the men are all mighty. And they shall eat your harvest and your children's bread, and your flocks of sheep and herds of cattle, yes, and your grapes and figs; and

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they shall sack your walled cities that you think are safe. But I will not completely blot you out. So says the Lord."

We neither listened to the Ministers of the Word of God, nor learned that we are all Priests ourselves and must listen and obey The Lord God Almighty. Human Wisdom, Psychology were to be the names of that first nation. Counselors and Positive Thinking were the mighty men. Around the Thanksgiving Holidays, I fled from home again. This time I was gone for about eight weeks.

He begged me to come back. He promised he was going to change his ways. He started to attend Church again, and he promised that he would seek help. He bought me a beautiful diamond ring. And he said he just could not live without me. I knew he was sincere about loving me. Regardless of all the bad times, I knew that he did love me in his own way. And besides, there was all those children to think about, so I went back.

When I went back, I was in another stage of self-righteousness. The attitude in my heart was, "I was right after all. Now everybody knows how bad he can be. He is a monster, but maybe he has learned his lesson. I am going to clean up my act a little bit. I am not going to be so hard on him. After all, I got some faults too. I am going to be cooperative and play his game, maybe he'll come around sooner than what I think."

Because there were three children involved that were not our own, for my son's adoption had not gone through and we were helping my son's 13 year old brother and a three year old baby girl that did not have a home, The Juvenile Court became involved in our "family affairs."

The Courts ordered Counseling. And so, we embarked in yet another stage of this game that we were playing. The counsel-

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ing stage of the game. We needed counseling. That's it! Everybody agreed. The whole family NEEDS counseling sessions. So, by now there were two more additions to the family, we were now a household of nine children and two adults. It takes a lot of money to support a big family like that.

It is a worse matter, when you have the money coming in, and the big family, but you are not a good steward of the money. Then, you get into financial troubles. We had gotten into financial troubles, and of course, we could not afford Secular Counseling at \$50.00. Nor even Christian Counseling at \$25.00 per hour, (a moderate fee, figured according to our income and expenses). For that matter, we could not afford any kind of counseling at all. But we were willing to pay as much as we could. And we had already used the services of a Christian counselor before, therefore we called him.

"The city has a good Family Counseling Program. I believe you should go there, I do not have the facilities to counsel with the whole family. They can arranged for fees to be suitable to your income too, like I did. And that is what the courts required anyhow," our Christian counselor suggested.

For the life of me, I never understood how a Christian counselor had referred us to a Secular Counseling Program. But I had decided to get off my high horse, and quit being a "know-it-all." "He is a Minister of the Word of God, he must be right and I must be wrong." I figured. And besides, I liked the fellow a great deal, because I had perceived that he was an intellectual man. I respected his intelligence. But, mainly, I knew in my heart that he was sincere in doing what he thought it was right. Of course, I did not know The Word of God, I was ignorant of

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Jeremiah 5:14-18,

"Therefore this is what the Lord God of Hosts says to his prophets: Because of talk like this I'll take your words and prophecies and turn them into raging fire and burn up these people like kindling wood. See, I will bring a distant nation against you, O Israel, says the Lord—a mighty nation, an ancient nation whose language you don't understand. Their weapons are deadly; the men are all mighty. And they shall eat your harvest and your children's bread, and your flocks of sheep and herds of cattle, yes, and your grapes and figs; and they shall sack your walled cities that you think are safe. But I will not completely blot you out. So says the Lord."

We followed the court order and our Christian counselor suggestion and appointments were made. Things were really going to be straightened out now! And for a few months things did begin to calm down, the storm somehow receded. My husband and the Counselor were becoming friends; they were beginning to talk like men at the sessions, about fishing and sports and business. I sensed that the Counselor felt that the work had been done. But I knew, in my heart, that it was all a "put on." I knew that between my husband and I, under the apparent calm, a storm was brewing.

He had begun to drink an occasional beer. He had not changed. I realized that, all of this counseling and good resolutions, were nothing but a mockery and a sham of the Word of God. I was beginning to see the flesh in action. I was on the way of knowledge, but before I gave myself a chance to see my own flesh in that action, before I even began to digest what The Lord was showing me, without any wisdom at all, I blew it!

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"I have discovered that my husband is an alcoholic!" I blurted out at the last counseling session that my husband and I attended. My husband, practically fell out of his seat! "Sabotage!" The Counselor blurted out himself. My husband walked out of the room. Counseling had ended! Finished by sabotage.

Here we were, all those sessions, all that money, wasted away by one stupid remark of mine! I came home that day and I cried in bitter agony. I had to be the most wicked person in the whole earth. I blew it! My husband had been doing so good, after all, he had consented to all of that counseling, he had attended all of those sessions, and he was making progress according to the counselor. I really blew it, everything good that my husband attempted to do, I would destroy. What kind of wife was I?

"I'll make it up to him," I thought. And that day I made a new resolution. "I am going to change, I am going to be a good wife. I am going to be the wife of Proverbs 31." I resolved in all sincerity. I had now been going to the School of the Flesh, for a good while. I had graduated from that school, and I was now ready to enroll in the University of the Flesh. Because I was ignorant of the Word of God, I had no idea of,

Jeremiah 5:16-17,

"Their weapons are deadly; the men are all mighty. And they shall eat your harvest and your children's bread, and your flocks of sheep and herds of cattle, yes, and your grapes and figs; and they shall sack your walled cities that you think are safe."

Thinking that I was praying to my Heavenly Father, I said one day, "Father, what can I do to be a good wife, and a good Christian, and a good helper? What can I do to help all of this teenagers

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that are in trouble. What can I do to get money, to help out?" "Get into Real Estate." came the answer from what I thought to be the voice of God.

At that time, I did a lot of my praying while I was jogging. I would jog everyday for an hour or two. The specific day when I made that prayer, and got that answer, I came home and opened my Bible. It fell opened at the parable of the talents. I thought to myself, "This is a confirmation for me to get into Real Estate." And away I went!!! Real Estate Industry, here I come! "Great idea!" said my husband, I'll help you."

By the end of 1979, I was a success in the Real Estate industry. I had made, "Listing Agent of the Month" twice, and I had bought my first Investment Property. "This is great!" I said to myself, "God is really with me. I must be doing things right. I am tough!" I thought. And my husband, also, was really enthusiastic at first. But I burned out. Real Estate was not for me. I needed to seek elsewhere.

This was 1980. My husband was no longer attending Church. He had the "IT IS NO USE IN GOING TO CHURCH, I CAN DO IT BETTER BY-MY-SELF. THOSE CHURCH PEOPLE, ARE NOT DOING IT RIGHT AT ALL" syndrome. Just about that time, he began to have problems at work. Not only he had disagreements with his business associates, but also he had problems with his back. I had nagged him to go in business for himself, for a long time. But now, I doubled my nagging. I found him a partner. I manipulated, and manipulated, until, he finally made a move and started in business for himself.

The children were going thru the adolescence of their lives, suffering growing pains. Out of the nine children involved, one had gone to live in an another home. There was only one that was

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walking with the Lord. Five of them were in rebellion, and the other two were mere children yet.

I had burned out in Real Estate, and now I was only spinning my wheels, wasting money and time. I was attending Church by myself. My life was one of Self-Righteousness and Self-Condensation. I was now a full flesh member of the University of the Flesh. I marched now, more than ever before, in the power of my mind. I immersed myself into the stream of the doctrine of Positive Thinking. I saturated my mind with the waters from that stream. When my husband started up the business, I said that I did not want to get involved in it.

Actually, I did not want to do the work in the business. What I wanted was to tell him and everybody how to do it, for I considered myself very knowledgeable in sales techniques and all of those matters. Of course, my husband was not about to let me tell him anything. Better than that, he embarrassed me in front of one his partners. I became bitter and resentful about the whole thing.

Then to top it all up, he cut down the household check. I simply did not have enough money to meet all of my expenses. I said to myself, "I am going to find me a job, and I am going to show him that I can make money too." Sure enough, I got a position in the Advertisement Department of the local Weekly Newspaper. "Congratulations on your new career," said my husband, with a beautiful house tree for my office, grateful that I was getting off his back.

Well, that lasted about eight weeks. After a while, I figured out that it was costing me more money and trouble to work, than to stay home. I gave my notice, and ended my Advertisement career.

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But now the mighty men of Bitterness, Resentment and Money Obsession took possession of my life. I ended my advertisement career, nevertheless, the bitterness and resentment about his business had become unbearable. I could not stand anything about the business. I fell out with his partners, who were my most personal friends. I hated everybody and everything connected with the business. And finally I became obsessed with the idea of making money, big money. More money than what he was making, just to show him.

I began to investigate all kinds of possibilities. I worked without ceasing finagling money. My husband had refused to take care of the bank account and the finances of the house. He insisted for me to take that responsibility. I hated it. I never have had any discipline to take care of financial responsibilities. I do not like it now, and I loathed it then. The worse part was that, I did not have enough money to meet the expenses, and instead of cutting expenses down, I would spend sleepless nights, in tears, racking by brains with the obsession to make more money, to meet expenses, so that I would not show my utter incompetence. I despised my husband because of that. I could not understand how in the world he could claimed to love me, and yet permit me to live in this kind of predicament. I lost all respect for him.

I began to investigate all avenues to get in business for myself, with intensity and determination. I dared the un-daring and spent all kinds of household money that I had no business spending to purchase literature and instructions on how to go in business for myself. Finally, I approached his bank with a Business Plan for a Computer Portraits on T-Shirts business and a request for a loan of \$10,000.00 to purchase the necessary equipment. I just knew that, that Business was going to work out and I was going to repay that loan within six months, and make a way with a fantastic profit!

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I did not convinced the Bank one hundred per cent, but my husband's Business Account was a serious account, and he was in the VIP list. So, the Loan Officer asked for his signature, and granted me the loan. Never in the furthest corner of my mind did the idea cross me, that I was going to fail. But fail I did, and miserably. And because of pride, I could not admit my failure and get out of the business graciously.

Rather, I doubled my efforts to make a go of the business. I continued to use the household money to charge everything, to the point that our charge accounts were past the limits, and our finances were in serious trouble. We were in the verge of bankruptcy. I lived in dreadful fear that my husband would stumble on one of the bills and see my recklessness.

The situation came to a point where I could not hide it any longer and I panicked and I decided to leave him. I called him at his work and told him that I could not take it anymore and that I was leaving. While I was packing my youngest daughter called, to find out what was going on, why I was leaving and where was I going. I told her of the predicament that I was in, and that I did not know where was I going. She told me to come and stay with her, for she did not wanted it any other way.

So, I packed my suitcase and left for my youngest daughter's house. And the thing that I feared the most did come to pass, my husband found out about the financial situation. I slept at my youngest daughter's house that night. The next day I went to hock my diamond earrings and wedding ring, in order to get money to pay for my car insurance.

My oldest daughter went and talked to him, to my husband and interceded between both of us. She told him that it was his fault too, for not taking care of things himself. I don't know exactly

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what it was said, but, she called me and told me to come and talk to him and work things out for he was willing to work with me, and straighten things out.

I went over the following morning, and we had a long talk. I thought that he was aware of the whole spectrum of the financial situation of the household and of my business. I thought that he really was going to work with me. I did not know that, the spirit of jealousy had gotten hold of his heart. I did not know that he was jealous of the man that I had hired to promote my business. I did not know that he suspected, for that matter, probably not only him but the whole family suspected, that I was running around on him.

When I went over that morning, and we talked about the business, he told me that he intended to get involved in the business, but he did not let on to me any of his suspicions. We did not discuss anything about the promoter, the man that I had hired to help me to promote the business. I assumed that it was understood that the man was going to help out too. So, that evening when I closed the shop, this man and I went to a restaurant, and I called my husband to join us to discuss how to promote the business.

Dear God! I opened a can of worms with that phone call! He told me to come home and take care of my family, and when I came home, he went into a rage. I realized then that he was confused, and mixed up. I knew he was going to kill me. The next day, I brought my suitcase to my youngest daughter's house and I went to the shop.

The following night he came looking for me with a gun to kill me. My daughters found out his intentions, and called the police.

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The police suggested that my daughter call me at my shop, and warn me not to come home that night for my safety.

The man that was promoting the business for me had gotten me the present location of the business, and he was in the habit to come and check me out towards closing time. We used to close the shop after nine o'clock at night, and since it was around that time, he was there at the shop, when my daughter called me.

I did not know the man on a personal basis. He was promoting my business for a hope of profiting from the promotion if he could get the Business to flourish. I had no idea that anybody would suspect me of running around with him. And I had no idea either that the man was having family problems also, and that his wife had put him out. I had not really talked about my personal life with him, even though, that he knew that I had left home, he did not know exactly why, he only knew that I was having financial difficulties with the Business. He was not really my confidant, or anything like that, he was just trying to promote my Business to make a buck. Because of my innocence, I acted un-wisely but in good faith and with honesty.

"What is the problem?" the man said when he saw the panic in my face when I hung up the phone. "My husband is looking for me with a gun to kill me. The police advices for me not to come home tonight for my own safety." I blurted out hysterically.

"That makes two of us, let's get out of here." He said. He got in his car and I followed him in mine. We pulled in a restaurant. We ordered a cup of coffee. "What are you going to do?" he asked me. "I am going to sleep in my car." I said. I did not have any money with me, neither did I want to spend any money for a motel room. I had slept in the car on many occasions and that was the only way I knew.

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"I had planned on doing the same thing, I know of a safe place that we can park." he told me. When we got to the parking lot that he was talking about, I invited him to sleep in the back of my Station Wagon, because I saw that his car was a small car, and I was not going to sleep in the back anyhow. And besides, I was scared and I felt the need for somebody to be close at hand.

The next day I drove over to my daughter's house to clean up. While I was in the front room drying my hair, I witnessed, thru the window, my husband driving away with my Station Wagon. I became infuriated, and I told my daughter how I had just hocked my diamond earrings and my wedding ring, in order to pay for the car insurance, and now he was taking the car away. I told her that he just wanted to hurt me, and that he was not going to rest until he saw me finished. I packed my suitcase, I called a taxi and I went away.

"Where are you going?" asked my daughter before I left. I said, "I have no idea. I am just leaving to get lost, and get away from him." I asked the taxi to bring me to the Salvation Army or somewhere like that, but she did not know where to bring me. I did not know what to do and I was running out of cash to keep on riding the taxi. I figured if I needed to walk or catch the bus, I was going to have a hard time with the suitcase, so the cab driver suggested for me to lock the suitcase at the Greyhound Bus Station. I did that and then I took a bus to go to the shop.

My daughter must have called him, and shamed him because he brought the car back, and at least now, I had transportation. But, my daughter had asked me where had I spent the night, and I had told her, not having any conception of how the whole thing looked to others. And I imagine my daughter became most upset about it, and she called her step-daddy, my husband, and told him where had I spent the night.

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The next thing I knew, my husband went berserk with jealousy. He began to hunt this man down. In frustration of not finding him he went to this man's wife, and told her all about this man sleeping with me. I was outraged. Never, ever in the entire period of my relationship with my husband, had it crossed my mind to sleep with another man! How could I have been accused of such thing? Smeared and run down, I cried in hopeless despair! I had no place to go, I did not have the slightest idea of what to do or where to go. And I did not have the strength to even worry about it.

Finally a friend of mine took me in and helped me. After a few days, things quieted down, he repented and asked me to come back home and back home I went. Little did I know how the spirit of jealousy works in a man. I did not know that once a man allows the spirit of jealousy to come in his heart, it gets a hold of his heart and grips it with a strong grip.

I was guilty of squandering the household money, but all of that was already in the open. Therefore I proceeded to the best of my knowledge to promote the Business myself, but I was not making any head away, and I was still spending too much money. I was innocent of adultery, though. But I did not know how possessed with jealousy he was, and that he was looking for an excuse to take revenge on me.

So one day, when I least expected, he confronted me with the situation again, and before I knew it he was beating me up. I ran over to my studio, to take refuge because I knew that my studio had a door to the outside where I could escape. But he ran after me, and was literally beating me to death, fortunately, by the grace of God, he was not killing me because, he had grabbed a pillow, and that is what he was using to hit me. It seems that at one point, for a second he came to his senses, looked at the pil-

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low, threw it away and ran into the house and I ran out of the studio, with nothing but my car keys and my purse.

I jumped in my car and drove away. I drove over to sister G's house, but it was so late, that I could not wake them up. God knows, though, because I left sister G's house and I went to a public phone to call the Battered Woman Center, and I saw him drive past the street, towards sister G's house. The Battered Woman Center finally answered, and they directed me to the secret house to take shelter.

Here I was now, around Easter of 1981. I had blown it. I failed, not only the Business Venture, but also, the marriage and the family. I was defeated. Totally and completely defeated. In the other hand, I still had my dignity and pride. I was not a total wash out. I had taken refuge at the Battered Woman Center. I had kept my equipment to work, and I purposed in my heart to make a go out of the Business, somehow. After all, I felt that God had given me brains to use them, and I figured that I could get up just as good as the next fellow.

I did not intend to give up. I could not give up. I moved my equipment out of the shop. I was in the Computer Portrait Business. My equipment, was kind of bulky, but it was portable. It is the kind of Business that you can do at fairs and conventions and such. I moved that equipment out of that shop, because my husband was threatening to take it away.

So, I moved it and I went to a lawyer and put a peace bond on him and initiated the legal separation procedure. Again, he came to his senses, and began the pleading campaign. He begged and he pleaded. I was determined not to come back, but my son was only nine years old, and again I figured, it is a hard life without a husband, so I went back home.

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But when I came back home this time, I had only one thing in mind, to clear my name. I intended to work and to work and to work until I succeeded in making the money that I needed to get us out of debt. I did not want to owe a nickel to anybody whatsoever! I multiplied my efforts now to succeed. Husband, Family life or Church, and even God, nothing mattered. Success, was top priority. Everything else was only to serve that one priority.

My heart motivation was: "He beat me up, and humiliated me, and smeared me, all because of money. Well, I'll make money, lots of money. I am going to make him eat it. I am going to choke him to death with rolls of money. I'll show him." And the harder I tried to succeed, the worse I failed.

In my spiritual walk, well, of course! I was walking with The Lord! Talking about deception! I was a deceived soul! I would pray with earnest. I would read nothing but books based on Scripture. I would do nothing against the letter of the Law. I would go to Church every Sunday, and sometimes even during the week! if my other priorities permitted.

I imagine Satan, the accuser, went to my Heavenly Father to accuse me, and my Heavenly Father knowing that I needed to learn a lesson for my own good, told Satan, "go to it Satan, but only spare her life" And Satan did not wait a minute too long, he got to it right away, and before I knew it, my marriage was broken, my children were scattered, I fell into sinful living, and I lost all my possessions.

I had become a leader and a shepherd because I had led the rest of the family into the fold of the Lord, but, I had destroyed and scattered them by following my own inclinations instead of obeying the word of God.

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Jeremiah 23:1-2

"The Lord declares: I will send disaster upon the leaders of my people—the shepherds of my sheep—for they have destroyed and scattered the very ones they were to care for. Instead of leading my flock to safety, you have deserted them and driven them to destruction. And now I will pour out judgment upon you for the evil you have done to them."

The Scriptures in Psalm 109 were my prayer. Oh how I would pray The Psalms! With all earnest I would pray,

Psalm 109:1-5

"O God of my praise, don't stand silent and aloof while the wicked slander and tell their lies. They have no reason to hate and fight me, yet they do! I love them, but even while I am praying for them, they are trying to destroy me. They return evil for good, and hatred for love."

And how often I would wonder who were all those "wicked" that the Psalmist talks about. "They must be all those demons that get a hold of people," I would think. "Or perhaps, they are the people that are deliberately doing wrong, like my husband." I would muse. And then I would pray, "Oh my God, deliver him from all of those demons, so that we can have peace in the family." And I would get up from my knees, feeling ever so holy! And on I went to pursue my "success god."

The next time I would pray again,

Ps 109:29

"Make them fail in everything they do. Clothe them with disgrace."

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"Yeah, Lord. Make him fall flat on his face. Don't let him succeed. Let that business break him. Just bring him to his knees. That he may worship You . . ." I would add with my mouth. (But in my heart, my prayer was, that he would be the good husband to worship me.)

My husband was in his own merry-go-round. He had his own problems too, and he was taking care of them. Only I did not know it; but, there was a woman in his horizon. I was so busy "making money for him", that I did not think about him having troubles. I did not ever thought about him having troubles. I always thought of him as being trouble himself. I thought he didn't have problems, he made problems. I did not just despise his ways, I loathed them with purple passion. I considered him to be the most arrogant, and ignoramus man in the whole world.

And then, some times when he would do something good for me, I would feel like I had to double my efforts, to reform my ways, and make him proud of me. At those times, I would apply myself to be humble, and submissive. When I would apply myself to be humble and submissive, it was beyond my comprehension why, he could not appreciate it.

It finally dawned on me, that something was wrong. "Take me out with you," I said one evening, when he was closing his shop. "Where in the world do you want to go?" he said with unbelief. "We could go to one of the lounges that we used to go." I said in a sweet tone of voice, "I am tired of being so rotten to you when you are so good to me and I have decided to change my ways and I am going to start going out with you, to make you happy."

Before I could count to ten we were driving in a parking lot of the closest lounge. We went in the lounge and sat down at a table

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in a dark corner of the lounge. "What are you going to drink?" He said as if to test me and see if I was actually going to have an alcoholic drink! "I believe I am going to drink an 'old fashion'" I said determined to prove that I meant what I have promised to do. The drinks were served.

"It has been so long!" He said with a sigh. "So long for what?" I said, not having the faintest idea about his sighing. "Oh well, since we are together like this." he sighed again. "Not really, we can catch up!" I said trying to humor him. "I sure hope so. . ." he said, with such a doubt in his tone that I, in an impulse from the pits of hell, said, "There is not another woman in your life, eh?" I was so sure of his fidelity, that never, ever, in my whole life since I met him, had had the slightest doubt about it. I hated the fact that he beat me up. I considered him to be an arrogant ignoramus. But, unfaithful! No, never!

"Well," he said painfully, "there is a woman that is in love with me." My ears rang! My head spun! My eyes felt like they were coming right out of their sockets! I was shocked! "What!?" I exclaimed, "what on earth do you mean? What are you talking about?" "Oh well," he said, sorry that he had opened his mouth, "it is nothing, she says that she loves me, but there is nothing between us."

"Give me a cigarette." I said, and put out a trembling hand. "You are not going to start smoking again? Are you?" he said, handing me a cigarette. "Oh well, what the hell difference does it make now?" I said, literally out of control!

A few weeks after that, he left. He went to the arms of a woman that offered him, what I, so ignorantly, denied him. She offered him LOVE.

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On the day he left I wrote, "Just that morning as the agony of one love had torn the very depths of my soul; I was hopeless, helpless and incredibly scared. I had no strength to even face for one single second, the devastating role ahead of me as a divorced mother, over forty, with a young son. I trembled in agonizing pain and my mind spun in a violent spiral of black, terrifying thoughts. I cried and tasted the salty tears of panic and defeat!"

It had been a long time, perhaps three years, since I had last talked to the one person that I could always talk to at times like these, Jean—my first Bible teacher. I picked up the phone and dialed Jean's number. "Jean," I said with a trembling voice, "this is Thia." "My goodness Thia! What is going on just this morning the Lord gave me a word for you and it is no coincidence that you are calling me! What is the matter?" She said almost in one breath.

"My husband found another woman and he left me today!" I said in the most painful tone that can be described. Those were the most painful words I have had to utter in my whole life. "So, that is what it was that I was praying for," she said, "The Lord gave this for you, open your Bible to Isaiah 54, this is from The Lord!" She told me with a confident voice.

"For a small moment have I forsaken thee; but with great mercies will I gather thee. In a little wrath I hid my face from thee for a moment; but with everlasting kindness will I have mercy on thee, saith the Lord thy Redeemer.

"For this is as the waters of Noah unto me: for as I have sworn that the waters of Noah should no more go over the earth; so have I sworn that I would not be wroth with thee, nor rebuke thee.

"For the mountains shall depart, and the hills be removed; but my kindness shall not depart from

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thee, neither shall the covenant of my peace be removed, saith the Lord that hath mercy on thee. "O thou afflicted, tossed with tempest, and not comforted, behold, I will lay thy stones with fair colors, and lay thy foundations with sapphires.

"And I will make thy windows of agates, and thy gates of carbuncles, and all thy borders of pleasant stones. And all thy children shall be taught of the Lord; and great shall be the peace of thy children.

"In righteousness shall thou be established: thou shall be far from oppression; for thou shall not fear; and from terror; for it shall not come near thee.

"Behold, they shall surely gather together, but not by me; whosoever shall gather together against thee shall fall for thy sake.

"Behold, I have created the smith that bloweth the coals in the fire, and that bringeth forth an instrument for his work; and I have created the waster to destroy.

"No weapon that is formed against thee shall prosper; and every tongue that shall rise against thee in judgment thou shall condemn. This is the heritage of the servants of the Lord, and their righteousness is of me, saith the Lord."

I do not recall what I answered Jean, but I did not receive The Word of God, because I was numb and deaf with pain and grief and fear. Fear gripped my heart, and blackness surrounded me in all sides at that moment of my life. I picked up my Bible and it opened to Psalm 139. And not having a knowledge of the Holiness of God, and the corruption of the flesh, I justified myself

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and I entered into a dark and miserable period of my life with Psalm 139 in my heart. I read in my Living Bible, "I can never get lost to your Spirit! I can never get away from God. If I go up to heaven, you are there; if I go down to the place of the dead, you are there. If I ride the morning winds to the farthest oceans, even there your hand will guide me, your strength will support me. If I try to hide in the darkness, the night becomes light around me. For even darkness cannot hide from God; to you the night shines as bright as day. Darkness and Light are both alike to you."

But I did not know the Scriptures. I had Psalms 139 in my heart but I didn't know how to live by it, how to give glory to God, or how to live a holy life. And I didn't know how much pride was crowding that Psalm in my heart. I didn't know even know that my heavenly Father loved me and was shedding tears because of my pride! I had been too busy working to make a good person out of myself and others, I didn't give any time to God. I didn't know God! For the Scriptures read,

Jeremiah 13:15-17

"Oh, that you were not so proud and stubborn! Then you would listen to the Lord, for he has spoken. Give glory to the Lord your God before it is too late, before he causes deep, impenetrable darkness to fall upon you so that you stumble and fall upon the dark mountains; then, when you look for light, you will find only terrible darkness.

"Do you still refuse to listen? Then in loneliness my breaking heart shall mourn because of your pride. My eyes will overflow with tears because the Lord's flock shall be carried away as slaves."

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For about one year I drank hard liquor and my mind was blacked out most of the time. When I was not blacked out of my mind, I would glue my eyes to the television set and spend long, long hours watching whatever program that would catch my fancy, or wallowing in self-pity, and rejection, if the program would not catch my fancy. And when the wallowing in self pity would become unbearable, I would get in my car and drive, drunk out of my mind. I would wake up, and knew nothing as to how I gotten to whatever I was at, or from where I had come.

At that time I was not walking in the fellowship of the believers. I felt that I did not belong. I deceived my own self, and I started to walk in my own way. I wound up in darkness and despair, because of the ignorance of the knowledge of a Holy God and a corrupt flesh. I would not bend and repent and humble myself before God because of the ignorance of my pride. I had Psalm 139 in my heart, but I was quenching it to death.

And that's how my divorce went. The rest of the story is in the preceding chapters.

The End

Where Am I At Now?

There is so much to tell in this page that I don't know where to begin. To begin with, I live in these gorgeous mountains of North Carolina and life here is a breeze. I have been living here only since 1999 but it feels like I lived here all of my life. My life in these mountains has been a miracle even before I came.

When Robin asked me to come to live with them, my friends Paul and Cheryl had also asked me to come to live with them in Mexico. They were planning to move there as missionaries. I prayed about it and asked the Lord what was I to do. The Lord answered me very clearly and inspired me to come and live with Robin, for my mission was to be with my family and friends.

I was very happy and proud living on my own in my wonderful trailer. But not everybody shared in my happiness, Robin and Diana were concerned, they did not like my trailer at all, hence the move was initiated. Actually, the whole thing was arranged by the Lord for nothing that happens to me happens from any other source. All my circumstances of life come to me by the hand of my Lord, be it for correction or for approval.

The first miracle that happened was the sale of my property and trailer. I didn't even have to advertise my property or trailer. Somebody came just at the right time and knocked on my door. He gave the asking price, no questions asked. Then, I did not have a place to stay while Robin and Warren built their house, but Paul and Cheryl came to the rescue and asked me to come and live with them. And there was the sale of all my belongings with the mind set in acquiring everything new. A new beginning

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all together. Everything was sold except for a few things like my TV and other things too personal to get rid of.

And when the actual move came on the way to the mountains, Paul and Cheryl were leading the way with their van loaded with my things. Things were going good until I got separated from them in Johnston, TN. From there on I was on my own and it was a frightening drive. Darkness set in and I was not used to driving in that winding 221 Hwy. Among my fears was the thought of how was I going to get my things? What am I going to do now? These thoughts kept ringing through my mind.

Well, the first thing to do was to get myself to the mountains, and get myself I did. I arrived and as soon as I found a phone, I called Robin and told her about my plight. She didn't get excited. I met her at the intersection that Paul, Cheryl and I had planned on meeting to wait for her to lead us to her new house which was not finished yet, but my apartment was finished and we had planned on bringing my things there.

I did not give Paul Robin's phone # but he had the house #. Robin and I decided to wait at the planned intersection and while we were waiting for a few minutes the car phone rang, it was Warren. Paul not only found the house but by chance the electrician was working. Paul explained himself and asked for Robin's #. Then he proceeded to unload my things in the apartment. Soon we all reunited and it was a marvel to us how Paul found his way, no doubt the Lord guided him.

The house was finished and pretty soon we moved in. I lived with Robin and Warren for about 18 months, they were very good months. Then it came the time that I needed to go on my own. Fay helped me to find just the right apartment which was wait-

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ing for me. I moved there in July, 2001 and I am still enjoying my beautiful little apartment.

JC, Fay's husband took me to the Senior Companion Program almost right away. I did not know any such a thing as the Senior Companion Program but within a few weeks, I became a Senior Companion. I have been a Senior Companion since October of 2001 and I love it. Then in 2002 the Lord also blessed me with a newer and better car. I cruise around in that car like a charm.

A New Work Within Me

Tuesday, January 25, 2005 4:18 am

It has been a while since I have written anything, my Lord. Yes, it has been a while, the last record I found is in September/October 2004. It was then when You inscribed in my soul the following words:

"My child, I love you with everlasting love and I am pleased with your ode of thanksgiving. I am pleased with your faithfulness. Your praises are a sweet odor unto My nostrils. I am leading you to new heights in your spiritual growth. I am weaning you from dead habits of the past. I am creating in you new works that please Me."

I left the Church sometime in the beginning of 2003 but it took a while for the Christian System to come out of me. But, on Thursday, October 7, 2004 the Lord inspired me to write in an email to my friend:

"Yes, my friend, the system is coming out of my system. I don't want any labels of any kind, I just want to be found in Him and learn of Him. my eyes have been opened to see my futile efforts

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to do something for my salvation and the salvation of those around me. The letter of the great commission is out of me and I am abandoned once again to His Spirit. I have been reminded once again of the cross. I don't want to be under any kind of bondage to people, in the guise of Christian fellowship, anymore. I am learning to discern. I am writing this mainly to the Lord for me to see in print what is happening in my life. He is pulling me up. He has answered my questions and the info that I got lately has been well taken in the long run. Now is the time to build. But the demolishing of the old structure has to take place first. My responsibility is to trust Him period, nothing less, nothing more.”

As I wrote that down everything comes clear to me. He has revealed Himself to me. Then I wrote,

Saturday, October 9, 2004

Thank You Lord for keeping me away from deception. You are my Teacher. We are in the last days, everything that we were to learn has been learned.

There is nothing new to learn. The new things that they are teaching now You have revealed those things to me and it is nothing new to me.

The only thing to do now is to build upon Your inspiration. I need You for this building. I can't build on my own. I need You to set the people in my path that You want me to minister to. You have changed me. You have changed even my ritualistic way of worshipping You.

Open my eyes to see and bend my will to do as You please not as I please. It is my will to do Your will not mine. I find myself all alone again. I have given to my friends what You have given

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to me but they have not received it. I know that You will show me what to do next.

Monday, October 11, 2004

Thank You Lord! Now I am un-learning all the heresies that I have learned through the years of learning from heretics. Truly, You are taking the System out of my system. Hallelujah!

Sunday, October 17, 2004

Here I am my Lord... it has been a while since I write anything. You are doing a new work in me and things are developing according to Your work.

Yesterday was a day of searching. Today, I want to stop the search and dedicate this day to worship You. I live in Your presence.

Tuesday, October 19, 2004

Inspire me today, my Lord in what I am to write. (I tried very hard to get back into my writing ritual, to no avail--the Lord simply wouldn't inspire me, there was silence in the heavens for me!)

Wednesday, October 20, 2004

Lord, You know my financial predicament. You know how I got into this predicament. Because You know and You direct my steps I ask You to give me the faith and confidence in You to get out of this predicament.

Friday, October 22, 2004

What can I say? If You are for me, who can be against me? You lead and guide me in these earthly grounds. I shall bear the fruit of Your presence in my life. I have nothing to fear. Hallelujah!

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I worship You in the very spirit that You have instilled within me. It is there that You live. You have lavished me with ample faith to believe You in the essence of my life.

Am I being presumptuous, my Lord? Indeed not! I am affirming Your Word written in my heart by Your finger. Hallelujah!

Romans 8:29-39 (AMP)

29 For those whom He foreknew [of whom He was aware and loved beforehand], He also destined from the beginning [foreordaining them] to be molded into the image of His Son [and share inwardly His likeness], that He might become the firstborn among many brethren.

30 And those whom He thus foreordained, He also called; and those whom He called, He also justified (acquitted, made righteous, putting them into right standing with Himself). And those whom He justified, He also glorified [raising them to a heavenly dignity and condition or state of being].

31 What then shall we say to [all] this? If God is for us, who [can be] against us? [Who can be our foe, if God is on our side?] 32 He who did not withhold or spare [even] His own Son but gave Him up for us all, will He not also with Him freely and graciously give us all [other] things?

33 Who shall bring any charge against God=s elect [when it is] God Who justifies [that is, Who puts us in right relation to Himself? Who shall come forward and accuse or impeach those whom God has chosen? Will God, Who acquits us?]

34 Who is there to condemn [us]? Will Christ Jesus (the Messiah), Who died, or rather Who was raised from the dead, Who is at the right hand of

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God actually pleading as He intercedes for us? 35 Who shall ever separate us from Christ's love? Shall suffering and affliction and tribulation? Or calamity and distress? Or persecution or hunger or destitution or peril or sword?

36 Even as it is written, For Thy sake we are put to death all the day long; we are regarded and counted as sheep for the slaughter. 37 Yet amid all these things we are more than conquerors and gain a surpassing victory through Him Who loved us.

38 For I am persuaded beyond doubt (am sure) that neither death nor life, nor angels nor principalities, nor things impending and threatening nor things to come, nor powers, 39 Nor height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation will be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Saturday, April 23, 2005

Here I am my Father, exactly 6 months later. So much has happened within these 6 months. Everyday I am learning more and more to abide in You.

Gone are the systematic and dead ways of the past. In are Your ways, life and steady growing every step of the way are my present.

The System served its purpose in my life. Yet, in due time You took it out of me and gave me a new way to live in Your presence everyday.

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Oh! How I longed to live in Your presence in the past. How much I tried and tried and read all the examples of the past in a futile attempt to live in Your presence.

You did not waste my efforts. You heed my pleas. Only, it took a while for me to grasp the essence of Your answer.

Finally, You had enough of my ways and You halted those. It had to happen, You made it happen. You caused the circumstances that made me take an account of my ways once again.

I sat still in the essence of my being, then I was able to hear You and heed Your ways instead of mine. You revealed to me not only the tragic state of myself and the System but also the reason why such state came to be. I came to one more cross road in my life.

Yes, You placed me at a crossroad and gave the choice, either My ways or yours. I chose Your ways and the rewards have been amazing!

Now it is Saturday, April 23, 2005 and the writing above bears an explanation. Since June of 2001 until the beginning of 2004, I kept a journal.

I had come to be pretty set in my ways. I had developed my daily religious rituals and I was becoming proud to have such rituals.

Could have been a “better than thou” attitude? I think so. More than that, my Heavenly Father knew it was so. And He sobered me up revealing to me the truth of my rotten attitude. And He eradicated it right at the root.

The first thing that happened was the fallen away of the Preacher in the church that I was so proudly attending. The Preacher fell

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and the congregation had no mercy on him. No mercy at all, only stones to stone him to death.

I saw our state in the sight of God Almighty, full of mercy and grace. I saw His Majesty shedding tears because of His people...and I repented.

I was drunk with the Christian System but my God sobered me up. I sat still and quit asking and begging and I began to listen.

What He told me that day has become more and more a reality everyday of my life. Again, He told me that day, “My child, I love you with everlasting love and I am pleased with your ode of thanksgiving. I am pleased with your faithfulness. Your praises are a sweet odor unto My nostrils. I am leading you to new heights in your spiritual growth. I am weaning you from dead habits of the past. I am creating in you new works that please Me.”

The ways of the past are gone. He has weaned me completely. He has created within me new works that please Him, and I am satisfied.

I no longer worship Him in a ritualistic way rehashing the ways learned in the Christian System. I worship Him in Spirit and in truth, in the reality of my life. When I talk I don't have to announce: “Jesus is Lord.” I just know that He is my Lord.

Words can be empty if we don't let God put depth in them. That's the problem, we blaspheme His holy name mouthing it around without depth and meaning.

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We don't let Him educate ourselves we simply let the Christian System teach us from heresy to heresy, so much so that what we believe has become a heresy.

This was the state of God's people when Jesus taught in these earthly shores. The Christian System has become nothing but massive religion--corrupted religion.

The Christian System has nothing to offer to this world like Jesus Christ has. He did not teach us anything like is taught today within the doors of the churches.

The Bible has been desecrated of its true meaning. In spite of all our verbosity the Holy Spirit has not been allowed to take over. Our modern so called Bible teachers are full of steps and guides and myriads of directions on how to become a better Christian.

What they can't teach nor make you do, no matter how desperately they tried, it is to abide in Christ. And they can't teach it to you because it is something that is not learned it is something that happens in due time.

In the meantime, while we are seeking in all directions the Christian System takes economical advantage of God's people. The commerce in the System is of a magnitude of obscenity.

Nonetheless, in spite of our rebelliousness, the Holy Spirit is taking over the hearts of many and setting us free of the System. It is well documented that great numbers are leaving the churches and I can guarantee you that such is the work of God. They are leaving to seek God on His terms not the System's terms.

He is opening many people's eyes to see the futility of the Christian System. He is doing a new work and this shall be the final work for us to be of any use in His Kingdom.

Welcome To My Life

I see and I feel the difference in my life. Now He can work in my life and completely lead me, knowing that I will not misuse the liberty that He has given to me.

Many years went into this work as it is probably the case with most of us. It takes a while to break habits of a lifetime. But God in His mercy He allows us all the time necessary. Yet, He is never late to restore us, it all happens in due time.

I am now due to publish this book. Since He commissioned me to write it in 1985 I have finished it many times. But I never had the desire to publish it as I do now.

His inspiration leads me. I will follow His leading so I can get where He wants me to go and I am sure the journey shall be exciting!

Tuesday, June 28, 2005

Now, before I close this book, I want to write the amazing developments that have taken place in the last week.

When I graduated in Guatemala and my half brother refused to help me to go to college, I went to live on my own. A loving family took me in as one of their own. This family loved and showed me a good time.

There were 4 sisters, Isabel, Meca, Betty and Ofelia. And there were 2 brothers, Moy and Rafael. Unfortunately Rafael died at the tender age of 17, such a tragedy!

I left Guatemala and after a while I thought they had forgotten me. Anyhow I was busy going from one trouble to the next and I never wanted to keep my ties to Guatemala because it was too painful to show my face as a failure.

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So all of these years have passed and finally I triumphed in life, but I never dreamed in a million years that this family wanted anything to do with me because I had not gotten in touch with them.

But Monday night the phone rang and a male voice asked for Basilia. I know right away that when they call me by my birth name, it's family, Spanish speaking family.

This young man identified himself as Sergio Licona, son of my half brother. Right away I felt affinity to him. He proceeded to tell how dear I had been to his mother Isabel. Then he told me that Ofelia and Betty were living here in the USA and had been looking for me for years.

We talked for a long time and he gave me the phone numbers for all of his aunts. What an interesting young man! He is smart, kind, stable, and full of love just like his mom was!

His mom Isabel died I believe in 1983. His grandmother Beita and grandfather Adolfo also died, that was very sad news to hear.

The most interesting things that we talked about besides the news about his mom and his aunts was the fact that he has gathered information for the family tree all the way to the 1800s.

I told him about my writing and I gave him the address for my autobiography. The next morning I found an email from him telling me how much he had read in the book and how interesting he found it.

The whole week we have been communicating and he got the rest of his family reading my book. He has sent me the info about the family tree and he wants me write a book about it. It has been an exciting week for me.

Welcome To My Life

But when I talked to Ofelia who we call 'Nena' I shed tears of joy when she told me in tears herself what a joy that moment was. She exclaimed how she had looked for me for years and how much she longed to see me again.

These sisters have renewed my love and affection that I once had for them, I never lost that spark and they have ignited again.

That's the note that I want to use in closing this book.