

lovely voice?" They all sat there smiling and nodded their heads.

"Aren't we a nice young couple, called of God, about to go into full time work for Him, going forth to conquer in His name?" And again they all sat nodding their heads in agreement.

"Well, let me tell you something which might surprise you all." I glanced across at Barbara who was on the edge of her seat, looking alarmed. "Before my wife and I came to the meeting tonight we had a humdinger of a row." Barbara blanched, then she gasped, then she stared unbelievably at me. The congregation followed suit, their eyes darting first to me then to her, then back to me again. I immediately started to preach.

Jesus says that you shall know the truth and the truth shall set you free. Many couples were set free that night. The enemy had had them bound with chains of condemnation. Why, they'd never dreamt that evangelists were just ordinary human beings who did such unspiritual things as row with their wives. I always feel it's very wrong of men of God to pretend to be what they aren't. So often they give the impression of being so perfect and they hate people to discover otherwise. Well, I love exposing the myth. Yes, evangelists are called of God, but they are no different from anybody else.

Jesus said that the greatest among you should minister to others. We all have a part to play in the body of Christ. An evangelist is called to preach the gospel; a prayer warrior is called to pray; someone given to hospitality is to open their home to others. We all have something to do in the kingdom of God and we should never puff ourselves up in the ministry which God has given to us.

So Barbara and I set off for Worthing with only our clothes, the baby's cot, our train tickets and a ten shilling note (fifty pence). We climbed into the carriage and settled into a compartment opposite two elderly ladies. Within hours of setting off in this new life of faith, God showed us again that He is able to meet our needs.

We were all sitting there, gazing out of the windows at the countryside as it sped past us, when God spoke to me and told me to go to the dining car. "But Lord," I argued, "I haven't got any money, especially if we're both supposed to go." So I decided the Lord was only meaning me.

"No," He said, "take Barbara and go to the dining car." "But what about the baby, Lord?" I argued, still trying to wriggle out of it.

Just then one of the old ladies spoke up: "If you two want to go to lunch, we'd be more than willing to look after the baby for you."

"Thank you very much," I said, with very mixed emotions. I told

Barbara to hand Elaine over to them. Then I took her by the arm and led her into the corridor. There was a look of horror on her face. As soon as we were out of earshot she whispered, "Where on earth are we going?" I said that God had spoken to me, that we should both go to the dining car.

"But we can't afford to. How much money have we got?" She knew full well what the answer was going to be and she looked exasperated when I waved the ten shilling note in the air. "But we can't both have a meal with that," she said. Now, she knew that I knew that, but God apparently didn't. "God's spoken to me and we've got to do exactly what He says from now on," I said, and off we marched into the dining car.

When we came to our table my wife very wisely put me on the inside nearest the window, so she could sit near the aisle to make a quick getaway! The menu was brought to us. It was ten shillings and six pence each. We ordered two meals while I sat and nervously fingered the ten shilling note in my trouser pocket. It was round about election time and the man sitting opposite me started talking about the political climate of the day. This was my chance! I gradually turned the conversation round to the Lord and explained that one day the government of the world would be on His shoulders. The man seemed really interested and said I reminded him of someone he'd known who believed the same sort of things as we did. It transpired that I knew his friend and that we'd held open-air meetings together some years before.

We chatted merrily away, thoroughly enjoying the meal and the company of this stranger. Just after the ice-cream course my wife excused herself and said she had to go to see to the baby. What a wise woman she is! The cheese-board arrived next. I took a piece and was eating it with some celery, thinking "This is the life," when I remembered that any minute the waiter was going to arrive with the bill. I stopped hearing what the man opposite me was saying. Panic started to well up from where my nice three-course meal was lying. Out of the corner of my eye I saw the waiter heading menacingly in my direction, holding a slip of paper in his hand. My heart was rattling against my rib-cage as, sure enough, he arrived and put the bill on a plate before me. As I reached out for it the man opposite me barred my arm, grabbed the piece of paper and said that he would like to pay for our meal. I didn't argue with his kindness.

When I got back to the compartment I quietly told Barbara what had happened and we both simply sat there, praising the Lord in our

hearts. It had seemed like a close shave, but we were both beginning to learn that God is often a God of the last minute. Just when it seems that all is lost, He makes a way where there wasn't one.

We've had hard times since and we've even wondered if God has forsaken and forgotten us, but always, just in the nick of time, He has met our need. I remember once living off a bag of wholemeal flour for days and days on end. We fried that flour, baked it, boiled it. We loved it, we hated it, we refused to eat it, then did so, because we were hungry.

We've had miracles of provision where groceries have literally turned up on our doorstep. God is a good God but we often don't discover His faithfulness until we launch out into the deep, cast out our nets and just wait to see Him fill them.



God Answers Prayers

It was with great excitement and expectancy that we arrived at the old rectory which was to be our home in Worthing. The rambling old house had been acquired by the Christian Publicity Organisation some time before, but there was still quite a lot of work to be done on it. So I spent quite a lot of time helping to dig drains and do other plumbing work.

We were given a set of rooms to live in. There were about sixteen other people living in the house and I soon discovered why God had brought us to live in a commune. Living with a group of people isn't very easy. We're all different; we all have different personalities and quirks of character. More often than not we think it's the other fellow who's wrong and that God really ought to do a work in his heart, but all the time God is asking us to look at ourselves first. Living in close daily contact with others reveals what's in our own hearts and lives. I remember once hearing it said that if someone rubs you up the wrong way, then you're the one at fault because you shouldn't have a wrong way to be rubbed up! Well, God took us to Worthing to teach us a few lessons. Looking back, I don't feel that we contributed much to the spiritual life of the commune; but it was a good training ground for our souls!

As soon as we arrived, we were introduced to the other members of the household. I was to be one of two full-time evangelists, and as soon as I met the other one, I knew I couldn't stand him. The feeling seemed to be mutual: we just couldn't get along together. Whether it was jealousy or plain strife, I don't know, but my heart sank when I discovered that we were expected to minister together and do our share of drain-digging together, too. Something about the man irritated me beyond measure. I knew the scriptures about loving one

another, but I couldn't bring myself to do it.

So there was I, the anointed, spiritual evangelist, seething because this other fellow even existed. As far as I was concerned, he was pig-headed, unteachable and unbearable. The fault lay entirely at his door: Peter Newman, I told myself, could get along with anyone and everyone, and if he couldn't, then the other chap was to blame.

Once the seeds of strife were sown, an evil root started to grow. My dislike for him became like a cancer which constantly ate away my peace and my joy. His face was before me when I woke in the morning and when I went to bed at night.

I lived in fear of the day when we would have to go out and minister the gospel together. I knew that the Spirit of God, gentle dove that He is, couldn't possibly flow between us: the resentment and dislike would put Him to flight in an instant.

The problem came to a head within a few weeks. It was about four in the morning and I was unable to sleep. Barbara was out for the count so I decided to go downstairs and pray about the whole messy situation. I went into the empty living room and sank wearily to my knees. "Lord," I cried in desperation, "what should I do?" I had hardly got the words out of my mouth when the door opened and in walked the man I was praying about. My heart sank to my knees.

"What are you doing up this time of night?" I asked him.

"I was wondering the same thing about you," he replied. "Tell me what you're up to."

The moment of truth had come. "I'm here talking to God about you," I said. "I'm afraid I just can't seem to get on with you at all." I waited with bated breath for his reply.

"Well," he said "what a coincidence. I've come downstairs to talk to God about you because I can't seem to get on with you either." We both began to laugh. Then we cried. Then we hugged each other and began to praise the Lord. The invisible barrier which had separated us had completely melted away. God taught us both a few lessons that night. First, that we have to bring our differences to one another as well as to Him. Secondly, that the devil loves us to keep resentment and bitternesses to ourselves. He hates us to bring them into the light where they can be exposed for what they are. If they go unheeded, they fester in the dark recesses of our hearts and minds until one day they take us over completely.

We got along fine after that and I felt as if God had lifted a heavy burden from my shoulders. From that time onwards we worked and ministered together in love, and we ended up actually liking each

other. He went on to become an able minister of the gospel, and my love and respect have grown towards him over the years.

A few weeks later the Spirit of God spoke to me as I was waking up. "Peter, I want you to go to the Embankment," He said. I didn't question why. I just told Barbara that I was going up to London and that I wasn't sure when I'd be back.

It was strange seeing the old familiar haunts and the old familiar faces. I stayed for a few days, sleeping rough on the bench I'd slept on years before. I had a good time sharing the love of Jesus with some of my former companions. They could hardly believe that I was the same Peter Newman they had once known. The weather was still cold, (it was Easter time,) and I spent many a moment thinking of home, Barbara and little Elaine. But God hadn't given me permission to catch the train back to Worthing, so I stayed on the Embankment waiting for His next set of instructions.

I didn't have to wait long. Three days later I was walking along the Embankment towards Charing Cross Station when God spoke to me. He directed me to a phone box. "Remember when you were a little boy of four?" whispered the inner voice. I remembered. I had a mental picture of Grandad taking me by the hand and walking me from Chelsea, over Battersea Bridge, to a house one Sunday morning. I was taken up to a room and left to play on my own with some building bricks. Then Grandad reappeared and took me home.

"I want you to ring those people up," said the voice.

"But Lord," I said, "that was years ago and I don't even know their name. They could even be dead by now."

The name Mascall came to me so I opened up the telephone directory. There weren't many Mascalls listed and one of those had a Battersea address, so I dialled the number, wondering what on earth I was going to say. I half hoped no one would answer the phone, but God had other plans. The line clicked and a man's voice said hullo.

"Hullo," I said, rather nervously, "is that Mr Mascall?"

"Yes, this is Mr Mascall," the voice replied.

"Well, er, this is Peter Newman here," I said. Then there was silence. "Er, don't you remember me?" I said.

"No, I'm afraid I don't," said Mr Mascall. "Who did you say you were?"

"Peter Newman. My grandad, Mr Walter Newman, used to know you."

"Ah yes, Walter Newman. I knew him, but I'm afraid he's dead now."

"Yes, I know that, Mr Mascall. I'm his grandson, Peter. I became a Christian a few years ago and I'm in London at the moment and I'd like to see you."

"Oh, that Peter," said Mr Mascall, sounding excited, "Yes, yes, you must come over straight away. We'd love to see you."

So I walked to their little terraced house along the route that Grandad had taken me all those years before. I even recognized their street as soon as I came to it. When I arrived at their home, they were waiting on the doorstep to greet me, with tears in their eyes. They could hardly believe that I was who I said I was. They took me into their little sitting room; it was just as I had remembered it, and they kept asking me if I really was Peter Newman. The more I assured them that I was, the more they cried. They asked me if I remembered the day my grandad had taken me to see them and I said that I did.

They told me that while I was upstairs playing, they had spent the morning praying with Grandad.

"And do you know what?" said Mrs Mascall, "we prayed that you would grow up to love the Lord Jesus and that God would call you to become His servant to preach the gospel. And now look at you..." her voice tailed off.

"Yes," said Mr Mascall, "your grandfather thought a lot about you, and he prayed for you, but I think he gave up towards the end because every time he heard anything about you, it was bad news. You were either in prison or were drinking and stealing. We nearly gave up hope, too. But we decided to carry on the praying and now," he said, his voice breaking with emotion, "I thank God we did."

We sat and talked all afternoon. I told them how God had saved me and about Barbara and my daughter. They seemed to cry all the time and I must admit I felt very tearful too. I had some tea with them and then knew that God had done what He'd planned and that I was free to return to Worthing.

Barbara was thrilled when I told her what had happened during my visit and a few weeks later I took her to meet the Mascalls.

I made other trips to London during our stay in Worthing. One Saturday evening God told me to go to Hyde Park Corner. That morning I'd been attending some meetings in London and I was due to catch the train home. However, I knew better than to argue with God, so I found some digs and went to Hyde Park the next morning. Speakers' Corner was crammed with people and orators were spouting forth about everything from politics to religion.

I walked around until I found the spot where the gospel was being

preached. There were two men there and only about six people had stopped to listen to them. They were having a rough time, too, with a couple of hecklers. As I stood and listened to them, the Spirit of the Lord came upon me and I felt a great urgency to get up and preach. I walked over to their box and asked if I could have a few words. They were reluctant to hand over their platform but I was so insistent that I almost ordered them off. When they saw that I meant business, they handed their platform over to me. Under the anointing of the Holy Spirit I started to preach about Jesus. Within minutes the six had grown to twenty, then to fifty and before long there were hundreds of people listening to the gospel being proclaimed. The crowd was silent. There was no heckling or jostling; God's word was having free course.

When I'd finished, I handed the platform back to the two preachers and walked down Oxford Street. "Hey, come here you!" someone shouted. I turned around and saw a policeman. "I don't know who you are or what you've got but I've never seen the crowds at Speakers' Corner listen so intently to anyone before. Where were you trained?"

"Nowhere," I replied, "and that wasn't me speaking. It was the Lord Jesus. He's the one who's been speaking to those people." The officer looked at me blankly, then said good morning and went on his way. I carried on walking, thrilled that the Lord had been pleased to use me in such a way.

We stayed at the commune for several months before moving to a small evangelistic mission in Bristol. We moved into a two-bedroomed terraced house which always seemed to be full of people. We'd lived with others and now it was our turn to be the hosts. During the day I'd preach in the streets and visit the law courts to gather in the outcasts who had fallen by the wayside. I felt very fulfilled because instead of digging drains, I was doing the true work of an evangelist.

We both felt that God was using us to bring others to Himself. Every morning we had a prayer meeting in the little mission hall. All sorts of people flocked to it, and as the weeks went by we started seeking God on behalf of others. What's more, we saw God answering our prayers for both converts and more helpers.

A lot of people used to come to me for counselling too, and God started to teach me about the gifts of revelation and knowledge. At the beginning of each day He would show me just who was going to turn up on the doorstep for help and what their problems were going to be. Now the problems they told me about were often different

from the ones God had shown me: people like to keep the unsavoury things about themselves hidden from view; but as I shared with them what God had already revealed, they would open up and admit their real problems. God was then free to help them and put them straight.

One day a man turned up at our morning prayer meeting in a particularly bad mood. He often used to pop in to see us although he wasn't a Christian. I suspect he liked the cup of tea and biscuit we gave him afterwards. Anyway, in he walked and announced: "I'm fed up with you."

"Oh," I said, "are you? Tell me why."

"Well, you're always saying that God answers prayers, but He doesn't answer mine."

"What have you been asking Him to do for you?" I asked curiously.

"I want a job," he replied. Well, you could have knocked me down with a feather. I knew that a job was one thing he didn't really want. He'd been living off social security for years and was well known in the area for being a waster. I thought that if I took him to a job, carried him there and did half his work for him, he'd still complain at the end of the day. Nevertheless, the challenge was there. He wanted a job so we were going to pray one in for him.

"Let's bow our heads," I said. "Father, you heard all that Jock has said about wanting a job. He wants one today. Will you find one for him, please?"

Jock hung around the mission hall until lunchtime. I gave him some money to buy some lunch and told him he ought to get himself down to the labour exchange to see if there were any jobs going. He took the money, muttered something under his breath about not expecting miracles and then closed the door behind him.

"Father," I said quietly, "it's up to you. I can't do anything."

That evening, as I was opening the doors for the meeting, Jock pushed his way in. It was bucketing down with rain outside and he was soaking wet and very angry.

"What's the matter with you, Jock?" I said, half expecting the worst.

"I'll tell you what's the matter with me," he snarled back. "I've got a job, that's what."

I could hardly contain myself. God had answered our prayers. "Well, praise the Lord; that's wonderful, Jock," I said.

"Wonderful, is it?" he said ungratefully. "Well, I may have a job but I can't go to it. I was on my way to the Labour Exchange when I stood on a pile of rubbish to look over on to this building site. The gaffer thought I was up to no good, but when I told him I was

looking for work he offered me a job there and then. Said they were short-handed and that I could start tomorrow morning. I told him I could, but I can't. How can I work on a building site with only a pair of plimsolls on my feet? I ask you: it's impossible, and they're all I've got!"

"That's no problem at all," I said, "you can have my shoes." In those days I had two pairs to my name. One pair let the water in so I used them in the mission hall and I kept my best ones for outdoor work. I gave Jock the waterproof ones. He only kept the job for a week and I never saw the shoes again, but at least he couldn't say that God didn't answer prayer.

When I got home after the meeting that night my feet were soaking wet. Barbara asked where my best shoes were and when I told her that I'd given them away she wasn't too pleased.

"Peter," she said with a hint of despair in her voice, "you know we're going to a wedding this weekend and we can't afford to buy you another pair of shoes. And you certainly can't go in those old things," she said, pointing to the soaking wet ones on my feet.

"Well, I've done it now, dear," I replied. "It's no use worrying about it," and off I went into another room out of the way.

"Father," I said as I started into the fire, "You heard what the missus said." He told me not to worry because a pair were on the way. Even as He told me, there was a knock on the door. Barbara answered it and ushered in a man. He had a parcel under his arm.

"Have you got my shoes in there, then?" I asked, not daring to look at Barbara's face.

"How on earth did you know that there are shoes in the bag?" he asked incredulously. "As a matter of fact I have brought them for you. I was having a clear-out and decided I had too many and I felt I should bring them round to this house. I hope they fit you all right."

"Oh, they'll fit all right," I said, "God knows what size feet I've got." Needless to say, they fitted.

One evening the phone rang and the duty officer at the medical mission in Bristol asked me to go down because they were having difficulty with a drunk. When I got there I found an Irishman who was loudly demanding money and making a general nuisance of himself. He said he needed cash to travel back to his home in Ireland, but I felt he just wanted to go back to the pub. He gave me his sob story, obviously hoping to con me, not knowing that I wasn't going to be conned and that anyway I was broke too.

I let him ramble on at length before putting my cards on the table.

I was in the middle of telling him that there was no way he was going to get any cash that night when God spoke to me to go upstairs to the nurses' flat and borrow some money until the following day. I was to give the money to this man. I excused myself and went upstairs.

I was a complete stranger to the nurse who answered the door but when I told her who I was a flicker of recognition crossed her face. "Oh, so you're Peter Newman," she said, leading me into her sitting room. I told her about the man downstairs and asked if she could loan me some money until the following day.

There was a gleam of triumph in Paddy's eyes as I handed him the cash. I explained to him that God had told me to get the money for him and that God had promised to repay it the following day. I then told him that he was handling God's money but that God left him free to do what he liked with it.

"So you can either go to the pub or go home on it and thank God for caring enough about you to give it to you."

I never met that man again. The following day someone gave me some money and it was the exact amount I'd borrowed from the nurse. A few weeks later I met some Christians from Paddy's home town and they said he had started his journey home that night and had started a new life too. He gave them a message for me: they had to tell me that he was grateful for the money and that he had found God.

God's ways definitely are higher than our ways. And once again God has shown me that obedience was the key to blessing.

Life in Bristol was hectic. For several weeks we held a crusade on a bomb site opposite one of the roughest secondary schools in the area. People told us to hold it anywhere but in that particular spot. However, we felt God had picked it especially for our work. We had a word with the headmaster and he agreed that some of his pupils could come across for some of our afternoon sessions. Honestly, those kids terrified me! They would swagger in, sit at the back and snigger at the singing. We had "No Smoking" signs up all over the place but they insisted on lighting up.

One afternoon their ring-leader was being particularly obnoxious and I decided that it was time something should be done. So, with shaking knees, I handed the meeting over to my friend Arthur, walked over to this cheeky-faced youth, plucked the cigarette from his mouth, nipped it and pushed the remainder behind his ear. All the other teenagers were watching him to see what his reaction was going to be. I think he was too shocked to do anything, and from that time

onwards we developed a new relationship with our school party.

God used to move in those meetings and many people from the neighbourhood got saved. But our crusade was only scheduled to last a couple of weeks and sadly we packed up. None of the churches in the area would co-operate with us because we were the "odd lot" who had a lot of singing and dancing in their meetings. And the established churches were suspicious of the baptism in the Holy Spirit. So when we left, the new converts had nowhere to go to, which really upset me. Jesus tells us to make disciples of all men. It's no good leading people to the cross and then leaving them there. New converts have to be fed and nourished just like little babies. All I could do was to pray that God would keep His hand on their lives and that the fruit would remain.

It was at this time that our second daughter, Sharon, was born at Tavistock, Devon. Her birth coincided with a tent crusade that I was conducting with two other brothers. We were there for ten days, and we preached in the streets, knocked on the doors, prayed and sang and shared in the tent at night. Nothing moved; the heavens were like brass. I was concerned in my heart that we had made a mistake. Should I have been near my wife at this time? Nine days and one more to go: no sign of anyone being stirred about the things of God, and no sign of the new baby. My heart was heavy; only one more day and I could be with Barbara. I felt as though we had fished all night and caught nothing. We continued to fast and pray, and the last day was spent in silence and prayer, each one with his own thoughts.

The final meeting started with a few more visitors than previous nights. There was an atmosphere like there often is before a storm. As the singing didn't seem to be going too well we decided to cut it short and preach the word. I began to open my Bible and was only saying what the Bible says, when pandemonium broke out among the people. Chairs went flying in all directions while one person ran out of the tent screaming. I shouted to a pastor, "Catch him and bring him back!" But, wonderfully, others were running to the front of the tent. The battle in the heavens had been won and people were born again.

What a night for Barbara too, as in Devon there was another struggle going on and our second daughter was finally born.



"I Ignored What God Was Saying"

God was calling me into the villages of England to preach the gospel, and the man who had just so kindly given Barbara and me some tea was going to help that vision come to pass. "This is the man," the Spirit said to me, "who is going to provide you with the necessary money. I have told him to give you five hundred pounds." I needed to buy a tent, a couple of caravans, a van and some chairs; and the chap who was sitting opposite me was going to foot the bill, even though he was struggling to say yes to God about it.

"The type of life you lead isn't particularly good for your wife and children," he said to me while his wife and mine went into the kitchen to wash the pots after tea. "You should be offering them something more secure. You've told me about your tent mission; now how on earth is someone in your position going to finance something like that?"

He wasn't getting hot under the collar with me; he was in the wrestling ring with God, and I knew who was going to win in the end.

I just sat there and listened to him rant and rave for a further ten minutes. Then, all of a sudden he stopped in mid-flow and said: "I'll give you three hundred and fifty pounds."

Now, he knew and I knew and God knew that that just wasn't enough. So I challenged him. "How much?" I asked indignantly.

"Oh, very well then," he said, talking not so much to me as to God, "I'll give you five hundred pounds."

So once again Barbara and I saw the hand of God move on our behalf and I was thrilled that He was making the crooked places straight for us.

The week before, God had shown me the caravan I was to buy for

the mission. I'd been driving past a garage when I saw it. I stopped the car, and a woman, probably the owner's wife, walked over to ask me what I wanted. "That caravan," I said simply. "Oh, I'm sorry sir," she said, "It's already sold."

"Oh," I said, "has it been paid for?" She told me that it hadn't, but that the man who was buying it had promised to call for it the following week and that he would be paying for it then. I felt sure that he never would collect it because God had it earmarked for other uses. So I told the woman that I'd ring the following week and that if the man hadn't come up with the cash, I'd have it. So, with my five hundred pounds safely in my possession, I rang her and ended up buying two caravans.

God provided more money for us too. I remember Him telling me to go and stand on a certain street corner, and within minutes a man appeared, an evangelist I'd known for some years. "Oh, it's you," he said, and handed me ten pounds. He later told me that God had just spoken to him and told him He wanted to give him a hundred pounds but that he first had to give his last ten pounds to the first person he met as he rounded the corner. After handing me the cash he walked on, and someone stopped him and handed him a cheque for the needed amount.

So it was with great excitement that Barbara, myself, our children and our small evangelistic team set off. We were to hold our first mission in Cornwall; exactly where, I wasn't sure, so I asked God to lead us by His Spirit. We stopped at a hill, called Kit Hill, well known for its views of the area. I got out of the van and was having a quiet word with the Lord when suddenly I saw a ball of fire descending from the skies just above a small village. At first I thought it was a plane on fire and then I realized that God was showing me where to hold the first revival tent meetings. God even showed me a picture of the field where we were to pitch our tent. Two of the girls in the team went off on their scooters to ask the farmer if we could use his land. He said yes.

So we put the tent up and then blitzed the whole area with leaflets announcing our arrival. I couldn't wait for the first meeting and at seven in the evening, half an hour before we were due to start, I was anxiously pacing up and down outside the tent waiting for the crowds to arrive. They didn't. The adult population of this village weren't very interested in this band of non-denominational "odd bods" who had arrived in their village to preach some sort of strange gospel. But the children in the area thought differently: they arrived in the tent

in clusters of threes and fours, so we had our "revival meetings" as planned.

On the third night a little girl came up to me before the meeting and said to me, "Uncle Peter, my mummy says my brother is dying and would you go to the house to pray for him?" I stood silently for a minute. Now, I knew that God had healed the sick in Bible times, and I'd prayed for Barbara once or twice when she'd been ill, but I'd never publicly prayed for the sick. I'm not even sure if I believed that God would answer my prayer of faith because I didn't feel that I had much faith for healing. But here I was in a dilemma: I had to go and pray for that little boy or the mission would lose all credibility.

"Yes, I'll come and pray for your brother," I heard myself saying to the little girl who was gazing so hopefully at me.

She took me by the hand and off we went. We arrived at her house and her mother opened the door to us. She looked terrified of me and, looking back, I can't blame her because I think I must have looked half scared to death myself.

She took me over to the cot where her two-year-old son was lying. He was very ill and had been having six epileptic fits a day. I took a deep breath, prayed over him and made my exit as quickly as possible. That night I told the team that if that little boy died, then we would have to pack our tent up as quickly as possible and make a hasty retreat. I hardly slept a wink. I kept thinking of all the people we'd witnessed to on the streets of that little village and how they'd all be laughing at us if the boy died.

I could hardly think straight the following day. We didn't hear a thing about how the little boy was and I was too terrified to go to the house and ask. Half an hour before the meeting was due to start I asked Arthur, one of the team, if he wouldn't mind just popping over to the house to see how the boy was. Arthur, fearless as ever, left at once, only to return again within seconds. "Peter," he shouted, "there's about thirty people heading this way. I think they're coming to the meeting." Yes, I thought to myself, to lynch us all.

They all filed into the tent and sat, hands folded on laps, waiting for us to begin. I still didn't know the fate of the boy, but I had something else to worry about: how was I going to get through to all these solemn looking people?

"For goodness' sake, Arthur, play something," I whispered dramatically. Off he went to the piano and started to belt out a couple of choruses. Now these people had never been in a meeting in their lives before. One look at them was enough to tell you that. They

just sat there wondering what was going on.

I couldn't bear to watch so I ducked out of the tent for a few words with the Almighty. "God," I said as soon as I got outside the tent flaps. "I don't know what to do or say. Please help me."

In seconds the Spirit shared His thoughts with me. "See that branch over there?" He said. I turned my head and saw a branch which some kids had broken off a beech tree. "I want you to take that into the meeting and preach on 'I am the Vine'".

So I grabbed the six-foot-long branch and crawled under the tent flap dragging it behind me. If the congregation had been surprised by Arthur's choruses, they were even more surprised by my entrance. Come to think of it, Arthur seemed a bit stunned too.

I plonked the branch in the ground at the front and read the story of the vine from St John's Gospel. Then I snapped off some twigs, threw them down and said: "That's you: dead; no life, no sap, no nothing; you're without God." As I continued, one by one they fell to their knees crying, putting their lives right with God.

That was the beginning of the revival. It turned out that the little boy had been miraculously healed. Word spread like wildfire round the village. People came to the meetings from miles around and every night the Spirit of God was poured out on to dry and thirsty land. We just stood back and watched God have His way.

Since then God has often used me for healing, but sometimes He has kept me on tenterhooks. I remember praying for a woman in Plymouth who had a withered hand. After I'd said the prayer of faith, she looked down at her hand, exclaimed that it hadn't been healed, waved it in the air for all to see and stormed out. I prayed fervently that she wouldn't come back to any of the meetings because she was bad for my faith. I also told the Lord that I was upset by the affair. I was very relieved when she didn't show up the following night, but my heart sank as she walked into the tent on the third night. I knew that she thought I was a fake, and when they saw her unhealed hand others would doubtlessly agree with her.

I kept looking at her out of the corner of my eye during the meeting and I held my breath as I made the appeal. Sure enough, she got out of her seat and I was sure that she was going to make a scene. I called a local pastor over and asked him to take her to one side if she started to cause any trouble. Imagine my surprise when she ran down to the front full of the joys of spring. She was praising the Lord and waving her hand in the air; a hand which had been made perfectly whole. She told us that she had gone to the meeting that

night to expose us as frauds, but as she was singing choruses her hand had been healed.

We saw many wonderful miracles during those times: God moved mightily and set many people free. I was thrilled to be in the Lord's service and my enthusiasm knew no bounds. I used every means I could to preach the gospel. In small towns and car parks I used to hide under the back seat of my big old Wolsley car and play Pat Boone records over a loudspeaker attached to a record player. People used to throng around to see what was going on, and then I would preach. I was often told I was a public nuisance. And I'm sure I was.

We made a habit of holding open-air meetings during the afternoons, much to the annoyance of the general public. One afternoon a man threw up his window and told us to push off. He was very angry and swore at us quite a lot, but we continued preaching the gospel. "You're disturbing my Sunday peace," he hollered over at us. "Sir," I said, turning towards his open window, "there is no peace for the wicked."

I thought he was going to have a heart attack, such was the colour of his face. But I carried on preaching, feeling sure that someone was going to get saved that afternoon.

Out of the corner of my eye I spied another man watching from his window. The Spirit told me to preach to the irate man, but said that the other man would get saved. Sure enough, down came the second man, crying to God, and God, as always, answered his cry and the man found peace.

Seeing God move more than made up for the discomfort and inconvenience of the travelling life. Barbara didn't complain once during those months, although her life was far from easy. She not only looked after her family and the team, but she also had to listen to my complaints when things weren't going right.

Sometimes hecklers came to give us a hard time, but I welcomed them because I saw them as a challenge. We were the target of abuse and stones many times, but none of it seemed to matter. God was using us we were doing the work of an evangelist souls were being saved and bodies healed, so what more could we ask for? I felt that we were successful in God and I liked the feeling very much indeed.

So you can imagine my surprise when God told me to end the tent mission. "I'm doing a good job here, Lord," I told Him, "and I must go on preaching."

So go on preaching I did. I ignored what God was saying to me and I told the team we were moving to another village in the South to

hold some meetings. We arrived and started putting up the tent. The others were out giving leaflets to the villagers and I was tackling the awesome task on my own. An old man was sitting on a nearby bench watching me. He stayed there all morning, puffing away on his pipe and eyeing me up and down as I chased from one end of the tent to the other. He went away for his lunch and came back to watch my antics during the afternoon.

I eventually finished round about tea time and the old man tottered over to me and said; "If I was you I would take that tent of yours down. If you don't do it, the wind that'll blow round this place tonight will do it for you." It was a calm day, not a cloud in the sky. I was sure this was the enemy talking.

"That tent will never blow down," I assured the old gentleman, "because God has called me to preach His Gospel, so He's looking after both me and my tent. I can also assure you that I'll be here to preach tomorrow night, tent or no tent."

The old man went on his way and I went on mine. I got back to the caravan, had my evening meal and went to bed early, ready for a full day's evangelism the following day. At about four in the morning I was woken by the rocking movement of the caravan. I could hear the wind howling and in an instant I was wide awake. The tent! I bolted out of bed, pulled on my clothes and jumped into my car, giving Barbara a garbled explanation of my actions.

Our caravan was about three miles from the tent. Dawn was breaking over the deserted country roads and in the silence of the early morning I could only hear one thing: the words of the old man. I reached the village, and there, on the village green, were the remains of my beloved tent. The wind had done its work. The poles were broken, the canvas was ripped, the chairs were strewn all over the place.

I started clearing up the mess in the half-light of the new day. Tears were rolling down my cheeks. The wind had started to drop and it was raining. I felt thoroughly miserable and kept tripping over the ropes and tattered canvas.

The only relief came that day from a sympathetic policeman's wife who brought me one of her delightful cornish pasties and a lot of sympathy. I needed both. God had let me down and humiliated me in this village. The old man with his pipe, was back, silent but with a twinkle in his eye and "I told you so" written all over his face. Several times that day I asked God why He had let this happen.

Other Christians came by with advice.

"Perhaps God hasn't called you."

"There might be sin in your camp."

"It was a test."

But I knew the real reason: God had said, "Move on Peter, new fields lie ahead."

That night, standing in the pouring rain with a piece of the remaining canvas wrapped around me, I preached the good news. My text was "He will have His way in the whirlwinds and the storm."

It's hard to give up something which God is blessing. For two years we'd seen miracles and I'd been slow to hear God pronounce His benediction on the work. The truth of the matter is that it had become my tent and my ministry and I had wanted to keep it. But I finally had to bow the knee to God. All right, I told Him, my tent days are over. But what next? I went to Kit Hill to pray and fast and find out what was to be our next step.



Shut Up in a Room

"Brother Newman," the man said as we all prayed in a large room in Holland, "God is going to make you into His donkey so that He can ride on your back." Stupid man, I thought angrily. I hadn't fasted and prayed for nine days to hear something as dull and uninspiring as that.

I'd gone to Holland with some Christians I'd met, shortly after waiting on the Lord on Kit Hill. I felt that God would answer me on that trip to Holland, so I shut myself away to seek Him. I prayed, fasted, read my Bible and spoke in tongues, but the only result seemed to be nausea and headaches, until that morning meeting when a brother came over to prophesy over me. I was quite prepared to dash back to England and book the Albert Hall, but when he started to talk about donkeys my heart sank. A racehorse, yes, Lord, but not a tatty old donkey ambling from one assignment to the next. I can't describe exactly what happened in my spirit at that point, but I do know that something within me seemed to die. I was prepared to be many things for God; I'd been called a fool for Christ many times; but I wasn't prepared to be His donkey.

I left Holland a disappointed man. Somehow that stirring enthusiasm which had driven me for so long had withered up and died. My ministry began to change from that point onwards. In many ways God started to do more exciting things than ever in my life, but the bubbling joy and excitement which used to be with me was no longer there.

Instead of holding missions and meetings, God started to tell me to go places, and He always led me to individuals, not crowds. God did some remarkable things. One day I was sitting on a train heading

towards Stuttgart in Southern Germany. I was watching the beautiful scenery round the Rhine when God told me to speak to a young man sitting opposite. There were four of us in the compartment: myself, the young man and a married couple. I reckoned all three of them were German so I told the Lord I was going to have difficulty obeying His request. The young man, who was probably in his late twenties, stood up and went out into the corridor. I followed him.

We were standing next to each other looking out of the window. "It's beautiful scenery," I started to say in English. He just looked at me blankly and indicated that he couldn't understand what I was saying.

"What now, Lord?" I asked.

Then the Lord told me to do a very strange thing. I had to speak in tongues! I wasn't all that keen to do as the Lord had asked, but I obediently opened my mouth and spoke in tongues. Immediately the young man started to reply in Dutch. God also gave me the ability to interpret. The young man told me he was a lorry driver travelling to Italy to pick up his lorry. He said his parents were Salvation Army officers who ran a hostel for alcoholics and down-and-outs in Amsterdam.

I then told him how God had sent me to tell him about His love. We talked for a long time. I don't know if he ever gave his life to the Lord but I, at least, had the assurance that I was in the right place at the right time.

I travelled to Africa, to Israel; all over the world. I often set off without any idea of the purpose of my journey, but I always saw God working. Yet there was still a dryness in my spirit. I felt I was doing things almost mechanically: it was no longer wonderful to serve God. Deep down I resented the fact that God wasn't going to make me another A. A. Allen, Oral Roberts or some other great world-famous evangelist. There was no denying that I was becoming the donkey God wanted me to be, but my heart was still fighting Him. I felt He was holding me back in some way, denying me the public profile I had become used to.

I suppose it was out of this restlessness and lack of fulfilment that our African venture was born. Barbara and I didn't feel at home in any fellowship or church in England; so when we met these loving, caring Christians who lived in a commune in South Africa, we packed our bags and with our two daughters, Elaine and Sharon, we set out to join them. It was several weeks before we realized that some things were not quite right. We had had no idea, at first, that we had joined

a cult.

How could an evangelist be so lacking in discernment? Well, every Christian needs to be in close fellowship with a praying church. Wise church leaders might have seen the dangers and helped me to look more carefully before I leaped. My problem at that time was that good men of God wanted me to represent their denomination, while I was concerned more for the furtherance of God's kingdom and less for the expansion of any particular denomination.

(Today I am surrounded by men and women who have my ministry at heart, and are in a position to advise and exhort me, for which I am thankful to God.)

The commune in Cape Town seemed to offer everything we needed. They cared about us, made a fuss of us, loved us, talked about being born again. A lot of cults are harmless at first sight: it's only once you're in them that you find out their true teachings and beliefs.

One of the cult's main errors was that the members believed that their prophets were infallible and that you had to do exactly as they said. They eventually ruled our lives, even telling us which soaps to use. I took it for so long, but then I started to question and indeed disobey the "prophets". I was told that I was blaspheming the Holy Ghost in doing so and must repent. I refused, so I was shut up in a room for three days in a bid to make me come to my senses. Barbara meanwhile, was in our quarters, torn between thinking they were right and I was wrong, and that I was right and they were wrong. The enemy is so very subtle, and although we'd only sat under the cult's teachings for a few months, they had already started to indoctrinate us.

Deep down I knew they were wrong, and during those three days I resolved to get myself and my family away from their influence as fast as I could. Some of my old evangelistic team had gone out with us and I prayed that they, too, would break away and head home for England.

Meanwhile I pretended to repent for not listening to the prophets and I was allowed back to my quarters. Barbara and I made preparations to leave. The prophets told us that if we left we were walking out of our salvation and that our marriage would break up. They also said that our children would die.

We arrived back in England terrified and in deep depression. Satan really attacked us and I used to spend days in total mental confusion, wondering if the cult had been right and I had been wrong. I felt I was heading for a complete mental breakdown and our marriage

started to show signs of stress. I had a spirit of fear upon me. The Bible says that fear brings torment and, believe you me, it does. My spirit still communicated with God, but my mind argued that because we'd left the cult, we were destined for hell and damnation.

Shocked and depressed, feeling like Elijah underneath the juniper tree (1 Kings 19:3-4), we felt that we wanted to die. But God had called us to live, and we soon began to discover that He was faithful and continued to supply our needs. Just when there seemed no one to provide we would find provisions anonymously supplied. And there were those loving Christian brothers and sisters who saw our hurt and bewilderment and helped us and provided for us many times, giving us the love we so desperately needed at that time.

My spiritual life was maintained in the only way I knew; by continuing to witness to the love and mercy of God. I would make my way to hippie communes, and into houses that hippies had squatted in, and invite them to our flat for food and talks and prayer. My candle may have been flickering at this time, but I was determined that it would not go under a bushel.

This stress lasted for about eighteen months, although it took me about four years to feel free from those we had known in South Africa, but I knew that I was free when I was able to pray for them earnestly and in love. Thus my deliverance came by continuing to preach the gospel, for that is where the real power of God is made manifest. It was difficult at times, and only those who have had the misfortune to be involved in these things will know how strong those powers are that seemed continually to cling to my thoughts. But in the mercy what of God seemed terrible at the time has now become profitable in our ministry to those who have been involved in such bondages.

But meanwhile there was worse to come. We found that Christians in England didn't want to know us. Church leaders who had once clamoured to have me take meetings in their church now shunned me as if I were something unclean.

On the odd occasion that I was invited to preach, my old "friends" would warn people away. During those years people even said I was a spiritist and that I should be avoided at all cost! There was no spirit of forgiveness at all; the Christian gossip vine was alive with the news that Peter Newman had gone into error. The people who had once put garlands round my neck were now throwing stones.

I thank God that He is always faithful. His hand was on me right through those nightmare months and years. It was a long time before

the scars were healed. Deep down I was still afraid that the things the so-called prophets had forecast would come to pass.

Meanwhile God was still using me, telling me to fly here and to fly there, miraculously providing me with the cash to do so. My timetable was secret only the Father and I knew my destinations. I remember going all the way to Ethiopia once just to cut some grass for an old missionary lady. I'd arrived in the country and had spent four or five days preaching in one village when the Lord seemed to tell me to walk into the middle of nowhere, in Africa! I walked for what felt like ages before I came upon a group of huts. A Finnish missionary, a white-haired eighty year old lady, came out of one of them.

"This is the second time I've had to come out to Africa, brother," she told me, "because no one else will come out to look after these people." She took me into her hut and gave me a cup of tea and a bed for the night.

The next morning she handed me a scythe and said: "Brother Newman, I'm so glad God has sent you to me. I've been asking Him to send me a man for several weeks now. Will you please cut all this grass for me, because it's full of snakes and the natives won't do it."

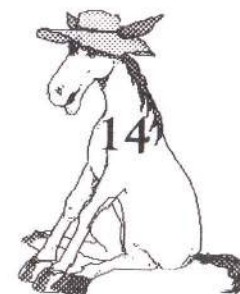
So I set to work chopping a quarter of an acre of elephant grass in the blistering heat of the day. I later preached the gospel to the natives, but I'm sure my main reason for being in Ethiopia was to cut that old Finnish lady's grass!

I later saw many miracles in Ethiopia; especially when the Coptic Church announced over the radio that no one should go to my meetings. That, of course, made people more curious than ever and some soldiers from the nearby barracks actually broke out to hear the gospel. Many of them gave their lives to the Lord.

Yet deep down I was still dissatisfied. Towards the late sixties, after three years, God started to speak to me about my family. He told me to go to Cornwall and settle down with them; I felt sure He was going to open the doors into a new type of ministry.

My two daughters were ready to leave their primary-school education; I knew that God had ordained family life and structure, and He was interested in our children and the need for them to have a stable education and to make permanent friendships. Up to this time we had been continually on the move, living in other people's homes and in communes. This was not the first time that God had shown us that we should protect our children from feeling hard done by because we were committed to the call of God.

They had to share us with so many people; they knew what it was to have drunks sleeping in their home, not to mention drug addicts and many others with psychological problems. It was nothing for one of them to be seen sitting on a tramp's knee, or to go with him for a walk in the park. Often they would have drug addicts teaching them art. They learnt from an early age that our life was a life of sharing and our house, cupboard and pocket were always open to those in need. Though often poor in this world's goods, they became rich in God's love and grace. My great joy today is to know that my children know Jesus and love Him.



An Evangelist, Not a Social Worker

A farm set in the heart of beautiful Cornwall became our new home. The building itself was fairly dilapidated but neither Barbara nor I cared; it was home, cracked walls and all. I'd been right about the new ministry too: we were hosts to drug addicts and alcoholics.

We were scared stiff of the first drug addict who arrived on our doorstep. We'd been expecting him, so we had carefully decorated his room to make him feel welcome; our bedroom was in a terrible state but his was like a palace. Within days of arriving he had painted obscene pictures all over the walls and put filthy captions underneath them. My eyes almost came out on stalks when I first saw them, but I decided that as he was obviously trying to shock me, the best thing to do was to ignore his works of art completely.

We repeatedly told him that our home was his home and that he should treat it as such. He must have taken us at our word because he tried to burn the place down by setting light to a stove in his bedroom. We managed to put it out before too much damage was caused.

We eventually had up to sixteen men and women sharing our home with us. Some of them were saved and allowed the Lord to straighten their lives out for them, while others just went their own sweet way. We needed a lot of grace, wisdom and understanding in dealing with them. Our first rule was not to push the gospel down their throats. I never once stood up and preached to them as a group, but I was quick to take every opportunity to chat about Jesus with individuals as we worked side by side in the fields or the barns.

In early 1967 I was very busy again taking meetings at home and overseas. As always my type of ministry brought me into contact with those on the other side of the track, and I was keen to help them in a

more practical way, to make some provision for them other than meetings. I continually came in contact with other people involved with the welfare of drug addicts and began to sit around a few drug centres that had been set up by the medical profession. One of these was in Chelsea, London, the borough that I was born in, and this centre was in a Salvation Army Hall.

The Officers involved in the work encouraged me to go ahead, and when we finally got started some of the Officers came down to the farm and were a great help and encouragement in the beginning.

The one person who was a real help to me throughout all my ministry, especially in the setting up of the farm, was David Foot Nash. Right from the beginning of my tent days he would provide me with equipment as well as spiritual advice. As his profession was that of a solicitor he was able to advise me on many things, and it was by his expert advice that we were able to purchase the farm. There were quite a few problems concerning this, but by prayer and David's skilful handling it was purchased and a company was formed. I had a 1 share in the company plus, as David said at the time, all the responsibility to keep it going.

Once we got started and people got to know of our place we were continually being contacted by other drug centres, the probation services, psychiatrists, and even judges phoning direct from courts before they decided what to do with a person. Christian ministers from all denominations would phone us; often late at night, as well as the Samaritans and the police. When we were approached by likely candidates we tried to make sure that they had been through most of the rehabilitation programmes and had not responded. The reason for this was that, although we were not professionals in this field, we offered these dear people a home. Not a hostel or a rehabilitation centre, but something they could know as their home and not just ours. Many of them had difficulty with this at first, but when they got the message they began to take an interest in the place and to share some of the responsibility. Their attitudes towards society often changed and they were able to listen and relate to others.

Because most of our guests were addicts, they were very cunning and determined to cling to their habits. Several of them used to try to grow their own cannabis in odd corners of the farm; the Lord used to show me, by His Spirit, where these hiding places were. Once I'd found them I would wait until the growth was well under way, then I'd attack it with weed killer, never letting on to the lads what was happening. Baffled by the sudden death of the plant they would start

all over again, and so it went on.

The nearest pub was six miles away, but distance was no object. One day I was standing by an upstairs window when George came staggering up the path on his way back from the boozer. He'd had a skinful and was carrying a bag in his hand which I knew was filled with bottles. I watched him look around, then hide the bag in a hedge before sauntering into the house. I nipped down to the kitchen to wait for him. He came in, straightened himself up and said: "Hi, Peter."

I said, "Hello."

He stretched, yawned, then said he was going upstairs for a lie down because he was feeling a bit tired. He wasn't going to admit that he'd been in the pub and I didn't let on that I knew.

I waited until he was asleep before going to the hedge and rescuing his two bottles of cider. I hid them in my room and then went back to the kitchen.

George reappeared after an hour or so. "Hi, Peter," he said, still trying to look as if he hadn't been drinking. "Where are all the others?"

I told him they were all out blackberrying so he said he would go and join them. He picked up a saucer, of all things, and headed outside. I saw him make for his hedge. He searched and searched and eventually headed back to the farm, with two blackberries in his saucer.

"Where did you say the others were, Peter?" he asked. I told him they were in the fields at the back of the farm. He didn't bother trying to join them but later that night, when we'd finished our evening meal, he slid up to me and whispered confidentially: "Peter, we've got a thief in the house."

"Oh," I said, "why, George, what have you had stolen?"

"Oh, nothing, Peter, but there's definitely a thief in the house," he replied.

"Well, you aren't telling me anything I don't already know," I told him. "After all, George, all of us have stolen at some time or other and we're all capable of doing it. So what have you had stolen?"

He wouldn't say, but I'll never forget the look on his face when I called the gang into the kitchen the following morning. Whenever I found drink on the premises I used to publicly pour it all down the sink. George's two bottles of cider ended up in the Cornish drainage system too; but at least he knew who the thief was!

The lads also tried to make a still in one of the barns. I had great

fun watching them trying to keep it a secret. They used to go into unholy huddles and there was a great feeling of conspiracy in the place. At night I'd go into the barn to inspect their handiwork. I could see that their contraption would never yield a drop of whisky.

I took a multitude of jobs to keep the farm going. Christians round about viewed us with suspicion and I admit that I still harboured bitterness against my fellow believers. The scars of South Africa and our home-coming were still there.

While we didn't have a hundred per cent success rate with our guests, we enjoyed a reasonable degree of success. During these six years I became quite an authority on rehabilitation and was asked to speak about our work on radio and television. We were visited by social workers and probation officers, and I was often in court speaking on behalf of the guests. Some courts even sent boys to us, and I enjoyed being popular for once in my life. During those years my spiritual life was quietly dying; prayer was becoming a thing of the past and that close fellowship which I had once enjoyed with the Lord was crowded out by a busy diary.

I believe that God had led us into that particular work but Peter Newman, as usual, had tried to take it over. I had once had a vision of Jesus, yet there I was, hardly able to pray, cut off from God. Unsaved people thought I was marvellous. I was invited to sherry parties and official receptions. I stood by and listened to dirty jokes without batting an eyelid. I even heard the name of God blasphemed and didn't once open my mouth in His defence. Outwardly I was a success, yet inwardly I was experiencing a spiritual desert.

Sometimes I would think back to the days when I moved in God and felt so close to Him. Nothing, not even seeing drug addicts going straight, could match that feeling. Every now and again I would feel the presence of God, but then it would go, leaving me cold and empty.

In my spiritual bewilderment, I went into business with another man. I invested nearly £4,000 in plant to hire out. For the first couple of years it went well. Then people couldn't pay their bills on time, and as we had to pay large amounts of hire purchase to the firms which had made the machines we ended up in a big financial mess.

But in the midst of all this turmoil God started to get hold of me again. I knew that I was like Jonah running away from God's call. I also knew that, like Jonah, I was very bad company for those around me, so I told my partner that I was pulling out. I told him that it was

for his sake, but he didn't understand. I signed all the machinery over to him and I accepted responsibility for all the debts, because I felt it was my fault that we had them in the first place. Money, at that time, didn't matter to me. God was again speaking and moving in my life.

Quite simply, He was telling me that He had called me to be an evangelist, not a social worker.



The Donkey Is Going to Be Loosed

Barbara, myself and our children moved out of the farmhouse into a small cottage up the road. I then spent the next fourteen months waiting on God and listening to what He had to tell me. He completely reshaped my thinking and believing and I eventually came back to a simple faith in Jesus. There I was: a failure, broke, almost homeless, an ex-member of a cult, and yet there was God: blessing me! For years I'd struggled and striven but over those months God showed me how to enter into His rest. You don't have to be always up and doing for God in order to justify your salvation. You can sit back and relax in His presence, but when He tells you to move, then move you must. I came to realize that the world is in the palm of His hand; and if the world is there, then I am too. My soul had been thirsty for years and I simply enjoyed drinking from God and relaxing at His feet.

There were external pressures: my business failure was constantly rearing its head and court proceedings were threatened. But in a way I didn't care. I had once again found the pearl of greatest price, and nothing, but nothing, was going to distract me from my relationship with God.

In order to eat, I used to go into the woods and cut logs which we would sell from our front door. I would take my dog, Prince, with me and we'd spend many an hour talking to God in the forests. Barbara was relieved that I, at least, was starting to see straight again.

God also dealt with the bitterness which I was harbouring in my heart against my fellow Christians, and I spent many hours ringing people up, apologizing to them for my resentments.

I remember the first meeting I was asked to speak at during that great cleaning-up period. I preached the simple gospel message and

the power of God came down to touch many hearts and lives. I made the appeal and my daughter Elaine was the first to get out of her seat. "Dad, I want to be saved," she said. With tears in my eyes I led her to the Lord.

I'd spent about eighteen months just waiting on God, learning of Him. Then He started to open doors. From different parts of the country by post and telephone people began to invite me to take meetings, and people began to arrive at the house for prayer and help. It was just like the old times and I was surprised and a little overawed by it all. But deep inside I knew it was God who was doing this. Something new was stirring and the feeling in my spirit was confirmed six months later at an International Gospel Outreach convention at High Wycombe. A friend of mine persuaded me to go with him, but I was reluctant. I'd spent a long time in the desert without too many Christians around and I quite liked my isolation. An added incentive to stay away was the fact that everybody there would have doubtless heard about my South African venture and I was loathe to have it all dragged up again. But God had decided that the convention was to be holy ground for me.

The first night I was there God told me to join International Gospel Outreach. I'm not one to join things for the sake of it, but God spoke very clearly to me about it. The IGO is really a fellowship of ministers from established non-denominational churches and it exists to encourage men in the work of God. So I applied to join and they put me, like everyone else, on twelve months' probation to prove myself, and to make sure that I wasn't preaching any kind of heresy.

David Greenow, one of the founders, asked me to say something at the convention. I obliged, albeit reluctantly, and a brother called Eddy Smith, whom I didn't know, came forward to pray for me. He began to prophesy and said that the key that I'd been searching for was at hand. Now I'd told Barbara several weeks beforehand that I was searching for the key to enter into God's rest, and here was this stranger telling me my innermost thoughts.

"Brother Peter," he said, "God wants you to be His donkey. He's going to ride your back like He rode on the back of the ass going into Jerusalem. People aren't going to see you, but they're going to see Jesus...." I could hardly believe my ears. God, ever faithful, ever patient, was again telling me what He first told me some fifteen years earlier. Only this time I bowed the knee and I had no ambitions to be a gleaming racehorse ever again. I was to be a donkey, His donkey.

We left the convention the next day and went to a house fellowship

in Wales. My immediate reaction was, "God, what am I doing here? It's too much like a commune for my liking." But God knew what He was doing.

My friend preached on the Saturday night and the next morning I woke up and said to him, "Arthur, today the donkey is going to be loosed."

"Well, I'm sorry I shan't be here to see it, Peter. I'm off today." So Arthur went and I stayed behind.

That evening in the meeting a brother looked across at me and said: "Peter, I don't know what it means, but God is saying that the donkey is going to be loosed today. You're the donkey and God's going to ride on your back." Talk about out of the mouth of two or three witnesses!

He'd barely got the words out when in walked a woman with a bowl of water and a towel. I thought that someone had been sick at the back of the meeting. But she came up to me, took off my shoes and socks and washed my feet, just as Jesus washed the disciples' feet. As you might expect, I felt very embarrassed. Then God spoke to me and said that it would happen twice again to me before He would lead me into the final ministry that He had for me.

From 1976 onwards God really began to move in my life. He opened doors, did the impossible, performed miracles and led me to many different countries. Yet all the while I sensed that it was preparation for the work He was going to have for me.

I became God's donkey, going here and there when He told me to go. I learned that there's no need to fret or fuss in God's will. I've nearly been in three plane crashes, but I can honestly say that I have not panicked. I've just committed my way to the Lord.

Since my earliest days I've known that if things didn't seem to be working out I had to stand still and wait on God. I also learned to use every day to the full. There is no clocking on and off; God's Spirit neither slumbers or sleeps, and often keeps unsocial hours.

Years ago I looked around my Gospel Tent at oil lamps and broken chairs. "God," I said, "if only I had an electric generator, then I could have brighter lights."

"Use what you have to the full, Peter," was His reply.

I also discovered that God expected me to do a bit of practical work from time to time to earn money. I would look around for a house that needed painting and offer to paint it. During the day I would paint the house and at night preach. It certainly made an impression on the local community and they got to hear the choruses as my

unmistakable voice boomed from the top of the ladder: "At the cross, at the cross, where I first saw the light."

It has been fun to see the hand of God in my travels and there are quite a few enjoying the blessing of God because I just happened to take my blow lamp and wrenches along. I have collected dead animals, dug and built cess-pits, driven cars across South Africa and fished on a trawler in the Irish Sea under the guidance of God, becoming all things to all men that I might win some for Christ.

After preaching at a large denominational church I was standing at the back shaking hands as the people left, but one dear gentle lady withdrew her hand as I took it to shake. She looked at me and declared that she had never met a preacher with such rough hands.

I never chose this path and I have had some rows with God over it. What has hurt most has been when this ministry of working for a living has been exploited by other Christians and they have used me for cheap labour. But it has been a thrill to go in with my tools and skills and do jobs for people who couldn't afford to employ anyone.

I was once down in a manhole, arm up a four-inch pipe, having left a note on the toilet seat saying "Please do not use", when to my dismay I heard someone pulling the chain. In my hurry to move my arm, it got stuck.

I was at this time being observed by a well-known preacher. "I don't know how you do it," he exclaimed.

I replied, "Cess pit or pulpit, as long as God's presence is with me, it is heaven." And I meant it.

I've often found that God uses me most while I am travelling from one place to another. I remember landing at Los Angeles and thinking that I would contact some Christians I knew in that city, when God told me that I had to spend the night in the airport itself. I did, and ended up preaching the gospel there. The glory of God fell, and at one stage I was dancing before the Lord with a nun by my side.

Towards dawn God told me to go across the lounge and pray for a man who was sick. So I went up to him and started chatting to him about the Lord Jesus Christ. He, in turn, poured out his troubles to me and told me of his illness.

"I can see you're sick, sir," I said to him, "but God has sent me over to you to lay hands on you because He's going to heal you."

"Yes, but I don't believe in that sort of thing," he said to me.

"Oh," I said, "I'm sorry. Perhaps I've made a mistake, sorry to have troubled you...." And with that I walked away from him.

I asked God if I had made a mistake and He told me that I hadn't

and that I had to go and pray for the man. So off I went again.

"Sir, you'll have to excuse me, but you're in a bad state both physically and spiritually. In fact, naturally speaking, you've just about had it. But Jesus has told me to come back and to lay hands on you. He wants to heal you."

The man looked quite startled. "Oh well," he said, "go ahead, I suppose." So I laid my hands on him and prayed. Within seconds he bounded up, saying he was healed.

"What you felt was the Holy Spirit. Now God wants you to give your heart to Him. Give yourself to Him completely and He'll give you a new heart," I said, and the man willingly complied.

How great is our God!



The Place of Rest

Many of my lessons have been learnt through pain, trial and tribulation; some self-inflicted. Barbara and I have experienced many hardships in the call of God: hunger, bankruptcy and having all our possessions stolen are but a few. Many times we have almost fainted by the way. We are given to understand by the word of God that the trial of our faith is precious to Him. I can't say that I have found it precious to me at the time. Nevertheless the end result of these trials has always revealed in greater depths the faithfulness of God.

It may often seem to the onlooker that my life is free of trials and tribulation now that I have found the place of rest which for sixteen years I laboured to enter. I found it by returning to the simplicity of the gospel and resting on God's word. This has taken away the stress of living; it is the stress and strain that wears most people down. Much of the tension was caused when I tried to live up to a standard that others demanded of me and struggled to convince everyone that I had arrived at the place of rest. This became filthy rags in the eyes of God but, praise His name, God had the answer even to my filthy rags.

However, God has continued to give me the opportunity of praising Him under difficult circumstances: I'm not immune to trials and pressures. I'm sharing this with you, not so that you can commiserate with me, but that you may be encouraged to press on towards the prize of the high calling in Jesus.

We have in our family two daughters and one son, Jonathan, who is the youngest. We have seen the healing power of God working in the lives of our daughters and raising them up from sickness. When our son was born it was discovered that he had a problem with his kidneys. He was operated on when he was four years old and for a

couple of years he was well. But then he began to deteriorate rapidly, till by the age of eight he was in chronic renal failure.

Hundreds prayed for him, and still are praying. During the course of my ministry I have prayed for many children of Jonathan's age and God has healed them, yet we have had to watch him suffer through the years. There were times when we panicked, when we felt the heavens like brass. All my experience over the years, the memory of all the wonders God has performed, have screamed at me, "What about your son? Where is God in this?" But then the Holy Spirit has risen up from within my innermost being and has begun to glorify and praise the name of Jesus.

Much advice has been given. Some people have suggested that I should not pray for the sick until God has healed Jonathan, and I have often felt like following their advice. Some have told me that I must be in sin or pride or out of the will of God. I believe that suggestions like that do not come from the heavenly courts, neither can they be found under the New Covenant that God made through Jesus Christ to all those that believe. Jesus Christ came to destroy the works of the devil. I believe that sickness and anything that would seek to destroy a man's faith in the word of God comes from Satan himself or from very ill-informed people.

We have, however, learnt many lessons through Jonathan's illness and I would like to share one with you.

In prayer one day God spoke these words to me: "Peter you don't really love Me."

"I do, Lord!" I replied.

"No, Peter you only love Me because."

"What do You mean 'because'?" I asked.

"You love Me because I found you; because I saved you; because I healed you; because I called you."

At this point I was beaten.

"Lord, show me Your love!" I cried.

Several months later I was in Great Ormond Street Hospital sitting by my son's bed. He had tubes up his nose and into his arms after yet another operation. Weeks of tests, reports and counter-reports had driven us almost to despair. We had prayed and so had almost a thousand others during those weeks. Yet in the end we had to watch them wheel him into the operating theatre to cut him open for "further investigation".

I had sent Barbara away to try and get some sleep, and so was by myself as Jonathan recovered from the anaesthetic. His first words

when he came round were, "Dad, pray," and he began to whimper because of the discomfort he was in.

"Son," I said, "your dad's all prayed out; I don't even know what to pray for."

He looked at me and said, "Dad, give me a drink of water."

I was under instructions to give him the tiniest drop of water every hour.

He had already had his quota for that hour and had forty-five more minutes to wait before the next drop was allowed. I panicked and decided I couldn't stay with him. I couldn't bear to see him suffer. My mind said, "Run, leave him to the nurses." But the Holy Spirit said, "Pray."

There by that hospital bed I called on the name of the Lord. I said, "God, help me; I don't know how to handle this situation. This is my only son and I love him but I can do nothing for him."

Then God spoke. He said, "Peter, now you know and feel My love. I too had a Son hanging on a cross. When He cried to Me I hid My face. Because I loved the world I gave My Son."

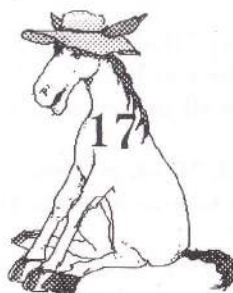
I can only say that at that moment everything changed. The holy love of God, and His peace came into that room. What had seemed an unclimbable mountain suddenly became a molehill. More than that, God told me to give Jonathan a wet cloth to suck, and he went to sleep.

Two years later my son Jonathan left hospital again, after another operation. When we were in the car he said, "Dad, God is good to me!"

Now as he sat there all I could see with my natural eye was a young boy chained to a life line which would restrict him from living a life that many other young boys enjoy. So my reply to him was, "Son, how is God good to you?"

"Well, Dad, it's like this: one, I'm going to have a meal at the Little Chef. Two, there are lots of children left in hospital, and they don't have mums and dads that know the Lord and many of them are sicker than I am. That's why God is good to me, Dad."

There are many unanswered questions, and there always will be this side of heaven, but we are not aiming to spend eternity down here; we look for a city whose builder and maker is God.



God in the Fire

Jonathan's illness had come to dominate our lives, and even though hundreds of people were praying, there seemed to be no intervention from God. Three years after Jonathan's operation, I decided to give Jonathan one of my kidneys. I felt it was the most natural thing in the world for any father to do for his son.

No, I didn't know what I was talking about. I didn't understand what such an operation really involved. The doctor was most hesitant. He looked at me and saw age: grey hair and wrinkled brows. However, though he knew about my faith, he didn't know my God. Sometimes God invites us to meet Him in fire, as He met Meshach, Shadrach and Abednego in the time of Daniel.

So God overruled human decisions and the initial tests began.

How dehumanizing: getting undressed, needles, samples. But I soon adapted to the system. I got over the embarrassment of carrying my sample from one department to another; even needles came to mean nothing to me, though the first time a nurse took a drop of blood from me I just about fainted.

There was one obstacle in the way of the transplant, and that was the insistence of the transplant team that I see a psychiatrist. This is the normal procedure for all potential donors. Now I had very strong views about this profession, none of them complimentary, and so I refused to go along with the system. An appointment was made which I never kept and, hearing nothing, I thought I had got away with it. But I seemed to be waiting a long time to get the date for the transplant, so I made enquiries and was told in no uncertain terms that unless I saw the psychiatrist there would be no transplant.

So I made the appointment.

Of all the tests I had prior to the transplant this was one that I

approached with the most apprehension and suspicion. "Watch it, guard your tongue," I thought. "Perhaps he'll think you're a religious nut." "Just answer yes and no," was my last piece of advice to myself, as I entered Dr Enoch's office and sat down on a chair.

"What, no couch?" I thought. But after Dr Enoch had introduced himself I felt we were old friends and there was the presence of Jesus, known only to those who have been born again. The psychiatrist turned out to be my brother in Jesus!

As he began to tell me of his faith and how he believed that God had placed him in his profession, I thought, "Peter you've blown it again and limited God to your own understanding."

The day came when they gave us the date of the transplant. Jonathan and I got really excited. All results were positive. Nothing would be sure until the last day, but boy, we were pleased. I saw worried looks on people's faces when I told them the good news, but I couldn't wait. I had found God in this fire, so fear and worry had no hold on me.

Before the transplant I had to enter the hospital for a minor operation. Nothing to it, I discovered; they gave me an injection to calm me down, a "pre-med", and I felt as high as a kite!

"Dad," said Jonathan one day while we were impatiently waiting and he lay in bed having one of his bad days.

"Yes, son?" I replied.

"Dad, when the surgeon takes your kidney and put it into me, it will give me a new life."

"Yes, son, it will give you a new life because it will purify your blood."

"Dad, that's what happens when Jesus comes into our lives. He gives us a new spirit and makes us clean"

"That's right, son."

"Praise God," I thought, "what a sermon!"

"Dad, now I know what it really means to be saved."

At last the day arrived. Transplant: eight o'clock in the morning; we were to be the first in the operating theatre. Six o'clock: bath, painted nearly all over with iodine.

Soon, I thought, they will give me that pre-med shot and I will get high and go down to the theatre singing.

The porters came to wheel me down. "What about the pre-med, nurse?" I asked. "Have you forgotten?"

She looked at the notes.

"Nothing here, Mr Newman," she said.

God, what are you doing? I'm supposed to have a pre-med. Everybody has a pre-med. Don't you know, God, I'm supposed to be sedated? I, of course, meant "high", I didn't like to tell God that.

I lay in the waiting room outside the theatre and it was cold. The central heating had failed. Everybody full of apologies. More blankets, please.

As the lady doctor took my details, she turned to the nurse and said, "Has he had his pre-med?"

"No," said the nurse. "It's not on his notes."

Immediately the doctor took off to see the surgeon. How relieved I was that action was being taken. The doctor returned, looked at me and said, "I'm sorry; there's been a slight mistake. You can have the pre-med, but it won't have time to work because the surgeons are ready for you now."

"Let's go," I heard myself say.

Wide awake, I was wheeled in. I think I counted five figures all masked up. As soon as they had lifted me to the table they began to stick things on me and in me. I really began to believe that not only were they going to deny me my longed-for drug, they were also going to deprive me of my right to be put to sleep while they operated! Wrong again, I'm glad to say.

"What's this pain? God, where am I? What's happening?" I tried to move but was stopped by pain. Somebody was putting another needle in my stomach! Can one find God in pain? For the first time in my life I was about to find out. In my walk with God I had come to know many kinds of pain; the pain of guilt, loneliness and rejection, but physical pain I had not yet encountered. When praying for the sick I had often felt that to identify with their suffering it would help if I knew physical pain. Well, if that was to be a qualification for praying for the sick, I had now qualified.

I slowly came round from the anaesthetic and became aware of my surroundings: pipes, people and...pain. My first anxious question was, "How is Jonathan?" Joy and anxiety were bound together. I had had a kidney removed. It had actually happened: that was joy. But had the transplant worked? Was my kidney active in Jonathan?

When I arrived home, leaving Barbara and Jonathan behind in the hospital, I was really ill. I was nearly a stone lighter, and I had only weighed ten stone when I went in. The pain and the weakness had taken their toll, together with other problems that I had to face which were far worse, and more painful. One serious problem was that I thought that death was stalking me, and twice I felt my spirit leaving

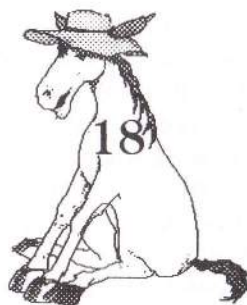
my body. I would have willingly gone, except that there was something wrong. I believe that when my eternal spirit has to leave this tabernacle, then angels will escort me to the presence of God, but my experience at that time was different. All I could see in my mind's eye were demons fighting to drag me away, taunting me to curse God and die. They reasoned with me that not only had my friends forsaken me in my darkest hour, but so had God. I always tell people that when the father of lies tells you that God has left you, then it means that God is near at hand. If God has truly gone, the devil will leave you alone.

There came a morning when all strength had gone and I just could not summon up the will to hang on any longer. Then suddenly there was light and power in that bedroom, and there was my own sister, Daphne, speaking in tongues and confessing the blood of Jesus. There is nothing that will cause the demon power to back off more than the presence of one of God's children, full of faith and the Holy Spirit.

Daphne had arrived at our home in 1959 desperate and defeated, sustained by tranquillizers, deceived by spirits, having been enticed into spiritism, sanctioned by man but forbidden by God. Then the Great Shepherd saw her need and stretched out His hand to set her free.

From that time on I began to mend and soon got back to fighting weight. At the time of writing this it is six months since the transplant, and Jonathan continues to get better. Barbara has found it strange, not having to spend so much time nursing him, and we have really appreciated our new freedom.

Barbara has had to bear the brunt of this affliction in our family, and to have the two of us in the operating theatre at the same time was a great trial to her faith. Once again God has proved faithful in giving me a wife who has stood firm even in the darkest times.



"I Am Just About to Shoot You"

I have continued travelling and going wherever the Holy Spirit leads me. I have always found it a trying experience, to be led by the Spirit. As soon as I am bidden to go I immediately find a dozen reasons why I can't. I think, "Where's the money coming from? Will any one turn up when I get there? It's your own imagination." I hear voices shouting the odds against my going. Then finally Satan will start at me. That gets me going quicker than anything. That's when unbelief and fear fly out of the window. If the father of lies, the great deceiver, tells me not to go, then that's the time to go.

When I arrive at places, unexpected and uninvited, it does my soul good to hear the words, "Brother, the Lord has sent you."

One of the things I have begun to notice is that my ministry is changing and I am being directed more into the ministry of prophetic utterance.

This really made me nervous at first. Had I not been warned to beware of false prophets? And I, too, had warned people. Yet here was I proclaiming to many people things that for the life of me I did not understand myself. I will share just one event so that you may understand my feelings about this new ministry.

I was in a large meeting and after having preached and prayed for a number of people I was approached by a young woman who was quite agitated. In her distress she poured out her story. Her husband was in prison and was taking out papers to seek a divorce on the grounds that they couldn't have any children, because she had taken drugs.

As I was praying for her I heard myself saying, "This time next year you will have a baby boy."

Someone shouted out, "Praise the Lord", but all I could think about was how to get out of the church as quickly as possible.

Eighteen months later I was back in the church. I had forgotten about the previous incident. If I had remembered I don't think that I would have accepted the invitation without making a few discreet enquiries first.

After the meeting was over, I was approached by the same young lady. I must confess that I panicked when I heard her saying, "You said that I would have a baby boy in twelve months."

"Lord I've had it now," was my immediate thought.

But she continued, "I couldn't bring him tonight: he's too young. My husband came out of prison and got saved. Six months ago we had a baby boy and we've called him Joshua."

I heard a loud voice say, "Praise the Lord." It was mine.

In a meeting in England the words came loud and clear: "Brother Newman, I have shaped you and sharpened you into a fine arrow and I am just about to shoot you on target."

I thought, "So that's what God's been doing with me all these years: shaping and sharpening me! No wonder it's been so painful at times."

I've already told you about my first foot-washing experience. I had completely forgotten that God had told me this would happen on two further occasions.

I was in America when, after a meeting, a woman crept up to me and whispered that God had told her to bless my feet. I was astounded to say the least, and I felt the same awe mingled with embarrassment.

Later the woman told her story. Eighteen months earlier God had spoken to her and told her that He required her to bless an evangelist's feet. Being shy and nervous, she thought that she would never have the courage to carry it through. So she confided in a few friends. She said that at every meeting she went to, she dreaded that this would be the time when she had to obey God. Finally she came to one of my meetings and God showed her that I was the evangelist, and she could not do it. When she arrived home she felt that she had disobeyed God, and could not put things right, as she heard that I had left the area.

But, as always, God is good and bigger than our mistakes. Through unforeseen circumstances I stayed over, and she arrived at another meeting to find I was unexpectedly speaking. This time she was obedient, but only just. She said, "It's not easy to obey the Spirit of

God, for often He asks us to do the most unusual and childlike things.'

Yes, there was excitement in my spirit. God had told me that the foot washing would happen three times, so there was one more to go. It had been four years since the last time. How long before it would happen again: four years or forty?

Only four weeks later I was having lunch in a house in Jacksonville, Florida when, as we were preparing to leave, in came a sister with the now familiar bowl and towel. There was no embarrassment on my part this time; I endured it joyfully.

What will happen next? Where will God lead me? What will He do? I do not know the details. But I do know that, since the very earliest days when Grandad prayed with Mr Mascall, God has honoured prayers and fulfilled His will for my life. Sometimes, because of my rebellion, this has taken a long time. But God's faithfulness never wavers, not even for a moment.

It's for Him to lead: my job is simply to follow.