



# *Looking Back*

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## **FORWARD:**

Looking back, is a time to reflect, back on the years of my life, recording the times, the travels, the friendships made, recording the growth of my Evangelistic work in the Army Of The Lord, the miracles and the wonderful experiences we came through, and those we shared them with.

These were the years, 1957 - 1973.

One of the things I have learned over the years is this; old people talk about the past, because there is so much of it. Young people talk about the future, because they see themselves, experiencing the years ahead. Of course, they have no promise of all those years they plan for, but old people have lived those years they speak of, and the experiences they came through, and the lessons they learned, or did not learn, are now, forever stamped in their minds, and can be a great asset to those who will read of them, listen to them, and learn from them.

I have written these things down, so that in the years ahead, my children, my grandchildren, and those who might wish to read and enjoy these memories of the past, could be to their enjoyment and to their learning, of how it was, and how it might aught to still be.

I made many mistakes in my journey, some were good for me, and some I take no pleasure at all in them. I have made many friends in my journey, learned what love really is, and how important it is, for this love to be deeply implanted in our everyday life.

May those of you that I hold dear, find peace in the end of your journey, and may you always seek to guide others in the right direction.

God Speed, Love you all,

Bill Porter

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## Chapter 1.

### **SENIOR YEAR, 1957**

Senior year of High School, finally school is almost over. This had been an exciting year, as I had suddenly realized that life was more than fun and games. I had wasted most of the first 3 years of High School, and finally I was catching up. I really wanted to do something with my life now, and I had taken some courses that would help me in the years ahead. It was coming up on Christmas time, and I was excited that we were going to travel by car to Oklahoma for the Holidays. It was a 3 day journey, and we would go the Southern route to Southern Calif. and travel Highway 66 most of the way. My cousin Dan Porter, and his wife Margie with their baby daughter Dana, would be going with us. So it would be Dad, Mom, my younger brother Ben, and myself along with those mentioned above. That would be 4 adults, and two teenagers, and a baby. Quite a load in a 1955 Chevrolet 4 door sedan. We had made good time, and it was the plan to arrive at my Grandmothers house in Perkins, Oklahoma, early Christmas morning. Things had gone fine, and we reached Clinton, Okla., we were only about 200 miles from the end of our destination. It was about 11:30 PM Christmas eve, and we had stopped just on the east side of town, filled up with gas, and went inside the little restaurant for a piece of pie, coffee and probable milk. We were resting up a little, as we were going to be arriving in just a few more hours. We were all anxious, and happy to be almost there. We started for the car, and being 16 and just having my driver's license for a short time, I wanted to drive it in. Right away I could see that this was not going to be the case, for Dan who was 19 years old at the time, almost 20, much bigger and stronger than myself decided that he was going to occupy the drivers seat. He easily slid me right over to the center, and he took the wheel as others piled in where ever they would fit. We took off just like we always had, feeling good and happy as could be. Little did we know that less than a mile, it would end for one of us, and leave the rest of us sad and broken up. Just a short distance from that Station and Restaurant was a little creek with

one of those old steel bridges that had the side rails that go up and over with an arch. The old highway 66 was still at that time concrete, with the little ridge on each side that kept the rainwater from washing out the edges. Sort of like a curb, on both sides, all along. Just about a quarter of a mile past the bridge was a little roadside rest, and at this little park like place, some teenagers were having a drinking party. A young Indian girl, who probable had a little problem with someone there, had decided that she was just going to walk back to town. We will probable never know the reason why. But in her walking back along the highway, and being intoxicated as she was, no doubt even staggering along without ever looking back to see what traffic she was hindering as she walked. Remember, it was about midnight now, and very dark. She approached the bridge, being only a few feet from it, a semi-truck, loaded with new trucks being delivered to dealerships somewhere, was coming and approaching her, and at the last minute he saw her there in his headlights, immediately swerving to avoid hitting her. But, right there coming off of the bridge, only seconds from the Service Station, and the beginning of our journey again, we were soon to see great tragedy. As the truck driver swerved and had taken up about 4 or 5 feet of our side of the road, Dan had no place to go, so the truck caught the driver side front fender of that 55 Chevrolet and shoved it right back into his lap. It shoved the steering wheel right into his chest, and his legs right into the lower dash. No doubt it crushed him just like he was a rag doll.

For a moment or two, all was blank. All of a sudden there were people everywhere. A Greyhound bus had stopped. Several cars stopped, and people piled out of the bus. First I heard Mother crying in pain, and I quickly went to the back of the car where she was pinned under the back. I helped pull her out to the outside and began to pray for her. Then I went to the drivers side of the car where Dan was crying out in pain, and tried desperately to pull the door away from the car, so that I could get to the seat release and let the pressure off of him some. I could not get the door to open, and so I was unable to help. But just about that time, the ambulance arrived, and a tow truck. They were able to get him out, and one by one they took us to the Clinton Hospital. Just before I got into the ambulance, I noticed that I was talking

funny, and it was not until then that I noticed that I had several teeth knocked out. I then noticed also that my left side jaw was hanging down and I could not get it to move much. I knew then that I too was in pretty bad shape.

The next morning, all seemed to be going ok. We were assessing the damages, and it seemed that Mom had a broken hip, Dan had broken legs, and chest damage, and Bennie had a cracked collar bone. Dad had a bad cut over his eye, and I had a broken jaw and all of my front teeth knocked out, by the roots on the bottom, and shattered off on the top. Mom had allowed them to x-ray her hip, and they showed her where it was jammed right through the socket about an inch, and Dan was going to be operated on that evening to fix his legs. I was in pretty bad shape, and dad asked me what I wanted to do? He said I was old enough to decide for myself, and that they wanted to take me on to Oklahoma City, to McBride Bone clinic, and fix my jaw. I said to him dad, I can't go through life like this, so I guess I better go on and get fixed up. We had for many years been living by faith, and trusted in God to heal our sicknesses and diseases, but I had never had a broken bone, and we did not know anyone close by that could set bones, and besides this, mine were in my face and difficult to deal with. So off I went to Okla. City, all by myself. It was time to be a big boy, and I knew it. Dad was not able to leave mom, and besides this, Dan was to be operated on soon, and Margie his wife, and Dana his baby daughter, by a miracle were not injured. They had to find a place to rest, and so it was decided that I would just go on and get fixed up. But because we had a loving family, I was not alone for long. Right away there were some of my family who came, and they were keeping me in good spirits and telling me what was going on back at Clinton. Sadly though, my cousin Dan did not make it. For some reason he died on the operating table from excessive injuries I guess. From this time on and for the next few months, time went pretty slow. But having been loved and cared for by our dear brethren, Bro. Johnny and Sis. Ruth McCoy, we were able to finally get back to traveling condition and back on our way to California and home.

During that two months, I spent most of my time at Bro. Estel & Sis. Bertha Greenfield's house, where their children became like brothers and sisters to me. Two months I missed out

of my Senior year of High School. This was not the best thing to happen. There was the rest of the year with no teeth, as I had to have the rest of them pulled out. They were not very good anyway. I also had to wait until the wire that had my jaws wired together could be taken out. Graduation day, new dentures, and I was good as new. Some of the kids I marched down the graduation isle with, didn't even recognize me. What a year?

## Chapter 2.

### 1958-1959 GRADUATION YEAR

I graduated from High School two weeks after my 17<sup>th</sup> birthday. It was hard to get a regular job when you were not 18 years old, at least in one of the lumber mills which paid good money. I had caddied at the golf course for the summer of High School and some even during the year. But when school was out, dad and I bought a business called, A-1 Septic Tank Service. We had received a little settlement from the trucking company that was involved in the accident, and we took the money and bought this business. Dad worked it in the mornings, and I worked it in the evenings. He worked second shift at the mill, and I did the afternoon work with the business. I owned half, and he owned half. It was enough spending money for me, and I was happy doing what I was doing.

I spent lots of time on the river that summer, and as I recall, Ben and I were swimming 60 some days in a row in Mad River, without a missed day. The year went by fast, and even though mom was slowly recovering, we did not go to Okla. that year. Being young, and not very thankful for what God had done for me, I had slowly started to miss Sunday church more and more. In the fall I was car shopping again, and came across this 1956 Ford Pickup. Some of my guy friends had bought pickups, and so I had to have one too. It was a dandy, and I started right away fixing it up to be a real looker. I added little short stacks that came up the sides right behind the cab, and also added a white Vinyl cover over the back to cover the bed. It wasn't a hotrod, as it just had the stock engine, but for a while anyway, I was really happy with it.



Springtime came, and I was car shopping again. Bought me a 1958 Chevy Bel-Air 2 Door Hardtop. It was a beautiful car, and I thought I was the king of the road. Most of my time was spent making my car look as good as I could, and less time spent asking God what he had for me to do. As a young boy, I always dreamed of marrying a girl that was tiny, quiet, and down to earth. But there in Calif. where I lived at the time, it just seemed that this girl was not to be found. I had dated lots of girls, some that were very nice, and others that were not so nice. But through it all, I had maintained my virginity, even though God only knows how. I was not even trying to live right, even though I had my line drawn in the sand, and somehow I had been able to stay on the right side. I was very much into fast cars, but I guess I had been able to avoid the fast woman. I was at the drag races most Sundays, and even though I lost more than I won, I still had a time of my life, and God allowed me to stay alive. This in itself was a miracle, and I didn't even know it. Many times I was going down the highway at speeds over 110, and didn't even think to pray. I didn't thank God before I went to sleep either, as I knew that I, and we, should do each and every night.

I had a wonderful mother and father that I am sure were praying overtime for me, and for that I am ever so thankful. Along in the fall, I don't now remember exactly when, my grandmother, who no doubt worried about me also and prayed for me often, was attending church one Sunday at Agra, Okla., and after church there was someone that had asked for baptism, and as the custom is in our little church, an Ordinance Supper and foot washing was set for the evening time. After the supper was over, during the foot washing, it happened that a little Sister in the church from Sapulpa, Okla. had sit next to my grandmother, and it happened that she was the one to wash my grandmother's feet. By a miracle it happened, that as this young girl was washing my grandmother's feet, and my grandmother seen a vision of me over her head as she was kneeling down before her. At first grandmother was frightened. She thought something awful had happened to me, as she knew that I was not going to church and living right. Fearful as she was, she did remember who the little sister was, but did not make any connection between myself and her. She went home, and the next day she sat

down and wrote to my mother as she done regularly. She did not have a phone then, and so letters were the common thing. She wanted to know if anything bad had happened to me, and was I ok? She told mom about the incident, and mom wrote back and told her I was fine, just not doing very well with my life. Grandmother was not satisfied, and sought to find out more. I am sure she prayed much about it, and finally she came to think that God was trying to tell her something about the little sister that had washed her feet. She thought, maybe God had a plan for her and I. It was some time before the little sister and her parents came to Agra again, and grandmother waited patiently. Finally the day came when they showed up again. Grandmother put my uncle John Porter, (this was the father of my cousin, that was killed in the car wreck), up to asking her what her name was, if she was going with anyone at the time, and would she be interested in writing to his nephew in California? He did not tell her about the vision. She said she was not going with anyone at the time, and that she would not write first, but she might answer a letter if she received one. He took her address, gave it to my grandmother, and she then sent it to my mother.

Now I was not interested in writing to anyone in Okla., as it was just too far away and I was having a good time already thank you. But with a little persuasion, I wrote. Not anything you might want to read, but I wrote all about myself, and little of what I said, was true.

Needless to say, she answered. I had expected her to just ignore me, and I would not have to deal with it. But no, she answered with a very nice letter, and in so many words I could tell that she did not believe a word I said. I was then compelled to write back, and tell her that I was sorry, I was not 5' 10" tall, did not have solid muscles, and was not the rave of the town and of all the girls. I was just a simple guy, worked in a plywood mill, and did have a pretty nice car. I did not tell her that I was not living a very good life, did not go to church and generally was not near good enough for her. She wrote back and sent me a picture. WOW, was that ever a closer. I was mystified by this little princess, and I was determined to meet her somehow. But, she lived in Oklahoma, 2000 miles away.

## Chapter 3.

### GETTING MARRIED 1960

Springtime came in 1960, and I had been writing to this girl that I now had fallen in love with, for some time now. It was little by little, and day by day. First a letter a week, then 2 letters a week, and finally every single day. Every day I went to the mailbox anxious to see the letter from my girl in Oklahoma.

Now as time went on in the spring, God began to work with me, showing me that I needed to change my life. I needed to get back to the things that I knew were right, and feel like I could be worthy of this new thing that had come into my life quite by a miracle. One night I dreamed a dream. It was a vivid dream, not one of the many normal dreams that you have that leave you not remembering what really went on. It was one of those dreams that you do not forget.

I dreamed that I was with my dad, and we were in an old pickup truck, going up a very long narrow valley with high mountains on each side. It seems that we were cutting firewood along the way, and we nearly had the old truck filled. I had noticed up the valley a short ways, there was a small store and gas station. Now as I remember, this was unusual because the road was dirt. It was one of those roads that you see in the hills where there are just two lines where the wheels go. Not a wide road, but a very narrow road that really seemed to go only up this valley. All of a sudden, I looked up ahead, and the people that were in the store, were running towards us shouting "flash flood", "flash flood". I looked up the narrow valley about a mile, and here came a wall of water about a hundred feet high, rolling down through this narrow little valley like a wave, coming in from the ocean. I shouted to my dad, "run up the mountain side". He and I, began to run up the mountain on our left, and as he ran, every so often he would fall down. I, being younger and stronger, never had any problem. I would have to stop and help him up, and then we would run some more. Time after time I would stop and help him up, until finally we reached the top. That wall of water came rushing down thru the valley, whoosh right past where we had been standing.

I remember it so vividly, for in this water were all kinds of things. Now the dream was like in the past, but the things that were in the water were things of the present time. New cars, houses, people, things of all sorts. Then I awoke.

I was troubled by that dream, and knew right away that God was telling me that my dad needed my help, and it was high time for me to get to helping him. I didn't change right then, but went on doing the things that I wanted to do. But, I did tell mom about the dream, and I'm glad I did.

A few weeks went by, and I am still writing to my sweetheart, as she was being called now. I wanted to change my life, and I had began to pray again. I was not sure yet that God was listening, but I did pray. I still can't believe that I had strayed away so far, that I did not even want to ride to work with the other guys, my dad, my uncle Ace, Bro. Chester Butler, whom I loved dearly because he always told me at work on Mondays, that he missed me at Church yesterday. That was even when I had been out of church, for at least a couple of years. Then there were others that shared rides, making it so, that taking turns, you only had to drive once a week. It was 16 miles to work, one way. But I, always drove my own car, so that I could stop off at the theater, or Bim's Hamburger Drive-In, on the way home to see who was there.

One night, I remember it well, it was a Saturday night, and I had worked overtime. As I was on my way home from work, going by the airport, just outside of Eureka, Calif., all of a sudden something large and white went across the front of the windshield. Flash it went, blurring my vision for a second. It scared me, and I shook and slowed down to about 30 or 40 miles per hour. I finally got my composure back, and the devil told me it was nothing, so I got back up to speed. I never went another mile when suddenly something began to bang on the right side of my car. Bang, bang, bang it went. That, I must tell you, scared me silly. I stopped the car, went around to the passenger side of the car and looked for a blowout. Nothing was wrong. I was shaking really bad, as I got back into the car, and I remember saying; "Lord, what are you trying to tell me?" In my mind he spoke to me clearly; "Its high time you begin to help your dad,

and get back on the pathway of right. The devil is trying to take your life".

I thought very deeply all the way home. When I did get home, mom and dad were not there. I was at first, kind of puzzled. But then I remembered that it was church night, and after church on Sat. night, they always either brought someone home with them, or they went somewhere and had fellowship with some of those that were at church. Sing, pop popcorn, visit and enjoy themselves. They all worked second shift, and were not used to being in bed until after midnight anyway, and, church on Sunday morning did not start until 11 AM, because of the fact that so many were used to sleeping in every day. So, I begin to think, where would they be? Oh, I know, they are probably at Chester and Louise Butler's house. So, off I went to their house.

Sure enough they were there, as well as many others. I remember as I walked in the back door, a deep hush came over everyone. Quite it was, like something terrible had happened. I stopped and looked at everyone and said; "what's wrong with everybody"? Mom looked at me and said; "well, we didn't expect to see you here. But we are really glad you are". I said "mom, I have decided that it is about time I started helping dad", and she began to cry.

We all cried a bit, and from that day on, Sunday after Sunday, day after day, week after week, I began my journey back to the pathway. It was a long journey, and many valleys and gullies, and hard places. But week after week I made more and more progress. Finally it was drawing near when we would make our next trip to Oklahoma, and I was pretty excited. I was going to see this little prize that God had given me, and I was intent on bringing her home with me, whatever the cost.

One day I was into town, I do not remember what for, but I walked by a jewelry store on the plaza there in Arcata. I stopped and looked in the window, and then went inside. I looked at several wedding rings, and as the clerk came over and asked if he could help, I said yes, I want that set of rings right there. Now I did not know what size they were, and I didn't care. I just took them with me, and on the way home I got to thinking about the size. It seemed that God spoke to me in my mind and said, don't worry, they will be the right size. I then remember going into the

house, and Jerrie, my sister-in-law was there. Her and my brother Bobby, lived right beside the house in a mobile home. Mom was in the back of the house cleaning, and I quickly showed the rings to Jerrie. She was so excited, and said to me, can I try them on? I said sure, just be quite so mom won't hear you. She tried them on, and quickly said, oh they are too big. I said no they aren't. If it is for me to marry her, they will be the right size. Jerrie quickly said, don't worry about that, you can have them sized. I said no, God showed me that they would be the right size.

Well time is moving fast, and it is quickly getting time to go to Oklahoma. I had made arrangements to have enough time off, and I had indicated that I was taking my car. Mom did not like this idea at all. There were three families going, and it seemed to her, there was no need for me to take my car, as there would be plenty of room in three cars. I had different ideas of course, and I did not want to share them with her, for she would think it was a terrible idea. I, on the other hand, knew that I was going to bring back a bride.

Off we go to Oklahoma, where every year the church has been having brush arbor meetings for many years, and only about 2 miles from where I was born, right across the street from my Grandpa and Grandma Porter's house.

We arrived in Perkins on a Saturday afternoon, and I called Marcelle where she worked, taking care of an elderly lady that had crippling arthritis. I had never called her before, (too bashful I guess), so this was the first time to ever hear her voice. Remember, this is the girl I came to marry, and this was the first time ever hearing her voice. I was nervous, to say the least, but I asked her if I could come early the next morning to pick her up for Sunday church at Parkland. She said yes, she had made arrangements to take off the entire day. I was there the next morning, very early, about 60 miles away, and as I walked up on the porch and knocked on the door, she came out and met me. She was everything I imagined and more. I wanted to take her in my arms, and hold her tight, but she quickly took me inside to introduce me to the woman that she worked for.

We took our time getting the 60 miles or so, to church, not late or anything, just not driving fast like I was use to doing. The meeting was good, even though I had many stars in my eyes.

After church, I asked her if she would like to go see where I spent lots of time as a boy? This was the old home place of my grandparents, which was down on a creek, only about 3 or 4 miles away from the church. And so we did. When we left the old place, I knew that if I went back a different way, I would go through a low water spot where the creek ran across the road for about 20 feet, about 3 or 4 inches deep. When we were in the middle of the creek, I asked her if she could swim? She said no. I said well either I am going to get my first kiss, or you are going to get your feet wet. She did not get her feet wet.

There was church again that evening, and after church was over I was taking her back to where she worked, and as we came into west Sapulpa, we were about to go past the golf course, and I turned into the parking lot where golfers parked when they were golfing. It was about midnight or later, but we needed to talk. We sat there in the parking lot, and we talked and talked, we were getting aquatinted in person, so to speak. Finally after some time, I said to her. I have a surprise for you. I reached into the glove box, and brought out the set of rings. I opened the box, and said, will you marry me? She thought for a minute or so, seemed like an hour to me, and then she said; "if my daddy will let me". I took the engagement ring, slipped it on her finger, and it fit perfectly. Her fingers were larger than Jerrie's, even though she was just a little 90 pound girl. Needless to say, only 9 days later we were married, and off to California. I will spare you the details of a few things here, just for embarrassments sake. Nothing fancy, just two people in love, and ready to make a life together.

## Chapter 4.

### EXPECTING OUR FIRST CHILD

1961 was a special year. Not because it was anything more than just a year, but because it was the year of our first child. Pregnancy was different than we were used to. Things were not the usual routine as they had been for the first few months of our marriage. Now we were looking forward to the birth of our first child. I was still not grown up like I should have been, but Marcelle was patient with me, and tough as nails in her time of pregnancy. We burned wood for heat, and she chopped wood, and even worked in the garden like a trooper.

When it came time for Mike to be born, we had it planned to go to mom and dads for the birth. Things had gone pretty much as expected during the time we were waiting. But, when it came time to deliver, things did not go well. Labor went on for hours, and we were beginning to worry a lot about Marcelle. I am telling you this, so that you can see just how serious you can get when things are not going well. I was really wanting God to deliver my wife, so I began to look back over my life to see if there was anything that I needed to reconcile, in order to reach God in this great time of trouble. I prayed and prayed, but it just seemed things were not happening.

I was taken back in time, to when I was 15 years old. I had somehow acquired an old gas powered lawn mower motor, and working it over some, I had been able to get it running pretty good. I loved to fire it up, and just play with it out in the front part of the house. One day I needed a little cash for something, and I sold that motor to a dear cousin of mine for \$5.00. Now you would think that this was not a big deal, but I had failed to tell him that the head was cracked. You see, I knew it was cracked, and each time I wanted to play with it, I would seal it up with something, and it would run fine for about an hour, then it would start leaking, and stop running. Well, here I am needing God's mercy, and I had never repented of that, nor had I asked my cousin for forgiveness. So, I went into the living room, sat down and wrote him a letter, as he did not live there any more. I told him I was sorry, and that I wanted him to forgive me for it. I took



it out and put it in the mailbox, and put the flag up. Remember, this is in the middle of the night. It was not long afterwards that Marcelle was delivered of our first child, Mike. He was born dead. He was lifeless as could be. The midwife worked and worked with him, but it seemed that nothing was going to work. Suddenly my mother, who had gone into a fast earlier in the evening, reached forth her hand over him and said, in the Name of The Lord Jesus, I command life to come into this body. Immediately, his body became pink, (it was very black up to this time), and he began to cry. Needless to say, there was rejoicing in the room. Later the next morning, before the mailman came, the devil kept saying to me, you still have time to go to the mailbox and get that letter. I never did, and I am so glad to this day that I did not. Because I do not believe this dear cousin of mine ever came to the Lord, and a few years later, he and his wife were killed, when the plane he was flying, crashed for reasons that I have never learned. This taught me the lesson, make amends for your wrongs while you have time. Say you're sorry quickly, or else you may never have the opportunity.

## Chapter 5.

### OUR FIRST TRIP BACK TO OKLA.

It was two years that went by before we went back to Oklahoma to visit, and Marcelle was no doubt pretty homesick. I had decided that it was time, so, very soon, we were off to Okla. on our first trip to see the In-laws, and the other relatives of course. We started having fuel pump problems just before we got to Santa Rosa, New Mexico. Marcelle was having one of her terrible headaches, so I stopped and picked up a fuel pump for the car, found us a Motel room, and she went right to bed. While I was installing the fuel pump on my 1957 Chevy BelAir 2DHT, the upper fuel line connector egg shaped on me, so I had to walk, seemed like a mile, down into town before I finally found one. By the time I got it all together, working out there in front of the Motel room, it was pretty late. After spending the night, we went on our way, without any more problems.

We arrived in Oklahoma and visited with all the folks in several places. We had made provisions to stay for as long as we thought necessary, so we took our time. After about 2 weeks, we started back for home and arrived without any problems at all. When we got back home, I went looking for work and finally was able to get employment at Durable Plywood Co. in Arcata, which was there on the south end of town. I had lots of experience in the plywood industry, so getting a good position was not a problem. I worked in almost every spot in and outside the mill, including on the log pond. Finally I found myself working production, on what is called the spreader crew. We rotated positions from core feeder, core layer, and sheet slingers. Durable Plywood Co. paid bonuses on production, so we got wages + .05 a thousand for every thousand board foot over 50,000 per night. It was not unusual for us to get from 70 to 90,000 a night, so our checks were pretty good for 1963.

Along about that time, I was called into the ministry by a prophecy spoken to me on a Sunday morning, by Sis. Lenora Carmichael. I was not ready to hear such a thing, and questioned God very much so about it. I remember some sleepless nights over that calling, but finally I decided that it was of the Lord, and the work had to be done.

I was aware of a job position at the mill, that required almost no labor at all, and very little of your attention. It was the chipper operator. This was the place in the mill where all of the waste veneer came up a conveyer belt, and then into a chipper that chipped it into small pieces and then by conveyer, it went out to a railroad car to be hauled to a chipboard plant in Ukiah, Calif..

The boss was not very happy about me bidding off of the spreader crew, but when I told him what my plan was, he agreed. He was a Christian himself, and when I told him that I had been called to the ministry, and needed to study the bible, it was ok. I also told him I needed to build me a small chair with arms on it, out of scrap 2X4's so that I could sit and watch the chipper and read at the same time. I would make sure things were ok, but read the bible 4 to 6 hours a day. He said fine, just do your job, and I won't bother you.

So by doing this, I was able to read the bible, all the way through. I don't mind telling you, it is a long ways from Genesis to Revelation, but I had told the Lord that I could not preach his word until I had read it all. This was the beginning of my ministry. Night after night, hour after hour, one confusing thing after another, of which, many things I did not understand, but I just kept on reading.

Not many months went by, till I was out at the Forklift fuel tank one day, and there filling the tank was a dear friend of mine that I had known for several years. His name was Les Garrison. He had owned a Texaco station when I was in High School and I worked for him some. After we said hi, and how are you doing, he said to me, Bill, why don't you get out of this mill, and go to work where I work, and make something of yourself. He worked at the Cal/Gas Propane Company, and he said, they needed a delivery man, which would soon open up to an opportunity to learn to be an Appliance Service man. I thought about it for a couple of days, then went in to see the manager at the propane office. His name was Derl Nazelrod.

Well, having gone from life in the mill, to life in and out of an office is really different. Only 3 or 4 people around you most of the time, and because the company furnished me uniforms to wear, it was really different. I learned the propane business, and not too long afterwards, I started to learn the service end of the business. Over the next few months and years I learned it well. My boss Derl, was one of the best people that I was ever associated with. He claimed to be an atheist, but I never was convinced. He had been raised in a strict Christian atmosphere, so I suspected that he just did not think he could live a Christian life. So, he claimed to be atheist.

I want to relate to you something that I learned from him. When I was at the first plywood mill I worked at, (Simpson Plywood), I worked with a fellow named Melvin Gilstrom. Melvin later became one of my best friends. He was not as sharp as some people, but he made up for it on the good guy side of him. We went hunting some together, as he had an old military jeep. He both married our wives, the same year, and he later had a couple of ornery little boys.

Well it happened one day, that one of them was playing with matches and set the barn on fire. It burned up the front end of that old jeep. Not long after going to work for the propane company, my boss Derl, also had an old jeep just like Melvin's, and the transfer case went out of it and he could no longer use it. I told him about this friend of mine that had an old jeep that was burnt in the front end, but the transfer case might still be good. So we went out to see him about it. We looked it all over, and determined that the transfer case was still good. Now Derl, my boss, was able to see that Melvin was not on the smart end of the stick, so he ask him what he wanted for it? Melvin said to him; "oh I don't know; would you give me \$15 for it"? Now what would you do next? Probably what most other people would do, offer something less. Derl says back to him; "no, but I'll give you \$25 for it, and have my boys remove it", and the deal was made.

Did you hear me right on that???? This was the first time I had ever witnessed something like this, and it really stamped a memory on my mind that I have never forgotten. This, coming from a "so called" atheist, a man who didn't believe in God, or the Bible.

Immediately I remembered the words in the Old Testament; Prov:20:14: "It is naught, it is naught, saith the buyer: but when he is gone his way, then he boasteth." It was along about this time that I started to realize that you can learn good things from anyone.

This same year was also especially good to me, because I baptized my first one. It was Ben, my younger brother. Having been a terrible influence on him those years that I was not living right, had made me worry about him a lot. But fear was subsided, when quite by surprise, on the 16<sup>th</sup> of February, 1963 he called on me to take him into the water for baptism.

It was bad weather, the river was up. Also, it was in the middle of the night when he requested baptism, he said right now, and I remember as we arrived at the river, it was dark, it was out of it's banks, and we walked out into the river, it seemed like forever, searching for deep water. I think we were completely out of sight of everyone, using the car lights shining towards us, before we finally found deep enough water. This

event, forever set us on our deep and lasting big brother, little brother relationship, that night in "old Mad River".

Well, 1964 had its own special times. We had experienced the joy of childbirth again when our second child, Philip was born. Everything went off with a flash. Marcelle was only in hard labor for about 45 minutes, and he was a little doll. I was into my ministry more and more now, and on May the 2<sup>nd</sup>, I baptized Richard Hackett, and then back to the river the next day to baptize Allen Rossiter. It was a time of great rejoicing, and we all felt the love of God in our hearts.

Marcelle and I had never moved to a different place before, and living among different people and attending a different Assembly. But along in the summer of 1964, I began to feel like moving to Grand Jct., Colorado. Bro. Les Pfister, a wonderful minister, and his family had been brought close to us, and I felt that I needed his tutoring in my ministry. It was not an easy move, as I had to quit my job, and work was not easy to come by in Colorado at that time.

Finally we made the move. We settled in and rented a little home on the very bank of the Colorado River. It was on an old peach orchard that was being repossessed by the Farmers Home Administration. It was fall, and I went to work for Arrow Gas, one of the local propane companies. We had a wonderful time and was able to come very close to many of those in the church at this Assembly. Bro. Otis (one of the elders) and Sis. Vera Wilson lived only a half mile down the road from us, and we quickly became very close to them and their children. Their daughter Elaine, who had recently married Bro. Gordon Morris, and their son Lee and daughter Trudy were still at home. Many of the others who lived there, became dear friends also. We lived there for about 4 months, and then, we moved back to California.

## Chapter 6.

### THE MIRACLE PEACH CROP 1966

Oh the year 1966, how I remember it well. It started out great, on Jan. 3, when I baptized Sis. Trudy Wilson. She was the young teenager daughter of Bro. Otis and Sis. Vera Wilson, who had come to McKinleyville to visit us. It was right down there in old Mad River of course, just a short distance from where I had been baptized myself, 10 years earlier. The next few days were fun, as we went on down to L.A. with them, as Sis. Vera had a sister in L.A. and wanted to see her. Then, we went to Disneyland. What a time we had. Little did I know that it was to be one of the most memorable years of my life.

It was wintertime, 1965 when I begin to feel I should move back to Grand Jct., Colorado. We had lived there for a few months in 1964 as I have said, and my wife surely did not want to move there again so soon again, but God was calling, and I was His Evangelist, called to go.

Lee Wilson, not a brother in the church, as of yet, and only 17 or 18 years old at the time, had just graduated from high school the summer before. He had decided to stay with us for a few weeks, having come with his folks to see us, as I spoke of earlier, when Trudy was baptized. He lived at home with his parents, Bro. Otis and Sis. Vera Wilson, and when I told him I might be coming back out there soon, he just stayed a few weeks with us, and rode with us in the move. Now unaware to him, he would be leaving for Viet Nam that summer, after arriving back home. At the time, I was selling cars for Bernie Anderson Pontiac-Buick in Eureka, California. Day after day I felt the strong lead of the Lord to go back to Grand Jct. and stay for awhile. I was not sure why, and did not question the reasons anyway. I did not wish to make this move again so soon but, the month of February went by, and I did not sell a single car. No sales, no money. Finally I knew that it had to be done. I was able to sell a nice 1956 Chevy. pickup that I had purchased from someone and make a few dollars on it, so off we went, to the wonderful state of Colorado again.

No sooner did we arrive, we found out that the same little house that we had rented in 1964 was available again, and at a price that we could afford, we thought. (\$50.00 a month). It was a nice little house, three small bedrooms, a nice living room, dining room and kitchen. The house wasn't all that old, and most of all, it was located on a 10 acre peach orchard.

Now the old orchard was in bad shape, and the trees really needed pulled up and burned. It had been in repossession from Farmers Home Administration for several years, and had not received the needed upkeep that an orchard needs. But never the less, they told me that if I wanted to work the orchard, I could have whatever it produced. It needed to be irrigated, and the water was paid for by Farmers Home Administration anyway, so I told them I would give it a try.

Jobs were hard to come by in Grand Jct. in 1966, in fact, you almost had to buy one to get one. I went everywhere looking for work, and offered to take anything. I tried doing a little business on my own. Bought a little van, and started doing some LP Gas service work for one of the LP Gas companies. But that did not work out. I applied for, and landed a job as shift manager at the largest service station in the world, so it was said, Gay Johnson's, Grand Jct., Colorado, largest and busiest service station in the U.S.. 24 pumps, and 6 islands. I had several attendants under me, and I had to work 12 hours a day, 7 days a week, for \$1.25 per hour. Now you don't have to be very good at math to figure it out. That is not very much money, and no time off. 7 AM to 7 PM, as you know, meant that Sunday church was out, and Wednesday night was hurry or you're late. But it was bread on the table, and with a wife and 2 little boys, I had learned, you just do what you have to do. Surely something would come along? Surely God was going to bless me for doing His will. I just knew He would. Several weeks went by, and the old orchard had put on some leaves, and with the help of a little irrigation water, it was looking pretty good. A dear friend, Bro. Zeke Bellew, had loaned me his tractor, and with his advise, I had marked it out, and put the water to it. Really, it looked pretty good for an old orchard that needed to be pulled and burned.

Working at the service station was getting pretty tiring, even though it was not hard work. No visiting time, and no Sunday church, was almost more than I could stand. But, until something else came along, I was going to stay right there. One evening, we went to church, and a dear young Sister, spoke to me in prophesy, told me that the Lord wanted me to go back to the place where I had come from, for the Lord had a work for me to do there, and when I returned, He would bless me for it.

Well I have to say, as I said to the wife, there is no way that we are going to be able to go back to Calif. for a few days. One, because there was no time off, and two, there was no money to do so. So I decided, this just could not have been the Lord that spoke to me, for He would not expect me to do what I was not able to do. But day after day, my wife would say to me, when I would come in from work; "honey, have you considered the prophesy that you received, and whether you should be doing what it said to do"? And I would say; "you can't do, what you can't do". Needless to say, a few days went by, and I decided that you must at least try the spirit, and see if it is from the Lord or not. And yes, I had to quit my good for nothing job, and yes I had to use the credit card. But with the help of a couple of young boys that wanted to go and help me drive, we packed a few sandwiches and off we went to California. My wife, 2 little boys, Mike and Phil, Lee Wilson, Marvin Peterson and my 14 year old cousin Dean Porter, who had come to live with us.

Lee and Marvin hadn't been driving long, and I did have a really nice car. They were anxious to go with us, just to get to drive that 1965 Buick Skylark 2DHT, with the Wildcat 355, and a 4 Speed Transmission.

We drove strait through. It took about 20 to 22 hours. Not much room, and not much sleep, but we were young. I was only 25 you know, and when you are 25, you can do things like this. I gave out some special meetings for the week, and preached my heart out. But it seemed nothing was really happening. Oh, people got lifted up, and rejoiced in the Lord, but it seemed nothing happened like I had thought it would. We finished out the week, and said our good-byes. Off we were, back to the high country, driving strait through again. We had made it to Utah, and we were headed down the long hill on 6-50 Hwy into



Spanish Forks, Utah. Suddenly I looked at the sky, it was in the middle of the night, and it was lit up like the world was on fire. I just couldn't believe it. As I got closer to town, I could see that it was smudge pots. This was also orchard country, and they were smudging, to keep the fruit from freezing. I stopped for gas, and asked the attendant what was going on? He said man, it has been in the 20's for the last few nights, and the fruit is about all gone. My heart sank, as I had planned so much for that old orchard to pull me out of the hole. Now it looked like it was all gone. I must say, I prayed all the way home. We got in very late that night, Sat. night, and still go up early and went to church that Sunday morning.

After church Sis. Vera, Lee's mother, asked us home with them. They only lived about a quarter of a mile down the road, and Bro. Otis had a peach orchard also. While the women were fixing dinner, I asked Bro. Otis about the peaches. He said that it had been getting really cold, and that the crop had been totally destroyed. I said to him, how in the world do you know that? He said, it is easy, all you have to do is look at the blossoms, and you can tell. I said to him, after dinner, can we go and check mine? So, after dinner, we went up to the old dilapidated orchard, and begin to check out the blossoms. The orchard was beautiful. All bloomed out, and just beautiful. But, as Bro. Otis said, when you break open the pod of the bloom, that little green bulb on the inside is the peach. If it is green inside, it's good, but if it is black, it's bad. So off we walked, pulling off blossoms. Green one, green one, green one, green one. Finally, a black one. Bro. Otis says to me, Bro. Bill, you have yourself a miracle here. I have checked mine over good, and I couldn't find a green one anywhere. Remember, he is only a quarter mile down the road. The man next door, Mr. Reece, had an orchard that was manicured. He raised peaches for a living, and he did not have a good one either. This was going to be very interesting indeed. I just couldn't wait to see what was next. Little did I know what the Lord had in store for me in the next few months.

Well you can't eat little green blossom pods, and I still didn't have a JOB. Now I knew that the Lord would give me something, but little did I know what he was getting ready to do for me. Now I had been down to the employment office many times. It was

just a little place, and you could see all the way to the back where the man sat that you had to talk to. After many times coming in, all you had to do was look back there, and he would just wave you away. That's a pretty discouraging sight when you need a job really bad. As I left the house that Monday morning, the Lord spoke to me in my mind, and said; "go to the employment office". As always, I spoke right back and said; "oh but Lord, I have been there many times, and the guy just waves me away. I don't think I could stand that discouragement this morning". And he said: "GO". And I said; "OK".

Off to the employment office I went, weak in faith, but obedient. When I got there, to my amazement, as I walked in and looked back to the back, low and behold, the man was waving me to come back, really hard. I almost fell over things getting there. He said to me, man I can't believe you came in here this morning. I have a call for one of the best jobs in the county, and you are the man qualified for the job. I just can't believe it. Take this paper, and go down to National Cylinder Gas. This was the local Oxygen and Acetylene plant, known as NCG. It was one of the largest Oxygen companies in the US, and they were Union. It paid more then just the average job. So, I took that little piece of paper down there in about 2 minutes, and there to my amazement was a big red headed Irish woman, and when I handed her that piece of paper, she went bananas!!!! She raged, "I told them not to send just anyone down here". "I told them I need to see qualified people".

"I just called them an hour ago, and there is no way they could have had time to find someone so fast". Well, needless to say, I had almost decided that if I was going to be working for this woman, I didn't need a job that bad. But I was patient. Finally she settled down, and she said; as long as you are here, you might as well fill out an application. So I did. Now what she did not know, was that I could print like a typewriter. You see, I had been on a job selling cars, and you had to print all your contracts for the bank. I was good, and she noticed it right away. She said to me, "where in the world did you learn how to print like that, smiling"? I said, with practice. She said; "there is not a man in this plant that can write so I can read it. This is really refreshing. I

think Mr. Wright is going to want to see you, he will be back in about 30 minutes.

Wow, I am not going to have to work for this woman, I thought to myself. I'll be back in about an hour, I said to her, and I was. On returning, I was shown back to the office of Mr. Pat Wright, who immediately said to me, Hi Bill, I am surprised you do not own the place you worked for in California. The manager there gave you a super recommendation. I went to work immediately, and started making more money than I had ever made in my life. I was driving the town delivery truck, and occasionally I would make a trip to Denver for a load of Hydrogen for the coal fired power plant. They used it for cooling.

Well the peaches are growing more and more now. Back in the early spring, before I went back to California for a few days, the neighbor man, Mr. Reece, had been out spraying his peach orchard one day, and he caught me and asked me if I wanted him to spray mine. I said to him, that would be nice. He said he would do it for just the cost of the spray. I told him that I did not have the money to pay him right now, but that I would be glad to pay him when the crop came off. Well, there's been a freeze, so he came over and wanted me to pay him. I told him that I did not have the money, and that he had said I could pay when the peaches came off. He said to me; "there is not going to be any peaches, and I need paid now". So, I borrowed the money from my dad, and paid him. Now occasionally I see him out in the orchard, with a long pole, looking for a peach. Of course there were none. Remember, his orchard is only a few yards from mine. Only a little driveway separated them. Nothing, that is what he had, nothing. I would see him look over at my old run down dilapidated orchard, and shake his head.

Well it's July now, and I was relieving the out of town, long distance delivery guys. Monday morning at 3 AM, I was off for New Mexico, and then around the corner of Colorado through Cortez and back into Utah, through Blanding and Moab, then back into Colorado to the plant. It took 4 days. I would get back in on Thursday, and then Friday all I had to do was go down to the plant and unload my truck.

One Monday morning, the peaches were ready to harvest. I had no idea what we were going to do. The trees were so heavy

with peaches, some of the limbs were about to break. Bro. Otis had said that we needed to thin, but we are just not the kind of people to throw anything away, so not much thinning took place. But I remember it well, it was Monday morning, 3 AM, and I am off on the out of town route. I was very distressed, and I remember praying all the way. Every moment that I was not very occupied, I was praying. I remember my prayer. God I do not know what to ask of you, all I ask is that you do something. We need you to finish this miracle, so that you are glorified. Please do something.

I remembered a few days earlier, when Marcelle and I had gone to the local packing plant, to buy some picking baskets. You need picking baskets to pick the peaches into. We only had enough money to purchase 12. Best I can remember, they were about \$1.75 each, and we only had enough money for a dozen. Can you imagine, a dozen baskets, in a 10-acre orchard, and hundreds of bushels of peaches? It would not have been enough for 5 trees. But we were doing what we could. Anyway, its tee time, as the golfers would say, and I was off on the truck. Out of town for the next 4 days. I enjoyed those few weeks that I was on the south route. It always put me in Pleasant View, Colorado for church, on Wednesday nights. I don't remember if I stopped that week or not. I might have kept on going so that I could get home early Thursday. But I remember well, when I did get home, I'm coming down the driveway, looking out across the orchard, and there were picking boxes everywhere. All through the orchard were picking boxes, and ladders. When I got up close to the house, at the shed overhang, there were full boxes of peaches. Lots of them. I went into the house, and Marcelle said to me "Oh honey, you are not going to believe what happened while you were gone. A man down the road, came to the house and said to me, you have the only peach crop here on the mesa, and I'm wondering if you have a buyer"? He went on to say; "I have a buyer from the eastern slope, he comes every year and buys my crop. I don't have anything this year, and as far as I can tell, you are the only ones that do. If I arranged it, would you be willing to sell him yours"? Marcelle said to him; "we don't have any boxes". And he said; "I have hundreds of them. I will supply the boxes". Marcelle said; "we don't have any ladders". He said; "I

have hundreds of ladders, I will supply the ladders". So, she said; "ok. We will sell him our peaches".

So, Mr. Jones brought his boxes down, and scattered them throughout the orchard. Then he brought the ladders, and scattered them throughout the orchard also. Marcelle called Sis. Vera, and several of the sisters in the church, and some of the young kids, and they all came to pick peaches. I helped when I was there, but come Monday morning, I was off on the truck again. So, it was mostly up to Marcelle, and she done a wonderful job. Truckload after truckload, the buyer would come and pick them up. Then he would say, I will be back at such a time, and pick up another load. Finally we had about worked ourselves out, and Mr. Jones came down to see how we were doing. I said to him; "Mr. Jones, how many peaches are left out there"? He said; "I don't know, lets go take a look. Quite a few he said, why"? I said; "you have been so good to us. How about I give the rest to you"? He said; "oh no, but I will buy them if you want me to". I said; "make me an offer. He said I will give you two hundred dollars for the rest, and my crew will pick them". I said; "you have a deal".

So, the harvest was over for us, and he still left us enough peaches on the trees, so we could can peaches for ourselves, and several others that we gave peaches to. Brethren came from all over, and also bought peaches from us to can. When it was all over, we had enough money to pay off most of our extra bills, and we had \$80. left. I knew it was not long off, till it would be deer season, and I did not have a deer rifle. So, I went to Gibson's Discount Store, there in town, and bought me a new Deer Rifle. It was a Remington 6 MM, with the ribbed barrel. I still have it today. It has many memories attached. By and by deer season came, opening morning, 9:30 AM, bang, bang, I killed two of the biggest bucks anyone had ever seen in that part. Both of them had 4 points on each side, and eye guards. One dressed 210, and listen to this. The other dressed 330. It looked like an elk. I had gone hunting with Bro. Otis Wilson, Bro. Bob Byers, and Bro. Gordon Morris, so we shared the two bucks that I killed, and the two Doe's that Gordon had killed, and we all had meat. It was a good hunt, and we had a wonderful time at it.

Soon after all of this, the Lord pressed upon me to return to California, which we did. So you see, 1966 was a wonderful year for Marcelle and I. Not without our moments of despair, but always knowing that God was going to bring us through. I look back now, and it is easy to see how all of this brought us together, and bonded friendships, some which endure even until this day.

We picked up a good dog while we were there, and yes he did ride on the back of the trailer all the way back to California. Sometimes there was even a little snow flying. His name was Fitzroy, and the kids loved him dearly.

## Chapter 7.

### 1967 LISTENING TO THE LORD

In order to begin this chapter, we must go back to the winter of 1966, after the glorious things that I spoke of in that year. You see, we no sooner claimed the wonderful things that God had done for us then, God said to me, go back to California. What a wife it must take, to just get settled in to one place, and then be asked to up and leave again, and go back to uncertainty. I look back now, and wonder how could she have put up with all this uncertainty? Time has told us, and this is the reason for the story you are reading now. We came back to California with no promise of employment, or a place to live. But, God is merciful, and He always provided. We eventually moved back into our house on Columbus Ave., as it had been rented while we were gone. Floyd and Lorene Taylor lived there some of the time, I do not remember just when. I had looked for work everywhere, and there were no jobs to be found. There was a new Pulp Mill that had just opened, and everyone wanted to work there. I learned that they had 3500 applications in the first week they were open. Needless to say, they had been overrun with job seekers. Never the less, I went to try my luck, and out in front of the personnel office, was this 4 X 8 sign that read, ABSOLUTELY NO APPLICATIONS BEING TAKEN TODAY. WE HAVE TAKEN OVER 3500 APPLICATIONS TO DATE, AND WE WILL HIRE FROM THESE APPLICATIONS.

You might not be able to imagine how humiliating that can be until you experience it, and you need a job really bad. It was several miles out to this place, for at that time the new bridge from Eureka to Samoa, which was near the end of a long peninsula of land several miles long, had not been built. You had to turn off in Arcata, and go the long way out to this new mill.

One morning I was on my way to look for work, as I had been doing, and as I was coming into Arcata, on my way to Eureka, having plans to go to the employment office again, and then to some of the places in Eureka that I had already been to. As I came closer and closer to the exit going out to Samoa, the Lord spoke to me in my mind and said; "Go out to the Pulp Mill". I remember very vividly speaking back to him and saying; "Lord, I have already been out there 2 times, & the sign says ABSOLUTELY NO APPLICATIONS BEING TAKEN. I cannot afford to drive those extra miles out of my way, and see that humiliating sign". As He does so many times, He said it to me again; "Go out to the Pulp Mill". Again, as I got closer and closer to the exit, I kept saying to Him, I have been there, I cannot go there again and look at that sign. But, just as I got to the exit I said; "Ok Lord, I will go".

My faith was weak, I was not feeling as I should have, but I went. When I parked in the parking lot, you could not see around the corner of the building where the sign was. I was fully expecting to see the sign, when suddenly I looked up, and the sign said, APPLICATIONS BEING TAKEN TODAY. You see, there was some paper taped over the (ABSOLUTELY NO), and God had known, and this is why He had put it into my mind to go there. Quickly I went into the office, and asked if I could fill out an application. The lady brought me one, and I filled it out. They were looking for someone mechanical, and I was mechanical. She also brought me an IQ test, which I had never taken before. This scared me a little, as she took me into a separate room, and told me I had 15 minutes to take this test. I took the test, and was not shaken by it at all, in fact when she took it and graded it, she said I had scored the highest of anyone they had ever given it to. I asked her if my IQ was good, and she said, if 165 is good, then you are pretty good. I did not know then if it was really good, or just fair.

I worked at the Pulp Mill for several months, and it was again, the best job I had ever had in my life. I made more money than I had ever made, and we were really doing well. I did not like to work 20 hours a day, as I had to do a few times, but we were doing really good financially. I had made some upward movement in the company, but when I hurt my back on the job one day, the boss made me a trouble shooter. I went over the entire plant, top to bottom, listed and categorized all the parts and equipment that would wear out on a regular basis. I listed all the parts that it would take to repair each piece of equipment, and where to order those parts. I was putting together a file, so that when anything was needed, it could be found and purchased, ASAP. To this day, I do not know for sure what he had in store for me, as it was not very long till, “you guessed it”, I told him I had to leave the company and go on another evangelistic mission. I gave him my 2 weeks notice. He said, I bet you are going back to truck driving. I said no, I am going to Okla. and work for Gibble Oil Company. God had told me to move to Oklahoma.

We had hardly even settled down, and I told Marcelle it was time to go again. What in the world are you talking about? I can hear her mind speaking to me now, as I write these words. They settle down on you more when you write them, than when you are just speaking them. Move again? Yes, to Oklahoma. But dear, we are expecting our 3<sup>rd</sup> child, and I am in no condition to move anywhere.

## Chapter 8.

### MR. GIBBLE, AN UNUSUAL MAN

Off we go again. This time we are pulling a little RV Trailer, with a batching kit inside, and we are driving our 65 Buick Skylark. We went through Grand Jct., Colorado for a short visit, and had a wonderful time. The brethren there were well, and wanted us to just stay there, instead of going on to Oklahoma.



We arrived in Okla. just fine, and decided that it would be good if we lived in Perkins, as that was where I felt that God wanted me to do His work. I had felt to spend some time with my Uncle Merl and Aunt Jane Reed, and their youngest son Terry. Also I wanted to be close to my grandmother, and visit with her. We settled down in a rented house, right behind the old rock station at the corner of Main and West Stumbo Ave., on the north side, across from the New Payne County Bank. As soon as we were settled, I went out to see about a job. Remember, I had told my boss in Calif. that I was going to work for Gibble Oil. God had showed me in a dream, that I was going to Okla., and I was going to work for Mr. Gibble. Bare in mind, I did not even know Mr. Gibble, nor had I ever been to the company office in Cushing. All I knew was that Bro. Bill Herring worked for him.

The day came, and I went looking for work. I went directly to Stillwater, not Cushing. I stopped at the first truck driving place I came to, which was Bumble Bee Freight Lines. I went in, shook the man's hand, and said; "I need a job. I can drive anything you have, and I will make you a good hand". He looked at me and said; "You can go to work in the morning at 8 am." I said back to him; "Sir, this is the first place I have been. Would you mind if I went to a few other places, and see if I can find something better"? He said; "No, I don't mind at all. But if you don't find anything, be here at 8am in the morning". I said ok.

Next I went right down the street to Stillwater Milling Co., walked in and done the same thing. He said; "Be here at 7am in the morning". I said back to him; "Do you mind if I look around and see if I can find something better"? He said; "not at all. If you don't find something better, be here at 7am in the morning".

Well, as you know, I had not been to Gibble Oil Co., and I was now faced with a big decision. Was I going to trust God, or was I going to do my own thing? So, I went back home and I told Marcelle, I had been to two places, and both places wanted me to go to work. She said right back to me; "Did you go to Gibble"? No, I did not, I said to her. She then said; "Don't you think you should go to Gibble Oil Co. first"? I said; "Yes I should, and I have to go to Cushing to get my Chauffeur's License anyway. So, off I went to Cushing, with much doubt, and very little faith. In fact, I went to the driver's license office first, and got my

chauffeur's license. Now if I am not going to drive truck, what do I need with a chauffeur's license? But never the less, that is what I done. I was probable stalling, because I was fearful of going out to the Gibble Oil Co. office.

Finally I went on out to the office, out on East Main Street, I walked in, first time ever being there, and the first man I see is the truck dispatcher, and he was on the phone. Soon he was finally free, and I asked if I could speak to Mr. Gibble? He said; "I'm sorry, but Mr. Gibble is never here in the afternoon. You will have to see him early in the morning". Well, I had been told that I was to be at work early in the morning early, unless I found something better, remember? I was about to faint in my heart, when low and behold, in walks Mr. Gibble. After the introductions and all, I told him that I wanted to go to work for him. He said to me, come on back into my office.

Mr. Gibble had a large office, and very nice. I was a little intimidated when we went in, and he asked me to sit down. Next he said to me, why do you want to go to work for me? I was nervous, and said to him, because Bill Herring works for you, and he is a dear friend of mine. He looked at me a little funny, and said; "Bill Herring doesn't work for me any longer, I fired him last week". Now I am really nervous. Then he said to me; "Bill Herring is one of the best men that ever worked for me, and I need him back. Can you get him to go back to work for me"? I smiled and said; "I don't know Mr. Gibble, but I will try". He said; "that's fine, you can try"? I said of course. Then he says to me, Ok, I want you to go to work in the morning at 8am. I am going to have you a nice new vehicle to drive, and you will be going to all my stations, and tell my people what we have to offer them, and some of the things that we are going to be getting real soon. I want you to drive this vehicle all the time. Does your car have Air Conditioning, he says? No, I said, it does not, Mr. Gibble. He said do you have a little family? I said, I sure do. He said take your little family in my vehicle with the Air Conditioning in it. So I said, I would. He said the first thing you will do, is go down to Bill Herring's place, and tell him I want him back at any price.

So, that was the way it went, and that is the way that God had intended it to be. So my work with Mr. Gible was wonderful. It was one of the most rewarding jobs that I had ever taken. It didn't pay the most, but it was most rewarding. And by the way, Bill Herring did go back to work for Mr. Gible, and at the terms that he wanted.

At this time, I just have to tell you some of my experiences with Mr. Gible. He was different than any man that I had ever met before, and since. One morning when I had just arrived, Mr. Gible was just coming out the door, and he says to me, Mr. Bill, that's what he always called me, what are you doing this morning? Nothing I can't put off, if you want me, Mr. Gible. He said to me, come and go with me. I said ok. You drive, he said.

Now you have to realize that Mr. Gible had a new yellow Cadillac Eldorado, and it was really a super automobile. He climbed into the back seat, and laid down with his head resting on a saddle blanket. He said take me north on 18. That's Hwy. 18, going north out of Cushing. We went along for a few miles as he whistled the Old Rugged Cross. Suddenly he said to me, Mr. Bill? I said yes Mr. Gible. He said, I bet you're a preacher, aren't you? I said, yes I am Mr. Gible. He said, my daddy was a preacher. I said, he was? Yes he said, raised me up right. I bet you go to the same Church that Bill Herring goes to, don't you? Yes I do, Mr. Gible. He says to me, I go to the biggest church in town, the more people there are, the more you know that will buy your gas. I said, you're right about that Mr. Gible. Suddenly he says, take a right on 51. That is Hwy. 51 going east towards Yale, Oklahoma.

So I took a right. Shortly he says, take a left up there at that next county road. So, we took a left and followed the gravel road. Not long, I could see lots of cars and trucks parked everywhere. It was easy to see that we were going to a farm sale. We parked and began to walk down through the crowd. Mr. Gible knew everyone, and he introduced me to everyone that he met. I just acted like I was his son, as it seemed that he wanted it that way. After awhile, the sale began. They sold lots of cattle, all kinds of cattle and calves. Once in awhile, they would bring in a skinny cow. The bidding would start off slow, and run

up to about \$75 or \$80 dollars, and no one would bid any more. Suddenly Mr. Gibble would say, I'll give a hundred dollars. Everyone would look kind of dazed, and the bidding would go on, but nobody would bid any more. Gone once, gone twice, the auctioneer would say. Suddenly Mr. Gibble would say, I'll give a hundred and twenty five dollars. Everyone would get real quite, and the auctioneer would say, Mr. Gibble, you have the bid at One Hundred dollars. Mr. Gibble would say; "I said I will give a Hundred and twenty five dollars". So the auctioneer would begin the bid again for a little spell, and then he would again say, gone once, gone twice, & you guessed it, Mr. Gibble would say; "I'll give a hundred and fifty dollars".

Quiet as a mouse the crowd would be, when the auctioneer would again say, Mr. Gibble, you have the bid at a hundred and twenty five. Again, Mr. Gibble would say, I said I will give a hundred and fifty dollars. Finally he would settle on a price, and he would allow the sale to be made. To him of course, and at the highest price. I didn't get it for a little bit. Suddenly it all came to me. These were old people, moving to town because their health was bad, and they couldn't work any longer. They needed all the money they could get, and Mr. Gibble was giving it to them fair and square. So now, do I have to ask you, where are these people going to buy their gasoline from now on? And where do you think these folk's children, and their grandchildren are going to buy their gas? At Mr. Gibble's stations, of course. I had learned a very valuable lesson, and I was getting paid while I was learning.

Another time, I came in early in the morning, and Mr. Gibble was in the office. He says to me again, Mr. Bill, can you do me a favor today? I said, of course Mr. Gibble. He said to me, I want you to go down to Broken Arrow, and pick up some sweet corn for me. I said ok, tell me where to go. He says, you know where the new station is that we just opened up? I said yes I do. He said just past the station, on the left side of the road, there is a truck patch where they raise sweet corn. I have already been there and made the arrangements. Ok I said, and off to Broken Arrow, Okla. I go. This is a town just outside of Tulsa, where we had just opened a new station. I got there about 10 o'clock in the morning, and as I pulled into this truck patch, place where they

sold all kinds of vegetables, the man came out to meet me and said; "Are you from Gibble Oil Co."? Yes I am, I told him. "Well I have to tell you something", "that Mr. Gibble is the most wonderful man I have ever met. He came here yesterday, and looked at my corn. I told him that everyone in the country was having a bumper crop, and it was not selling well. I told him that I had a lot of corn picked already, and if we did not sell it pretty soon, it was going to ruin. He said how much does it sell for? I told him that it usually brings so much. I do not remember now how much that was, but, he told Mr. Gibble that he would sell it cheaper, because he needed to get rid of it soon. Mr. Gibble said to him, how much do you have. He said, oh I've probable got a pickup load. Mr. Gibble said to him, "I'll take the whole load". "I'll have a man here for it in the morning". The man said to me; "Mr., I don't have to tell you, he was a God send. Don't you see, we needed to sell that corn bad, and he took the whole lot". I said back to the man; "I am not surprised. I have seen him do things like this already".

(Now again, do I have to ask you? Where do you think this man is going to buy his gas, and his children's gas, and his grandchildren's gas??) Mr. Gibble was a genius, and a saint. A genius in marketing, and a saint to many that were in need.

I took the truck load of corn back to the office, and there was Mr. Gibble waiting on me. He jumped into the seat with me. (This new vehicle that he had bought me, was a Ford Ranchero, so it was like a car, and like a pickup). The back was loaded full of sweet corn, and I had covered it with a tarp. Mr. Gibble said to me, go west to Euchee Creek. I knew where that was, it is a Creek between Cushing and Drumright on Hwy. 33. When we got there, he said turn left on that gravel road. I turned left, and we went for a mile or so, and he said turn right. So, I turned right, and then he said turn right again, into that long driveway. So down this long driveway we went to an old farm house. There was about a dozen kids all around us, as I remember it. I got out, and Mr. Gibble went up to the door. An older lady came to the door and said, good afternoon Mr. Gibble. Mr. Gibble spoke back to her, and said, by the way. I brought you some sweet corn. You and your family do like sweet corn, don't you? She said of course we do Mr. Gibble. She came out to the truck, and when she seen

that it was a truck load, she said, Mr. Gible, that is a lot of corn. I don't know where I'll put it. He said to her, don't worry about a thing. I have told Otasco's to bring you out a new freezer tomorrow. Now (Otasco's was a store that sold appliances. It used to be called, Oklahoma Tire and Supply Company, but then it was just called, Otasco Stores). She was so overjoyed she was beside herself. Mr. Gible said, now don't you be saying anything. I just wanted you to have some corn. Again, this woman and her family are going to buy Gible Gas for the rest of their lives, and all that know them, will know of his kindness to her and her family.

I could tell you more, but I guess enough is enough. Needless to say, Mr. Gible loved me like a son, and he even bought me into the Parkland grocery store not too long afterwards, but I did not want to run a grocery store, as I was a preacher, and preachers have to travel. So, in the end, I disappointed Mr. Gible, and I am really sorry I had to make that decision.

## Chapter 9.

### RUNNING ON EMPTY

Well after I decided that I did not want to run the Parkland Grocery store, I had to find another job. I was back to looking for a truck driving job, because that is what I could do, and that is what I liked to do. But as we know, truck driving jobs are not too good for preachers, as they often take you out of town. It was not long until I realized that I was not suppose to be in Okla. any longer, but move again.

First, I want to tell you how wonderful God is, even when we are not completely in tune with what He wants us to do. I did easily find a job driving truck, for a company in Stillwater hauling gravel. Now at first it was not bad, driving a semi-truck with a tip dump trailer. I was hauling gravel from the Quapaw gravel site at Drumright, Okla. to Stillwater. Four or five trips a day, and then went home. That did not last long, and it was off to

Atoka, Okla. hauling out of the Bromide crusher to Hugo, Okla. where they were stockpiling for a new highway they were building. It was 66 miles one way, so that made it a 132 miles round trip, two trips per day. I started at 5am in the morning, and got back to the Motel about 7pm in the evening. Long days, and lonesome. Marcelle and the boys were still at home in Perkins. I was down there for a week, and I was missing Marcelle pretty bad. I called and ask her if she would come and get me on the following Friday evening, and she said she would. So, on Friday, I was really anxious to see her and the kids, so that is all I had on my mind.

Low and behold, I forgot to fuel on my return of the first trip, and the truck could not make two trips on one tank of fuel. You see, we could only fuel at one particular place there in Atoka, with a company credit card. The old truck held 50 gallons, and at 3 to 5 miles to the gallon, you could go somewhere around 200 miles on a tank of fuel. Well it was 66 miles one way, so if you fueled after each round trip, you were in good shape. But, if you forgot, you could get back to the drop, but that was about it. Very soon you were out of fuel. There was no place to buy diesel anywhere on the road between the two places, so here I was on my return, and only about 10 miles from the drop, and about 56 miles to go. All of a sudden, the truck stops running. That particular day, I was the last truck out that morning, so I was also the last truck coming in. There wasn't anyone behind me that I could even catch a ride with, and even if there had been, the boss would have been very unhappy with me, leaving that truck along side the highway.

Slowly I rolled off to the side of the road, and fortunately there was a place to park off the pavement. I was saying to myself, kinda praying, Lord, what am I going to do? Marcelle and the kids are going to be at the Motel waiting on me, and I am over 50 miles away. That little voice that I was so familiar with, said to me, pray like you have never prayed before. Now I had prayed some very humble prayers in my time, but I was never in a fix like this one before. So, I prayed a very humble prayer. I hit the starter, and the old truck started up. I put it in gear and started to roll on down the highway. I never went very far until it started shutting down again, and I prayed all the harder, and suddenly it

would start to run again. Soon after I would stop praying, it would begin to shut down again. On and on, mile after mile, I was crying, tears running down my face, & I was a mess. But as long as I prayed it ran. For over 50 miles I prayed and it ran. Finally I was in sight of the station at Atoka, and suddenly it quit running, and I coasted all the way to the station, and right up to the pump.

Yes, I don't need to tell you I was a happy man. Happy to be back in town to see my family, and happy to know that Christ was riding right there with me, in that old truck, all the way. He was checking me out, seeing if I really believed or not. He was seeing if I really was His friend, or just one of those that say they believe, but are not willing go all the way in that belief.

Well Marcelle and the kids were there waiting for me, and I told them all about the miracle that God had just performed for me that day and brought me to them safe and sound. I have also been careful to tell this story to many over the years. I didn't have to drive that old truck too long, because very soon God told me it was time, and yes, sooner than Marcelle was wanting too, we were back on our way to California again.

## *Chapter 10.*

### MOVING BACK TO MCKINLEYVILLE

We arrived back in Calif. in the fall of 1967, I went back to work for Cal-Gas, in Arcata. My old friend Derl Nazelrod hired me back again, and I was back to doing Appliance Service work for the company that I had worked for several times. If you remember back a few pages, he is the one that was the so called, atheist. The one that taught me how to treat people even when they were not as smart as they could be. So for a few months I was back in my home area, doing the Lords work, and making a living.



The year was going ok, and many souls were being added to the church. Lets see, it was the 14<sup>th</sup> of May, I baptized Trella (Carmichael) Shores and Barbara (Taylor) Porter. They are both married now, and have families of their own. Barbara married my first cousin, Frank Porter. Standing on the bank of Old Mad River was not unusual for me now. Having been baptized in these waters myself in 1956, I was very comfortable with this old river. Having baptized my brother Ben, on Feb. 16, 1963. Then my foster brother, Richard Hackett on May 2<sup>nd</sup>, 1964. Then it was Allen Rossiter the next day. Then it was Evert Rossiter Jr. on Nov. 14, 1965. So Mad River was water that we had visited many times.

In 1968, not long after baptizing Barbara Taylor and Trella Carmichael, God began to lead me to go back to Grand Jct. Colo. again. It was to be my last move to Colorado, and while we were only there a very short time, the move was worth it. This was the time that we lived in Fruita, and my oldest son Mike, started the first grade. Kris was just a tot then, and the year was very happy for us. We lived out in the country about as far as you could go. It was only a quarter of a mile to the canal, and beyond that was desert and mountains. I was an irrigation ditch rider for the Grand Valley Irrigation Company, and my boss was Bro. Bob Byers. I always started early in the morning and finished up my route about noon. The rest of the day I only had a little paperwork to do, and then I was free to do other things. We spent a lot of time back in the desert, running up and down the hills in my old Jeep 4X4 pickup. The kids loved it, and so did Marcelle and I. We would plink with the 22 Rifle, and just have a great time.

Not long after moving to the place out in the country, Bro. Bob Byers and Bro. Otis Wilson acquired a old donkey. I don't remember where, but they came across him somewhere, and we elected to take care of him because we had some pasture and a barn. The kids really liked to ride him. His name was Harry S. And it took us ever so long to realize that this meant Harry S. Truman. Meaning, he probable was very old, as it had been quite a few years back, to President Truman. Anyway, he was tall and lanky, and bony. If you sat on his backbone, you would be very uncomfortable. We also bought a little Shetland pony for the

kids, and he was found to be so wiry they couldn't ride him. So we kept him for awhile, and sold him. His name was Skeeter.

That summer was remembered for the amount of flats we had. I remember it well, 17 flats, and 6 blowouts. Every time they graded the road, I either had a flat or a blowout. I became good friends with the man at the tire store in Grand Jct. and he would sell me used tires for \$5.00 a piece. This really helped me out. One weekend lots of visitors came to Grand Jct. for church. We had a house full of company, and I remember that Bro. Raymond and Sis. Berta Boyd stayed with us on a Saturday night. The next morning Berta had one of her terrible headaches, and decided that she did not feel like going to church. Marcelle decided she would stay home with her, and Raymond and I went on by ourselves. Very soon after we left, Sis. Berta's head quit hurting. I think Marcelle must have prayed for her. Anyway, they decided they would come on after all. It was 25 miles to church, and about 7 or 8 miles of it was gravel. About 2 or 3 miles from the house, Marcelle was coming up over a hill, going pretty fast, and a car was backing out of a driveway right in front of her. She only had a split second, and she swerved to the left about 5 feet to miss the car. She only missed it by inches anyway. The road was narrow there, so she narrowly missed the ditch. On her way home, she observed again where it had happened, and right there, where she had swerved to the left, was a mailbox post with a mailbox on it. She could not have missed that car, and missed the mailbox. So, we determined that God picked up the mailbox, let her go by, and then put it back again. After all we had seen the Lord do for us, this really seemed quit simple.

Later in the year, Bro. Bob Byers and some of the other young ministers decided that we would have church up in the hills. So, we scouted out some area, and decided that up on Glade Park, an area up on the Monument Mountain, across the river from Fruita, we would have church one Sunday evening under a big Cottonwood tree. We used logs for seating, and built a big fire in the center. All the young kids went, and some of the older ones. We had a wonderful meeting there with only the light of the fire. Our hearts were filled with the spirit, and we all rejoiced. Even the kids enjoyed it so much that a few weeks later, we went to a Parent Teachers meeting and Mike's teacher showed us a

little essay that Mike had written about it. He told about going lots of places to be in church, and seeing lots of people. He said, we even went up on Monument Mountain and had church at night under a big Cottonwood Tree with only a camp fire for light. He ended it with, "When I grow up, I want to be a preacher just like my dad".

We had lots of company that year. Hubert Carmichael and several from Cushing, Okla. Dorman Rodgers, and Gerald Rodgers and many others that I do not remember. In the fall, December as I remember it, the Hong Kong flu was raging. I took it, and thought I was going to die. Marcelle thought I was going to die also, and that really worried her. Three little kids, and all under 7. I remember Bro. Erwin Easter coming out and praying for me, and I was made instantly better. I recovered very soon after that, and we again were ready to move back to California. It was wintertime, and the roads were icy and snow was really bad. We had bought a 1966 Buick Station Wagon, and pulled a 6 X 14 Uhaul trailer. We were coming through Susanville, Calif. and the roads were really bad. I was told that the snow over the mountain was really deep. We really didn't have money for a Motel, and they were probable all full anyway, so we started over the mountain and real soon, had to put on chains. When we got to the top of the mountain, the snowplow driver, who was right in front of me, said he was not going any farther. So, for the next 80 miles, we just stayed between the fences. You could not see where the road was, just that it was the blank area between everything else, we hoped. We spun the tires so much, we registered over 50 extra miles on the odometer getting to Red Bluff. Even from there on through Redding, and over Buckhorn Summit, it was really bad. Finally we came to Weaverville, and started over the last high mountain. We made it to about a mile from the top and we spun out and slid down off the road on the wrong side. The reason for this, I had worn through, and spun some of the cross links off my tire chains on the driver side. So, I caught a ride back into town, bought some new cross links, and because I had "towing service" on my Car Insurance, I got a tow truck to go to where we were, and the driver was able to hook on and pull us up the mountain to the top. In the process, he backed into us several times getting us going. He didn't even know he

was doing it. He practically destroyed the front of my car.

Finally he got us to the top of the mountain. I fixed the chains, and drove another mile or so, and the snow was all gone on the road. No more snow the rest of the way. What a day that was. Just before we left Grand Jct., Bro. Les Pfister had said to me, Bro. Bill, you are going to meet a lion in the way. Sure enough, we had met that lion alright, but God was with us, and we arrived home safe and sound, just like God had always allowed us to do.

## *Chapter 11.*

### LIVING IN CUSHING 1971-73

It had been some time now since I had felt to move anywhere. It seemed that we were settling down, and maybe we could start to put down some roots. But, no sooner did I feel this way, than I began to feel like moving to Oklahoma again. It was a sudden decision to go, and Marcelle was already expecting Ty at this time. Her pregnancy seemed to be a normal one, as normal goes, I thought. But what would I know about pregnancy anyway; I'm just a man.

We had to rent a Uhaul Truck to make the move, and as usual, we went through Grand Jct., Colo. to see those that we loved so dear. We spent a day or so, and then headed on to Oklahoma. While going over Monarch Pass, the Uhaul truck just did not seem have enough power to pull our car, along with the load of all our things inside of the truck. So, about half way up the mountain, it just came to a stop. It was an automatic transmission, and it just would not go any farther. I know now, that it was timed for low altitude, and of course, we were at high altitude. So, I had to pull off to the side of the road, unhook the car, put the driveline back under the car, and let Marcelle drive the car to the top of the mountain, while I drove the truck. It made it to the top finally, so then we hooked it all up again, and we were on our way.

When we arrived in Oklahoma, we started looking for a house. I had felt like holding some meetings in Ripley, so we rented a house in Ripley. It was a little converted Coin Laundry building that had been converted into a small rental. We moved in, and started our new adventure. It was my plan to go into business for myself, as I had been doing appliance service work, off and on, for several years. Mostly working for Cal-Gas, in California. The company had sent me to several appliance service schools, and I felt that I was good enough to accomplish it on my own. So, besides starting to hold meetings in Ripley, I launched, Oklahoma Appliance Service. I had become acquainted with Mr. Jett, who ran Jett Propane Company in Cushing. We became very good friends, and he helped me in many ways. One way he helped, was giving me lots of service work, and the other way, was selling me fuel for my service truck for a nickel a gallon. You heard that right, 5 cents a gallon. That will help you a lot, when you burn as much as I did. Marcelle was getting pretty big now, being in her 7<sup>th</sup> month. Finally I realized that living in Ripley, and running a business in Cushing, was not the way to do it. So, we rented a little house that Danny & Loretta Smith owned on West Moses Street. Very soon after getting moved in, and settling down, it was time for Marcelle to deliver. She had been having some complications, because while we were still living in Ripley, one morning early, Kris, our youngest at the time, came to the bedroom where she was sleeping, and said he was sick at his stomach. He woke her up, and she put him in bed with her. I was already gone to work. Suddenly he decided he was going to vomit, and she grabbed him, and brought him over herself, to hold him over the bedside so that he would not vomit on the bed. In doing so, she fell right out of bed herself. She fell on her right side, and felt a sharp pain. She was preoccupied with Kris, so she did not think much more about it at the time. Later, she felt that it had maybe injured the baby or something. But she could tell that something was not right. As the days went by, she felt like maybe she was over the problem, but not sure.

Now, just a few days later, it was time to deliver. We had moved into Cushing, and as time came for the delivery, it seemed to be coming along just like always. Sis. Burdeen Combs and Sis.

Gladys Tibbett, (my great Aunt), were the Mid-wives, there to take care of her, just like they had for Kris in 1967. Sure enough, another boy. Named him Preston Ty Porter. I liked the name Ty, and Marcelle liked the name Preston. At the time, we did not know that Fred Britton's first name was Preston. He and his brother Keith were my dearest friends, and had we known, we would have named him, Preston Keith, after both of them. But Ty it is, and when Marcelle's mother came, she asked what we named him, and we said Ty. She said, "how come"?

Very soon after the delivery, Marcelle was not recovering like she should. She just became sicker every day, and instead of the normal recovery time that we were used to she just felt awful. Finally she was so sick, that my folks, and my brother Bobby and his wife Jerrie, came to from California to see us, and to help out. They had wanted to come and see the new baby anyway, so they came prepared to stay a few days. Marcelle became so sick, that I thought we were going to loose her. She became so frail that she felt like she just could not take it any more. but, God was with her and gave her strength. Slowly, day after day, she began to get more strength. I was having to stay at home, and not able to be out making service calls as I needed to do, and we were hitting it pretty hard financially. I remember, before leaving California, we had for some reason or another been able to get a hundred dollars worth of food stamps. Now food stamps were not used in Oklahoma, and we needed groceries pretty bad. So, Bobby and Jerrie decided that they would make a trip to DeWitt, Arkansas to see some of dear friends who lived there. Arkansas was on the food stamp program, so they took our Station Wagon, and our food stamps. While they were there, they went to the Kroger Store in Dewitt, and bought \$100. worth of groceries with the food stamps. I have to tell you, it filled up the back of that Station Wagon with groceries. They had a good laugh, while they were shopping, and filling up the baskets with groceries. They said a black lady noticed them, and kept saying, look at all them groceries. My Lordy would you look at all them groceries.

We were so glad for those groceries, as now we had food and plenty to spare. Slowly Marcelle recovered, and I was able to get back to work.

I built up a wonderful business there in Cushing, and many dear brethren called upon me to fix their appliances, for which I was really grateful. I had a really big shop, and Bro. Doyle Combs was always coming by to visit with me. One day he called early and said, Bill, I have to go to the City, and I have a water pump leaking. What will you charge me to fix it. I said, I don't know, I guess labor, and whatever the water pump costs. He said, no, what will you charge me. I said \$36.00 and he said ok, I will have it down there in a few minutes. I went to the parts house and got the water pump, and it cost me \$12.00. Now Bro. Doyle thought it would take me 2 hours to put it on. Instead, it was a really easy one, and I put it on in about 30 minutes. As I was winding up, he kept saying to me, boy that didn't take much time at all. That was really an easy one. I just kept on working, and didn't say anything. Finally when I was done, he said to me, how much do I owe you? I said, as I was writing out the ticket, you said you would pay me \$36.00 so I guess that is what I should get, right? He said but it only took you 30 minutes. Finally I handed him the ticket for \$24.00 and he said, well I guess you're a pretty good guy after all. I said, next time you want me to do something, just remember, time and material. He never questioned me after that.

Off and on, Bro. Doyle and I would go to Springfield, Missouri and buy a car or two from the auction there. I had also bought my dealers license, and had a car for sale all the time. We also went to Okla. City to the Midwest City auction and bought cars from time to time. One day Bro. Fred Britton came by and said, Bill I need another car really bad. My old car is just giving out on me. Lets go to the Springfield, Missouri auction, and see what we can find. I said ok, we will do that. So, the next Tuesday, early in the morning, we started for Springfield. Now we took my pickup, which I ran on propane, so that he could drive the car back. I had a 50 gallon tank, and I also had gas, which I could easily switch to if I needed to do so. The regular gas tank said full, but I knew that there was some used, as I had switched to gas a couple of times to get back into town. So, I had 50 gallons of propane, and almost full on gas. We were almost to Joplin, driving along about 70 MPH, and there beside the road was an older couple with a pickup, and the hood was up. I went

by so fast, that when I finally decided to stop and help them, it took me a quarter of a mile to get pulled over. I backed up all the way to where they were, and asked them what the problem was? They said that they were going to St. Louis, and they were out of gas. They didn't have much money, and only a Mobil credit card. They had failed to see a Mobil station in Tulsa, so they were trying to make it on to Joplin. As it was, they did not make it. I told Fred, I have plenty of gas, lets see if we can get them going. So, I dug around in the back of my truck, and found a 5 lb. coffee can. They had a full garden hose, and we cut about 6 foot off of the hose and begin to siphon gas out of my truck and fill the can, then pour it into their truck. We filled and poured, filled and poured, until we had given them at least 5 gallons of gas. The old man kept saying, that's probable enough, I think we can make it now. But we kept filling and pouring. I know the reason he wanted us to stop, was because he planned to pay us, and he didn't have much money. When we were done, he said how much do I owe you, and I said nothing. He looked at me so strange, and said, are you sure? I said, I am sure. I am running on Propane, and I don't need the gas to get where I am going. He said, thank you so much. We will never forget you, and this deed.

I never thought another thing about it, and neither did Bro. Fred. We went on to Springfield, and we got Fred a really nice car for a really good price. As we were leaving, Fred said to me, lets pull over here across the street and fill it up with gas. I said ok, and I pulled up to a pump myself, and thought, I might as well fill mine up also, and then if I needed it, I would have it. I remembered that I had given away 5 gallons, so I needed to fill up myself. I put the hose in the gas fill hole, and started to fill. Click, and it shut off. I pulled it again, and click, it shut off. I pulled it out, and looked inside the hole, and it was full. Right up to the top, it was full. I called over to Fred, and said, look here. He looked in the hole and said, its full, so what. I pointed to the register and it said, .3/10th of a gallons. About a nickels worth. He looked at me and said, is that all you could get in there? I said, yes it is. He said, we gave that old man at least 5 gallons, and you said you had used some yourself. I said to him, "Good measure, pressed down, and running over". That is what our Lord said that He would give us, if we would give to others.



## *Chapter 12.*

MY MIRACLE PONTIAC 1973

The months went by, and we were finally able to buy us a home. It was right behind the Cushing Church, 1314 E. Elm Street, which is where Bro. Wayne and Sis. Alfreda Tibbitt lived when they passed from this life, as we sold it to them when we moved away. We had been living in Cushing for almost 3 years now, and times were good. They were good, because we had been blessed by the Lord in so many ways. We had seen His wonderful mercy over and over again, and we had started something that we had never done before. Taking the younger couples with us on our preaching trips. A couple of trips to Arkansas with Dorman and Bonnie Rodgers, and a wonderful trip to Indiana with Bob and Donna Swank. That was such a wonderful trip. We had never been to Indiana, and I felt very strong to go. I also felt very strong to take Bob and Donna with us. He did not think he was going to get off work, but at the last minute, his boss said ok. We traveled along, singing and rejoicing in the Lord, even though Donna was having trouble with her little girl. It seemed that she was never happy, and it caused her a lot of worry. But, we arrived there in good shape, and had a wonderful visit with some of the younger couples that were living there at the time. We got there in time for meeting in Indianapolis on Wednesday night, and had a wonderful meeting. When church was dismissing, Bro. Ray Hamner asked me if I wanted more meetings, and I said no. He then asked me to dismiss, and afterwards, came over and asked what my plans were. I told him that I wanted to go to Beach Grove, (called Morgantown now), and give out meeting for the next night, and then go on to the Gosport church and give out meeting for the next night.

He said to me, Bro. Bill, let me do this for you. I will call and give out the meetings for you. I will go and sit right up front with you, but I will not preach or use up any of your time. If I do that, it will be my blessing on your efforts, and you will be accepted with a full welcome at each place. You can then just do what the Lord has for you to do. You see, if I come and sit up front with you, the brethren will know that you are ok, and they will listen to you with full attention. Can you believe that? Bro. Ray Hamner is going to be my representative, so that I am accepted where I have never been before? Where are these men now??? Oh what a blessing he was, and what a wonderful time we had. As we said on the way back home, we just went to heaven and back, and it was wonderful. By the way, we brought Bro. Mickey Baker home with us, and he stayed for a few weeks. We sure learned to love him, and miss seeing him in the years that have followed.

I just have to mention this, as we talked about going to Indiana with Bob and Donna Swank, we were driving a 1966 Pontiac Bonneville 4DHT that I had bought at the Midwest City auction for \$320. I had purchased it on a bank draft, and then a 90 day note. Well the note was coming due, and I did not have the money to pay it. Also, the lifters had started to rattle on this car so bad that I was afraid to drive it any longer. I prayed about it very diligently, and decided to take it back to Midwest City to the action. Bro. Henry Ratliff offered to drive my service truck, and follow me, so I would have a ride back. On the way to Midwest City, the car sounded so bad, I was afraid that nobody would even bid on it. So, I started to pray. You know, those prayers that you pray when you are really in trouble. Like the one that I prayed when I ran out of diesel, and continued to drive that old truck for another 50 miles. Well I started to pray, like I had never prayed before, and that car started to sound better and better, and by the time I got to the auction, it was as quite as it was when it was new. And you know what? You guessed it. It brought \$360. That was enough to pay off the debt, and the auction fee, and the gas to take it up there.

That my dear ones, is the life of an Evangelist Minister, tuned and ready to do what God ask of him to do. Spend and be spent, knowing that, while the blessings of the Lord are great, and

the rewards you receive while here on this earth are plentiful, the goal is heaven. That is where we want to be when we finish our race. And remember this; It's not winning the race, but just staying in the race that matters. For if you finish the race, you gain the full reward...

The End

Author: Bill Porter 1998 (updated and renamed, April 2019)

## Biography of the Author

Bill Porter, (Billie Eugene Porter) was born May 27, 1941, near the little community of Parkland, Oklahoma. His parents were living with his father's parents, while share cropping, as was sometimes done in the 1940's, this being his grandparents, Ben and Florence Porter.

Grandmother Florence was a Tibbett, a sister to Bob Tibbett, and twin to Francis (Tibbett) Retherford.

Not long afterwards, his parents, Albert and Ellen Porter, moved 7 miles or so, North East of the little town of Perkins, Okla. where he grew up. Later when he was 4, they moved into town where he went to school, and graduated from the 8th grade at Perkins.

In the summer of 1954, after a couple of short moves to McKinleyville, Calif. for the summertime only, his parents then decided to move to McKinleyville, Calif. for the last time, where they remained until their deaths, years later.

While living as a young boy, his father was a farmer, raising corn, Milo and peanuts. Across the road were his favorite Uncle and Aunt, John and Maxine Porter. Maxine was his mother's older sister, and John was his father's uncle, being Grandpa Ben's

half brother. Homemade ice cream was the favorite Saturday evening special, and just spending time with the cousins was great fun.

Sunday dinner was a favorite at Grandpa and Grandma Porter's house, near the little community of Parkland, where they lived about 3 miles north, down on the creek, as they often said, on the old Ford place.

Bill felt the drawing of the Lord, and was baptized into the General Assembly and Church of The Firstborn, February 11, 1956, and often said; He entered into God's Kingdom for the long haul". But, as some young men often do, he fell victim to the devils snares and at the age of 17 began to fall away only to recover himself just before his first marriage.

Bill finished High School at Arcata, Calif., graduating in the 1958 graduating class, and besides helping in the family business with his father, he went to work in the Lumber and Plywood Mills where his father also worked nights. He found the love of his life in the spring of 1960, when by a vision witnessed by his Grandma Davis, came to know Marcelle Johnson, who lived in Sapulpa, Okla. They married that summer after a pen pal relationship and a 9-day courtship, while on a trip to Oklahoma.

To this union were born five children. Four sons, Michael, Philip, Kris, & Ty, then finally a daughter, Rhonda Cheri.

Bill was called by prophecy into God's ministry, in the spring of 1962 and started his Evangelistic work that summer on a trip to Oklahoma to see and visit with his wife's family. This Evangelistic work took them many places over the next 50 years, and resulted in them having their furniture behind them over 17,000 miles, besides the single trips to various places, which were many. He made many long lasting friendships over this time span, and took many souls down into the water for baptism. They rejoiced with the church family over the years, and many of those dear friends survive to this day, but most are gone on.

In 1974, while living back in McKinleyville, Bill decided he wanted to learn to fly. He began to take the necessary steps, lessons and learning and finally was licensed to do so in the spring of 1975, when he passed his test and became a licensed

pilot. He later owned his own airplane, a Cessna 182, and more than once, flew over the western half of the United States.

In the summer of 1984, having sold his Appliance Service business, and after having made a couple of trips to Missouri in his ministry work, he felt the lead to move to Southeast Missouri, finding a place to live just a few miles out of Doniphan, where the little church at Naylor was struggling. This trip, lead them to living there for 21 years, reviving the Assembly, and building a new Church building at Oxly, Missouri, that Assembly which still abides today.

In the spring of 2005 they sold their home in Missouri, began a long 7000 mile Evangelist trip to 14 different Assemblies across the western states, and finally arrived back at Sapulpa, Okla. where his brother Ben and sister-in-law Bessie lived. They bought a home and lived there for the next 6 years where during the last 2 years, his wife Marcelle lost her health and passed away from this life in May of 2011.

Shortly after the death of his late wife, Bill became more acquainted with his long time friend and Sister in the church, a widow for 10 years, Sis. Carlene Case, whom the Lord had spoken to him about soon after the death of his late wife Marcelle, and in Nov. of 2011 they were married at Grand Jct., Colorado. Bill had sold his home in Sapulpa, and after his marriage to Carlene, made his home with her in Arriola, Colo..

Soon they were able to do much traveling, all around the United States, visiting many different Assemblies that he and Carlene had for a long time desired to visit again. Their travels took them from coast to coast, and many places in between, and the smile returned to his face again, as he found the love of companionship with Carlene, and became the grandfather of some of her grandchildren who had only him to look towards as a grandfather figure.

He was also called grandfather by many others over the last years of his life, and loved them all dearly. He has authored several books, and used his retirement as a time of sharing his experiences and the things he has learned from the many years experiences of life, and from his deep studies of God's word, which he loves to share with whomever would show an interest.

He spends his latter days with the bride of his old age, and the love that is supposed to be shown, by them of older marriages, has been manifested to all those around them, to this very day.

Thank you so much for reading my book.  
I am so honored by it.

Bill Porter