

Newsletter 12 March 2009

As I reported in my last newsletter, the urologist discovered three small tumours on the walls of my bladder necessitating another surgery. He said this was 'urgent' but with Christmas and his holidays intervening, it would be five weeks before I entered hospital for the second time. Immediately following the surgery I suffered extreme spasms in my bladder so I had to return home with a catheter and bag attached to me, which could not be removed until the next morning. That was easily done and there was no more discomfort. Four weeks later I started a course of weekly injections (by catheter) of 50ml of bovine TB culture (BCG), the usual treatment for bladder cancer. No side effects accompanied this treatment though I was careful not to do too much energy-sapping work. I have concluded that treatment and now await my next visit to the urologist on April 15th to verify that I am clear of the cancer. All through this time Anne and I have lost no peace that my times and health are in the Lord's hands.

Should my visit to the urologist prove satisfactory, we shall be leaving for Wales a few days later in April. We have been offered a home for six weeks, followed by an annex for the next six weeks, in the area around Cardigan. A car has been provided and much favour shown to us. I shall be spending most of my time trying to learn Welsh – a life-long dream – but shall also be speaking at a conference on Revival and assisting in the Cardigan Baptist Church with Pr. Steve Evans.

The weather this winter has been unusually cold with several days of snow – something we see very infrequently in Victoria. There have been few reasons for leaving the house so I have been able to relax, read and study while undergoing my treatment.

Following my return from Scotland I spoke for the month of January at Bethel Baptist Church in Sidney, before their new pastor and wife arrived. They are a fine couple and the church will be greatly blessed by their ministry. Sadly I shall not be here, God willing, for the opening of their new facility – a beautiful church complex, debt free, which contains a crèche, underground car park, counseling center and a ready potential congregation in the seventy or so housing units that surround the sanctuary.

I have had some other ministry during this time, speaking at the local university and teaching a seminar to leaders of a local Presbyterian church. I have also received a number of invitations from churches in developing countries asking me to go on tours of their region. I have to be realistic and reply that my long distance traveling ministry days are over. No more sleeping on airport floors or traveling overnight – my body is not up to it any more – unless the Lord 'renews my youth like the eagle'. These days I find my greatest joys in mentoring several young adults who visit me at home. On Sunday evenings two young couples come with their infants, plus one or more others; other days I entertain other young men with a passion to grow in the things of God. Of course, I continue to be in touch with Greg Gordon, founder of the web page www.sermonindex.net and organizer of the conferences on Revival at which I am privileged to be one of the moderators. It was a great joy to have Greg stay with us for three weeks in February.

To those who know my family: Anne remains in good health and is a wonderful support to me and the ministry. Our three daughters and their families are all well. We have much to thank the Lord for – He continues to be faithful.

I pray that the rest of my life may be profitable to Him and that I may be "to the praise of His Glory" – for he is worthy!

Trusting you, my readers will also know His favour .

Gareth