

Chapter 29

A Very Full Year

1998 was a very busy year for me with ministry in Baja California, Mexico, UK, Brazil (my third trip for the missions conference and evangelistic campaign – see Ch 28), UK again and Mexico City and surrounds.

In February I was invited to teach pastors in Baja California with Circuit Teaching International – a program developed in Africa to teach pastors who could not afford to go to seminary. We drove down to San Diego where dear friends of ours from Anastasis days, Randy and Barbara Sizemore now had their home. Anne spent much of her time with them but also joined me for some of the time in Tecate at the home of Dave and Beth Goff. What precious friends they turned out to be as they took us around much of Baja California for ministry opportunities to eager pastors in all those places. I would spend many times subsequently in various cities of Baja, learning to improve my Spanish and delighting in Mexican culture, its humour and its food, and enjoying such wonderful fellowship. Many new friends were made in Valle de Trinidad, San Filipe and San Matias on the coast, and Mexicali and Tijuana on the USA border.

In May I left for six weeks in Britain at the invitation of the Christian employees of the National Westminster Bank (NatWest). There are many ‘chapters’ of believers in the greater London area and, especially in ‘the city’, who meet weekly for fellowship. It was my privilege to speak to all these chapters over the six weeks and to be their guest at the NatWest country mansion, Haythorp Hall in Oxfordshire, for a day’s seminar attended by about seventy ‘bankers’ and titled “Releasing your spiritual gifts in the secular marketplace”. This is the major theme of my book *Soar Like the Eagle*. How this came about is an interesting story. Martin Edwards, Anne’s cousin, who held a senior position in the bank, was approached by Peter during a break from the usual busyness. “I’m really frustrated,” he said. “I feel a call into the pastoral ministry but my church won’t let me function in this way.” “See that lady over there?” Martin replied. “She has just lost her teenage daughter in an accident.” “That man over there has just been made redundant after twenty-five years.” The young man on your left has just had his engagement broken off.” “Don’t you think they need a pastor?” Peter immediately took up the challenge of ministering to these hurting people and, one year later, had become known as the pastor to all the bank employees on that floor – and was greatly fulfilled in carrying out his ministry in this secular marketplace.

From Britain I traveled to Fortaleza, Brazil where Anne would meet me and we would begin our three-months, ministering to young leaders of YWAM as they planned the missions conference and evangelistic campaign, the success of which I have told in the last chapter.

In September, as Anne returned to Canada after Fortaleza, I returned to UK as my ticket was via my home land. Again I ministered in many churches before my return home, most especial of which was a return visit to an Assembly of God church in Nottingham. An old friend of mine, Yorrie Richards attended that church and had arranged for me to speak there. It was a particularly wonderful time with much fruit for my efforts, particularly in the lives of four people – I slept well that night!

In November, it was off again to Mexico, this time to the regions around Mexico City. Francisco had arranged many meetings for me with CTI and I traveled many miles on excellent busses, even into remote and dangerous places. We spoke to very large groups of pastors and several small groups, as far apart as Ciudad Victoria and Tampico in the north to Oaxaca and Matias Romero in the south, with an extended stay in Vera Cruz.

1999 would be spent mainly at home in Victoria with lots of speaking engagements in many churches. I was especially pleased to speak several times at my old church, now known as Pacific Rim Alliance Church, and also at Oaklands Chapel, a Brethren assembly pastored by a good friend, Denis Scott. However, at the end of the year I traveled again to Baja California to teach further pastors’ conferences with CTI, this time visiting new groups at Rosarito, Sonora and Carranza, both in the Valle de Mexico. Again Dave and Beth consolidated our friendship which lasts to this day.

The year ended with us taking, what has become a regular part of our lives, a trip to see our daughter and grandchildren in Australia. For six months I would minister at churches all along the eastern seaboard of that great land, sometimes for whole weekends. My contacts were those made at Capernwray five years earlier, still eager to hear the Word and to grow in the Lord.