

## Chapter 37 – (2008/9)

### *(The Big C)*

In the summer of 2008, before the Atlanta conference, Anne's cousin Bernard and his wife Pam, came to Canada on vacation. We travelled to meet them at Calgary from where we drove through the Canadian Rockies back to Victoria. We had a wonderful time together as they had hired a quality Recreation Vehicle (RV) for the journey. Shortly after arriving back home, Bernard and I hiked up a local mountain, Mount Finlayson. It was a strenuous climb but the adrenalin rush was wonderful when we reached the summit. That night just before going to bed, I passed a lot of blood in my urine. Our concern was sufficient for Bernard to take me to the emergency department of our local hospital where the emergency doctor diagnosed I had 'ruptured a blood vessel' due to the strenuous climb that afternoon. However, as a precaution he arranged for me to see a urologist a couple of weeks later. His report was again very encouraging – no sign of any problem, but, seeing how I was passing an audio testing place on my way home, he suggested I call in for another examination. This being done, I forgot all about the bleeding. Two weeks later my urologist called me to say that the audio examination had seen the suggestion of some lesions on my bladder so 'we'd better be safe than sorry'. He inserted his probe, looked around and then said matter-of-factly, "O yes, you've got cancer"! This was totally unexpected as I felt in such good health without any discomfort. "We must scrape this out as soon as possible" he added. Two days later at home, I said to Anne, "Are we in denial or something? I have felt not one moment of anxiety since receiving this bad news." Again we had experienced the "peace that passeth understanding". A couple of weeks later I was the speaker at a seniors' camp and had occasion to comment upon this wonderful peace. Little did I realise that this was to be a matter of great concern to some of my listeners who raised an army of prayer supporters for my cause. I even read about myself in a local Christian newspaper where they had written that I was 'wrestling with cancer'. I contacted the editor to correct him that I was not 'wrestling' but resting in the Lord. My surgery was scheduled and then I was required to visit my urologist for the first of many three-monthly visits. It was between these visits that I travelled to Atlanta for the next conference. See here the great providence of God. If I had not climbed the mountain I might not have passed blood that evening. If I had not gone to the emergency department I might have had this cancer in my bladder, not detected until much later when it might have progressed beyond the state in which we found it.

Following the conference in Atlanta, we had another conference planned for Greenock, Scotland in November 2008. I informed Greg that I would not be going to the UK just for the four days of the conference but would take the opportunity to visit my friends in Wales en route, arriving at least three weeks before the scheduled meetings. "Why not come with me?" I asked, adding that I would be glad to take him around the sites associated with the Welsh revival of 1904. Greg quickly agreed so arrangements were made to meet in London, together with another anointed young man, Eli Brayley ([www.timothyministry.com](http://www.timothyministry.com)). On arrival there we were greeted by a young man who gave us the keys of his car with the comment – "This is yours as long as you are in the UK"! What a blessing! However, as Greg and Eli looked at this gift, they blanched a little and said, "We cannot drive that car! It's a stick change and we've never driven such – further we have to drive on the wrong side of the road!" Needless to say, I had to become their chauffeur for the next three weeks.

I drove the three hours to Wales, taking in the valleys where I taught and into the Rhondda Valley (Cwm Rhondda) where my Canadian ‘sons’ experienced real fish & chips with mushy peas. My dear friend Rob Ash and his family hosted us for two nights in Bridgend as we visited my old haunts, saw the home where I was born again and the castle where I played, and met some dear old saints of my young years as a believer. Oswald Penry, currently secretary of *Keswick in Wales*, had many stories of those revival days, as his grandfather was very prominent in ministry at that time. While he was telling some of these stories to my two wide-eyed friends, his brother-in-law, a retired Baptist pastor living next door, came into the room and joined in the listening. He then invited us to his garage, where he kept his large library of theological books. “Take your pick!” he told the boys. They were hesitant at first but when he urged them again they began to survey this treasure chest with interest. Fifteen minutes later they walked out with up to ten books each, Eli’s being mostly of the reformed doctrine and Greg’s being mainly the old puritans. They were already being blessed by the warm hospitality of my homeland.

From Bridgend we journeyed to Swansea and my brother-in-law’s home at Loughor. There we visited Moriah chapel where Evan Roberts began his ministry and God began the great influx of souls to the church. A local elder, Dyffrig was so hospitable to us, spending much time showing us the archives and telling many stories of that time. When we said we’d like to spend some time in prayer there, he was eager to join us, so a precious hour was spent in that special place where God so moved a century before.

Greg informed me that he had received an email from Dick Funnel, an American living in West Wales, who was blessed by the sermonindex web page and desired that we visit his locality en route to Scotland. In fact West Wales is way off route to Scotland, but I was compelled to travel west as Greg had accepted the invitation, Dick having promised us ministry for the weekend we would be at his home near Cardigan. We arrived on Friday evening after our GPS navigation system had led us through miles of country lanes where we could almost touch the hedgerows on either side as we drove through, much to Greg and Eli’s delight and wonder. I was billeted with a local Baptist pastor, Steve Evans and his wife Sulwen. On that weekend they stole my heart as they went out of their way to bless us with tours and ministry opportunities.

Sunday morning I was scheduled to preach at Cardigan New Life Church, led by pastors Doug & Janice Bell. At the time of announcements, Janice introduced Tony Nam who had a remarkable testimony of healing from, of all things, bladder cancer. Following that a man stood to declare that he had also been diagnosed with bladder cancer but the Lord had also healed him! Then a woman stood to say the same thing! Now Janice declared ‘Evidently, the Lord is doing something here for bladder cancers. Has anyone else got bladder cancer?’ I could not believe my ears as I slowly raised my hand. Needless to say, I was very encouraged when they gathered around me to pray with laying on of hands.

On the Monday we travelled to NewQuay where Florrie Evans had cried out (in Welsh) “I love Jesus with all my heart” – thought by many to be the ‘trigger’ that started the Welsh revival. Then on to Blaenannarch where Evan Roberts received his Baptism in the Spirit and cried in agony, “O Lord, bend me!” From there he returned to Loughor and the rest is history – over

100,000 new believers in a matter of a few weeks! While in the chapel at Blaenannarch, we were joined by three men from Swansea. Steve knew them quite well so invited one of them, the opera singer and passionate believer, Huw Priday, to sing for us. His magnificent voice filled the room as he sang a hymn that was written at that time of revival. "*Here is love vast as the ocean, Loving kindness as the flood...*" O how our hearts rejoiced as these wonderful words stirred us to a longing for the Lord to once again manifest His presence among us.

Before leaving West Wales a chance comment to Steve Evans triggered a response that was to lead to another of those blessed experiences the Lord has granted me. I told him how I would love to come back to this part of the country, never previously visited, in order to submerge myself in a Welsh-speaking community where I would have opportunity to learn the language of my fathers. It has always been one of my major regrets – that I do not speak Welsh, though I have tried to learn it from BBC broadcasts and on-line teaching. (My other regret is that I do not play the piano well – my mother was a noted pianist with several letters after her name, but she sadly died in the years of my youth.) On my return to Canada, Steve would write to invite me to return to Cardigan where a car would be made available to us, a home to live in for several weeks and ministry opportunities with him at Mt Zion Baptist church. More of that wonderful time in my next chapter.

Leaving West Wales we drove toward Scotland, stopping off for the first night at the home of Netta Rowland, great grand-daughter of David Morgan, used mightily of God in the Welsh revival of 1859. It is said of him that one night 'he went to bed as a lamb but woke as a lion; two years later he went to bed as a lion and woke as a lamb.' Netta and her husband Wynn, now raise shire cart horses – magnificent animals.

The conference in Greenock was different from the two in America, but also greatly blessed. One of the speakers was my old friend Yorrie Richards, a lay man with great anointing on his preaching. As a young man he was living a life of crime until the Lord arrested him. He had a terrible stammer and could read and write but little. However, I was present at the meeting where he first spoke without a stammer – a great miracle – and later heard him preach many times with great anointing. Greenock was to be no exception! What anointing rested on this dear old saint as he poured out his heart for revival, and what an impact when he quoted one of his old pastors – "It is God's mercy that He does NOT send revival – upon an unprepared people!" I celebrated my 70<sup>th</sup> birthday at that conference with a cake and some good fellowship from my fellow planners.

Again, we were seeing God's hand on this ministry and on Greg as he walked before the Lord in humility.