

THE JOY OF A GREAT MIRACLE!

At the end of the opening meeting local pastors were praying for the sick. In front of me I heard one say, "Now lift up your arm." I noticed a young girl, about 10 years old, who put her right arm in the air.

"No, not that one, the other one." I now saw that her left arm was withered, small and useless. She looked surprised, but I watched as she tried to raise it. Slowly it grew in front of my eyes until it was fully restored. If I ever doubted the miracle, I needed only to see her eyes like saucers, or her mother beside her, with the tears streaming down her face. This was reality! This was worth dedicating a life for! How had I lived for thirty-seven years without knowing that God did this? The urge to share what I had experienced was too strong to suppress. My life had changed forever.

That same week the Lord also poured out his Spirit upon me, and for the first time I spoke in tongues. It flowed from me like water, in song and in praise. Returning home, my wife Bron expected me to sign up to be a missionary in Africa at once, but it took the Lord another six years. We started a Bible weekend in our home that ran for several years, and people began to give their lives to the Lord including a local vicar and his family, who were also filled with the Holy Spirit!

CALLED TO MINISTRY

While cleaning up cow droppings the Lord spoke to me. "John, do you want to do this for the rest of your life?" Selling the farm was a tough decision. We had no idea of what the Lord wanted us to do next.

During that time I had a vision. I saw a English country church on a small hill, the

congregation emerging into the summer sunshine on the right side. But on the left all was stark; red and grey rocks, with a huge silver cross hanging in the black sky. It seemed the Lord was giving me a choice. "I must go the way of the cross," I said. Then I asked the Lord, "But please show me more of what I have chosen." He picked me up and zoomed me into the picture. I saw cliffs and barren canyons, and then a valley full of trees. As we flew closer, I could see they were not trees but people – millions of people surrounded by unfamiliar jungle, circled around a white light. Closer still, the white light was a platform, and a man was preaching the gospel in the open air.

Immediately I knew that we would be going into evangelism overseas, and within two weeks we had a call from Reinhard Bonnke's right hand man, Peter van den Berg, offering the position of International Crusade Director. We were stunned. Totally unprepared, we travelled to Africa to see how it was done!

We attended an event in Uganda where the local mayor's militia surrounded us with AK47s, and stopped the meeting! Next we flew to Nigeria, where the crowd grew to half a million. The sheer logistics of planning such events were astonishing. How could we begin?

With many misgivings we set off to Jakarta, Indonesia to prepare our first event, organised by a very efficient team of local Christian businessmen who became our mentors. Wrestling with a strange language, culture, country and job, those first six months were extremely hard, and we both nearly went home! But the Lord's grace gave us strength, and we eventually saw a major crusade in the national stadium, where 60,000 people gathered. Many thousands gave their lives to Jesus. It was totally rewarding, and totally exhausting!

We were next posted to South America to organise crusades in Argentina and Brazil. One of the great privileges was being invited to speak in many well-known churches, but I was still learning to trust the Lord.

One occasion I was speaking at a youth camp. It was winter and bitterly cold. After maybe forty-five minutes, I had come to the end of all I had to say, but the air hang heavy with the presence of the Holy Spirit. What to do next? The pause grew to the point of embarrassment. But then I saw that these young people would be the changing and saving of the nation. As I prophesied over them, they all began to weep, some so hard their noses ran. Not knowing what else to do, I called them forward, and laid my gloved hands on them, and they fell to the ground! I had seen this happen for others, but it was my first experience. I am certain that many ministries were birthed that day.

Jamaica was a total contrast! Brash, loud and hilariously funny, the Jamaicans stole our hearts. The event proved to be a great success. Many others followed, and we grew in our knowledge and love of the Lord, seeing many millions come to Christ. Then one evening after a particularly exhausting campaign in Sri Lanka, I was praying at home when the Lord whispered, "It is time to leave." "Lord," I replied, "to take such a huge step, I surely need a lot of confirmation." "No," he said, "you must learn to listen to my still, small voice." And that was all.

WHAT DOES THE LORD WANT US TO DO?

The years that followed were not easy. Plagued with doubts that we had made the right decision, we waited for the Lord to open the floodgates of ministry around the world. It didn't happen. We pastored our own church for

awhile, but I soon learned that I am not a pastor! We began a charity to support orphaned children in India which grew from caring for 25 children to almost 1,000. We established an outreach in our local city, and a few came to Christ. But after the glorious years with Reinhard, this felt desperately insignificant. However, the Lord was teaching us that obedience is never insignificant. He still had much more work to do in us than through us.

The lesson of patience is one of the hardest. It is easy to trust the Lord in the heat of battle. It is much harder in the desert, when He doesn't speak at all, nor even share His plans. We rejoiced in God's grace and waited in peace.

As we were able to, we had been holding small crusades in India, and several thousand people had made decisions for Christ. But most who attended the meetings were already believers. Then one day preparing for an event near Hyderabad, the Lord said, "Do not hold pastors' meetings, but instead hold a School of Healing."

During Bonnke's crusades we had prayed for many hundreds of sick people, and while many thousands were healed in the meetings, only rarely had I seen anyone healed when I prayed for them personally. So now I panicked! I rushed to our nearest bookshop and bought everything I could find on healing. All had a different theology, and I became very confused. So I set about studying all the miracles and healings in the Bible, and began to discover things I had never seen before.

The day came, and over 100 attended. I was very nervous. Would anyone be healed? But I needn't have doubted our faithful God! After the School I asked the delegates to minister to the sick on the campaign ground that evening, and many came forward to testify that the Lord had indeed healed them.

So began the next phase of our ministry. Our next School of Healing was in Kerala, India. A man with a withered leg was there, and when his neighbour laid hands on him, his leg grew and straightened. To great applause, he walked up and down demonstrating his new ability. I rejoiced that the Lord was doing miracles, but very sad that the church seemed to have forgotten this gift from God. In that same School I felt we should encourage the delegates to take their new found faith into the streets. When the moment came, it was pouring with rain. "They will never go out," the host pastor said. But into the rain they went, two by two, just as the Lord had sent them.

One pair later returned with a third man and stood, dripping, to tell their tale. They had found the man lying stone drunk in the gutter. Bending down, they rebuked the demon of alcoholism, and the man awoke, sober. They then shared the gospel with him, and led him to Christ. He stood there beaming! You can also give your life to the Lord Jesus and have the same joy of salvation.

"Jesus, have mercy on me. I have been a lost sinner, but now I repent and put my faith in You. Save me, Lord Jesus, and make me into a true Christian."

In July 2005, John & Bron moved their home to Auckland, New Zealand. In 2006 they spent 6 months in Rwanda assisting in the organisation Hope:Rwanda.

John first visited Nepal in 2007, and has returned there twice a year since then, leading teams to run schools of healing, gospel campaigns, pastors' conferences, humanitarian support and printing Christian literature.

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THE HEALING POWER of Jesus Christ



*The testimony of
John & Bron Fergusson*