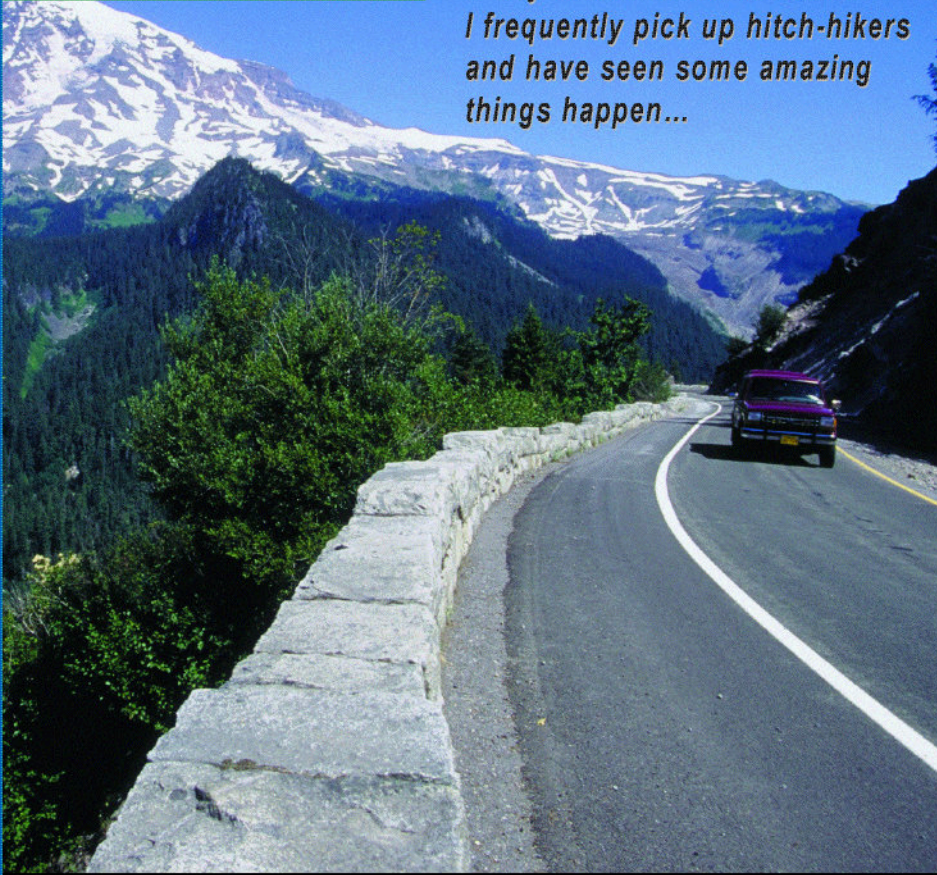




On the Road

As a business man travel is a way of life. While in Russia I frequently pick up hitch-hikers and have seen some amazing things happen...



For further information, please contact the above address. Don't let this magazine die... Pass it on to a friend.

ENGL. NR. 982

VOICE



Full Pardon

Summary

Another Dimension	2
At Sea	3
<i>Daniel Yeboah, Tel Aviv, Israel</i>	
Full Pardon	4
<i>Billy McFetridge, Belfast, N. Ireland</i>	
Order Voice	10
An Important Note	11
Security	12
<i>Peter Tompsett, Gresford, England</i>	
Contact Addresses	15
Your Choice	16
<i>Lasse Suhonen, Espoo, Finland</i>	
A Good Reminder	17
<i>Eugène Schuler, Cleebourg, France</i>	
A Second Chance	18
<i>Robert Wohlers, London, England</i>	
Who are we?	19



Editorial



Richard Shakarian

Another Dimension

For quite some time now the Lord has been speaking into my heart that the Fellowship is about to move into a new dimension, one where we will see more and more laymen begin to function in levels of ministry that we have not yet seen. As in a court of law, where the sworn testimony of witnesses is recorded and acted upon, testimonies such as those in Voice continue to demand a response. For over forty years men in the Fellowship have been testifying to the actions of Jesus Christ in their lives. These experiences are real and cannot be denied.

How do you explain the peace a man has in the midst of impossible situations? Where does an impossibly perfect answer to a specific problem come from? You can't explain away a broken hip being healed overnight, a bomb going off in an Army camp and no one being injured, a person being well enough to return to a singing career after a head wound which made him tone deaf. Is it really possible to eject from a plane just 15 seconds before hitting the ground and live to tell about it? How do you refute the testimony of the woman who has removed her "coke bottle" glasses because she hasn't needed them since she was prayed for?

More impressive than all of these is an obviously changed life. When a man has been consumed with himself all his life, using everyone to get what he wanted, and then one day becomes gentle and full of love, a miracle has taken place.

Richard Shakarian
International President

At Sea

Daniel Yeboah, Tel Aviv, Israel

"Chief officer, please ensure that the mooring ropes are ready," rang out the voice of Captain Boakye Wallace. I was employed as a navigator cadet in March 1979 at the State Fishing Corporation, Tema, Ghana. A seaman's life was quite different to that of other young men who could barely afford three square meals per day. At our home port I was a playboy and would deplete my coffers during boozing sprees.

Then I met a girl, who eventually became my wife. Victoria introduced me to some young men, one of whom was an ex-schoolmate. They were committed Christians and knew what it means to have a living relationship with Jesus Christ. We began an intensive Bible study with them. This changed everything for

me. The Bible came alive in a new way, and it was soon clear to me that God cared for me and wanted to be the major focus of my life. When I invited Him to come into my life and take charge, my bondage of drunkenness and moral decadence gave way to the fruits of the Holy Spirit.

On one occasion God kept me from difficulty when my ship came into problems with the law. I was not on board at that time because I was at the Maritime Academy for an exam. During the past years I have been stationed in Israel, where I have witnessed the profound love of God for my wife and myself. Without a doubt God is real and is our Source for help.



FULL PARDON

Billy McFetridge, Belfast, N. Ireland



The telephone rang loudly in our council flat. It was one of hundreds of calls which took me to the streets for the UDA (Ulster Defence Association). On this occasion we were to force our way into the local football club as the last people were leaving and steal the club's money. The fact that we were to rob a Protestant establishment didn't bother us. The guns we would get with the money would ensure that Ulster remained Protestant and British and, in our minds, the ends justified the means. Unfortunately, nothing went as planned that night and we were forced to flee with nothing, leaving a wounded police officer behind us.

That night I was on my bed, nervously smoking a cigarette, when my mind wandered back over the years. In 1972 I was at home on leave from the army when we learned of a cousin's merciless murder by the IRA. For the first time in my life I was directly affected by the violence of Northern Ireland. I realized that what had happened to Jim could as easily have

been to my dad or me. The fact that the police were doing nothing to find the murderers also troubled me. I began then to think that perhaps the Northern Irish people themselves might have to take up arms for their rights. Then an army friend who was posted back to Northern Ireland happened to buy a car from a constable, who had been listed as a bombing target with the IRA's intelligence. Unaware of the sale, they wired his car to explode, killing Tom and his two companions.

Not too long after these incidences I was called by the UDA (Ulster Defence Association) and asked to join their ranks for the Protestant cause in Northern Ireland. Ironically, they thought I'd make a good leader for their cause because of my experience in the army. Little did they know that I'd never been a disciplined or committed soldier. My time in the army had been filled with alcohol, wild friends, and loose women. My thrill-seeking quickly expanded to smoking pot and

absorbing pornography, and I was soon addicted to hard-core porn. At that time pornography was virtually unobtainable in Northern Ireland and I soon discovered I could sell my material there for five times what I had paid for it.

While involved with the UDA I still needed to earn a living, and I found myself drifting from one job to another, including a job as a guard with Securicor. Though I carried around more money than my friends could even imagine, I was never tempted to steal, for fear of a jail term. Through that job I was asked to become a security man – or bouncer – at local night-clubs. The money was good and the work was easy. Slowly becoming disillusioned with my UDA work, I was happy to have a legitimate excuse to cut back on my work with them.

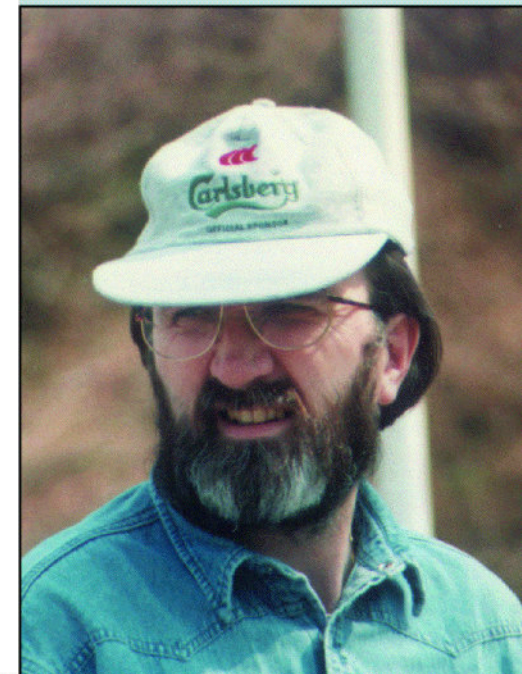
Around this time I met Christine and we seemed to hit it off from the start. Within a few months I knew that I wanted her to be my wife. We were married in April of 1977. Though I was twenty-seven, I can't say either of us were ready for marriage. My work kept me out till late in the night and then, instead of returning home to my wife, I'd find myself getting drunk, playing cards, or talking up the waitress for some quick sex. When work took me to a different town every week I developed a network of sleeping partners. Even when Christine announced we were to have a baby, I carried on as badly as ever.

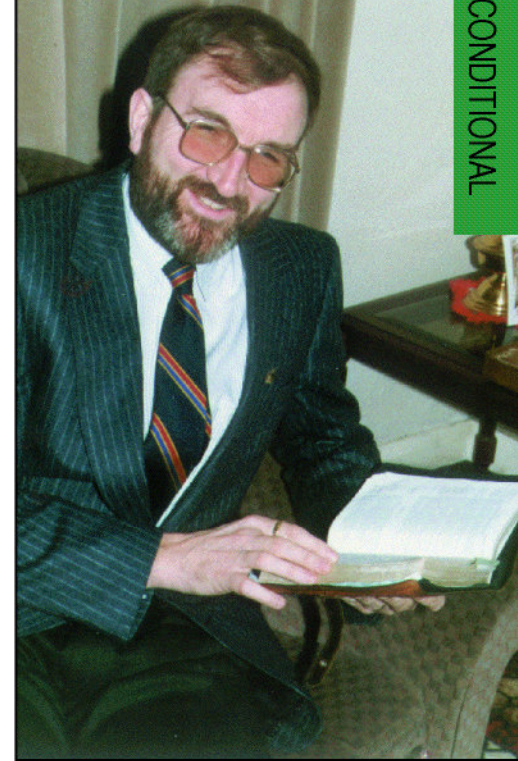
Though less involved, I continued working with the UDA. To the outside world it may appear that paramilitary groups are united, but in reality there is inside feuding and rivalry, which I experienced first-hand when a bomb meant for me exploded. Fortunately a heavy door prevented my Mum from being seriously injured.

In June of 1980 I was ordered to follow 6

Peace or Conflict

It's said that in N.Ireland the people live with history in their pockets; it's something we carry around with us. N.Ireland has known hundreds of years of national and sectarian strife. In the past, the surest way to bring about peace was by force, even if the peace was nothing more than a mere absence of outward conflict. To be perfectly honest, I couldn't see any way other than armed conflict to bring about an end to the sea of problems facing the Irish Protestants. We were in an unsolvable stalemate. At the time there were a few Christians talking about reconciliation and the need to "forgive and forget", but I was convinced that these people were the least likely to solve Ulster's problems. With time I came to realise that instead of the brave freedom fighters we claimed to be we had become more like Chicago mobsters.





Change Required Help

My loss of freedom forced me to rethink my whole value system. However, I found that I was still ungrateful at heart. I did not appreciate my mother and her unconditional love or my father who had worked to provide me with a decent home. I could feel no gratitude to my commanding officer in the army. Even Christine, who affirmed my masculinity, cooked my meals and bore me a healthy son, received no thanks from my selfish heart. It's not that I didn't want to be grateful. I wanted to change my life and be like a Hollywood prisoner who learns his lesson and decides to reform. I found that my behaviour disgusted even me, but I wasn't free to change my selfish ways. I needed help...

One day when she left, the guard standing nearby said to me, "Do you guys ever think about what your wives have to go through running up here week in, week out, for years on end?" I was ready to return a smart remark, but became aware of the sincere tone of his voice. I realised that indeed I stood there as a twice condemned man. I had no defence and resolved from then on to stop thinking about myself. I began to speak with Christine about her needs and those of our son.

Then a prison officer invited me to a Bible study. Glad for an extra opportunity to leave my cell, I went. The man in charge made an effort to get to know us prisoners. I could tell he had our interests at heart and that he respected us despite our being behind bars. What was amazing was that he talked about the Bible as if everything were true. Through him, I came to learn that Jesus was a real man's man and that He is interested in the affairs of modern Ulster. This was a radical revelation to me. After a few months I found that I was able to open up. We talked about prayer and before long I can honestly say that my prayers stopped being cries into the darkness. For the first time ever, my prayers became two-way conversations with God.

Instead of the newspapers or trashy novels, I started to read the Bible. I was amazed to discover that it was not a long list of do's and don'ts, but rather contained a road map, showing the best options for us in life, made available to us by God through His Son, Jesus Christ. Far from being disgusted by me, Jesus actually loved me. The Bible says that the wages of sin is death. That means that if you break God's laws you die, physically as well as spiritually. Jesus loved me so much that He was willing to die in my place. This I could relate to. What prisoner hasn't longed at one point or other for someone to trade places with him? This is what Jesus had

► 8

and knew I had connections with the UDA. The hours and days of interrogation gradually wore me down until I was a nervous wreck. Though guilty of most of their charges, I had not murdered Smith. Finally, desperate to get away from my interrogators and their endless questions, I signed a confession to all charges. Some days later, as I lay in my 10 feet by eight feet cell, I felt an overwhelming sense of relief. For seven years I had lived with the knowledge that one day I would be caught or killed.

The only truly friendly person to speak to me during my remand was the prison chaplain. "Where are you from, Billy?" I had to think for a moment in order to recall the answer to this perfectly ordinary question. Afterwards it occurred to me that I was grateful for the time he had given me. In my whole life I'd been too busy doing my own thing to bother being grateful to anyone.

If I was a swine to my wife as a free man, I became perhaps an even worse one behind bars, expecting her to run back and forth to the prison, bringing me whatever and listening to my endless complaints. There was not a moment for her to get a word in about her situation or the welfare of our son.



man I'll call Smith, a man who I knew personally. I was so cold-hearted in those days that it did not even cross my mind what Smith's fate was going to be. Would they rough him up, kill him, or what? On the night of his murder, I got home after 3 a.m. I never paused to consider how Christine must feel being alone night after night with our infant son. During the three years we'd been married I had refused to settle down to the role of husband, provider, and friend. I lived from day to day like a predator on the make for easy sex, easy money, and easy targets. My wife was my property, my slave. It amazes me that Christine stayed with me. After Christopher's birth I somehow became affected with some latent paternal feelings and, shortly afterwards, broke off my terrorist career. Remarkably I felt no pressure put on me because of this decision.

It was the morning of 17th September 1980. As I lay in bed next to Christine, I heard a knock at the front door. It was the police. Though I played it cool, my mind raced as they searched the apartment. Though they found nothing, I was told to get dressed. "You're under arrest for murder, McFetridge." At the police station I discovered that my arrest went back to when I'd been stopped at a road block the night of Smith's death a few months earlier. They had me near the scene of Smith's murder

Freedom in Prison

One thing about life in prison, it gives a person plenty of time to think, to contemplate the meaning of life. As a young man I chose hedonism – eat, drink and be merry, for tomorrow you die. The selfish road is a lonely one, however, and doesn't meet the need for meaningful human contact. Later I chose the Loyalist cause in Northern Ireland, thinking that here was a cause greater than myself, a cause rife with dignity, purpose and self-sacrifice. In less than a decade, however, I came to see nationalism of any sort as a sham and a vile deception. I had to ask myself, "Is anything real? Is there anything worth living for? It was then, at the lowest point in my life, that God came in. After being in the Crumlin Road Prison in Belfast for a few months, I learned that Christianity is not merely a religion. Rather it is a powerful way of life and it exists inside prisons as well as outside.



always wanted to do for me, only I'd been too busy running my own affairs to respond to God's love.

Finally, one night in March 1981, quietly and alone, I knelt in my cell and invited Jesus to come into my life. I placed my life and future under his control. There were no bells or rockets, but a quiet feeling of peace crested over my being like a gentle wave of the sea.

It was some months after this that I was charged officially with my crimes. It was then that my initial confession came back to haunt me with a vengeance. "Why on earth did I ever confess to a crime I didn't commit?" I moaned. Despite my anguish, I slipped down on my knees and prayed, "I commit this whole mess into your hands, Father. Your will be done". Soon after this I was visited by a woman named Agnes. She listened as I confided my situation and she shared my needs with her prayer partners. One day as I was agonising over my situation, Agnes arrived. "If you are innocent of this particular charge, then God will not allow you to be punished for it," she said. It was more like a prophecy than a word of condolence. In spite of the good fight of my defence lawyer, we all expected the worst. "Don't be surprised if you go down for life," I was told.

When my barrister met with me in a downstairs room at the courtroom before the day's proceedings were to begin, I dreaded what I was about to hear. "I've been informed that they are prepared to drop the murder charge," he said. "The deal is that you will have to plead guilty to manslaughter." I didn't have to think twice. "They've got a deal!" My total sentence was 152 years. Due to my plea bargaining and the fact that remaining counts would be concurrent, I was to serve only 12 years. Changes for the better began to come with

time, but they did not come fast, nor were they easy.

Prison is a totally different society from that of the outside. In prison everybody minds his own business. You learn which type of people it is safe to associate with and which to avoid. Twice during my imprisonment there were riots in my part of the prison, once due to overcrowded conditions at Crumlin and once at the Maze Prison because of the practice of placing Republicans and Loyalists together, creating intense friction just as dangerous as any outside the prison. In both instances, with God's help, I was able to abstain from participation and the due punishment.

One time I got a new cell mate. Ed had a pornographic magazine which was being circulated from cell to cell. His first words to me when he saw me glance at the cover were, "Help yourself, mate!" At these words I felt the old surge of lust well up. To my horror, my first glance at the pages caused me to flush with embarrassment. What was happening? I used to push this stuff for fun and profit. Then it dawned on me: the Holy Spirit was telling me in no uncertain terms that I needed to put the magazine down. I paused, wondering who would win the battle raging in me: God or the devil. Then I summoned all my will and put the magazine back on the shelf.

For the rest of the day I managed to keep busy enough not to think about it, but when it came time to pray before bed I found my mind kept straying back to those sexy images. This was the worst torture I'd ever known. My spirit wanted to be pure and righteous, but my body lusted after naked women. I'd never fully broken my addiction to pornography, so my struggle was like an alcoholic's with his bottle. As I lay in bed, I literally began

to sweat. Not knowing what else to do, I prayed, "Dear Jesus, I know you were a man, and so you understand my struggle. I don't want to look at that magazine. Please show me what to do."

"You all right, man?" Ed asked. "Yeah, I'm okay," I lied. Then I decided to be truthful. "Actually, I'm not okay, Ed. I have a problem and you can help me. I'm a Christian... I haven't been one very long. And, well..." "Yeah?" said Ed, waiting. "So what's that got to do with me, man?" "It's your porno book, Ed. It's driving me crazy, but I don't want to look at it. Being a Christian doesn't mean I'm brain dead, if you know what I mean. I wonder if you could get rid of it. It's not really any good anyway. It gets to you after a while."

I fully expected him to laugh in my face. Instead he said, "I'll think about that man," and rolled over. In the morning the magazine was gone. I don't know what Ed did with it, and I didn't ask him. The best thing was that the agony I'd felt the night before had gone just as mysteriously.

► 10

During my time behind bars I had

Of Value

If there is one segment of our society which is branded "loser" it is people behind bars. Yet Jesus willingly identified himself with prisoners for all time when he said, "Come, you who are blessed by my Father; take your inheritance, the kingdom prepared for you since the creation of the world. For... I was in prison and you came to visit me." Then the righteous will answer him, "Lord, when did we... see you in prison and go to visit you?" The King will reply, "I tell you the truth, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers of mine, you did for me". (Excerpt from Matthew 25:34-40)

many opportunities to spend time with other men who had become Christians at the Maze. Here was the only place in Ulster where ex-IRA and ex-UDA men could experience communion together as brothers in Christ. It was in this setting, I realised that I could love my former enemies, with that I felt I had indeed received a FULL PARDON. Better still, I was able to grant full pardon to others.

Through my involvement with the Christian community in the Maze, I met James McIlroy, then Director of Prison Fellowship Northern Ireland in Belfast. Following my time in prison, where I studied the Bible through correspondence, at James' suggestion, I attended Belfast Bible College. That was a big step of faith. God has shown Himself faithful to me, giving me opportunities to share His love with the prisoners who Jesus came to set free.

Alberta

Recently in Alberta, Canada, a woman came into a laundromat to do her wash. While waiting she saw a small box. On it were the words, "Take one, it's free!" The display carton contained copies of Voice. Life had not been good to her and as she read in Voice how God had transformed the lives of others, hope welled up within her. She committed her life to Jesus Christ right there in the laundromat. She left with clean wash and a new spring in her step.



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A PERSONAL RELATIONSHIP

While reading VOICE Magazine you may have wondered if you, too, could have the kind of relationship with God shared about here. For this to occur, take the following steps.



1 Acknowledge to God you have lived selfishly and that, in not honouring Him as Lord of your life, you have sinned and are separated from Him. "For all have sinned and come short of the glory of God" Rom. 3:23.

2 Repent by turning to God and asking for His forgiveness of your past sins and for His help to live as He desires. "Except you repent, you shall all likewise perish" Luke 13:3.

3 Believe that Jesus is the Son of God and that, as He died on the cross, He took your sins upon Himself that you may obtain God's forgiveness. "For God so loved the world that He gave His only Son, that whosoever believes in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life" John 3:16.

4 Confess that you wish to invite Jesus to be Saviour and Lord of your life. "If you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus, and shall believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you shall be saved" Rom. 10:9.

If, after careful thought you wish to make this important step, then pray the following out loud: "Dear God, I am convinced that I am a sinner and as such I am destined to perish. I believe in my heart that Jesus, your Son, died for all sinners, including me, and shed His blood to wash away my sins. I confess Jesus to be Saviour and Lord of my life and thank you for your gift of eternal life. I now trust You to help me to live as You desire." **Do not depend on feelings as proof of your acceptance by God. Feelings are changeable, but your new relationship with God is based on His promises (Rom. 10:13). Do not be ashamed to tell others about Jesus (Mat. 10:32). Take time daily for prayer and Bible reading (1 Pet. 2:2, Psalms 37:4, Rom. 8:14). When you have made this greatest of all decisions, please let us know.**

TO CONTACT THE VOICE TEAM

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- I wish to inform you of my decision to follow Jesus Christ. Please send me the booklet 'Now You've Received Christ'.
- Please send me information about the FGBMFI.
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Name and address (print clearly):

Security

Peter Tompsett, Gresford, England



Looking out the window of a crowded ex-Russian helicopter at the snow tipped mountains passing at eye level, I asked, "Why are we flying so low?" One of the English-speaking passengers returning to his home in Nagorno Karabakh replied casually, "This is to stay below the Azeri radar. Otherwise they send fighters to shoot us down." I found myself paying much more attention to the blue horizon and focusing on just why I was making this trip into a little known ethnic war zone.

My mind went back to a summer camp when I was just thirteen and hearing for the first time that I was very special in God's sight and that Jesus Christ had

come to earth to die as my redeemer. I remember being so moved by this evidence of His love that I gave my life over to Him.

At sixteen I joined a small local church and life became full of activities centred on finding out more about God's plans for me and the world, and then telling other people at various evangelistic events. I was so excited to know that each of us has a destiny to fulfil and that life was about discovering that destiny one step at a time. At twenty-one it was time to leave home and I was tired of the drabness of London. I fell in love with a wonderful Christian girl from Sussex and decided to apply to join the Sussex Police. I was successful and suddenly found myself in a world of blue uniforms

and law books at the Police Training school near Folkestone in Kent. I was posted to a small market town in West Sussex and quickly found that villains didn't play by the rules. God used me to meet people's needs when they were in desperate situations. When disaster strikes I have found that people naturally turn toward God and are more ready to hear about His plan for their lives.

After eight years, during which time I had married and started a family, I felt that God was calling me out of the police force. At first I did not want to leave as I had enjoyed a highly successful career with a number of commendations, all my promotion exams and specialist qualifications on traffic including a much prized Instructor's Certificate.

We settled into a very lively Baptist Church in Walton-on-Thames and quickly became involved in youth work and Sunday School leadership. At work things went well. I was regularly promoted and head hunted for exciting jobs, but in my spiritual life I began to feel a need for something more of God. A number of my church friends seemed to have changed and were talking about the "Baptism of the Spirit". Accepting an invitation to an FGBMFI breakfast meeting at 'The Cafe Royal' in London, I was very impressed by the speakers. Going forward at the end for prayer, I felt a great sense of God's love and peace, but nothing else seemed to happen.

Over the next months, though, something changed. When sharing my faith with other people I seemed to have exact-

14



South London

I grew up in South London in a street of small terraced houses backing onto a shunting yard. My earliest memories are of air raids and my dad coming home in uniform and carrying his rifle and a toy he had made for me! When the war ended he became a garage mechanic and I went to school. At the age of twelve I passed the examination to enter the local Grammar School and entered in a new world of activities and information I never knew existed. The Prime Minister, John Major, was in the same House but a year behind me so I did not get to know him. It was while I was in my second year that a Stockbroker customer of my father's offered to pay the fee to send me to the camp where I became a Christian.

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ly the words they needed to hear. Even more amazing, I had friends coming and asking me what made me different. This power seemed to come from a source inside me, without conscious thought.

Then, my company re-structured unexpectedly, and I found myself in limbo. In the midst of the confusion I was offered an exciting new senior job based in North Wales! After a lot of prayer I decided to accept it and we moved to a rambling old house in a beautiful area on the Welsh Border. The house had more problems than my Surveyor had found, but amazingly insurance paid for all the extra work. We felt this confirmed that we had indeed followed God's leading.

Just as we were settling in disaster struck! At this time I was UK sales Manager for a subsidiary of a famous Drug Company, having helped to build a thriving business. Out of the blue came the news that the parent company was in trouble and thirty senior jobs were to be cut. At times like this we discover how real our faith is. Day by day I was given encouragement in different ways. I discovered how much my friends cared.

I did all the right things to find a new job. I wrote several hundred letters, applied for numerous positions, and went for many interviews, but all to no avail. It became obvious that at over 45, you were considered finished. With all avenues exhausted, I was asked to open an office for a Relief and Development Agency. I knew this was God's timing and accepted. I found all my previous skills of team building, motivation, negotiation, public relations, advertising and marketing were being put to use. I was able to build

church-based teams of well-motivated fund raisers and feed them ideas.

A large regional newspaper heard of our efforts and ran a campaign to raise cash for Bosnian children. I was able to gain support from famous people in the armed forces and famous pop stars. It often involved getting soaked to the skin whilst collecting outside football grounds, and personally leading expeditions with quantities of aid to Bosnia, which included getting horribly seasick, breaking down in blizzards, sleeping in the vehicles on the move and battling with border bureaucrats. It also meant visiting Romania to help with a project for little children infected with AIDS, and seeing their suffering, and taking medical aid into Armenia and Nagorno Karabakh.

Seeing the misery inflicted on whole countries by greed and political ambition changed my perspective on my own life. Witnessing the bravery of the Karabakhis and being woken at dawn by exploding bombs draws you close to people. It was a privilege to be able to help them and to have been able to use my contacts in the Pharmaceutical Industry to obtain supplies of medicines to take to places such as these. Once again I was aware of God working out my destiny as we flew in to the landing strip.

As I look back over the years I can see how He has led me and used me to fulfil His plans. I have seen how He uses seeming disasters to move us where He wants us, and so I face the future with excitement. Wouldn't you? ●



Your Choice

Lasse Suhonen, Espoo, Finland



It became clear to me from a young age that coming from a Godly family was not enough. The faith of my parents and grandparents could only point me in the right direction. I had to have my own relationship with the living God.

While working in Sweden as a teenager I attended a Christian meeting where I made a personal decision to give Jesus Christ first place in my life. This was by far the most important and the most wonderful day of my life. God has been so good to me over the years. The Christian life is interesting and challenging, and though I do not stand in a preacher's pulpit, I feel like I have a mission for God in my business.

Frequently I pick up hitch-hikers and share my faith with them. Over the years I have met some very interesting people and have been able to pray for many of them. As a business man, I try to use what God has given me for His kingdom. Anything I have given, God has returned to me several times over.

Once we had some customers come from Minsk to Saint Petersburg to meet us. I felt strongly that I should give each of them a Russian Bible. When I did, they accepted the Bibles and stated, "You are representing a firm that honours God's Word. We want to do business with such a company as yours."

We send a Voice magazine to each of our customers, and have

had good results. We are now very active in the Baltic States, and have had a lot of interesting discussions with these customers. Many have come to know the Lord Jesus as a result.

In one joint venture with a Russian company, we decided we wanted them to know, right from the beginning, what we stood for. So when they sent a business man to Finland to meet us, we took him to a Christian meeting in Helsinki. We tried to find the best possible translator. She faithfully interpreted every single word that was spoken. Afterwards he said that he'd never heard the gospel message expressed so clearly and understandably.

Not long after this, the man did not appear at his office one morning. People went to find out whether there was a problem. He was found in a car, having been shot to death. We don't know anything about the reason. God only knows where our friend is now, but we were happy that we had used the opportunity to share the good news about Jesus Christ before it was too late.

One time a friend, who owned a Finnish competitor of MacDonald's and Carol's Restaurants, came for a visit. We shared about Jesus with him one evening. The next morning he said, "I have had the worst night's sleep, lying there thinking, thinking and re-thinking what you said." Today that man, who is multimillionaire and successful business man, is a very strong believer. He and his wife share Jesus with others wherever they go, and many of their staff have committed their lives to Jesus Christ. If we are prepared to honour God in our businesses, we will never be sorry. ●



A Good Reminder

Eugène Schuler, Cleebourg, France

While in Strasbourg recently, I parked my car and took the tram system into the city centre. As I left my car, an inner voice seemed to say that this was not a good place to park. Unfortunately, I didn't heed the warning. Returning that evening, to my horror, the car had been broken into. This experience taught me a valuable lesson. As a committed Christian for more than 13 years, I believe that God wants to help me even in the simplest things. I may not always understand why He tells me to do something, but I do know that He always has a good reason. This situation with the car reminded me of His faithfulness.

It is important for Christians to be sensitive to the leading of God's Spirit. Despite my disobedience, God did protect me, as only insignificant little things were stolen. There was even a bag with quite a bit of money in it left untouched under the seat. They had opened my boot, which was full of Bibles, but had taken nothing.

When I reported the break-in, the policeman sighed, "This happens everyday. But it is very unusual that they did not find the money." I had no difficulty having the car repaired. The insurance company looked after that. I'm grateful for this reminder that God is interested in every part of our lives. ●

A Second Chance

Robert Wohlers, London, England

"Please don't let me die!" I cried as I sat bleeding to death from a gunshot wound. "Give me a second chance." That was around Christmas 1987. Years before, I had made a commitment to Jesus Christ, but had turned my back on Him. The music scene as a pianist had consumed my attention. Nevertheless, God was there when I needed Him.

After dropping off a friend on my way to play at a blues and jazz club, I was hit by a "drive by shooting". It was dark, wet and misty. Witnesses later said that several men had fired at my car from different angles at close range. Nearby houses were also hit. My car was riddled with bullets. The first shot had hit me in the head and knocked me out. When I came to, I was partially paralysed, and there was blood everywhere. A .45 calibre bullet was lodged in the side of my head.

Then I experienced the biggest miracle of my life as I whispered to Jesus, asking Him to preserve my life. The power of the Holy Spirit came upon me, and I rose from that car like Lazarus from the tomb.

I managed to make it to a nearby house and sat on their porch while they phoned for help. To my surprise, they were Christians and immediately started to pray for my survival and recovery. I was losing a lot of blood and thought I would die at any moment. Suddenly it hit me how far I had fallen away from God. "Please, Jesus, forgive me!" I prayed. A still small voice answered back, "Keep

calm, Bob, you won't die."

An ambulance arrived and took me to hospital, where they removed the bullet. The police later stated that very few people survive such a dangerous gunshot wound to the head. Early one morning some days later the Lord spoke to my heart, "I did a miracle and saved your life. Now I want the rest of it." I didn't argue.

I had been a professional musician for years, having started to play the piano while still a kid. In the 60s the Beatles really got me going. I forgot all about other things and focused my energy on a music career. Several concerned friends had warned me about my life-style just a year or more before the shooting. One had declared, "God has a powerful calling on your life. If you continue to shun Him, something horrible is likely to happen to you." Though I had felt empty inside, I found it was not easy to withdraw from that world.

When I left the hospital, to my dismay, I discovered that my injury had damaged my sense of hearing, making me tone deaf, so my music career was over and I had to cancel all my "gigs" and concentrate on my recovery.

I studied the Bible and books on divine healing. This drove me to my knees and I started praying the Bible verses I'd read. I believed God would answer my prayer. He had just saved my life in a miracle, so I could surely trust Him for further healing. Tears rolled down my cheeks as what Jesus had done for me in His death on the cross became vividly real to me. Eventually He did answer my prayer, and I now spend much of my time witnessing about the wonderful love of Jesus Christ.

The music business can lead into many sins and temptations. You may think you



can dip into worldly pleasures for a while and it will not affect you, but that's just an illusion. Don't be fooled, it's serious business!

When God generously restored my musical hearing, I started playing keyboard for the church I was attending. I am now working on an album of Christian songs I have written about God's love and miracle-working power in our lives. My situation has afforded me some unique opportunities, such as sharing my faith with movie star, Clint Eastwood, and others on the set while working as an extra on a new movie he was filming.

I am so thankful that God gave me a second chance!

WHO ARE WE?

The Full Gospel Business Men's Fellowship International is an international fellowship of Christian business men whose purpose is:

1 To call men to God and into the church by witnessing to God's presence and power in the world today through the message of the total Gospel for the total man.

2 To provide a basis for Christian fellowship among men everywhere under the single banner of their experiences in Jesus Christ and to strengthen them so that they can go back to their respective churches refreshed and renewed. The FGBMFI is not a church nor a sect. It has no priests nor pastors, and does not start churches.

3 To bring about a greater measure of unity among all Christians.



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