

My Testimony

by Adelaide Jennings



My name is Adelaide Jennings and it is always a joy for me to tell how the Lord graciously came into our family and saved father, mother, and all ten children.

I was born on the 24th April 1921 in Barrington Street off the Donegal Road, Belfast Northern Ireland. In our family there were five boys, five girls, and I was the seventh child. When I was about two years of age, my father, who was an engine driver, was transferred from Belfast to a small village called Clover Hill in County Cavan. It was there I spent the early years of my life having a nice home with plenty of wide open fields. In the summer we often ran in our bare feet through the the rich green fields of the Emerald Isle which had an abundance of buttercups and other wildflowers. It was less than a country village, having only one shop, post office, and the school.

From those early days we were made aware that there was a God, and my parents made sure that we went to Sunday school and church. They were God-fearing Presbyterians, however, the Presbyterian Church was about 5 miles away, and since we were too young to walk the railway lines on the Sabbath Day, us younger children went to the Church of Ireland which was beside our home. The minister in the Church of Ireland was Mr. Shorten, and the poor man was certainly not saved.

However, in school we had religious instruction and I do remember Mr. Brandon telling us that we need to be made whiter than snow. As a child, I wondered how anything could be whiter than snow! We did not learn much about God however, but a Presbyterian minister called Mr. McDowell used to come from Cavan town on Thursday nights to tell us stories of the Bible and teach us little hymns.

About 1929 father was moved back to the city of Belfast where we had a house just off Donegal Road. It was there the Reverend Anderson came from the Richview Presbyterian Church, came to visit us. It was easy to remember because he was a small man with a silk hat and a tailcoat, and for all the world looked like someone out of Dickens. Shortly afterwards we started to attend his church, but learnt nothing about God from him or in Sunday school. During that time, my sister Joyce took ill with pneumonia, and indeed it was thought she was going to die. To my mind she was going to be fortunate because she would not have to go to school which I hated! As Joyce lay so sick, God used this illness to develop this purpose for us to hear the gospel. One evening a group of people came to the corner of Tates Ave. and started to sing hymns and preach. Then they gave an invitation to the little mission Hall called "Kilburn Street Mission Hall". My parents started to send us to the little hall, and such beautiful times we had there.

That was where we started to learn that we were sinners and needed to be saved, that Christ died on the cross to take away our sins, and all we had to do was to take His gift of salvation. Nearly all of us children were sent, and then my parents also began coming. I thank God for Kilburn, for it was there I believe I got saved when about fifteen years of age. Not only myself, but also a number of our family were saved because of the ministry we heard at Kilburn Mission Hall.

Mr. Cassidy, the minister at Kilburn, was a real child of God and I can truly say, a Shepherd who fed his flock. I thank God for such faithful men who made sure we all knew about salvation. He had a true heart to care for the sheep.

Sunday was an exceedingly busy day, and a typical one was as follows. First there was the prayer meeting at 7:30 A.M., then we came home for breakfast. We then got ready for Sunday school and this was immediately followed by the service in Ulsterville Church at 11:30 A.M., then we came home. In the afternoon we were sent back again for Sunday school. In the summer we usually went for a walk and then home for tea. After that it was out to the prayer meeting at 6:30 P.M., and then for the gospel service from 7 to 8 P.M.

In the passing of time, I met a man who was to become my husband, Rowan Jennings. We started attending a church on Lower Windsor Avenue in Belfast, and until Rowan died in 1986, Lower Windsor Avenue Gospel Hall was principally our home church.

Addendum to Adelaide Jennings Testimony by her son, Rowan Jennings

What would my Mum say about God? This is the year 2011, and on the 24th of April she will be 90 years of age. She is an old woman, youth and beauty have passed away, her thinking is not clear as it once was, nor the body as strong. However, in retrospect, I know my Mum would honestly say:

“All the way my Savior leads me
What have I to ask beside
Can I doubt His tender mercy
Who though life has been my guide”.

“He has been a husband to me, and when my husband died, and when nights were long and dreary, I knew His shepherd care. Soon I shall be released from this body of clay, and with joyous delight, I shall see MY Redeemer and join with unnumbered hosts and sing:

Unto Him who hath loved me and washed me from sin,
unto Him be the glory forever, Amen.”