

Testimony

by Mr. George Orr



My name is George and I was born in Dublin on 27th December 1918, the eldest of seven children who were born and raised in a godly home. It was on a Sunday while I was still a baby, Mr. Handley Bird from India was at our home for a meal. I am told how he took me in his arms in prayer and asked the Lord for my salvation and that I might become a missionary.

I started work at fourteen at a tea agent's office. Here I found myself in the company of Christians who tried to force me or embarrass me into salvation, but, because I was shy, I didn't like to be cornered, so I became a resentful and rebellious teenager.

At seventeen years of age I was still unsaved but God was merciful, and on Thursday, 23rd April 1936 I was at a gospel meeting. Despite having little to no interest yet, because Mr. Percy Jones invited me in the most gracious way I could not have refused. Mr. Harold Wildish of Jamaica was preaching from Exodus 2 on Moses, the child who was condemned to die but who was saved by the king's

daughter. It was while he was speaking that I had personal dealings with God. I recognized myself as a sinner and pleaded with Him to look upon the cross in lieu of my sin. What a momentous moment to see oneself included in the work, one's sins covered by the death of Christ on the cross. Everything was changed as to my outlook. I started attending all the meetings and, after some time, I was baptized and received into fellowship. I became involved with the activities of the assembly and I can remember the day when, with trembling knees, I stood on a platform for the first time.

God, in His own way, brought me to ponder Brazil and His work there. The believers in Merrion Hall had a missionary study class and prayer meeting. There they would read up and present the characteristics of various countries, the work of God there, the missionaries and the problems they faced, and would pray for them.

During this time I reread, "*Adventures with the Bible in Brazil*" by Fred Glass, a book I had received years before in Sunday School. The book described rural Brazil, but didn't say anything about the big cities such as Rio de Janeiro and Sao Paulo, which we would come to know some years later. Corresponding with a missionary from Brazil living in England, wanting to know more about the country and the work there, I began to feel I should go and help in the work. In 1939, the 2nd World War started and all civilian traveling stopped. During the war the idea didn't leave me and was the subject of much thought and prayer.

At the end of 1941, my attention was drawn to a young lady and, after much prayer and consideration, I arranged to go for a short walk with her. I wanted to be sure it was of the Lord, and that she would also have a desire of serving the Lord wherever He would lead. One of the first things I said to her was: "Did you ever have thoughts of the mission field?". Having established that we had that in common, three years later Martha and I were married in Merrion Hall on 4th April 1944. What a blessing she has been as a delightfully precious helper, loved by all the Brazilian believers.

In 1944 the war was raging and those were times when people had just about enough to eat and everything was rationed. When living by faith, that is having no assurance from man's income, I started wondering could God keep me and my wife in Brazil? I continued praying and seeking God's guidance. The war finished near the end of 1945, and after a while the ships started leaving our shores again for distant lands. While we were still seeking confirmation as to the will of God for us, one night in a ministry meeting, the preacher (Mr. J. B. Watson - late editor of *The Witness*) read from Jeremiah 1, and the words that caught my attention were: "Thou shalt go..."; "Thou shalt go to all that I shall send thee, and whatsoever I command thee thou shalt speak."

Early in 1947 it was a never-to-be-forgotten spiritual experience. I sat daily for three weeks in north Wales under the teaching of the late Mr. W. E. Vine and Mr. Harold St John. The latter also did a wonderful service in Brazil. I spoke to the brethren about our exercise and they were happy to give us their full support and commendation to the work of the Lord. After that, arrangements were made and tickets bought, and on 18th October 1947 we said goodbye to friends and family and left for Brazil with a certain fear and conscious of our weakness, but trusting in the Lord. He has never let us down! We arrived in Brazil on 5th November, 1947, with a two-year-old son, Stanley, knowing nobody in the land, and not speaking the Portuguese language.

Once we learned enough of the language to be able to communicate with the people, it was a great privilege to tell them the good news of God's love, of the death of His Son, and salvation available to all. Most of our years in Brazil were spent in the states of Sao Paulo and Parana, but on many occasions we travelled to other parts of the country, from the North on the banks of the Amazon, to the South in the Rio Grande do Sul to point sinners to Christ and help and have fellowship with God's people.

At the beginning of August 2004, I had to have a heart pacemaker installed, which the Lord used to spare me a little longer. Looking back over the years, when I think of all He has done for us, how little is it that we have been able to do for Him. Thank God He is gracious, and despite the many failings, He has been gracious and used our sojourn here for the advancement of His glory and kingdom. None of us know what lies ahead but thank God we know the truth of the little hymn, that while we do not know the future, we know Him who holds it secure in His hand.

EDITOR'S NOTE:

It was only seventeen months after George had the pace maker that the Lord released him from his earthly journey. On the 18th May 2006 he fell asleep. What a life of this child of God.