

**JOY
IN OUR
JOURNEY**



The purpose of recording this memoir is so that
"You may see and know and consider and understand together that the
Hand of the Lord has done this, the Holy One of Israel has created it."

Isaiah 41:20

The Living God keeps His Promises!

Short Bio of Walt Henrichsen

Walt was born in Berkeley, California. His parents were Walter Henrichsen and Dorothy Davis. He grew up and lived in San Leandro, located in the East Bay of San Francisco. While living at the family summer mountain home in Twain Hart, CA, he met Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior. He was 19, and it was during the summer between his freshman and sophomore year at Modesto Junior College.

He graduated from Central College in Pella, IA with a degree in Philosophy, and went on to receive a Master of Divinity Degree at Western Theological Seminary in Holland, Michigan. He trained with the Navigators in Southern California and at their headquarters in Colorado Springs, CO. His first assignment was to direct a Navigator program, with a staff of two men and two women, at Maranatha Bible Camp in North Platte, NE during the summers of 1960 and 1961.

Short Bio of Leette Dillon

Born and raised in St. Paul, Minnesota. Her parents were Clyde Dillon and Ena Boustead. She met Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior at the age of 11.

She graduated from the University of Minnesota with a Bachelor of Arts degree in Education.

She had Navigator training in Los Angeles, CA and Colorado Springs, CO from 1958-1960. Her first assignment was to assist in a Navigator training program for High School and College students at Maranatha Bible Camp in North Platte, NE during the summers of 1960 and 1961.

The second assignment was to tutor Sandra and Steve Sanchez in San Jose, Costa Rica. Both teenagers were bilingual, but their education had only been in Spanish-speaking schools, and the family was scheduled to return to Navigator headquarters.

Married Years

Walt and Leette were married June 3, 1962 in the Navigator Glen Eyrie Castle, Colorado Springs, CO.

They ministered on staff with the Navigators in Michigan, Texas, Colorado, and New Zealand from 1960 to 1977.

Their four children: Deborah Lynn, Walter Arlie III, Jonathan Dillon, and Janna Kay.

Their son, Walter, entered the Lord's presence at age 7 ½ having died of Leukemia.

Walt was invited to minister to business and professional men in 1977. With the blessing of The Navigators, he fulfilled this assignment from the fall of 1977 to August 29, 2016 under the sponsorship of Leadership Foundation, Inc.

The major focus of Leette's life was to minister to her husband and children. Men and women lived in their home from 1963-1975 for discipleship training.

Leette was introduced to neighborhood Bible studies for women, while she lived with Marion and Bob Foster in Colorado Springs.

Her main ministry with women has been teaching Bible studies.

They lived in San Diego, California from 1987 to 2015.

They moved to Hoosier Village Retirement Center in Indianapolis, IN, November 2015.

The Lord called Walt Home to Heaven, August 29, 2016.



Leette age 4



Walt age 4



Leette and Walt age ??



Leette age 7



Walt age 7

Leette's Personal Testimony

In the very cold winter of 1946, our little family moved to a new neighborhood. My baby sister, Linda, had Whooping Cough. I had a respiratory infection and a severe eczema breakout on my hands and feet. My Dad took me to the doctor and my infection was treated with the new wonder drug Penicillin; and my hands and feet were wrapped with salve and gauze. Within three days, I began to smell something and discovered the skin on my hands and feet had turned black. I was allergic to Penicillin. We went back to the doctor's office daily to have the dead skin removed. During this healing period, I sat daily with my hands and feet in a blue water solution until the skin grew back. Plastic hadn't been invented yet, so Dad used his rubber raincoat to protect the bed from my bandaged-soaked hands and feet during the night.

As the days passed into weeks and I began to get better, my mother decided to take over a jar of her special sweet pickles to meet our new neighbor lady while baby Linda was sleeping. By this time, I was able to stay out of the blue solution for a period of each day. When my mother returned, she brought the neighbor lady with her. She introduced Mrs. Chatfield saying she had told her something she had never heard before and wanted me to hear it also.

I was eleven years old, and this was the first time I heard that Jesus, as God's son, came to earth to die on a Cross to pay the penalty for my sin. She also read John 3:16 and parts of Revelation 21 & 22 as she explained the gift that Jesus was offering. She asked me if I wanted to go to heaven and I eagerly responded, "Yes!". My forty-year-old mother had never heard the good news of Jesus Christ until that day.

Mother and I, with the neighbor lady, knelt by the bed, confessed our sins and asked Jesus to come into our lives. If I would have known the story of *Pilgrim's Progress*, I would have understood about the burden of guilt that rolled off Pilgrim's back when he knelt and prayed at the Cross. All the guilt I was carrying rolled off and I knew Jesus had come to live in my life. Three evenings later, my dad, under deep conviction of sin, also accepted Christ into his life.

Years later I met the daughter of Mrs. Chatfield, and she told me how her mother had remembered meeting and sharing Christ with us. She said it was a memorable time for her mother as she witnessed the Lord's presence manifested in our lives at our conversion.

Observations on My Life Journey

Once my parents and I met Christ, we faithfully attended church, and I remember as a youngster having a deep inner desire to grow in my walk with the Lord. Every time the church doors were open, I was there. As a high schooler, I was actively involved in our excellent young people's group, and remember asking my pastor how I could be a better witness for the Lord. He told me I needed to pray more. I did, but I still needed help and I pled with the Lord for someone to lead me. Little did I realize He began answering my prayer during the summer between high school and the University of Minnesota, when I met some young people who were being helped by an organization called The Navigators.

I began by doing Bible Study in their beginning "Lessons on Assurance" booklets, and by memorizing verses in the Topical Memory System. One of the older college students began meeting with me on an individual basis asking and answering questions as I went through the studies. The challenge of their theme, "To Know Christ and To Make Him Known," fit into my longing to grow in my Christian life. I also learned of their vision to multiply your life by investing in disciples. Throughout my college years, I was involved with Young Life Campaign, Campus Crusade for Christ, and The Navigators

Following university, I went for training with the Navigators in Los Angeles, California. There were seven girls living in a big home under the leadership of a Navigator staff lady. We all had jobs in the marketplace. As we lived, studied, prayed, and ran a house together, all kinds of lessons were learned, from dealing with attitudes that weren't right, to applying the Scriptures in all situations. Coming from a very sheltered background, I had multiple lessons to learn during my two years.

Since I could not teach in California, as they required five years education for their teacher certificate, I had the privilege of working as a "Girl Friday" in a plumbing shop owned by Bob and Marion Foster. The founder of the Navigators, Dawson Trotman, had died earlier that year and Bob was asked to be the Vice President and Lorne Sanny was asked to be the President. Marion taught me all kinds of office duties. The office manager and my boss, who was the lead plumber, added to my education.

Following two years in Los Angeles, Bob and Marion invited me to move to Colorado Springs, Colorado and live with them and their four children. I worked for Marion, helping run the home and learning the ministry of Christian hospitality. I am so grateful for the months the Lord gave me under Marion's guidance. No woman, other than my mother, has impacted my life in my walk with the Lord more than Marion. She exemplified a godly woman who lived out the Word of God in her life. She also modeled submission to her husband, dedicated motherhood to her children, and hospitality as a daily lifestyle. Predominantly, she loved me and faithfully guided and counseled me in my life.

Parallel of Walt's Journey

Walt tells of lying on his back as a young boy watching clouds float by and wondering at the purpose of life. He would ask various people the question but could never find an answer. He began his college studies at Modesto Junior College, but between his freshman and sophomore year, he received an invitation to attend the U.S. Naval Academy which he considered as a possible career.

While at their mountain home, he met a local contractor at the swimming lake and asked him, "Do you know the purpose of life?" Bob Wheeler invited him home, opened the Scriptures and told him how Jesus Christ came to die for his sin. He challenged Walt to invite Christ into his life. Until that night, Walt had only heard of Jesus Christ as a curse word. He immediately knew that Jesus was what he had been looking for and he accepted Christ. As he returned home, he knew a change had taken place in his life and decided that whatever it meant to "minister" for Christ was what he wanted to do.

When he returned to college, he met some young people who prayed before classes and he joined them. At the end of his second year, his friends were heading back to a Christian college in Pella, Iowa. Up to this point in his schooling, he had studied engineering. As he put it, "I realized, if I was going to master the Bible, I'd have to think conceptual, not analytical. So, I changed my major to philosophy." He transferred to Central College and discovered it was a school of the Reformed Church in America. He was headed to be a minister, and their closest seminary was in Holland, Michigan.

In his three years of seminary training, he had two internships: one in Roseland, located on the south side of Chicago, and the other in southern California. While at Roseland, he did evangelism for the church but discovered the ministry of follow-up was missing. Before he began his second internship, he attended the Billy Graham Crusade in San Francisco and asked to work in the follow-up department. His boss was a Navigator on loan to the Crusade. He included Walt in follow-up ministry and introduced him to some other Navigators.

Following the San Francisco Crusade, Walt went to southern California where he met Skip Gray, a Navigator Staff in the area. Walt asked Skip if he would come each week to meet with some of the men in the church. Skip came and taught the men for an hour each week, but then spent four hours with Walt, challenging him in his personal walk with the Lord. When Walt returned to seminary for his final year, he corresponded with Skip by doing an in-depth Bible study from the book of Hebrews. Following seminary, he trained at the Navigator headquarters in Colorado Springs and then lived in the Gray's home for two years, while teaching Bible at a local Christian high school. The two summers, between those years, were spent leading a Navigator training program at Maranatha Bible Camp, located on an island in the Platte River outside of small, Maxwell, Nebraska.

WALT'S STORY OF HOW GOD BROUGHT US TOGETHER

I'm sure you have heard the phrase, "One thing worse than being single is being married to the wrong person." Walt was terrified of marriage for two reasons: First, it was a life-long commitment with only death as a way out. (He could go to the mission field; realize he had made a mistake and return home; but with marriage it was "until death do us part.")

Second, although he wanted marriage and children, he thought God may have called him to be celibate. While in seminary, God challenged him that he was "shopping" for a wife. He yielded to the Lord and likened his experience to Abraham taking Isaac to Mount Moriah. He ended all dating.

Years went by, and in the middle of the second summer of our working together at the Navigator Training Program in Nebraska, he realized he had fallen in love with me. Before we parted at the end of the summer, he never gave me any indication that he was interested in me. But he asked the Lord for three things to happen before he would proceed in any relationship. This was his Urim and Thummin.

First, since we were going different directions, he asked the Lord to help him forget me. "Out of sight, out of mind" was the phrase he used. He didn't forget me, and mutual friends would ask him about me as a possible wife.

Second, he asked for a promise from Scripture. The Lord laid Isaiah 41:20 on his heart. "That they may see and know and consider and understand together that the hand of the Lord hath done this and the Holy One of Israel hath created it."

But these two things were subjective, and he wanted one more thing that was objective. He diligently prayed for three men who knew us both well, and then asked them what they thought of me without telling them he was in love. If any one of the three had a negative response, he would take it from the Lord that he shouldn't pursue a relationship.

Skip Gray had told him before he left for Maranatha the first summer, "Do not fall in love with Leette Dillon." There was no explanation at the time, but he decided it would be a good idea to start by asking Skip. He wrote to him and the reply was, "It is about time, Henrichsen, get with it and marry her."

I had lived with the George Sanchez family the previous school year tutoring their children. He asked George what he thought of me and got a positive response.

He then sought out Lorne Sanny, the President of the Navigators, and asked him what he thought of me. The typical response of the Navigators (The Never Daters, as they were called) was for a fellow to start writing to a girl to get to know her. That was Lorne's suggestion to Walt. Walt took it as a negative. Because we had worked together for two summers, he believed he already knew me. He thanked Lorne, and as he had his hand on the doorknob to leave, Lorne said, "On second thought, if I loved a girl, I would call her and tell her."

That night I received a telephone call, "Leette, this is Walt."

My first thought was "What did I forget to do?"

"Leette, I love you and I'm asking if you will marry me?"

I was so stunned that if the floor would have opened, I would have gone straight through. Through my tears I said, "Yes, I love you. But I need some confirmation from the Lord." He replied, "Take all the time you need. I will wait two weeks, two months, two years. Your answer is not dependent upon my love for you." The rest of the conversation was a blur, but I knew God was bringing about a miracle.

MY SIDE OF THIS MIRACLE IS A WHOLE OTHER STORY

While in college, I was actively involved in the ministry with university and high school students in the Twin City area. I had dated one of the fellows in the group. He was a godly young man who treated me with the highest regard. He planned to join a mission agency in British Columbia. He asked me if I would marry him but be unofficially engaged until after my Navigator training in Los Angeles, at which time I would join him and get my engagement ring. I agreed.

Within six months I realized I wasn't in love with him. It was very distressing to me because I realized that if I was truthful, it would deeply hurt him. God worked out my breaking off the relationship, but I also was very aware that I did not know the difference between infatuation and true, lasting love. Three years passed and one day I faced the possibility that I might never marry. The issue wasn't being single; I had yielded that to the Lord years earlier. I realized I couldn't love a husband as the Lord commanded. I was shattered to the core of my being. Following my encounter, I heard the Lord's still small voice, "Leette, when I bring the man of My choice into your life, I will give you My love for him." The promise wasn't that He would bring a man into my life, but that if He did give a husband, He would give me His love for him.

Following a year of living with Marion and Bob Foster and their four children, I worked and lived at the Navigator's headquarters, Glen Eyrie. In the spring of 1960, The Navigators asked me if I would join a staff of four (two fellows and two girls) to participate in a training program for high school students. The program would be under the leadership of a fellow coming from California by the name of Walt Henrichsen. Before leaving for the program in Western Nebraska, I asked Skip Gray what Walt was like, since he had lived with and trained under Skip. He replied, "He is a minister in the Reformed Church of America, and he carries a Scofield Bible." I had never heard of the Reformed Church of America, but I knew the Scofield King James Version of the Bible, so I figured he must be okay. Then Skip said to me, "Whatever you do, don't fall in love with Walt Henrichsen." That was a solid directive without any amplification. It was kind of like God speaking!

My first introduction to Walt was when the other staff girl and I went to meet him. He had driven from California with a car full of student attendees and had come down with the flu. He was put in isolation in an infirmary, and we approached and sat down with our backs to the screen door. I remember he said something very strange, "You'll find me a hard man to love." (Isn't it interesting that the girl who realized she didn't have the capacity to love was given the Lord's love for a man who believed he was hard to love?)

That summer had a major impact on me as I heard Walt teach the Scriptures, lead the program, counsel the girls I would take to him, and listen in as he directed them from the Word of God. I realized that he had a depth in the Scriptures that I had never encountered before. At the end of the summer, Lorne called Walt and me into his office and asked if we would consider doing the same type of program the following summer with college people. We replied yes and went our separate ways.

That September, I flew to Costa Rica to tutor two of George and Florine Sanchez's children to prepare them for Stateside education. During that time, Florine asked me if I was in love with Walt and I responded no and inquired why she had asked. She replied, "You are always saying, 'Walt says this, and Walt says that.'" While flying back to the States, I thought about the coming program and wondered if Walt would ask us to do staff Bible study again, in addition to the full program, plus the Bible study we were doing with the trainees. The previous summer I had submitted but hadn't put my heart into the study because I thought the schedule was so full. The Lord convicted me about doing it "grudgingly and of necessity." I repented and told the Lord I would do the study wholeheartedly if Walt should ask.

In our first staff meeting, Walt outlined the summer's program and requested the staff meet early Sunday mornings for investigative Bible Study before the campers awakened. After the meeting, I approached Walt and told him my decision about doing a staff study, but I honestly didn't know when I would find the time to prepare for it. He suggested I take my day off and give it to Bible Study. My day off was spent in Maxwell, Nebraska which consisted of a main street that had a Feed store, Grocery store, Dry goods store, Drug Store and not much else. He asked me what I did on my day off. I replied, "I window shop." He looked at me like I had just come from outer space. I instantly got the picture! I spent the mornings studying on a park bench, and after lunch I found an air-conditioned Carnegie Library that had two different translations of the Bible. That summer I learned the difference between doing Bible Study and studying the Bible.

In the middle of the second summer at Maranatha, I was in a friend's wedding at Glen Eyrie. On the return trip, I decided to turn my responsibilities over to my associate and major on counseling the girls. I also realized I was very attracted to Walt, but I didn't say anything to anyone. Even when people asked me if I was interested in him, I would answer no, but that I respected him very much. I was doing everything I could to squelch my feelings and obey the command not to fall in love with him.

Lorne Sanny called me into his office for an evaluation of the summer, and he asked me if I had fallen in love or had a love interest. I said no, but I had a deep respect for the man I had worked with for the past two summers. For the next several days, I was miserable because no matter where I read in the Bible, it spoke of lying or deceit. I finally asked my associate to pray for me because my communion with the Lord was gone. She immediately got down on her knees and began to pray. I was under such conviction, I got up and left the room to find Lorne. I knew he was scheduled to leave on an overseas trip, and I had to find a way to contact him. As I walked out of the house, Lorne was walking out of an office ahead of me. It took me until we got outside before I told him I didn't think I had lied to him when he asked me if I was in love, but the Lord was convicting me every time I opened the Bible about deceit and lying. He graciously hugged me and told me, "Don't feed it and don't fight it." Immediately the burden was lifted, and I was back in fellowship with the Lord.

My new assignment was in San Francisco, living in a women's residence for college students and working girls. I had been there about a month when I received a letter from a Navigator representative serving overseas. He told me he had an interest in me and would like to write and get to know me better, in hope there could be a future for us. I was crushed!

I wanted the will of the Lord first and foremost and prayed for the Lord's will even if it meant marriage to this man. At that point a pain shot through me like a stab wound, and I admitted to the Lord, and to myself, that I loved Walt, and I realized I wouldn't be able to spend the rest of my life with him. This was not infatuation; I was hopelessly in love. I didn't think I could ever be Walt's wife as he was spiritually so far down the road ahead of me. I confessed to the Lord that I had given my heart away again and begged Him to help me obey His will for my life.

One week later, Walt called and told me he loved me and asked me to marry him.

I fell on my knees and wept, overwhelmed that Walt loved me and that God had been working in both of our hearts for months, without our sharing it with each other. I determined not to hunt for a promise from the Scripture as God could give it in His own time. In my Quiet Time three mornings later, I was reading in my regular place in Psalms. This was my confirmation, "But our God is in the heavens, He hath done what He hath pleased." (115:3) I lifted my heart to the Lord. "Oh, Lord if this pleases you, it surely pleases me." I gave Walt a wholehearted, "YES!"

Letters began flying back and forth as we tried to figure out how we could get together to announce our engagement. Finally, we decided it should be announced at Glen Eyrie. The night our engagement was announced, it was also announced that Walt would go to Wycliffe Bible Translator's Jungle Camp in Mexico for the next five months to teach Navigator basics to their new candidates.

Walt drove to San Francisco before his scheduled flight to Mexico, and we had our first date after we were engaged. Our time together was perfect, and as we shared our story with friends and family, we learned from each other what the Lord had been doing to bring us together. Walt gave me a lovely diamond ring that his dad had given to his mom as her first engagement ring. (Dad had given her a new one on their 25th anniversary.) When I learned that the Lord had given Walt Isaiah 41:20 as a confirmation of our relationship, I was stunned. Seven years earlier, I had penciled in my Bible by Isaiah 41:20, "Lord, if you ever bring marriage into my life, please do it on the basis of this verse."

"That we may see and know and consider and understand together that the hand of the
Lord hath done this,
The Holy One of Israel hath created it."



THE BEGINNING OF OUR JOURNEY TOGETHER

Walt returned from five months of ministering at Wycliffe's Jungle Camp in Mexico and we packed up the belongings we had in the San Francisco area, and began our journey to Colorado Springs. There were family and friends that Walt wanted me to meet, and I wanted him to meet my family too.

Our first stop was to visit the staff and students of Valley Christian High School in Bellflower, California. The poem, * written by student Gloria Sleger, reveals part of the impact Walt had on his students. Another student continued his education in Michigan, followed us to Texas for Navigator training, and went on to a full career of a discipleship ministry with the Navigators, both overseas and stateside.

Following our meeting with friends in Southern California, we traveled to St. Paul, Minnesota to meet my parents, sister Linda, other family members and close friends. My parents had already fallen in love with their soon-to-be son-in-law through our letters telling of the Lord's work in our lives. Meeting him personally increased their love. Linda had met Walt two summers earlier when she visited me at Maranatha's high school session.

We arrived at Colorado Springs to attend Staff Conference the week prior to our wedding. I planned our wedding from California. Marion and Bob Foster gave us a lovely rehearsal dinner at their home, and Marion, with some other friends gave us our reception.

Lorne Sanny married us in the Great Hall of Glen Eyrie Castle. The wedding began at four in the afternoon in complete sunshine. As Walt and I were giving our vows to each other, a huge thunderstorm, with hail, arrived and then quickly passed. Lila, Dawson Trotman's widow, announced at the reception that she believed it was the Lord's blessing on our marriage. Considering her statement, I thought it was interesting that the Lord had impressed upon me Isaiah 55:12 prior to our wedding. "For ye shall go out with joy and be led forth with peace; the mountains and the hills shall break forth before you into singing and all the trees of the field shall clap their hands." We left on our honeymoon under sunny skies. That was Sunday, June 3, 1962, the third summer since we met.

*See next page



At our school there was a man
Who taught us of the Lord.
He made us learn and understand
God's Precious Holy Word.

When we spoke of marriage
This is what he said,
"It's up to Christ, my Savior
If I ever wed."

As he left Valley Hi
To labor at the Glen
We said Goodbye, hoping
That someday we'd see him again.

And so it was at summer camp
That he did meet the girl
That God had sent to be his wife
And set his heart in a whirl.

He consulted God's Holy Word
And asked that his love might grow.
He also asked 3 friend's advice
And none of them said no.

He made a very important call
On October 23
For to Leette he said,
"Will you marry me?"

He prayed and prayed
Asking for God's Will
In her letter she answered yes
With joy his heart did fill.

Now she wears his mother's ring
The wedding is June 3.
We hope with Christ
They live together happily.

This is message from the "gang"
You taught at Valley Hi.
We hope to see you again someday
Congratulations and Goodbye

Our two-week honeymoon began with the first night as a gift in a lovely Denver hotel. From there, we had the balance of the week at a small cabin in Rocky Mountain National Park and the second week at Lost Valley Ranch near Decker's, Colorado.

The Fosters lived at the Ranch during the summer, and they invited us to live and care for their home in Colorado Springs while we worked at Glen Eyrie the remainder of the summer. In the latter part of the summer, the Navigators asked me if I would move up to Eagle Lake and direct the first Girl's Camp. Little did Walt and I realize this would be the first of many separations for ministry.

Lorne asked Walt where he would like to minister in the fall. Walt requested a place where there had not been a previous Navigator ministry. They decided on Michigan, and we took off with all our earthly possessions in a steamer trunk and two-foot lockers. The Lord led us to Western Michigan University in Kalamazoo. Since Walt had been in seminary in Holland, he knew several businessmen who asked him to lead them in Bible study. The Lord supported us by income from substitute teaching in local high schools, and by Walt accepted preaching invitations throughout western Michigan.

We rented the downstairs of an old house that was on a street with a campus entrance. It had a living room, dining room, kitchen, one bathroom and a small back entry way into the kitchen. There were no bedrooms or closets. The original, glass, dining room, French doors were wall papered on both sides. That became the bedroom. When Walt said he thought we should rent it, I fought back tears. Two years later, I again fought back tears because we had to leave.

On the weekend, we moved in, good friends came to help us clean the house, and the next day Walt accepted an invitation to preach in a local church. Following the service, a man came up and handed Walt a fifty-dollar bill, a large sum in those days. That was used to buy our first furniture: a mattress and box-spring.

We entertained our first guest in the kitchen, using the steamer trunk and foot lockers as table and chairs. Soon after we were given used furniture by friends, and we frequently filled the place with students for meetings, meals and Bible studies.

Those were special days of seeing the Lord provide for all our needs, begin a student ministry, and start a couple's Bible study.



OUR JOURNEY WITH OUR CHILDREN

We always believed, from before our marriage, that if God should give us children, they would be a gift from Him, and He could call them back at any time. Walt wrote the following to me during our engagement: "If God is good to us, we will someday have children. As we hold each other, so must we hold them—with an open hand. Let us begin even now, to pray that whatever impact we are allowed to have, and especially with our children, that it may spell out the honor and glory of God in Christ Jesus."

Walt loved children and had a deep desire that the Lord would give him "dozens." On my side, I was scared to have the responsibility of raising children, and although I wanted children, I had hoped not too many! The morning of our first child's birth, a Godly missionary prayed that God would make me a "joyful mother of children" from Psalms 113:9. Truly, God has answered that prayer!

God blessed us with four wonderful children: Deborah Lynn, Walter Arlie III, Jonathan Dillon and Janna Kay. May this account show the faithfulness of God to the promises He gave from His Word, to His leading in our lives regarding our children, and to His lessons in our journey.

Five weeks prior to the due date of our first child, the doctor gave permission for me to travel from Michigan to Colorado for an International staff conference with the following provisions: that we would travel by train, and that I would see a doctor immediately upon arrival. I was shocked when the Colorado doctor checked me and announced I would deliver within forty-eight hours! It wasn't known until ten years later that if a woman goes from low altitude to high altitude during the last trimester, she goes into labor. It takes six weeks for a person to increase the oxygen capacity of their blood to provide enough oxygen to the child they are carrying.

Deborah was given a ten percent chance of survival due to the Hyland Membrane Disease. The attending pediatrician said there were three things to her advantage: she was a girl, (President Kennedy's son had died three days earlier from Hyland Membrane), she had a strong heart, and she was a fighter. (I recalled that part of God's gift when we went through her two-year-old stage). The whole Navigator family prayed for her recovery. Walt and I, along with the Navigator family and the hospital staff, recognized that God gave her life.

With my next pregnancy, the doctor considered an additional problem than just going to high altitude: an incompetent cervix. As we prayed, the Lord gave Walt assurance of safety for any future babies from Psalms 147:13, "For He hath strengthened the bars of thy gates: He hath blessed thy children within thee."

The doctor's diagnosis was correct, and I began to go into labor with our second child, Walter. At six and a half months of term, I was rushed to the hospital where my cervix was stitched closed. When the baby was term, the suture was clipped, and we had a very healthy baby boy within forty-five minutes.

The year following Walter's birth, Walt ministered with an International Navigator team in Japan for three months. While he was gone, the Lord gave both of us, individually, the promise from Isaiah 44:3. "For I will pour water upon him that is thirsty and floods upon the dry ground: I will pour my spirit upon thy seed and my blessing upon thine offspring." I also thought the Lord added verses 4 and 5 when He gave me the promise. "And they shall spring up as among the grass, as willows by the water courses. One shall say, I am the Lord's, and another shall call himself by the name of Jacob and another shall subscribe with his hand unto the Lord and surname himself by the name of Israel." I had no idea what it meant.

I was given a trip to meet Walt in Hawaii on his return from Japan, and Walt's parents graciously offered to take care of Deborah and Walter. Walter was very observant but not a talkative child. Walt and Walter had a way of understanding each other without talking. I needed to communicate by talking and found myself an inadequate mother as I related to my son. Until he was eighteen months old, Deborah did all his talking for him, except "Mama, Dada" and grunting yes or no. While he was alone with Walt's mother and grunting that he wanted something, she told him, "Walter you are going to have to tell me what you want, I don't know what you mean." He replied, "I want my sweater." You can imagine how thrilled I was to learn my son could talk and in complete sentences!

Within three years, our healthy, happy son, Jonathan was born. When he was six months old, I was taking Deborah and Walter to school and Walter said, "Mama, I have asked Jesus for a baby."

"Oh, that is nice son, but we have a new baby."

"But I've asked Him for a baby sister."

I have no idea when I got pregnant, but the Lord answered Walter's prayer and Janna Kay was born. She was the delight of Walter's heart and he was her protector.

Just before Walter's sixth birthday, he was hospitalized with what the doctor thought might be a heart problem. When I met the doctor at the hospital, she told me that although more tests needed to be run, he probably had Leukemia. The first thing out of my mouth was, "The Lord giveth and the Lord taketh away. Blessed be the name of the Lord." Then I asked her if I could bring my husband to her office so she could tell him, because I didn't think I had the strength.

As soon as I saw Walt, he asked me what the doctor said. There was no way I could not tell him. On the way to the doctors, we stopped to pray, and I saw my beloved husband broken hearted before the Lord. As we cried together, he began to pray, not only thanking the Lord for giving us Walter but also thanking Him that He was taking him Home to Heaven. This was the first time I had ever been in the presence of someone hurting so badly, and yet thanking the Lord for the pain and sorrow.

Walt said from the beginning he thought we would lose Walter, but we obeyed every Biblical teaching and asked the Lord to heal him, if it was His will.

Early on this part of the journey, the Lord gave Walt a promise from Psalms 77:19, "Thy way is in the sea and thy path in the great waters and thy footsteps are not known." The verse always gave Walt comfort, as he said the Lord never gave him any reason why He called Walter home.

We were on a twenty-one-month roller coaster of emotion as our son went in and out of remission. Someone asked me if we had told Walter he was going to die. I told them no, as we all are going to die. But we did talk a lot about heaven. I found myself mentally running ahead of the Lord and having Walter dead and buried before God's time. As I cried out to the Lord for help, He gave me Deuteronomy 30:19b, "I have set before you, life and death, blessing and cursing: therefore choose life." I coveted with the Lord that I would daily choose life and not run ahead of His timetable.

One of the hard-emotional times for our whole family was the morning I went in to wake our sons up, and found Walter's pillow covered with his hair that had fallen out the previous night. We knew it would happen but there was a shock, especially the realization for Deborah and Jonathan (Janna was too young) that Walter was seriously ill. Before this happened, I had explained to Walter that he could lose his hair and asked if he wanted a wig. (There were no shaved heads in the culture at that time.) He didn't think so at the time, but that morning he said, "Mama, I think I'd like a wig." He wore it as if, it was the most natural thing in the world. When his school class was doing tumbling and they had to do summersaults, I asked him, "How did you keep your wig on?" He nonchalantly replied, "Oh, I just wear my jacket with the hood."

Walt best described, in his devotional, one of the biggest lessons he learned during this time: Thoughts from the Diary of a Desperate Man.

"When my six-year-old son was dying of leukemia, the doctor had to run a large needle through his thigh and into his bone to draw bone marrow. I held him in my arms during the procedure, and as the pain mounted, he looked me in the face asking, 'It hurts so much, can't you make them stop?' I assured him that it was essential that they do it, and he said okay, squeezing his little arms around my neck.

As I heard him whimper in pain I prayed 'Oh God, if my son can trust me, a fallible, sinful man when I tell him 'no,' help me to trust You when You refuse to remove my pain in the time of testing.'"

Walt decided he would major on Walter for as long as the Lord gave him to us, and then try to make it up to the other children after he was gone. This wasn't one hundred percent of the time, because when he was in remission, he was also attending school. However, Walt traveled for the ministry, and he would take Walter with him. They had adventures rowing down the Suwanee River, traveling through the Okefenokee Swamp, and visiting Wycliffe's Jungle Camp in Mexico where Walt had ministered the five months prior to our marriage. He also took him to Washington DC, visiting all the important places. At the Treasury building, they left Walt standing outside while Walter was privately toured through areas where the public was not permitted!

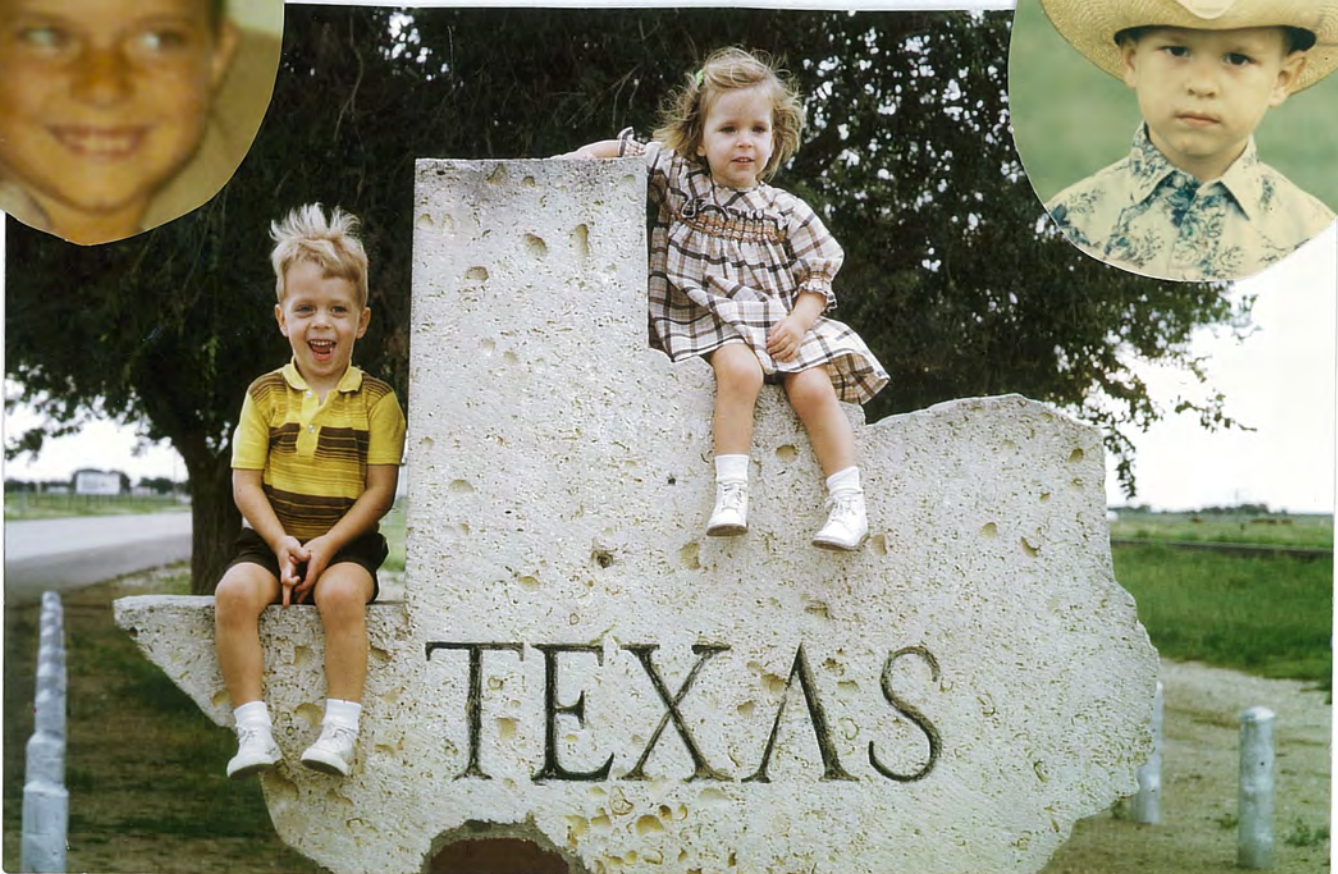


FAMILY PICTURE BEFORE WALTER'S ILLNESS

JONATHAN WALTER JANNA DEBORAH

OUR MOVE FROM TEXAS TO COLORADO

DEBORAH JONATHAN JANNA WALTER



On Walter's last day in the Colorado Springs hospital, I looked out the window at beautiful Pikes Peak and the Lord recalled all of Psalms 121 for comfort.

"I will lift up mine eyes unto the hills from whence cometh my help,
My help cometh from the Lord which made heaven and earth.

He will not suffer thy foot to be moved:

He that keepeth thee will not slumber.

Behold He that keepeth Israel shall neither slumber nor sleep.

The Lord is thy keeper, the Lord is thy shade upon thy right hand.

The sun shall not smite thee by day nor the moon by night.

The Lord shall preserve thee from all evil:

He shall preserve thy soul.

The Lord shall preserve thy going out and thy coming in
From this time forth and even for evermore."

Walt's adventures were not restricted to Walter's post-diagnosis travels. The history of people, cultures, civilizations and religions was fascinating to Walt, and he was eager to share this with all his children. It was important that his family see as many beautiful places in the world as possible. He delighted to take us on multiple road trips. Our most remarkable adventure followed our two-year assignment in New Zealand. We spent three months returning home via countries in the South Pacific, India, the Middle East and a lot of Europe. We lived out of suitcases and lost our appetite for "trail mix" long before we reached Colorado! But it did give us some amazing memories, like seeing the Pharaoh mummies before Egypt sealed them off from the public. Our tour guide must have sensed we were a gullible party as he pointed out the missing ear lobe of Ramses II. He told us that Ramses II must have been the Pharaoh that drowned in the Red Sea during Israel's Exodus.

Our adventures were numerous, but I would like to share a couple of lessons I learned from our children which give "snap-shots" of how the Lord used them to teach me.

When we moved to New Zealand, we requested that our friends pray for our children's adjustment to their new school situation. We arrived in the middle of the Southern Hemisphere school year, and the children made new friends and seemed to do well in their studies. When the next year began, Jonathan arrived home and announced he would not be going back to school, having been separated from his best friend. Walt was ministering in the Philippines and there was no way to contact him. I told Jonathan that he was required by law to attend school, but I would visit the teacher to see why he had been separated from his close friend.

In typical American style, I appeared before his teacher, Mr. Taylor, and asked why they had changed his class. (Later I discovered that New Zealand parents do not go to the school to discuss policy, but fortunately, Mr. Taylor was Canadian.) They didn't realize Jonathan had made a special friend because he appeared to have made many friends. They had changed all the students who were weak in writing skills into a special class, so they could major on writing and Jonathan needed improvement in that skill.

I returned home and told Jonathan why they had changed his class, but he still didn't want to go to school. I asked him if he would pray with me and thank the Lord that he was in Mr. Taylor's class. He looked at me and said, "No, that would be lying." I was stumped! Silently, I was asking the Lord for help and an idea of what to do. Then I asked Jonathan if he would be willing to be made thankful. He thought about it for a few seconds and replied, "No." In my desperate state, I asked him if he would pray with me and ask the Lord to make him willing to be made willing to be thankful. He agreed and returned to school. Mr. Taylor became one of his favorite teachers.

I learned from my son to be honest in my responses before the Lord, and by faith to obey I Thessalonians 5:18 ("In everything give thanks: for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you."), even if it means taking a couple of steps back from the first encounter.

Walt's job was ministering throughout Southeast Asia while we lived in New Zealand, and due to the vast distances of the South Pacific, he was gone a lot of the time. During his trips, I would read to the children around the dinner table. On one of those evenings, fear enveloped us as we concluded our reading. We prayed together and I sent them to get ready for bed. Deborah had left her bike in the driveway and said she was too scared to go outside to put it away. I volunteered to do it for her, even though I too felt fear. I claimed Jesus' name, His shed blood over me, and sang the Doxology at the top of my lungs while outside. We all went to bed.

Twice during the night, Deborah came into my room so frightened she was shaking. It became apparent to me; this was an evil attack from Satan. We prayed and quoted Scripture verses together until we both fell asleep. As I processed the event in the days that followed, I realized that even while under enemy attack, we were learning together to trust the Lord and His Word.

Later I learned that the acclaimed, U. S. published book, I had innocently been reading to the children was based on the occult.

Walt adored his kids and would take them on dates during his times at home. He confided in me one day his concern about Janna. He felt he didn't know her because she was so quiet. We learned later, that as the youngest, she would observe Deborah and Jonathan, figure out what got them into trouble and avoid it! Years later when the kids were in college, they helped pay their way through school by working. Janna decided she wanted to work in retail, so we dropped her off at the closest mall, set a time to pick her up and drove away, praying for her. She never asserted herself, and we were sure this would be a totally discouraging time for her. When we picked her up, she not only had a job but had several other offers. We asked how she accomplished that, to which she replied, "Oh, I just pretended I was Deborah."

I learned from her to observe other people. The children differ in their personalities and gifts, but they each have invested their lives in the Word of God and people. They are a testimony of Walt's love and commitment, first to the Lord, then to family, and then to others.

NEW ZEALAND



HOMeward BOUND



TRY OUT FOR CAMEL JOCKEY



OUR JOURNEY IN THE MINISTRY

Our four years in Kalamazoo, Michigan were full of new adventures and blessings. We experienced the Lord's provision for our material needs in every area from food to furniture and so much more. The ministry began on our knees, looking out the living room window, as we watched students head to class at Western Michigan University.

As we began to meet students, we decided to entertain them with Friday evening suppers. Individual time with the students developed into evangelism and Bible Studies. Our biggest outreach was hosting an "Hootenanny" in the student center on campus. Everyone sat on the floor listening to the local talent of "Mr. Kay and Karol" perform after the pattern of "Peter, Paul and Mary". The evening closed with our Navigator regional director, Jack Mayhall, presenting the Gospel, sitting on a three-legged stool.

Shortly following Deborah's birth, we started having people live with us. Our first resident was Paul Tolley. He was willing to have his bedroom in the basement, converted from a Michigan fruit cellar with an addition of a shower. Within two years, we had two fellows, two girls and a baby in our one bathroom, no bedroom apartment.

A businessman, father of one of our students, began the process of buying a home for the Navigators. It was a lovely Dutch Colonial. By then we totaled nine, three men, two women, our two young children, and us. In addition to the student ministry, Walt led a couple's Bible Study, and a weekly group of men met for an early morning Bible study. Many times, close to midnight, we would hear pebbles hitting our upstairs bedroom window. Fellows wanted Walt to come down and share the gospel with their friends. It became known as "Midnight Evangelism." We have great memories of that time.

Following our four years in Michigan, we moved to Ft. Worth, Texas where our two Texans, Jonathan and Janna were born. Walt was appointed Regional Director for Texas, Oklahoma, Arkansas and Louisiana. He traveled the four states by car, ministering on college campuses and military bases. Early in our new assignment, friends encouraged us to visit Amarillo and the people welcomed us like family. It seemed like "home" to us, and even after our move to Colorado, we returned to vacation there.

While living in Ft. Worth, Walt continued to preach and teach, and I started my first neighborhood ladies' Bible Study. During those five years, Deborah and Walter began school, and Walter was diagnosed with Leukemia.

Lorne Sanny asked if we would move to Colorado Springs so Walt could work as his assistant and help establish a laymen's ministry in cities where the Navigators had training centers. From headquarters, Walt's mode of transportation changed from cars to airplanes. The timing wasn't right for an organizational laymen's ministry within the Navigators, but Walt loved meeting the men and having opportunities to teach and preach as he traveled around the country.

Shortly after our move to Colorado Springs, our son Walter died. During that time, businessmen asked Lorne if Walt could be free to travel around the country to lead Bible Studies. Instead, Lorne felt it would be good for us to have some overseas experience, and Joe Simmons, the leader of the Pacific Area Navigators, needed an assistant.

We rented out our Colorado home, packed up two crates of goods, along with a used US Postal Jeep that had steering on the right side, and moved to Christchurch, New Zealand. The Amarillo friends, who acquired the Jeep for us had it painted neon Yellow! Many times, in Christchurch, I would come out of a store and find businessmen on their knees checking to see if it really was a US Jeep. Their introduction to the Jeep was from WWII, and since ours was unique in the country at the time, it drew admiration and attention!

I was stunned when I learned that Colorado Springs is closer to Tokyo than Christchurch is to Tokyo. I also realized Walt's travel time would increase due to the vast distances between Christchurch and the countries around the rim of Southeast Asia. Australia was our closest neighbor and it was 1,500 miles away! For us, our two years in Christchurch was a time of blessing. We loved the people, the beauty of the country and the new lessons that required our dependence on the Lord.

Following our two years in New Zealand, we returned to our Colorado Springs home and again the businessmen requested Walt to minister to them. The businessmen established Leadership Foundation, Inc., and a board of directors and for Walt. With the blessing of Lorne, we resigned from The Navigators

Walt's first year was spent traveling around visiting various organizations as well as speaking at conferences and starting Bible study groups with men in various cities where he was invited. The ministry grew both nationally and overseas. When Walt was asked how many cities, he visited for Bible studies, he would never give a number not wanting to aggrandize himself.

After Janna and Jonathan finished high school, the doctors encouraged us to live at a lower elevation due to my high blood pressure. We moved to San Diego, California. Walt could live anywhere that had a good airport with access to the cities he visited. We spent twenty-eight years in San Diego.

The year Walt and I turned eighty, our board of directors suggested we think about where we would like to "finish the cruise." Walt never planned to retire, so he asked me where I would like to live if the Lord should call him Home to Heaven first. Distance had been a factor in our not being around our five Indiana grandchildren as they were growing up, so I suggested Indianapolis. He responded positively and suggested I contact Jonathan to visit places and make the decision. I asked him if he planned to come and visit possible places with me and he responded it wouldn't be necessary; he would be happy with whatever I chose!



DEBORAH JONATHAN JANNA

MY JOURNEY SINCE MY BELOVED WALT'S HOME GOING

The Lord called Walt home on August 29, 2016. I am so thankful that he is with the Lord. He longed for the time when the Lord would call him home. I have often said he had one foot in the temporal and one foot in the eternal. He always longed to be with his Lord, yet he wanted the will of God first and foremost.

Walt began preparing me for widowhood at the beginning of our marriage. I am so grateful for his thoughtfulness and insight. As we discussed the possibility of God calling Walt home before me, I realized there were three areas I had to deal with: intellectual, spiritual and emotional. Walt walked me through the intellectual area by helping me think through possible financial solutions for myself and any children the Lord might give us. The spiritual issues were dealt with day by day as I studied and applied the Word of God to needs that arose in my life. Ultimately, I realized only God can meet my needs and that is where I turned for help. However, I couldn't grasp how the emotional needs could be met. This was the hardest challenge, as emotionally I was not ready to be separated from Walt. Then it dawned on me, God doesn't give you special Grace until you need it.

Our life together is best summed up in Psalms 126:3, which Walt wrote in a New Testament he gave me, *"The Lord hath done great things for us; whereof we are glad."*

I recalled that when our son Walter died, Isaiah 61:3 became a special verse: *"To appoint unto them that mourn in Zion, to give unto them beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness that they might be called trees of righteousness, the planting of the Lord, that He might be glorified."* This was the first time the Lord replaced *"the ashes, the mourning and the heaviness"* associated with death, with His joy, praise and peace. I didn't have to know the way or the destination; I just had to know Who to follow and how to follow Him. I was beginning to learn to give thanks in everything!

The morning following Walt's death, I was reviewing Hebrews 11:1, *"Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen."* As I meditated on this truth, it dawned on me that Walt's hope had become reality, and his faith had become sight. What a blessed hope for us who are still in this temporal life.

Another favorite Scripture of Walt's was Philippians 1:21, *"For me to live is Christ and to die is gain."* He strongly believed that the Lord has our days numbered. With deep conviction, he gave his life to the study of the Word of God, to the investment in the lives of people, and to preparation for eternity.

Years ago, Walt asked me if I would make sure there would be no funeral or memorial service for him. He never wanted attention drawn to himself in any area. While I planned to honor his request, I also realized we were going contrary to our current Christian culture. Darts of doubt began to enter my mind, wondering if there was something wrong with me in how I was responding to his death. While reading my Bible, I Thessalonians 4:13 stood out in a new way, *"But I would not have you to be ignorant brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that you sorrow not even as others which have no hope."* Thank you, Lord for your faithful Word and the work you are doing in my life.

As I have experienced the loss of Walt's presence, I realized with gratitude the gift the Lord gave us of His Holy Spirit. If Jesus were still on earth, it would take years to wait in line just to have some time with Him. Instead we have immediate access to His presence by His Spirit. I will have to wait to be with Walt again.

Travel was a part of Walt's ministry throughout our years together. Each time we parted, we knew that *"our times were in His hands,"* and regardless of what happened, we wanted His will above our own. As I was missing Walt, I thought about the times when he would be gone on a long trip, and I liken it to my present situation. The difference is that I will be joining him instead of his returning here. Some dear friends of ours put it in the present tense, "It has been a GREAT journey! Walt has taken an earlier flight. We are still in the terminal, 'Wait Listed.'" I smiled at the truth of this statement! I eagerly await my call home.

Leette

