

CHAPTER TWELVE

Into All The World

When Jean, Velma and I began singing together in Rossland, we did not imagine to what distant places in the world our melodies would travel. Some people claim guidance from God through dramatic happenings—they hear a voice or see a vision. God led me but not in mystical ways.

My activities in the newly-formed McColl-Gerard Trio made a heavy demand on my spare time. Ours was a continuous round of radio broadcasts and evangelistic rallies. It soon became necessary for me to decide which I should be, teacher or preacher. I really liked teaching. There was security for the future in it. My salary was not large but it was regular with promise of systematic increases. A woman evangelist could look for neither professional standing nor financial security. Her treasures are laid up in heaven; she must await eternity for a word of recognition from the Master Himself.

Before I joined them, the McColl sisters were evangelists of excellent reputation. During my second summer vacation, we undertook a tour as an evangelistic trio. We travelled across Canada to New Brunswick and there spent a busy season in meetings. Our combined efforts were crowned with success. Over and over again preachers with whom we worked ex-

pressed surprise that I was going back to school teaching, when we were so effective as an evangelistic team.

ANSWERING THE CALL

My own conviction that there is nothing as worthwhile in this world as the winning of one soul to Christ, was taking a stronger grip on me each day. After one more year of teaching, the three of us travelled to Victoria, British Columbia and as a Trio launched an evangelistic campaign. I went daily to the teacher's Summer School. At two o'clock one morning I awakened Jean and Velma with an announcement, "I am not going to school tomorrow."

Sleepily they scrutinized me, "And why not?"

"I am going to give up teaching and give myself to the full-time ministry." They knew that I had been wrestling with the problem for months and expressed approval that I had decided to dedicate my life to the Lord's work.

When finally we cut all ties to enter full-time evangelistic work, we went first to Miami, Florida to campaign in Evangel Temple. From that time we have travelled continuously.

In Miami we were invited to sing at the Three Score and Ten Club. One must be seventy years old to be a full-fledged member. At sixty, one is a junior member. The program was scheduled to be sheer entertainment but the Lord so blessed our gospel songs that the mistress of ceremonies and many in the audience were deeply moved. Departing from the planned program, she had a very elderly minister come to the platform to pray. She asked him to lead

the audience and "pray God's blessing on these dear girls." The soloist who was to sing "A White Christmas" sang instead "The Holy City". With a choke in her voice she said, "I hope we will all be good enough to go there."

OPPORTUNITIES UNLIMITED

We have never lacked opportunities to sing and preach the gospel. We have carried it to civic clubs, homes for the aged, jails, hospitals, schools, camp meeting tabernacles, churches of many denominations and even railroad stations. We sang at the railroad station in Locarno, Switzerland until, overcome with weariness, we wondered if the train would ever pull out. Yes, we even sang in factories in England—to say nothing of our large street corner gatherings. A British newspaper man in Louth took a photograph of the Trio with the crowd gathered around and ran it in the newspaper under the heading, "Evangelism, 1949 American Version."

From the two weekly radio programs over C J A T, Trail, British Columbia, the pattern of our radio work altered to something more irregular and more strenuous. In almost all of our American and Canadian Campaigns we carry on radio and television programs. We have been able to use these two powerful media to send forth the gospel in most of the States and in all parts of Canada.

Step by step God has lead us into larger fields of ministry. In the past six years we have turned our attention to the foreign fields for three extensive

preaching tours. With some hesitation we set out on our first venture, scheduled to spend several months in England and continental Europe. We also planned to visit the World Pentecostal Conference in Paris, France. Whatever doubts we had concerning our reception in England disappeared early in our tour. From London we travelled to other points in England, everywhere preaching to large congregations. Our American-styled gospel music and all-girl preaching team proved an asset rather than a liability.

We were invited to sing almost every night of the Paris Conference. Through the nightly contact with the delegates and visitors from thirty-five countries, we were deluged with invitations to visit other countries. We could not go everywhere but we did preach in Belgium, Germany, Denmark, Italy, Switzerland and Sweden. In Sweden, on the invitation of Louis Pethrus, pastor of the Filadelfia Church in Stockholm, we participated in the great mid-summer convention.

Two years later we were on our way again to foreign pulpits. This time we spent several weeks in Mexico where we visited the Latin American Orphanage in Acapulco. The purpose of that visit was to acquaint ourselves with their work so that we could represent them in missionary rallies. After preaching in Mexico we flew south, preaching in Guatemala, El Salvador, Costa Rica, Honduras, Nicaragua and Panama. From there we continued south of the equator to Lima, Peru, where we launched a campaign with ten Assemblies of God churches co-operating.

The last country on our southern journey was Bolivia. While there we saw a wonderful outpour-

ing of the Holy Spirit at the Bible School in Cochabamba. (Acts 2:4) To that time, no one in the Assemblies in Bolivia had received the Holy Spirit. It meant a great deal to the missionaries and to the progress of the churches when almost all of the students in the school and a number of the laymen were baptized in the Holy Spirit. When we were back preaching in North America, we received word that the outpouring of the Spirit had spread across Bolivia to the church at Lake Titacaca. Missionary Everett Hale and his wife felt that God had led us to Bolivia to aid them in the spiritual warfare. For us the demonstration of supernatural power in the Cochabamba meetings was more thrilling than flying the Andes or any of the wonders of the journey.

A year and a half after our return from South America we went to Europe again. This time we took with us the Oral Robert's film, "Venture into Faith." In conversation with Oral Roberts in Sacramento, California, we laid our plans and stated our objectives. It was to be a soul-winning program, in every detail. The film would be shown one-third of the time, and we would conduct our own services the other two-thirds of the time. When the *S. S. United States* set sail from New York, everything we needed for the British tour was stowed away in the hold: the moving picture equipment, several hundred of our own gospel recordings, gospel literature, and our Pontiac which was to carry us to over forty British cities and continental Europe.

The four months in Britain was one of the most fruitful periods in our ministry. Everywhere the

auditoriums and churches overflowed. We saw hundreds of people take their stand for Christ at the altars.

From England we crossed the Channel to Cherbourg and thence by car to southern Italy. In the two months following we were to preach in Egypt, Lebanon, Trans-Jordan and the New State of Israel. What can be done in foreign lands by consecrated missionaries is well demonstrated in Lillian Trasher's Orphanage at Assiut, Egypt. We preached in three different churches in Cairo and also Assiut and Tahta, southern Egypt.

In Beirut, Lebanon, five different missionary groups co-operated in the meetings. We saw once again an outpouring of the Holy Spirit, when several of the young men received the Holy Spirit in the public services. In forty years of Pentecostal preaching in Lebanon no one had ever been baptized in the Holy Spirit in a public service.

From Damascus, Syria we journeyed south to Jerusalem and from there to almost all the places of Biblical significance in Palestine. Our view of the Holy Land proved so faith-inspiring that on return I wrote, "*The Holy Land Guide to Faith*".

Through radio, television, the printed word, overseas preaching tours, regular campaign schedules in churches at home, and in our summertime tent campaigns in eastern United States, God has led us into ever-widening fields of ministry. The simple story of Jesus Christ and what He can do has been on our lips at all times. It was the hearing of that story in the backwoods of British Columbia that transformed

my life. The marvel of the gospel is that it meets the needs of all men everywhere, regardless of race or station in life.

HAVE YOU BEEN CONVERTED?

Why do I write my story? For the same reason I have told it to thousands in our audiences across America—to influence others to give their lives to the Lord Jesus Christ.

In Philadelphia a man and wife of our congregation were in the process of adopting a baby girl. I gave my testimony in the campaign just at the time the adoption papers were about to be signed. They were so moved to think of what Christ had done for me that they legally named the little adopted daughter, Bernice Gerard —. No one knows what the future holds for little Bernice. But whatever happens, she will always know that her adopted parents named her after an evangelist because they wanted her to grow up to be a fervent Christian.

After telling my life story in Panama City, Florida, the church altars were filled with sinners asking Christ to save them. A young airman, who was one of ninety teachers on the Sunday School staff, beckoned me to come and pray with a boy from his class.

The boy had been forsaken by his parents. He was one of the city's problem children, having been before the Juvenile Court several times. The Sunday School teacher had succeeded in getting him to the class but had failed to reach his heart. The youngster was sure that nobody cared about him. He kept an icy wall between himself and others.

At the altar that night the wall of ice melted. Looking down on the kneeling, freckle-faced teen-ager, I put my hand on his brush-cut and said, "I am glad you are giving your life to Christ. I think God is going to do for you what He did for me." With all reserve gone, he looked up through his tears and said, "I think so too." A miracle had been wrought.

We have seen countless teen-agers dedicate their lives to Christ, influenced by my experience. Many of them have parents who go nowhere to church. Without any help from home, these youngsters have been successful in living lives with a purpose—serving Christ.

Looking back on the past and its miracles, I know God will give me the joy of seeing many more converted. Will you take Christ as your Saviour today?

Christ died for you.

For when we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly. For scarcely for a righteous man will one die: yet peradventure for a good man some would even dare to die. But God commendeth his love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. Romans 5:6, 7.

The next step is up to you!

Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved, and thy house. Acts 16:31.

Additional McColl-Gerard Publications

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By Bernice M. Gerard

- * An account of what may be seen in the Holy Land today to inspire faith.
- * Up-to-date information on the New State of Israel.
- * Thirty-five photos of the Holy Land.

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TRINKETS AND TREASURES

Jean McColl's unusual collection of poems – sometimes spiced with humor but always vital with a spiritual point.

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