



My name is Fiona Tidswell; I was born in Scotland in Inverness 68 years ago. My father was away in North Africa during the Second World War and I was 3 years old before I met him. He was a good father to us. I have one brother, Peter, and had a sister named Hilary who died in childhood. When I reached primary school age I was sent away to the Assumption Convent in Devonshire and then went to high school in Kent. After finishing school I

commenced nurse training in a Catholic hospital in London. My parents were Catholic, but my father gave it up and turned to atheism. It was during my nurse training that I met my future husband when we enrolled in a psychiatric course in Oxford. We fell in love and were married a few months later. I did not know it at the time, but David was a born again Christian.

I should say that at this time in my life I was very disillusioned with the Catholic Church. When I was living in Oxford, the local priest would constantly ask for more money and would chide the congregation for not giving enough to buy a new church. Besides this, I found the church's doctrine of transubstantiation very hateful. To think the wafer I was made to eat became the very physical body of our Lord revolted me.

David was very knowledgeable in the scriptures and he knew the answers to all my questions. I became convinced the Catholic Church was false. One day I witnessed the same priest working behind the bar in an Oxford pub and decided to leave the church.

Shortly after our marriage I received news from my parents saying they were going to retire to Australia. David asked me whether I would like to go to Australia too. Of course I was delighted and said yes.

So early April 1969 we left England to sail for Australia and arrived in Sydney 6 weeks later. We started attending church services at the local gospel hall in Croydon Park and it was there I first heard the good news that made me feel so 'at home'. I had never met such kind people before. Robert and Melanie were born within a year of each other and 2 years later Duncan, my youngest was born. Also during this time, my husband's sister Carol arrived from England to live with us. She also had 2 young children aged 5 and 3. The house was now very full and I began to feel sorry for myself.

One night, 6 weeks after Duncan was born, I cried out to the Lord and sobbed my heart out to Him. I confessed my sin to Him and asked Him to save me. He came immediately to my life and lifted my burden from me. From that moment, I never fell into that depression again. That night David was on duty at the hospital. The next morning I told him I had been saved and he was very happy for me. I threw away my packet of cigarettes and never touched them again.

David and I were expecting to move into our first house at Mt. Druitt, but the new Labor government changed policies and decided against selling Housing Commission homes. I was walking back home from the public phone box and I felt the Lord put His arm around me reassuring me that all would be well.

After 40 happy years of marriage, my dear David's heart gave out and passed into the presence of our Lord. I have come to know the Lord in a special way and He has replaced my grief with His joy. The Joy of the Lord is my Strength. Nehemiah 8:10