

## **Chapter III – Troubles, Becoming “Born Again”**

Throughout my adult life, I’ve been struck with a disease called “being an inventor”. There are only two types of inventors: 1) Crazy and 2) Rich.

In our society, if you are rich, you aren’t crazy, but if you are doing something new, and aren’t rich, you are crazy. As a result of my strange new ideas, I’ve been rich several times – “on paper rich” – because I held the majority ownership of companies that I started. Each of the companies went under, before I could convert any significant amount of the “on paper” money into real money. Most of the time I’ve not been rich, and must have been crazy. I cannot imagine a more interesting life than the one I have had. Inventing is a very challenging and interesting way of life.

### **Barbados—Typing and Proofing**

In the 1970’s, I started a company called Satellite Data Corporation based upon another new idea. The new venture was the first company to use communications satellites to do offshore word processing. Our New York City based customers would use fax machines to transmit raw material to Barbados by satellite telephone lines. In Barbados, the work was received on fax machines as hand written and marked-up book manuscript material.

In Barbados, our staff would type the material, proof it, and put it into computer format, so it could be sent by telephone back to the USA where it was printed out or typeset. The system worked well. The New York Times, Business Week, etc. wrote about this new business I had started.

During the same month that our business reached the break-even level, the company went under. Once again, we didn’t have the money needed to stay in business. Today, lots of companies do the same sort of satellite communications we started many years ago. And it still makes good economic sense. Despite the company being a sound idea, we had to start over.

We were broke, left New York City and moved to Westport, Connecticut, where our two daughters could go to public school.

## **On the Move**

My two sons, George Jr. who was just finishing college at Syracuse University, and Alex, who lived in New York City with his mother, helped me move from New York City to Westport. It took us three days of moving and the boys were great.

By then, I was really in bad shape, physically and emotionally. As is often the situation with such acute cases of failure, I was drinking too much and frequently fighting with my wife. We were broke and desperate.

## **Betty and Toddy Teach -- About to be Born Again!**

We were sad, needed a change, and were ripe targets for being "Saved". We were about to "find Christ".

My older brother, Toddy, was a large man, six foot six, two hundred and fifty pounds at least. He rowed on the world championship Cornell University, championship Henley Crew in the late 50's. He and his wife Betty lived in a high priced section of Houston, Texas and they were "Born Again Christians".

They had been the sort of "everyone else is going to Hell" Christians, for as long as I can remember. They held "church" services in their own home once a week. They testify to people at their hard-to-get-into country club, and in the town where they owned a ranch, about how they were saved, and how they had become servants to the *Lord Jesus Christ*.

So, I called Toddy and Betty called Jean. That's the way "real" Christians did. The men talk to the men and the women talk to the women. They say the Bible tells you to do it that way, "*that's the way God meant it to be.*"

Toddy and Betty instructed us on how to get whatever it is that they had.

They told us to find a church that relied heavily on the Bible. They told us to read the Bible every day for an hour or so, pray a lot, and find friends that were of the same church-going, praying, Bible-reading type.

*"You simply can't trust people who aren't real Christians,"* Toddy and Betty warned us.

Around that time, we met a couple in Westport, Peter and Annabel Stehli. They were interesting people, and we began to see them frequently. Peter and Annabel were also down on their luck, but, unlike us, had “*found Christ*” many years before. They told us their version of the steps you must go through to find what they had found.

### **Church-Goers**

Somehow or another, we seemed to find enough money every month to pay the bills. I got some consulting business, Jean found some oil income checks, that she had overlooked years before, and cashed them.

We lived that way for six months or so, until Don Hutton came into our lives and *really* saved us. More about him later.

We joined the Saugatuck Congregational Church in Westport. It wasn't much of a “based only on the Bible” church, but friends of ours, Peter and Annabel Stehli, went there, and it seemed good to us, at first. When we joined the church, we had to sign some sort of testimony card, swearing that “we believed” in the same way the others in the church believed.

Ted Hoskins, the preacher who met with us before the signing, made it clear, that if we signed it and didn't agree with what we were signing, that was OK. He said he wasn't sure that he agreed with all that his church had printed on the testimony card.

That seemed strange to us that a man of the cloth would tell new members it was simply OK to lie in a church testimony, but nonetheless, we signed the card like all the other church-goers had.

### **Sunday School and Coffee Hour**

Within a month or so of joining the church, I was asked to teach a Sunday school class. Why did they do that? I didn't know much about this God and religion stuff, but they couldn't find anyone else to teach the third grade kids, so I did it.

I loved working with the kids, but I realized that I was trying to teach them things that I didn't understand on my own. Later, I realized that no one understands Bible stuff; people only pretend to understand it, because the Bible is so contradictory and disjointed.

At the Saugatuck Congregational Church Sunday church services,

people just sat there watching the preacher do his thing – most didn't listen. They sang three or four songs, prayed several times, and were in and out in an hour.

After church, Jean and I would go downstairs and stand around drinking coffee with about thirty dull churchgoers who had come to the coffee hour. Every once in awhile there were things to do at night and there were some poorly organized and even more poorly attended adult programs on Sunday mornings. The kids were in Sunday school while the adults had their Church Service.

### **Holy, Holy, Holy**

Then, Annabel and Peter talked us into going to a nationally famous, “enlightened” church that they had started to attend, St. Paul's Church in Darien, Connecticut, about 20 miles west of Westport. This church was quite different from the church in Westport. The Darien church had “Born Again” Episcopalians, big attendance, three hour services to a packed crowd on Sundays and Tuesdays. Prayer meetings and special events were held nightly.

St. Paul's church was reported to be a “based on the Bible” church. The sermons had a lot of quotes from the Bible. There was a lot of singing, standing up, raising arms, praising God out loud, talking in tongues, healing the sick, testimony from the audience “how I was lost and now I have found the lord”, etc. Those are the main things that made up the three-hour services. The audience got so big at St. Paul's that they had to hold services at the local High School auditorium. In those days, St. Paul's Church even held services on one of the mornings during the week for the ladies and the men who were out of work.

One of the preachers at the Westport church told me to be careful with Christians like the ones at the Darien St. Paul's church, because they may not really be Christians. The believers in the Westport Church weren't too sure about much, but they seemed to be sure that being “Born Again” wasn't necessary, and probably wasn't good for you.

St. Paul's Church-goers said you had to be careful with the non-believer church-goers”, the type of people you find at the Westport Saugatuck Church. If you weren't Born Again, you weren't real Christians.

One of the ET Corn Gods translations of the word “Jesus” is “Hates”. The translation for “Sacred” is “Hatred”. It's the nature of religion –

you have to get the flock to hate the competition if you are going to keep them coming to your thing.

I had learned from my brother, Toddy that you couldn't really tell who the "real" Christians were. The ones that would tell you "we are the real Christians", others call "fakes", and "of the devil". Jean and I wanted to be the "right type" of Christians but we were finding out for ourselves that that wasn't so easy.

For a church to sell salvation, it has to claim the best or only flavor of salvation. Coca Cola can't make any money, if people drink Pepsi.

### **Church, Church, and More Church**

I set about trying to learn all the strange things these holy people do, so that I, too, could be Holy. Talking in tongues was really difficult for me to learn to do, until I learned the secret from a friend of mine.

For those people who have never heard of "Talking in Tongues", Some Born Again Christians do it. These are people like everybody else, but they seem to have this ability, when the rest of us do not. It sounds like pure gibberish—babble. But the born-again types tell you that the Holy Spirit teaches you how to do it. They say you sit there and pray and the Holy Spirit will take over your voice and this Holy speech will miraculously come out of your mouth.

I tried over and over to speak in tongues, but it never happened. I prayed and prayed but nothing came out of my mouth. The Holy Spirit just wouldn't do what it was supposed to do. Then a friend of mine, a retired Navy Officer, told me the born-again secret; "YOU JUST FAKE IT!"

Start talking in gibberish and play like it's the Holy Spirit doing it. If the Holy Spirit doesn't take over, don't wait for it. I tried it the way my friend told me to, and it worked! With a little bit of practice, I sounded just like the other "Born-Agains".

When a Born Again Christian talked in tongues at that Darien Church, often someone else would stand up and translate, what the Holy Spirit was declaring through the person speaking in tongues.

The retired Navy Officer would do both; he would not only talk in tongues, but he would also interpret what others were saying in tongues. He would do this in front of the entire church. I don't know if anyone in the church actually did get the tongue talking from the Holy Spirit, but it seemed to be much easier to just fake it.

## Slain by the Holy Spirit

Two of the St. Paul's "Lay Missionaries" came to visit us several times at our Westport home. Once, the missionaries had us stand in a circle holding hands in our living room -- praying. I fell down on the couch and they told me that I had been "Slain by the Holy Spirit". I think the Lay Missionaries congratulated each other for knocking the devil out of me.

I don't know what happened to me, but I wasn't faking it.

## Bible Study, His and Hers

At Toddy and Betty's insistence, Jean and I joined Bible study groups. The Bible study was held in a town about twenty minutes away from Westport, once a week and they were attended by people from all over Connecticut. The Bible study groups were sponsored by an organization located in Texas named "*Bible Study Fellowship*".

These meetings were held all over the country (now all over the world) for the "elite" among the Bible believing Christians. The women, who were not supposed to work, attended on Tuesday morning. The men attended an evening session once a week. We had daily homework. We had to study the Bible and study some typewritten notes that a famous *holy lady* had written in Texas.

<http://www.bsfinternational.org>

The guy who ran the Bible study program for our group of men in Connecticut was a volunteer. His wife was the teacher for the women and he had a full time job at Union Carbide headquarters in Danbury. His job at Union Carbide was something like "Manager of Safety" for all the company's plants around the world. The 1984 Union Carbide chemical plant disaster that killed all those people in Bhopal India happened shortly after I met him.

The first word in the Bible is "**IN**".

The Bhopal disaster brought to mind the Challenger Shuttle disaster and the fact that the faulty O-Ring design which caused the disaster was designed by a bunch of Mormons. How about all those Born Agains in Houston and other southern towns who work on the Space program?

If I did engineering or software development the way the religious

people do their thing, nothing would ever work.

And if that hadn't been enough Christian stuff for Jean and me to attend, I would meet with a small group of men two or three mornings a week before breakfast for Bible Study at other churches. One group met in Norwalk, about ten minutes west of Westport, and another group met in Greenwich, another twenty minutes west. Within a year, I became one of the board members of the Connecticut chapter of an organization, called "Youth for Christ", a worldwide organization that "brings kids to Christ". I was really getting into the scene of "being a good Christian".

### **Enter Don Hutton—Micro-Curl Display Technology, Inc.**

At about the same time that we were getting deep into the Christian stuff, Don Hutton showed up. A stockbroker based in New York City at Bache and Company (now Prudential Financial), introduced Don and me.

Don Hutton was a first class promoter working out of Vancouver, British Columbia. He liked one of my inventions, a new way to make computer displays, which I had been working on, off and on, since 1970. Don agreed to raise money to finance a company to exploit the new computer display technology, and he did exactly what he said he would do.

We started a company and named it Micro-Curl Display Technology, Inc. Don rounded up some investors to buy the company's securities; we went public and raised two or three million dollars. I was the Chief Executive Officer and the largest stockholder of Micro-Curl, which became a NASDAQ listed company.

Don Hutton is a rare human being. I have never met a better promoter and salesman. Uncharacteristic of the dullards I usually meet in the financial world, he doesn't know how to stop working until the job is done and done well. Don was also quite a contrast from the Christian wimps we were hanging around with in the prayer circles of Fairfield County, Connecticut.

So, it was Don Hutton and the salary from Micro-Curl that kept us paying the bills during the "Question this Christian Stuff" phase of my life.