

# THE CALL

Be and become the follower you are  
meant to be

Francois Carr

SAMPLE



ENDORSEMENTS  
AND  
PRAISE FOR THE CALL

I've known Francois Carr for many years. His heart for the Lord and revival is exceptional. His life also testifies to this. Jesus commanded His church to make disciples—a matter sorely neglected by the church. This well-timed book by Francois will help you understand the personal calling that God has for you. You're going to become aware of the glorious presence of the Father and will experience changes in your life. You will be challenged to go live out your calling. In addition, you're going to be encouraged to make your own disciples. Thank you, Francois. I believe with my whole heart that this book is going to touch people's lives and be a blessing to the church of Christ.

*Soli Deo Gloria!*

Rev. Willem Badenhorst

Executive Director: Moreletapark Association and leader of Moreletapark Congregation, Pretoria, SA

'God assigned the prophet Ezekiel to be a spiritual watchman for God's people' (Ezekiel 33:1–20). In every age and in every country, God raises up those with a keen spiritual sensitivity to His activity. I have sensed that Francois is one of God's watchmen for our day. Francois has a hunger for God that is contagious. He has a ministry that God continues to use mightily. I am delighted with his latest book, *The Call*, in which he shares with readers the rich harvest he has gleaned from years of walking faithfully with God.

Dr. Henry Blackaby

Founder of Blackaby Ministries International, Jonesboro, Ga., USA  
Author: *Experiencing God*, *Spiritual Leadership*, *Hearing God's Voice*, USA

I am proud to call Dr. Francois Carr a friend and a colleague in the faith for almost 20 years. The friendship that has grown through mission trips, revivals and conferences has led me to a deeper walk with Christ. In this book, Dr. Francois writes about the principles he shows in his own life as a true disciple of Christ. You will have a more intimate walk

with the Lord after reading this book, as He teaches you about walking in obedience while your life is being transformed for the purpose of the Great Commission.

Dr. Charles Bishop

Pastor: Subligna Baptist Church, Summerville, Ga., USA

It was my privilege to meet my dear brother, friend and mentor Francois Carr 30 years ago. Preaching together on revival at revival conferences in South Africa, the Netherlands and Poland was an honor. Ever since the message has been the same: 'Jesus, all for Jesus,' following in the footsteps of Jesus. To have a friend like Francois, who always makes time for talking and praying together nearly every week is very precious. *The Call* is a living testimony of someone who does not just talk about Jesus, but also walks with Jesus. This I can tell you, because I know him well. My prayer is that this book will guide people to do what Jesus told His first disciples to do: change the world. *The Call* has changed my life and many others' in our congregation as we studied it together for many weeks. This book is meant for a time like this.

Rev. Johan Botha

Pastor: Evangelical Reformed Church, Pretoria East, SA

For any book to be of significant value to the reader it must be accurate, clear, and understandable. Dr. Carr has certainly achieved all three in his latest book titled *The Call*. Filled with supporting Scripture throughout, *The Call* is written in a simple manner that provides great clarity to the reader. It is replete with meaningful life illustrations that reinforce the basic premise of the book, which is that of connecting your life with God's purpose. Dr. Carr will awaken you to the joy of finding God's call on your life to become a fully devoted follower of Jesus Christ.

Dr. Gary Fleetwood

Pastor: Chime Bell Baptist Church, Aiken, S.C, USA

Vice President: Academic Affairs, Covington Theological Seminary, Fort Oglethorpe, Ga., USA

I greatly recommend the ministry of my dear friend Dr. Carr. He has been a great blessing to our revival work in Poland, and his book *Revival! The Glory of God* became the best and most-read publication regarding the topic of revival in Poland. No doubt the text that you hold in your hand is no different. It has the depth of great Puritan and revival writers of former centuries, but its anointed contemporary language makes it more understandable and practical. It is remarkably recommended for pastors, leaders, and laypersons who want to be used for the glory of God.

Pastor Dr. Kamil M. Halambiec (multiple PhDs, STM, MTh, MAR, BTh)  
Associate Dean: College of Theology and Social Sciences, Warsaw, Poland

The power behind *The Call*, written by Dr. Francois Carr, is alignment to the model and the message of Jesus Christ as well as Dr. Carr's intention to model Jesus in his own life and work around the world. Dr. Carr's simple instructions reflect the model of the carpenter/stonemason, Rabbi and Lord, Jesus, who Himself was apprenticed by his Father, and who disciplined and deployed ordinary men and women into His kingdom enterprise around the planet, began His training process with a 'call' to His followers. Dr. Carr captures the significance of the specific call to become a follower of Jesus and then to be launched into His work of 'fishing for people' and 'entering their lives' on a daily basis right where we are. I applaud Dr. Carr for this work, and I'm thankful for his life.

Dr. Carl F. Martin, Jr.

Executive Director of Real Champions Inc., Ridgeland, S.C., USA

I have known Dr. Francois Carr for about 20 years and appreciated his teachings from Scripture. In this book, *The Call*, he has captured the essence of where so many believers fall short. There is a great need for Christians to develop a deep intimacy with the Lord Jesus and Dr. Carr has laid out a road map for exactly that. It is worth reading and, more importantly, applying to life.

Rev. John McGregor

Former Executive Director: Canadian Revival Fellowship

Current Lead Pastor: Heritage Alliance Church, Regina, Canada

I have known Dr. Francois Carr for over 20 years. The messages that he was burdened with in the past, 'Revival, Intimacy with God and Discipleship,' are the same messages that he is still burdened with today. This latest book, *The Call*, continues to reflect this message of Jesus, namely, 'Come, follow me' (revival), 'Come, be with Me' (intimacy), 'I will send you' (discipleship). Jesus's last command, to go and make disciples (Matthew 28:19), must be our first priority if we are to make an impact toward ending gospel poverty. I highly recommend the reading of this masterpiece. The exegesis of the texts, coupled with personal, practical life experiences, will keep you wanting to read to the end, then regretting that you have come to the end. Francois has a hunger and thirst for the Word of God and this is reflected in his personal and family life. He has been a tremendous blessing to me personally and has made an impact on the lives of many in South Africa and around the world.

Rev. Kovilan Moodley

Moderator: Reformed Church in Africa, SA

Former Executive Director: Haggai International (South Africa)

International Faculty: Haggai International

I first met Francois Carr over 20 years ago while working with a mission in South Africa. Since then, I have hosted him in my home and church. I have been in his home and we have traveled to many locations around the world, sharing God's Word. I have always found him a man of passion for Christ, with an insatiable desire to know Jesus more deeply. Francois is a man truly hungry for God. In his latest book, *The Call*, Francois shares practical insights into what it means to abide in Christ and in doing so fulfilling God's purpose. I recommend this book wholeheartedly.

Dr. Mark D. Partin

Director: Minister to Minister International

Senior Pastor: Grapevine Baptist Church, Madisonville, Ky., USA

The other day I took some time to read through *The Call* in one go. I must say, the more I read, the more I was blessed and, needless to say,

challenged. Once again I learnt that: the intimate life with Jesus is not optional but really part and parcel of following Jesus and discipleship. In a world that emphasizes quick fixes, shortcuts to success, fast living and sensationalism, this book cuts past those transient things and ploughs into the inner soul, demands brokenness and full surrender to the Lord Jesus and His way by the working of the Holy Spirit. Ephesians 2:10 puts it so well, 'We are His workmanship created in Christ Jesus ...' What I, and all of us, need to do is to constantly step aside and let Him do His work in us! This will bring about authenticity, which is what the world is looking for. Jesus said, 'by this shall all men know that you are my disciples, if you love one another.'

Here's a book that can be studied carefully and could well be used as a study for groups, etc. I would therefore prayerfully but confidently recommend it to all who 'hunger and thirst after righteousness.' Thank you, Brother Francois, for these timely reminders and it is my sincere prayer that all who read it may become 'doers of the word and not hearers only' (James 1:22).

Dr. Harold Peasley

Former Director: Multi Ministries International, EE3, SA

Francois Carr's burden for revival is shown in an exemplary way in his new book, *The Call*. As he shows, revival is all about God's children spiritually moving back to normal Christianity so that, through awakening of the bride of Christ, the greatest salvation of the unsaved can occur. Carr exhorts that it is time for the followers of Christ to grow in obedient discipleship in the midst of an empty wasteland. He notes that as the 12 disciples learned intimately of Jesus, they became fishers of men. This revival consciousness of God's presence issues into the fulfillment of the Great Commission. This is Jesus's call today: out of daily obedience, relationship with Jesus becomes intimate, His love flows through us and into the work of God, and results in the salvation of a lost world. Spiritual power for this task comes from the Holy Spirit, all to God's glory. *The Call* is a book of compelling spirituality and obedience for all who are on this mission from God.

Dr. Tom Phillips

Vice President: Billy Graham Evangelistic Association, Charlotte, N.C., USA

Dr. Francois Carr has provided us with a wonderful resource in his book *The Call*. His words are filled with wonderful truths so needed by this generation. What makes this book different and so rich is its balance. He shows the importance of being *with Jesus, changed by Him, and sent for Him*. Francois intertwines the great truths of prayer, revival, and discipleship into one great work. I highly commend this book to every follower of Jesus. As you read it, you will discover God's original intent for your life. Read! Be blessed! Obey! And see the glory of God!

Sammy Tippit

Author and international evangelist at Sammy Tippit Ministries, San Antonio, Tx., USA

Francois Carr has now written a very needed and timely book, *The Call*, which will assist many people to learn how Christ connects people to His purpose and His plan for their lives. Far too many followers of Christ never learn how to connect their lives to Christ's purpose and plan and as such they remain unproductive in their Christian service. Dr. Carr uses the exegesis of Scripture, personal testimony and practical application to assist the reader with knowing and being engaged in Christ's plan and purpose for their lives. Dr. Carr clearly shows, based upon Mark 3:13–15:

The Call to Communion (fellowship with Christ)

The Call to Conformity (transformation by Christ)

The Call to Commission (service with Christ)

I highly and enthusiastically recommend *The Call* to anyone who is seeking to connect their lives and ministry to the plans and purposes of God. I urge anyone who is desiring to be used by God to read and submit to the biblical truths of Dr. Carr's exegesis in his book.

Dr. Joe Youngblood

Director: Revival and Missions International, Aiken, S.C., USA



THE CALL—Be and become the follower you are meant to be

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Editor: Wilna Swart  
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*This book is dedicated to*

*the Lord Jesus, who sets forth Himself as the object of our faith  
and the pattern of our life. His life is the illustration of what He wants all  
of us to be and become;*

*and to*

*my wife Dorothea and my daughter Leoné.*

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## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I am so grateful to God for calling me to Himself while I attended a weekend youth camp in Pretoria in April 1988. There is nothing sweeter and better than being a follower of Jesus.

There are many people to thank for this project, which began as a series of talks at the Reconnect Retreat for Spiritual Leaders and Pastors in South Carolina several years ago. I thank you all for your support and patience.

I thank Dr. Joe Youngblood, former Director of Church Health of the South Carolina Baptist Convention, and his team, who arranged these two-day retreats and for inviting me to share and teach on this important subject.

I thank those who attended these sessions in South Carolina, and other parts of the world, who so helpfully interacted with me about the ideas that I was trying to articulate. It helped me to ‘test’ and develop some of the thoughts, truths and principles captured in this book.

I want to thank those who walk in these principles and understand how important it is for me to walk in them also.

I want to thank my daughter Leoné Mostert for her assistance in finalizing the project.

Finally, Dorothea, my wife: thank you for your continuing role in my life and your support on my spiritual journey. Thank you for believing in me and modeling the truths shared in this book.

My hope is that this message and process positively impacts many. Thanks be to God!

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And He went up on the mountain and called to Him those He Himself wanted. And they came to Him. Then He appointed twelve, that they might be with Him and that He might send them out to preach, and to have power to heal sicknesses and to cast out demons. (Mark 3:13–15)

And He went up on the hillside and called to Him [for Himself] those whom He wanted and chose, and they came to Him. And He appointed twelve to continue to be with Him, and that He might send them out to preach [as apostles or special messengers]. And to have authority and power to heal the sick and to drive out demons. (Mark 3:13–15 *The Amplified Bible*)

He climbed a mountain and invited those he wanted with him. They climbed together. He settled on twelve and designated them apostles. The plan was that they would be with him, and he would send them out to proclaim the Word and give them authority to banish demons. (Mark 3:13–15 *The Message*)

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## Foreword

I had the inestimable privilege of growing up in the home of a father who is widely regarded by people around the world as a great man of God. He did not earn that reputation because he was a great man *per se*. In many ways, he was exceedingly ordinary. As his oldest son, I have no doubt of that. But when it came to his walk with God and his life in the Spirit, he was extraordinary. When he preached, the Spirit of God would work so powerfully that people would stream to the altar before he had finished speaking. Often, after he sensed God leading him to take a step of faith, an unanticipated check would suddenly arrive in the mail. Other times God would alert him to a new ministry he should start, and someone would unexpectedly call and invite him to do the very thing God had revealed to him in prayer. When my father prayed for people, God powerfully set them free.

Now, I must confess that when I was a young child, I was unaware of how unusual my father was. I naively assumed all Christians routinely experienced the supernatural power of God working through their lives. I thought it was commonplace for God to speak to people and guide them to do surprising things that had amazing results. After all, the Bible was filled with examples of people doing just that. God told Noah to build a massive ship even though it is doubtful he had ever imagined such a craft before, let alone encountered a rainstorm. He inspired a teenaged shepherd boy to enter a grim battlefield and face down a lethal behemoth. He appointed Elijah to challenge 850 prophets of Baal and Asherah on the top of Mount Carmel, knowing that if a spectacular and unprecedented miracle did not occur promptly, he would suffer a gruesome death. Jesus invited a dozen ordinary working men to leave their careers and follow him. Before long they were healing people, casting out demons, and preaching before thousands. It's difficult to read very far in the Bible without seeing God do God-sized things through ordinary people. I might add that a cursory study of Church history reveals that there have been many who believed in God's mighty acts through ordinary people, and they, too, saw God accomplish spectacular things through their lives.

So, it is natural to assume Christians today should be experiencing a similar degree of heavenly power. But, sadly, they often do not. Many people today who profess to be Christians and have attended church services all of their lives have never heard God speak.

They have never experienced His power working through them. They cannot point to any experience in their life and exclaim, ‘Only God could have done that!’

I eventually came to realize that my father, Henry Blackaby, author of *Experiencing God* and many other books, was unusual. At first, I assumed people like my father were extraordinary, while most Christians were ordinary. Later, I began to wonder if people like my father were normal Christians while all the rest were subordinary. Could it be that God intended for every Christian to hear His voice, know His will, experience His power, and bear much fruit?

I cherish many passages of Scripture, but my favorite is Ephesians 3:20–21: *Now to Him who is able to do exceedingly abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that works in us, to Him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus to all generations, forever and ever. Amen.* I love that the passage begins with ‘now.’ Not ‘in the New Testament.’ Not ‘in Martin Luther’s day.’ Not ‘during George Whitefield’s, Charles Wesley’s, or Charles Spurgeon’s age.’ But *now!* ‘To Him who *is* able.’ Not *was* able. He *is* able! To do what? To do ‘exceedingly abundantly.’ The Greek word literally means ‘superabundantly.’ ‘Above all that we ask or think.’ I don’t know about you, but I can think of a lot! And I have prayed for much. But God can do far more. Why? Because His work is not based on my effort, power, skill, resources, or the size of my church. It is based solely on *His* power. And He has a lot! Why does God work powerfully through us? So, Christ receives the glory due Him in the church before a watching world. God is looking for people who will trust Him to do what only He can do through their life and church.

I have often placed Ephesians 3:20–21 up against my life and ministry and asked, ‘Do these verses describe my life?’ If what I find in the Bible cannot be found in my life, then something is amiss. Sadly, many Christians witness this inconsistency and assume God’s power is not available today. At least, not for ordinary Christians. Churches struggle and decline, yet they assume their challenges are normal for most churches in today’s troubled times. But what might

the world today if ordinary Christians and average churches stood before the promises of Scripture and refused to accept that they were not intended for them as well? Our world desperately needs to encounter Christians who are living and ministering like first-century Christians.

I am delighted with Francois Carr's latest book, *The Call: Be and become the follower you are meant to be*. I thoroughly enjoy knowing and working with Francois. We have spent many hours discussing what God was teaching us as we traveled together across South Africa and spoke at conferences. We have also ministered together in the United States, the Netherlands, and Israel. I always enjoy my time with Francois, because I am inspired by his thirst to know God more deeply and to experience His power more dynamically. Francois is a zealous student of God's Word. He reads voraciously and has learned from many of the great Christian teachers of our day.

In this book, Francois compiles much of the rich spiritual food he has discovered over the years and presents it in a straightforward, engaging, and inspiring format. He has taught this material all over the world and it always has a profound impact on the audience. Francois has not only been teaching 'the connected life,' he has been living it. As a result, God is using him mightily.

As Francois underscores in his book, the key to a powerful, victorious Christian life is an intimate, growing, vibrant relationship with God. Such a walk with God is not restricted to famous saints and megachurch pastors. Christ invites everyone to come and follow Him. And, if you do, Scripture promises that you will experience God doing exceedingly abundantly more in and through your life than you could possibly have imagined.

Dr. Richard Blackaby

President: Blackaby Ministries International, Atlanta, Ga., USA

Co-author: *Experiencing God, Spiritual Leadership, Fresh Encounter*

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Dr. Richard Blackaby

President: Blackaby Ministries International, Atlanta, Ga., USA

Co-author: *Experiencing God, Spiritual Leadership, Fresh Encounter*

The same is true and applies to us today. As I looked at that passage, it was as if God allowed me to see the process of transformation and the cycle of discipleship that Jesus followed with His disciples. The process of transformation consists of three main parts:

- Part One—the call to be with Jesus;
- Part Two—the call to be changed and transformed by Him;
- Part Three—the call to go out on His behalf.

In the cycle of discipleship, the disciples learned about the importance of being with Jesus, hearing Him speak, understanding His intentions, receiving His empowerment, understanding His concern, accomplishing His purposes, and receiving God's gift of rest. During this process they were also changed from mere converts of Jesus to being followers, workers and leaders. I presented some of those thoughts which God placed in my heart in the *Connecting with God* series at the retreats. Since then it has developed into *Connected—The Jesus Way*,<sup>1</sup> a 'disciple-based process' designed to equip and empower believers and churches to live and act like Jesus, become workers and leaders of influence who in turn transform their immediate environment.

In this book, *The Call*, we will cover some of those 'transformational moments' with Jesus and look at how those events affected the disciples and their impact on our lives today. Together we will discover how God uses encounters with old truths to generate a change in people's perspective of who He is, bringing about a change in their perspective of who they are, and what they can become with Jesus at the center of their lives. *Christianity is not about what we know about God but how what we know about God transforms us into His likeness.*

God has a purpose and a plan for your life.

That's right.

He wants you to see the potential of 'what you can be or become.' But we must be connected to His purpose and plan. God is still calling. He wants us to join Him today and experience Him like never before.

I should caution you here, though. If you respond to *God's Call* and *connect with His plan and purpose* for your life, you will undergo a life transformation, just as my life was transformed, and the lives of many others who chose to respond to God's call.

God has used many people over the years to touch and shape my life. Some of them have already passed on to be with the Lord, while others are still alive and are having a continued impact on my life. I am deeply indebted to all of them for the example they set me and for every conversation and encounter that has helped me to become the person I am today. I am also thankful for all the quality resources,<sup>2</sup> books, commentaries and excellent teachings that have shaped my life and guided my thoughts as I write about this journey. Throughout *The Call* I will allude to some of these contributions that have become a part of my everyday life, message and mission. I am especially grateful to all the people whom God uniquely placed in my life to help me follow God's will and agenda for my life. I have received them as if I have received the Lord Himself. Did Jesus not say ...

Most assuredly, I say to you, he who receives whomever I send receives Me; and he who receives Me receives Him who sent Me.  
(John 13:20)

It was not my desire to write one more book to add to the millions of books full of wonderful thoughts and ideas that already fill the shelves of bookstores. Although *The Call* is by no means a complete, detailed discussion on the topic, my desire, in writing this book, is to share some of my thoughts, a few truths and principles gleaned from my devotions that shaped my life and ministry. Looking back on my life, I celebrate those truths and encounters that have allowed me to gain a new perspective of God, and to develop a new perspective of myself, which helped me to rediscover the joy of fellowship with Him.

*The Call* consists of an introduction and eight chapters that take you on a journey through realizing your need to connect your life with God's Call and Cause. What would it be like to be at the feet of Jesus, listening, watching and learning more about His life, relationships, ministry and kingdom? What will happen if we follow Him wherever He leads and commissions us to go? In *The Call* we take a closer look at Jesus, the twelve disciples, and how they relate to our life. Here's a road map for *The Call*.

*The Call: Introduction.* I share how the Lord has called us into ministry and how two specific encounters with God, to know Jesus and be known by Him, and to follow His method, strategy and example, laid the foundation for me to write this book.

Chapter 1: The Cause: *Continue With What Jesus Started.* We take a look at Jesus' favorite mountain, the Great Commission and think back along with the disciples to where it had all begun before it spread throughout the world.

Chapter 2: The Connection: *To Be with Him Before we Work for Him.* We determine life's priorities, explore how Jesus stayed connected with His Father in the midst of a busy schedule and our call to be with Him. We also discuss four enemies of intimacy you should be aware of.

Chapter 3: The Communication: *To Hear Him Speak.* We establish that it is more important to listen to God than to speak to God. We elaborate on Why is God speaking? When does He speak? Why do so many struggle to hear Him speak? How does He speak to us? and How can I hear His voice?

Chapter 4: The Change: *To Understand and Realize His Intention.* God's purpose is to change and transform us and use us to accomplish His purposes. We take a look at the why, what and how God is doing in our following Jesus and becoming fishers of men.

Chapter 5: The Commission: *To Receive His Enabling and Empowerment.* We are called to 'go' and in this chapter we explore why we are sent out, what we have to do, where we need to go, when and how we do that. We share some powerful principles that will help and empower you to make a difference in your environment.

Chapter 6: The Commitment: *His Concern, Our Response and Obedience.* By the time you get to this chapter you will have the tools for a life connected to God's Call and Cause. However, in facing a crisis of belief, you will have to make the decision to obey. We also look at some enemies that you will face to prevent you from reaching your full potential.

Chapter 7: The Completion: *To Accomplish His Purposes.* We encourage you in this chapter to take some time out to behold and process following a season of ministry or encountering a truth from God's Word. We share some practical thoughts on when to do it, why to do it and how to do it.

Chapter 8: The Celebration: *To Rest and Be Refreshed.* We learn the importance of taking a break and practicing a rhythm of life.

The Conclusion: *An Invitation.* Jesus had called the disciples to be with Him, equipped and changed them and gave them all they needed to accomplish their mission. Then He invited and commissioned

them to go, make disciples, baptize and teach them. We explain what it means to become a man or a woman on the move.

## The Journey Begins

I am humbled that the Lord has encouraged me to share my heart, mind and prayers with you as you might find these writings valuable in your own walk with Him. I accept full responsibility for any shortcomings or weaknesses in this devotional book, but I am praying, however, that in what any of us render to God in sincerity, He finds something acceptable to use for His glory.

I am grateful that you have chosen to read this book, and I am confident that, as you read and allow God to speak to you, you will experience Him in a new and fresh way, your walk with Him will be refreshed as you rediscover the joy of fellowship with the things you already know, and so often take for granted. This could be more than the beginning of a book. It just might be the beginning of a changed and transformed life—a life connected to God's call and purpose. May God use it to help you change the world around you ... to praise and glorify Him.

This will be written for the generation to come, that a people yet to be created may praise the Lord. (Psalm 102:18)

This is my prayer and my heart's desire.  
May it be so!

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PART ONE  
Being with Jesus



# The CALL

## Introduction

You did not choose Me, but I chose you and appointed you that you should go and bear fruit, and that your fruit should remain, that whatever you ask the Father in My name He may give you. (John 15:16)

“Follow me” is the substance of the call in the power of which Jesus makes people his saints ... We may say, therefore, that in practice the command to follow Jesus is identical with the command to believe in Him. (Karl Barth)<sup>1</sup>

Our lives changed forever in 1999 when, on 30 June, I resigned from my role as Personnel Officer in the South African Defence Force in Pretoria, South Africa. My job, attached to the rank of Lieutenant Colonel, provided a good income and a secure future for our family but we were sure that God had called us to leave our secular jobs. My wife Dorothea and I had taken the major step of faith to leave behind a life filled with certainty and familiarity to believe in God and accept the call to follow Him.

Prior to my resignation from regular full-time employment, I used my evenings and weekends to plan and arrange revival meetings and evangelistic outreaches, and to complete my theological studies. The Lord helped us during those busy days and times of full-time work, studies and part-time involvement in the ministry. However, we knew that God was preparing us for a new season in our lives. We understood that God wanted us in full-time ministry. We accepted the call and responded by saying yes to His invitation to join Him and fulfil His purposes. One evening, shortly after I had resigned from my role, the Lord directed me to read from the book of Isaiah. The words of the prophet spoke to my heart:

Enlarge the place of your tent, and let them stretch out the curtains of your dwellings; do not spare. Lengthen your cords, and strengthen your stakes. For you shall expand to the right and to the left, and your descendants will inherit the nations and make the desolate cities inhabited. (Isaiah 54:2–3)

God was about to enlarge our borders. He was about to change our lives, routines, habits, thinking and even our view of Him. He was about to bring in people and opportunities, and open new doors in our lives. He was about to s-t-r-e-t-c-h us. When God tells you to *enlarge the place of your tent ... stretch out the curtains of your dwelling* and to *lengthen your cords* it means lengthen your reach. Wider tents require longer cords to keep them securely held in place. Once we lengthen our cords, we must also *strengthen our stakes*, and drive them deeper into the bedrock of God's Word and Truth.

If we are rooted in Him, we will be 'like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that brings forth its fruit in its season, whose leaf also shall not wither; and whatever he does shall prosper' (Psalm 1:3). We shall be like a tree—not a mere annual plant—with steady, progressive growth and increasing fruitfulness. Planted by the rivers of water, we shall drink from His deep and hidden sources and bear fruit. The wider the branches spread and the higher the tree grows, the deeper the roots must grow.

But be aware there is a difference between work and fruit. *Work is the outcome of effort, and fruit is the outcome of the way you live.* A bad person can do good work, but a bad tree cannot bear good fruit. We believe that God has chosen and appointed us to bear fruit (John 15:16). He is going to stretch us as we grow in becoming what He has in mind for us to be useful and fruitful in the ministry He will initiate. At the time my heart was filled with excitement, knowing that God was directing our lives on a new course.

### *Traveling with Jesus*

The Lord strongly impressed on my heart to look at the life and ministry of Jesus, to recognize that during His time of ministry Jesus *went about all the cities and villages*, traveling from place to place (Matthew 9:35). I sensed that God wanted me ... just like Jesus ... to travel from place to place, to preach and teach in towns and cities in South Africa, and to go beyond these borders to other nations and countries. To me traveling was a foreign concept. I grew up in a small rural town and had never thought of or even cared much about traveling. Nor was I accustomed to being away from home for long periods of time, let alone being abroad.

Doors began to open for us to minister and expand to the east and to the west. The very next day after the Lord had given me the word about traveling to cities and villages, I received a phone call from a pastor inviting me to preach at his church in the state of Tennessee in the United States of America. Since then, I have crossed the Atlantic more than 40 times to teach and preach in North America. I have traveled many times to African nations, to Britain, Europe, the Middle East, Australia and New Zealand to speak and teach about prayer and revival. I have led more than 60 groups of Christian pilgrims, who walked in the footsteps of Jesus in Israel and other biblical countries, over the years. I have flown by airplane, and driven hundreds of thousands of kilometers along the roads of South Africa. God has been kind and gracious in blessing our ministry as people responded to the burden on us and our message, which He has given us to take out there.

I believe these open doors, expansions and growth were because of God's call upon our lives. God took the initiative. God did it. But God had to take us on mission with Him and put us through the *expanding*, the *stretching*, the *lengthening* and the *strengthening* of our faith and *trust* in Him. We surely felt the pressure and stress of it, and at times were afraid but we always found Him faithful. We stepped out by faith, without a fixed income or a promise from someone to help or provide for us. Looking back, we can truly say: 'Blessed be the Lord who daily loads us with benefits, the God of our salvation' (Psalm 68:20). By God's provision and grace, we have witnessed many miracles and I can honestly say that God has provided according to our every need as a family and that He has even spoiled us with special experiences, creating beautiful memories, throughout the journey. God has been kind to us as a family as He touched and used our lives in ways that we never could have dreamed possible.

It has been an incredible journey full of amazing, life-changing encounters with God. From the very beginning of my ministry, God has used my avid reading of the writings of Christian literature, which include biographies, revival accounts and more, to cause a stirring in my heart. It created within me a deep longing to really 'know' Him, grow closer to Him and to see Him work through me in revival.