

*If I'm not carved
on the palms of
God's hands, I'll
eat your hat!*

44

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1 SUBJECT

9 CHAPTERS



Rebecca Bryant Hervey

If I'm not
carved on the palms
of God's hand,
I'll eat your hat!

By Rebecca Bryant Hervey



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**IF I'M NOT CARVED ON THE PALMS OF
GOD'S HANDS, I'LL EAT YOUR HAT!**

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Table of Contents

Foreword.....	Page 4
Chapter 1.....	Page 5
Chapter 2.....	Page 7
Chapter 3.....	Page 9
Chapter 4.....	Page 11
Chapter 5.....	Page 14
Chapter 6.....	Page 16
Chapter 7.....	Page 22
Chapter 8.....	Page 26
Chapter 9.....	Page 30

FOREWORD

*“Shout for joy, O heavens, rejoice, O earth;
burst into song, O mountains! For the Lord
comforts His people and will have compassion
on His afflicted ones.*

*But Zion said, “The Lord has forsaken me, the
Lord has forgotten me.”*

*“Can a mother forget the baby at her breast
and have no compassion on the child she has
borne?*

*Though she may forget, I will not forget you!
See? I have engraved you on the palms of My
hands; your walls are ever before me.” (Isaiah
49:13-16, NIV)*

It's happening again... that delightful
'knowing' that another book is coming forth to
me with the Lord's inspiration! He always
gives the title first. The rest flows like a stream
down a mountainside.

May this stream water your dry places.
May it bring renewed hope into your everyday
walk.

CHAPTER ONE

I should have known, when I found myself awake before daylight that this was not going to be just an ordinary day. It's been two years or more since the Lord set me to the task of writing a book. Not a big book, mind you. Just one you can pick up and read while you wait for someone, or stick it in your purse to peruse under the hairdryer. Maybe read it in the bathroom? You get the idea.

The Holy Spirit has never given me a really thick book to write, so I figure this one will be just long enough to get the point across and short enough to hold your interest.

It gets me so excited! I can feel it gathering up inside as little waterfalls, rivulets and creeks come together to form a river. It's good medicine for my own soul, since I've definitely had my share of ups and downs in this lifetime.

As soon as I heard the title in my spirit I began to look for an empty notebook in which to write notes. My darling husband may not be aware of everything around our tiny house but he directed me straight to this one. It was in my 'piling system'. I'm not a filer, but a piler. Some of us are like that, aren't we? We seem to be able to find things better in the pile on our desk or shelf. Filed away neatly, they're 'out of sight, out of mind' and in the last place I'd think to look. The notebook's bright yellow

cover says exactly how I'm feeling today...
optimistic and happy.

How can we fail to be optimistic when
we remember that we are important to our
Creator... the King of Kings, and Lord of
Lords? As you can see from the title, the
subject is affirming the fact that I, as well as
yourself, am carved on the palms of God's
hands! Were 'awesome' not such an overused
word I would say that is an awesome fact.

CHAPTER TWO

“Can a mother forget the baby at her breast”? I think not!! Not to mention the wonder of the little miracle who is at that moment drawing sustenance from her. She can feel the flowing of milk into that little baby’s hungry mouth, and know that the baby is totally dependent upon her. Is she going to ignore its cries of hunger? Oh, no! If you’re a woman who has ever breast-fed a baby, you know that the first whimper of hunger from that child will cause your milk to begin to flow... ready to give that little baby what he or she needs! And you’ll be quite uncomfortable until you do! Maybe even wet with milk!

I believe God’s compassion is like that flow of milk. When He hears us cry out to Him for what we need, His compassion begins to flow toward us. Not that His compassion is not always there, but in that moment it begins to flow in our direction in response to our urgent cry. He will pick us up and hold us close to Him, comfort us, dry our tears and meet our needs. Just as a mother isn’t constantly holding her child and feeding him, so God lets us sleep or play or do whatever we need to do. It’s when He hears our heart-cry that He moves to meet our request.

“...ye have not, because ye ask not.”
“Draw nigh to God, and He will draw nigh to you”. These words are in the book of James,

Chapter 4. And then there's "When you ask you do not receive, because you ask with wrong motives." Can you picture a toddler running up to a parent, arms uplifted, eyes wet with tears, crying out, "Mommy! Daddy!" The little child has a need. He comes to the ones he knows care about him and will take care of that need. If you're a parent, you might even say that toddler is 'carved on your heart'. Right? The sound of his voice meets your ears, and if you know that the child is actually in need of something, then your heart is touched with the sound of his plea. You will give him the attention he's needing.

Sometimes we ask God for things we don't need, and He... as a good parent will do, might wisely ignore that request. There've been times in my life when I stubbornly persisted in asking for the wrong thing, and got it, then lived to regret it. Even so, my heavenly Father made it turn to good for me in many ways. He always makes sure that I'm learning something that will eventually work to my good, even though my motives were not the best. Why? Because of His great love. His tender heart. His patience. "As a father has compassion on his children, so the Lord has compassion on those who fear Him; for He knows how we are formed, He remembers that we are dust." Psalm 103, verses 13 and 14.

CHAPTER THREE

“But from everlasting to everlasting the Lord’s love is with those who fear Him, and His righteousness with their children’s children— with those who keep His covenant and remember to obey His precepts. Psalm 103:17 &18.

There is such comfort in the Psalms! Consider Psalm 139... bathe in it. Bask in it. Stretch out and relax in it. It’s better than Calgon! Submit to it’s powerful truth and know how much you mean to your Creator.

“Oh, Lord, You have searched me and you know me. You know when I sit and when I rise; You perceive my thoughts from afar. You discern my going out and my lying down; You are familiar with all my ways. Before a word is on my tongue you know it completely, O Lord.” Seeing that He knows us this well, shall we not confide in Him our deepest thoughts, trusting that He cares?

“You hem me in... behind and before; You have laid Your hand upon me. Such knowledge is too wonderful for me, too lofty for me to attain. Where can I go from Your Spirit? Where can I flee from Your presence? If I go up to the heavens, You are there; if I make my bed in the depths, You are there. If I rise on the wings of the dawn, if I settle on the far side of the sea, even there Your hand will hold me fast.” This tells me that even if I were to try to escape from the earth and find refuge on some

other planet, my loving Father would be there with me. I would never be alone. Likewise, if I should find myself in a submarine... highly unlikely though that may sound... my God would surely be there with me.

CHAPTER FOUR

There is no escaping His loving care!
Never think you've wandered too far for Him to find you and bring you back, for He has never lost track of you! "If I rise on the wings of the dawn, if I settle on the far side of the sea, even there Your hand will guide me, Your right hand will hold me fast." This makes me feel as secure as a baby wrapped in a soft warm blanket! Held in His arms! Guided by His hand... for I am always in His hands... carved on the palms of His hands.

"If I say, 'Surely the darkness will hide me and the light become night around me,' even the darkness will not be dark to You; the night will shine like the day, for darkness is as light to You." Here's a part many of us have probably heard all our lives... "For You created my inmost being; You knit me together in my mother's womb. I praise You because I am fearfully and wonderfully made; Your works are wonderful, I know that full well."

"My frame was not hidden from You when I was made in the secret place. When I was woven together in the depths of the earth, Your eyes saw my unformed body." Think of this!! "All the days ordained for me were written in Your book before one of them came to be." I personally find absolute joy and peace in this last line. All my days were written in His book before I was ever born. Before I

was ever conceived. My loving Father was aware of whatever good I would do... whatever bad I would do... whatever stupid mistakes I would make... and whatever choices or paths I would take. Even so, He finds me worthy of His care. Even so, He came to earth to die for my sins and to rescue me from the consequences. Not that I won't be chastised for my willful wrongs on this earth, for the Father will chastise them that are His.

What a comfort to read this in Hebrews 12:5! "And you have forgotten that word of encouragement that addresses you as sons: 'My son, do not make light of the Lord's discipline, and do not lose heart when He rebukes you, because the Lord disciplines those He loves, and he punishes everyone He accepts as a son. Endure hardship as discipline; God is treating you as sons. For what son is not disciplined by his father?'"

We should pick up our Bibles and read Hebrews 12 every day until it sinks in... God is not hateful nor unfair. He is neither absent-minded nor forgetful. He has great care for us, His children, ... that we may share in His holiness! He never has, nor will he ever desert us or turn His back on us!

This lifts my spirits every time I read it! Makes me want to jump for joy! Okay, so I'm spanked sometimes by the hand of the most loving and caring Father that ever was or ever

will be. Well, Hallelujah! Ever hear a parent say, “Well, son, I’m doing this for your own good.” when punishing a child? We don’t hear that much in these days, but when I was a child, and also when my children were growing up, it was a well-used phrase. And I would draw your attention to what’s happened to so many young people today who have had no discipline from their parents. “Going to hell in a handbasket”, you say? Well I’m so glad my Father disciplines me so that I do not go to hell but that I may share in His holiness! I praise Him!

I will not listen when the enemy tries to hiss in my ear that God has deserted me or does not love me just because I’m going through some hard times. That’s the enemy’s job... hissing in our ears! Deceiving us if he can. He is known as the deceiver. Don’t listen to him. That’s how Adam and Eve fell in the Garden. The serpent hissed... “Did God really say that you would surely die if you disobeyed Him?” Hisssssssssssss! And so, they disobeyed their Father, who had carved them upon the palms of His hands.

CHAPTER FIVE

Well, I've been awakened early two mornings in a row now to write this little book. I don't feel an end to it yet, but neither do I sense a need to say more at this time. Maybe it's for you to meditate upon and write your own chapter. Listen to the One who loves you more than anything else... hear Him say to you that you are indeed carved upon the palms of His hands and that you can never escape His presence. Hear Him say to you that he deals with us as sons if we are indeed His. Rest in that! Crawl up in His lap and ask for forgiveness, then ask for wisdom. If you don't understand things, then ask Him.

It's written in the book of James... a servant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ.. "Consider it pure joy... whenever you face trials of many kinds, because you know that the testing of your faith develops perseverance. Perseverance must finish its work so that you may be mature and complete, not lacking anything. If any of you lacks wisdom, he should ask God, who gives generously to all without finding fault, and it will be given to him." "But"... notice this. "But when he asks, he must believe and not doubt, because he who doubts is like a wave of the sea, blown and tossed by the wind." Uh-oh! "That man should not think he will receive anything from the Lord; he is a double-minded man, unstable in all he does."

And that's why we need the Lord's discipline; to stabilize and strengthen us. To make us mature and complete. To keep us from being half-baked, you might say! And so I come to the ending now until He gives me more to write.

"Blessed is the man who perseveres under trial, because when he has stood the test, he will receive the crown of life that God has promised to those who love Him." Let us say with Job... who suffered long and patiently and still loved and trusted the Lord God...

"But He knows the way that I take; when He has tested me, I will come forth as gold." How can we come forth as gold if we are not to endure the fire that purifies us? How can we endure if we forget that we are carved on the palms of His hands and He loves us as His own? Stand up and shout in the midst of those trials and painful lessons... "If I'm not carved on the palms of God's hands, I'll eat your hat!" And don't worry, you're not going to have to eat anyone's hat. He loves you.

CHAPTER SIX

It's 6 a.m. on March 28, 2003.

I began writing this book in a light-hearted manner several months, or perhaps a year ago. After a few chapters the inspiration seemed to end. I had nothing more to write. It had to wait until I experienced more evidence of being carved on the palms of my Father's Hand. I needed to persevere in trials.

It seemed a trivial thing when I tripped and fell sometime in December or January. Carelessly walking across a parking lot to the mail box, maybe dragging my feet in the Birkenstock sandals my daughter Kat had bought for me... I suddenly found myself doing a pretty good imitation of Dick van Dyke awkwardly stumbling and stomping... only I didn't regain my composure as he could do so well. I gave up the effort to right myself because I knew it was impossible, and fell forward on one knee and both hands. What a sight! My sandals went flying in other directions, opposite of my eyeglasses. But alas, no one in the neighborhood happened to be looking.

Picking myself up after making sure nothing was broken, I went on and retrieved the mail and went back into the house, remarking that I sure did thank God for my 'rubber bones' since nothing seemed to be broken. I've had two close neighbors about my

own age who have fallen in the same manner, each breaking her wrist and having to endure extensive surgery and much pain for many months. When a 5 foot 8 inch woman, weighing around 200 lbs. falls as I did, it is not a light thing! But I had no pain at the time and never even thought of seeing a doctor about the slightly skinned knee and palm of one hand. My son Robbie came to visit soon after that fall, and I remember telling him about it, how nothing had been damaged.

Robbie seldom came to visit at our house. At age 42, he lived a totally different lifestyle from that which a mother would desire for her beloved son. I had just made a big pot of turkey-vegetable soup and it was still hot on the stove after our lunch when Robbie's dilapidated old truck lumbered noisily across the parking lot. As always, I was so very happy to see him, and he was happy to devour the last two bowls of soup and cornbread. Then he asked me to run an errand with him, and when we returned we sat for a moment in his truck. He reached down into the cluttered floorboard and found a small plastic picture frame... round, and garnished with the image of two small angels at the top. He said he'd found it in a house he was remodeling and knew I'd love to have it.

I told him I'd keep it safe and put his soon-to-be-born grandson's picture in it, and he smiled as only my Robbie could smile. We

walked back into the house. Talked for a few minutes more, then Rob said one of his violent headaches had just come over him and he needed to go home and take some pills. The pain relievers I offered were not strong enough, he told me. Near the door, I grabbed him impulsively and hugged with all my might this beautiful son God had given me...my only son who came into my life in direct answer to prayer. "Ooooh, Robbie! I just love you so much!" I told him.

His blue-green eyes gazed sincerely into mine as he said quietly, "I love you too, Mom". I walked him to the gate and he was gone. Out of my life. Out of this life on earth where he could never seem to find happiness anyway. His friends had noticed that his truck was still parked in front of his mobile home two days later, when he should have been at work and didn't answer the door in spite of their loud knocking and calling. They phoned his dad, who came and found Robbie's cold and lifeless body lying in his kitchen floor, as though he'd leaned against the wall and just slipped to the floor as his spirit left his earthly vehicle. His "earth-suit" as my husband Reed calls it. He was still dressed as he had been when last I saw him, in fresh khakis and clean shirt. Freshly shaved, which was a bit of a rare thing for him. I have a feeling that as he walked into his home to take his pills after leaving our house, his heart gave one enormous surge and stopped. That's pretty much what the coroner told us.

An agonizing week of autopsies showed nothing different. Robbie had been a heavy user of drugs; a party-loving kind of guy. Yet I, his mother, knew his heart was never happy since the day when he was ten years old and I announced I was divorcing his father.

A little boy cannot understand how one day everything is fine and the next day he's told that his father has been molesting his sisters and would not stop it, and the family was forever destroyed. His sisters made recovery, each in her own way, but Robbie could never deal with it.

My oldest daughter had phoned to give me the news of his death as she received it from his dad. I can not describe the agony and heartbreak I felt. I thought that both my heart and my stomach were tearing themselves loose from my body and would soon come out along with my groans and tears. My dear husband Reed made a few phone calls to friends for prayer. I finally regained enough composure to call a few close women friends myself for comfort and prayer. Soon, here they came, bearing loving gifts of food and flowers, cards and hugs. I am so grateful for such devoted friends! Before long, the sweet assurance from my Lord God came over me. Reed and I both knew without a shadow of doubt that Robbie had gone to be in the Presence of the Lord Jesus Christ whom he had received so sincerely at the age of twelve.

This was the comfort that sustained me!

Only the previous Easter Sunday morning I'd passed up being in the Easter Pageant at our own church to be present to witness my precious son being baptized by the pastor he loved and trusted. Robbie was no church-goer, but he'd found friendship with this fatherly pastor in a small Baptist church not far from where he lived. God knew! You see, my son was also carved on the palms of God's hands. Despite his weakness and many failures and hurts, Robbie knew his Lord and loved Him. The night before his funeral, with many friends and relatives gathered to say goodbye to him, several of his friends came to tell me that Robbie's one desire for them was that they would put their trust in Jesus. He had helped at least one young woman to quit using drugs, and her testimony was the Jesus that her best friend Robbie had told her about. Just a few months earlier Rob had brought another young woman to us, hoping we could help her find rehabilitation and pray for her. Except for her addiction to drugs so powerful she could not conquer them alone, she was the kind of person we'd gladly have accepted as a daughter-in-law. Yet amid all our efforts and attention, she slipped away and we've not heard from her since that time.

Still, this young woman's most treasured gift from us was a little orange-colored Gideon New Testament, which she kept in her purse

and read often. She knew where her help came from, and I know without a doubt she also was carved on the palms of God's hands. Should we never see her again on this earth, I feel quite sure that both she and my Robbie will joyfully greet us when we reach that heavenly shore... washed clean from all the turmoil and heartache of their lives. Clothed in heavenly garments whiter than snow!

CHAPTER SEVEN

There! It's now seven in the morning of this same day, and I can get back to telling about my tumble in the parking lot. Nothing but a skinned knee and palm of one hand? As it turned out much later, I had so warped my spine that at least seven nerves were severely pinched. In the months to come, the pain was so agonizing that I saw six MD's and visited emergency rooms three times, only to be told, "Mrs. Hervey... there's really nothing wrong with you!" Finally my daughter Gayle suggested I see a doctor we knew from church a few years back. This calm, unassuming man listened to my complaints of agony and said at once, "Why... that's neuropathy!" All he could do was write a prescription for pills that relieved the pain, but he also made appointments for a complete physical check-up for me. Meanwhile, chiropractors had greatly helped to relieve the compressed discs that caused most of the pain

Previous experiences with callous men who practiced medicine and called themselves doctors had left me fearful and suspicious of the entire medical profession. I now apologize. An examination by a very gentle gynecologist soon had us hearing his diagnosis... "Well, dear. If you had to have cancer, this is the easiest kind to cure, and has the highest rate of cure." Reed and I could not believe our ears! The pap smear he took had shown

nothing definite, but the quick biopsy samples he took had revealed “a few” cancer cells. Before the month was over I’d been sent to a gynecologist in Little Rock, Arkansas specializing in cancer, given an Iridium implant to kill the malignant tumor in my endometrium and given a speedy and complete hysterectomy.

Am I carved on the palms of God’s hands, or what? Reed and I had moved from our cozy little rented home to travel to Little Rock Arkansas in early October, hoping to find work there since there was none available in Texarkana that we could find. We’d stayed with friends, and had made some contacts, but no jobs came through... only two more trips to emergency rooms because of the agonizing pain in my back and abdomen. The month over and our welcome worn a bit thin, I e-mailed my daughter Gayle and her husband Joe that it looked like we’d have to come drooping home to them with our tails tucked between our legs. Of course they immediately made us welcome and prepared a comfortable bedroom, in which we remain to the time of this writing.

God had not deserted us! He knew what was ahead for us! He knew our needs. Reed was despairing of ever finding work to support us, and remarked one day when we were in Texarkana he still regretted not staying in college for a Master’s degree in professional

counseling. With his words still hanging in the air, I demanded that we drive to the local college and see about enrollment! It was a God-thing! All the right people were there for him to talk to. The doors were wide open, and God had obviously greased all the wheels for him to be accepted. One requirement was that he must have the recommendation of three reputable people who knew him well and could give a good report of him. Voila ... if you'll pardon the expression! One of these people is a very dear friend who works right there in the University of Texas A & M in Texarkana! As we stood in the hall talking to him and he gladly agreeing to give a good recommend, along comes a man who is now a professor at the college, but was also at one time a brother-in-law of Reed's! Two hearty recommendations in that first hour of enquiry!

The third came as soon as another old acquaintance had returned from his short vacation the following Monday; a professional counselor and pastor under whom Reed had taken some classes in years past! He was only too happy to give his letter of recommendation. Being a graduate student, there were no grants available, but an advance loan was quickly obtained through the college offices, and before he could blink, my 54 year old husband was a college student once more! His years of trying to be a minister in the way one would normally think of ministering had only left him frustrated and disappointed. God

has other ways of ministry besides the pulpit!

Troubled people are literally drawn to both Reed and me for counsel and prayer. How many nights we've sat up until three a.m. and later listening to young people trying to find their way in spite of the many blockades the enemy had thrown in front of them. Most did not realize the enemy was their own fleshly desires but had looked for an easy 'out' of some sort of spiritual deliverance.

CHAPTER EIGHT

Meanwhile... back at the medical clinic, a mammogram had shown something suspicious, which led to a sonogram, which led to a biopsy, which revealed a small cancerous tumor in my left breast. I was told I needed an immediate mastectomy, but we took the matter to the Lord, with the help of many friends. Might I insert here that by this time we'd found a church that thrilled our hearts... not more than ten minutes drive from the house we now shared with Gayle and Joe. My daughter and her husband also had been in ministry for many years, and their bookshelves overflowed with many interesting books, and Gayle seemed know instinctively the ones we'd most enjoy reading.

Enjoy? Make that ENJOY concerning one book in particular. It's a small paperback by James Rutz, entitled, "The Open Church". James Rutz describes a church patterned by the Holy Spirit alone... straight out of the New Testament. I went through the book over and over, and prayed, "LORD! Where can we find a church like this where we can worship You so freely?" Seemingly, no answer came... and yet on the next Sunday morning Reed and I suggested to one another that we might visit a little church in the woods not far from here, called River of Life Worship Center. It's just across a field from a good fishing lake, named Lake El Shaddai.

We had worshipped with these same people years before when they met in homes and had sweet fellowship but had seemed so disorganized. What a laugh... it's on us, not on them. Un-organized is the key word here. In seven years of having no pastor, taking up no offering, having no choir, no ushers, no 'order of service' except as the Holy Spirit directs each Sunday morning at His will... this congregation had built a sturdy metal building, furnished it with comfortable chairs, grown tremendously in love for the Lord and for mankind, and had gained the respect of pastors of other churches for many miles around!

They owed not one penny to anyone for all this. It was fully paid for by their faithful tithes and offerings. Not long after we made ourselves pretty much at home there, loved to our hearts content by the 'family' of the church, God did call forth a pastor. The humble middle-aged man who'd been known in his youth as a fierce fighter and rebel, came forth with tears to say that not only himself would be pastor of the church, but several others would also be called. Still, you'd never guess that he or anyone else had assumed the 'office' of pastor. There's never a prepared sermon except as directed to random persons the Lord selects... usually in the days before, or early morning hours before church and directs them to subjects in His Word. Amazingly, though as many as six or seven speakers may take the

microphone over the next two or three hours, each speaker, singer or pray-er has been given, by the Holy Spirit alone and unknown to one another... the same subject, to dovetail into one beautiful message from the Lord. This is the Open Church of which James Rutz wrote, though none of the members had ever read the book! They've read THE BOOK, in 1 Corinthians 14:26 where God inspired the apostle Paul to write about it in the first century of the Church.

You can buy the book, or you can simply open your Bible. God has enabled James Rutz to bring the Scriptural church to modern day life in his book. The Holy Spirit enables the Word to be brought to life where worshippers and followers will hear and obey His Voice. We believe this is the Church that is written on the palms of God's hands. Not only River of Life church, but everyone who hears and obeys God's Word and Spirit.

And again... back to my own self being carved on those marvelous hands! After much prayer, Reed voiced his opinion that a mastectomy for a tiny tumor that was nearly under my armpit would be like killing a fly with a sledge-hammer! One day the surgeon phoned and said he would be doing a 'needle biopsy' of my lymph glands and a surgical lumpectomy instead. And here I sit... a bit scarred but none the worse for wear. I have met the enemy and the enemy is cancer, and

the enemy is conquered through Jesus Christ my Lord. There will be approximately five more months of chemo-therapy followed by three months of radiation and then five years of a drug called Tamoxifen. I can't explain why God chose this path of healing for me, but I do know that the path opened up with my tripping over a tiny white stone embedded in a crack in a parking lot!

Rebecca Hervey, who'd always said she'd never have cancer in the first place, and if she did would never submit to chemotherapy, etc. etc... has been led through green pastures and beside still waters to this place of peace and assurance that God has many paths of healing. I freely confess now that at first I supposed that this cancer meant the end of my life. I almost welcomed it. I'd been near death several times in my tumultuous life and had no fear of it. Instead, I was prepared to give in to it and had made preparations, right down to writing farewell letters to my loved ones and selecting songs to be sung at the funeral.... until God gave me a vivid and memorable dream. It's now 8 a.m. and I'm tired from typing, but I'll pick up this subject in a while and tell about this dream, for which God gave Reed the interpretation.

CHAPTER NINE

It's now about twelve hours since I wrote the previous paragraph... and here we go again. Are you still with me? Here's the dream: Reed had left the house to go to classes; my daughter Gayle and some of her relatives had come and gone. I assumed that the front door had been shut and locked behind them all, so I went into the bathroom and didn't feel a need to shut that door completely since I was alone in the house. Coming out, I heard a male voice calling out, "Anyone home?" I rushed into the living room to see Bill, a distinguished-looking white-haired man whom I had seen around the neighborhood a lot lately, and even in church. He said he had something he wanted to talk with me about, so I told him to come on in. As I went to close the door behind him I was interrupted by a happy, chattering group of women I knew who had parked in my driveway and were flocking into my house! Before they all got inside, another car drove up and parked at the curb. It, too, was filled with women I seemed to recognize and was glad to see. They all trooped unbidden right past this man and into my kitchen.

About then, someone outside called for me to go someplace with them, and I called out to my guests that I'd be right back. As I returned very shortly, a dark and homely man was standing by the garage and seemed to

have pulled my car halfway out and was looking at it. He explained to me that when he was there before he'd not had his license with him and had to go back after it. Somehow he still had 'forgotten' to get his license, but told me if I would simply trust him that he did own a license he could 'go ahead and write me up'. I didn't question his right to write up a policy for me... whatever it was. I don't remember exactly what answer I gave him, but I was suddenly back in the house with all my guests, who had helped themselves to a great deal of special food I'd cooked up for a big occasion. They were having a party, eating everything I had prepared, and with great gusto!

The man called Bill had been pushed to the wall at the back of the kitchen, and I apologetically asked if he still wanted to talk with me. When he answered that he did, I noticed that he was much smaller than at first, and far less attractive to look at... even a bit soiled in appearance. And with that I woke up and told the dream to Reed.

Immediately my husband knew that this distinguished-looking man represented death. As we talked the dream over, it became clear to us both that the homely man (probably named 'Cancer') outside had been trying to convince me that he had license to 'write me up' for a policy that would end my life. Both he and death were representatives of the deceiver, satan. They were just about to con

me into receiving what they had to offer, but were pushed aside by the laughing, hungry women devouring my 'food'.

The food I have to offer women is, in addition to my 'hands-on ministry', the little books that I write and distribute as we are able to print them out in our computer and staple them together. The books glorify Jesus. They also give encouragement to live according to His plan, and to live life to the fullest extent possible. My stories illustrate that no matter how errant a person may be; his or her Creator has a Master Plan for that life and will walk us through to His best conclusion. One of my little books contains poems inspired by my love for the Lord Jesus Christ. More 'food' that I have to give is the gift of song, and the songs God has given me to sing ever since He healed and made me able to sing more than thirty years ago. I also love to send encouragement and prayers to those in need of such through e-mail.

The realization of all this brought me to repentance of planning to die this very year. I had already written farewell letters to my loved ones, planned the songs for my funeral and how I'd like my body to be clothed. I was willing to allow cancer to take my life without even putting up a fight! Now I know that the battle I have to fight is to simply have the will to live. My entire outlook has changed. No longer are there any funeral plans... the letters

have been torn to bits and burned outside on a bonfire of leaves and twigs.

My Father knows I have need of awakenings such as this, and I am ever so grateful to Him. Is there any doubt that I am carved upon the palms of His hands?

The end



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