

TAPE DICTATED BY TOM MENDIES IN JULY, 1986 TO THE TMI TEAM 8647

My mother was a Catholic, my father was a Baptist, and as this mixed marriage was performed in the Catholic church, my father had to give a written understanding that every child of his should become a Catholic. Without this they could not get married. It was the law of the Catholic church in those days so my father signed this pledge.

I was brought up as a Catholic and I became a fanatic to the Virgin Mary, a real fanatic, worse than the fanatics of Nepal who don't know God and Jesus. I knew (about God and Jesus) and yet I was a fanatic to the Virgin Mary. I did not know Christ, I knew the Virgin Mary.

So fanatic was I that one time a close friend of mine put me in a very difficult position; he had me go to court with a non-¹ case. I couldn't get out of it. I vowed to the Virgin Mary, "Please, Mother Mary, help me and forgive me and get me out of this mess. I will walk on my knees in the broad daylight in the streets of Calcutta and give thee worship for saving me."

I did just that. I got the case cancelled and annulled, not knowing who did it for me and thinking only that the Virgin Mary did it for me. I went on my knees in the broad daylight in the streets of Calcutta (worshipping Mary) to fulfill that vow. How sad that is. I can see it now. How sad that is. I did not know better.

Then the Lord got hold of me and showed me otherwise in a most miraculous way.

I had lived all my life as a fanatic to Mary and he brought me out.

I was a major in the Second World War and after the war the Lord touched me and gradually I lost my attachment to Mary. In 1947 there was the partition of India, the independence of India, and I went to East Pakistan, now Bangladesh. There I got a chance (in business) because all my classmates were in the ministry of East Pakistan. The chief minister was a fast friend of mine, a classmate, and I could get lots of things sanctioned through him. I rose in business like a rocket. I did very well but yet the Lord's hand would not let me go. He touched me and showed me in a miraculous way that what I was doing was wrong.

I fell in love with a girl. She was a Methodist, I was a Catholic. We became very close to each other and then we lived together as husband and wife. Finally I said to her, "I don't think this is right. I think we should get married." She agreed. I said, "All right. We'll get married but it has to be in my church, the Catholic church." She said, "No, I will never marry other than in my church, the Methodist church." So I said, "I can't do that. If I marry you in your church I will be excommunicated from my church." She said, "I can't marry you in that case." So I wondered what would be the result.

We lived on like we were for some time until the end of 1948. I had a beautiful flat, fully air conditioned, with everything. I even had a car. Everything was for her. I spent more than a month with her in Calcutta over Christmas and then I went back to Dacca. I was then in Dacca, East Pakistan.

¹ ??? always means the tape was indistinct to my American ears and I decided it best not to guess

The moment I arrived in Dacca at the airport something spoke to me and said, "Go back and see her." Now I thought to myself how ridiculous this was. I was just coming from her. But again I heard, "Go back and see her." Well I went home and this intuition kept hitting me, "Go back and see her. Don't delay." I got weary of it and took the phone and rang the airport and asked if there were a plane back to Calcutta. They said, "You are in luck. The plane that was to go fifteen minutes ago has been delayed for two hours." I said, "All right, book me on." They said, "You've just come from there." I said, "Don't worry, just book me on."

I went back to Calcutta that night. When I arrived at my flat the whole area was in darkness, a power failure, and as I was going up the stairs I met my next door neighbor and I asked her, "Where's Vicky?" She said, "She's not here. She's gone to the movies." I said "Movies? Blackout?" She said, "No, no, no. We have got movie theaters that have their own generators so they don't depend on the government power." So I said, "That's really incredible."

I didn't have the car because she had taken the car so I got a cab and went for a nice long drive and then went out for dinner. I arrived back home at 11 o'clock at night. I saw the lights all burning inside but evidently she did not know that I had come back. It was quite possible that my next door neighbor did not tell her. I tapped on the door but no answer. I banged a little harder, no answer. I banged a little harder. I was getting excited. I knew she was inside. The lights were all on and there was no lock on the outside door. I kept banging, thinking she might be in the toilet, and then suddenly I became very nervous. I don't know why. I walked around by the balcony that went around by my bedroom window. The bedroom window was opened and I pushed the curtain aside and saw there what no man should see. (I'm sure you will all understand what I mean.)

I became like a madman. I wanted to break the door down and commit murder. Suddenly in a flash I could see my name in the newspapers. "Tom Mendies, wanted for murder." I literally ran from there. I went out into the streets of Calcutta and prayed to God and walked about like a madman till the early hours of the morning. The police inspector who was on his rounds saw me walking about in the fields there. He did not know it was me. He came closer and when he saw it was me he put his arm around me and said, "Tom, what is the matter? You look like you have committed a crime. Tell me. I'm the Inspector. I'll help you." And he talked to me and took me and put me in his jeep and begged me to open up to him. "It will not go against you," he said, "because you are my classmate. I will try to help you. Tell me."

When he said that, I opened up, "Don't worry. I did nothing wrong. Don't worry." I just kept repeating that and so he asked what happened. I explained it to him and he said, "Thank God, nothing really bad has happened. Come with me." He took me to his station and we had tea together.

Then he said, "All right. I'll send my constable now." I said, "No, now that I have spoken to you, I am myself again. I have control over myself again." So I stayed the night there with him and the next morning I went back to my flat.

The door was opened. She saw me and she screeched thinking I would beat her up. Most Asian men beat their women but not me. I never struck a woman in my life and I never did then. I went in and told her, "All this is mine, the car and everything and you know it but I will leave it all to you. I don't want to see this or you ever again. If he's the better man you have

him.” I walked off. I had lost control of myself. I went back to Dacca to try to divert my mind by focusing on my business. But I couldn’t. My business started going down.

I left and came back to Calcutta and I wandered around. I didn’t know where to stay but after a while I found I could stay in the Salvation Army’s Men’s Industrial Home. There many people who had difficulties like me could come and rest. There I heard for the first time in my life the message of Christ. I hadn’t heard it before even though I was a Catholic. I thought I was a child of God because I was Catholic. There I learned about His grace. I listened when I was laying there in the bed. Downstairs would be the prayer meetings, morning and evening, and I would listen in my bed. There they showed me who Christ was.

One day I was walking down a street called ??? in Calcutta and heard music, a band playing. I got inquisitive and went to listen to find out what the music was about. I walked inside and there was a Salvation Army band playing hymns and singing. I went inside quietly and sat at the back. My wife of today, Captain McDowell of the Salvation Army in Calcutta, was doing the service. I looked at her and she looked at me. Our eyes met. In that moment the Lord spoke to me. “That’s the woman for you.” Can you believe that? Yes, that was it.

She used to come to the door after the service to shake hands with everybody but that day before she could get to the door I was out. But a “magnet” drew me back every Thursday evening to that service.

One Thursday evening I noticed that she was not there. On inquiry, I found that she was very ill in hospital. I was again drawn as if by a magnet to the hospital and after that we began to know each other.

She finished her time in Calcutta and went back home but while she was in Calcutta I became great friends with her and her two roommates, two American ladies also with the Salvation Army. For their birthdays I used to give them the same presents, no difference, so they couldn’t say one got better than the other. They all truly influenced my life.

Then one day these three ladies asked, “Why don’t you come with us to the Youth For Christ meeting this evening? They have very good services there. Won’t you come along with us?”

I went. This was in 1949. Hubert Mitchell, the founder of Youth For Christ work in India was giving the message that day and when he gave the altar call I walked to the mercy seat and accepted Christ as my Lord and Savior.

Not long after that the Lord opened the way for me to come to Nepal. I started the first hotel in Nepal. I had to walk over the mountains to come here. My coming to the Lord was in October 1949 and in June 1951 the Lord opened the way for me to come here.

There were no roads, no transportation, no airplanes, no nothing in Nepal. However, I came. I was offered a palace in Kathmandu for the hotel. The owner of it gave it to me to run as a hotel and asked me not to mention him to anybody. I had to run it all on my own without his aid.

² Ibid.

Before I came to Nepal I had read a book about an American business man who gave 90% of his profits to the Lord. That book was entitled, God Runs My Business. The Lord prospered him on his 10% and made him a multi-millionaire and he gave 90% to the work of the Lord around the world. After I read that book, I knelt down and prayed, "Lord, have mercy upon me and forgive me. I am a miser. I wish to offer you a partnership in my business but as a miser please forgive me. I offer you 50% of my profits for you to become a partner with me like you were with Mr. Robert.G. LeTourneau the American industrialist who invented the road building equipment."

The first night that I was in Nepal I was so frustrated with life that I felt like running away. Even though I had been given the use of the palace, I had no resources at all. However, I said to myself, "I can but fail. That's all. I'm going to have a go at it."

Then I prayed to the Lord to show me what to do, how I should get on about my business, how I should get known. Eventually an idea struck me. I should get somebody to give a party and I should cater it. The person who gives the party should invite everybody, from the King on down. The idea seemed a good one so I scouted around Kathmandu looking for this person.

There again the Lord's hand was with me and held me. I met a newspaper reporter and we got to talking and he asked me who I was and where I came from and so I told him what I was going to do. He said, "Very good idea." So I said, "I would like to find someone to give a party." "Yes, the right man," he said. "I know a man who wants to give a party and he is not doing it because there is no caterer and no place. If you can go and convince him he will give you the contract." So he gave me the man's address and I went to him and the result was that the Lord inspired this man to give me the contract. He asked me, "I'd like to know what experience you have. I don't know you and I don't know your capabilities. I'm going to invite the King and his ministers and everybody, about 500 people." I looked him in the eye and told him frankly, "I have no experience, but it is in my blood. Hoteling and restaurants are done by my family." Because of that frank reply he was convinced and he gave me the contract. "Please don't fail me because I will be in difficulty," he said.

On the final day he came to me again and said, "Make sure all is OK because I have invited everybody from the King on down. You will feed about 500 people." It was a buffet dinner and the party went off without a hitch except for one accident. One of my waiters bumped into one of the guests and dropped a platter full of rice. The platter broke and he was frozen with fear. I went quickly up to him and put my arm around him and said, "Don't worry. Go and get more rice and tell the sweeper to come and clean this up." Within minutes they finished clearing and after that it all went on wonderfully well. So well that the King asked the host for the name of the caterer and then sent for me.

That's what I had been praying for. I thanked God and I went. The King, King Tribhuvan, asked me, "Who are you? Where have you come from? Why have you come here?" I said, "Your Majesty, it is a great day for me when you send for me and ask who I am, where I have come from and why I have come here. I have come here, Your Majesty, to run a first class hotel so that you and your government might enjoy good foreign exchange but last but not least because every laborer is worthy of his hire.... I look after my pocket." He laughed and thumped me on the back. "Thank you for looking after your pocket," he said.

After that it was easy. I started giving out invitations and people accepted. I got known and known and more known. But getting known is one thing and doing business is another. The Lord brought me here to get started and he prospered me. He established me miraculously and gave me contacts with all the important people of the country from the King on down but I knew without communication with the outside world no hotel could survive in this land.

I got the first airline to come and operate in Nepal but it was not easy to get the permit. The minister who had the authority to give me the permit was a right hand man to the King. He was very frank with me. "I will give you the permit provided I get a 25% cut of the profit."

I persuaded an American gentleman, an engineer by the name of J.P. Mott and an Australian gentleman, a pilot by the name of Eddie Quin and the Maharajah of Jamnagar a financier to operate an airline in Nepal. The name of the airline was JAM Airlines because of the Maharajah of Jamnagar. I brought that company here to operate in Nepal and they made a big profit on one aircraft every weekend. This supplied them with a profit of more than 80000 rupees after all expenses. This was a gold mine for them.

They asked me what did I want for my share of the check. I wanted nothing as a share. I just wanted the whole crew and everybody to stay in my hotel at the concession rate, at a fixed rate, and for them to bring in my equipment. They helped me to really get my hotel fixed up by bringing in everything quickly. It went on and with their help, with their staying in my hotel, I managed to survive.

1956 came. That was the year of the coronation of the King of Nepal, Mahendra, the present King's father. I thought that was my silver lining because the whole world was invited. All the big dignitaries, heads of different countries were invited to come to that coronation and I knew that after that our country would be known outside Nepal and people would come, the tourists would come. 1956 was a boom year for me. 1956 was also the year I would marry my wife. That was also a miracle, how I married her.

I must tell you how I got married to my wife, the one that the Lord showed me and said, "That's the woman for you." We had become quite friendly before she finished her term in Calcutta. When she was going back home I proposed to her but she said, "No. I can't give you an answer now. I have to go home first and visit my mother and make up my mind. She left in 1953 and by 1956 I could not take the strain of being alone any more. I was old then. I was 50 years old when I got married. I wrote and asked her to marry me once again.

She had a friend of hers who was coming to India on an assignment to one of the schools in India and both of them were very great friends. I knew them both. They took this matter before the Lord in prayer and prayed, "Father, if you wish that Elizabeth should marry Tom, grant that we may travel on the same boat together on our trip to India."

Now that's a tall order. She didn't consult me, she consulted Him.

I had made arrangements with my agent to arrange for her to come to India and then to Nepal to marry me. One week before the departure of her friend she got my letter and my agent's letter advising her about her ticket. She had not yet sent word to me about whether she would marry me or not. However, they had prayed so after reading that letter they went to the agent

to pick up the ticket for the trip to India and Nepal. Both of them went and the surprising thing was they were on the same boat from New York to Liverpool!

She didn't have time to answer me. She made arrangements to leave for England immediately. Her friend asked her, "What about the ship from Liverpool to India?" Elizabeth said, "It's all right. If the Lord can do this, He can do the same in England."

I married her on the 25th of February in India in a mission church in ??? not far from ???. We arrived in Nepal on the 26th of February, 1956. It was a boom year. She thought it was wonderful. But in 1957 everything changed. The business went right down.

For six months there was not a single guest in my hotel. All the expenses and no guests for six months. I couldn't take it. I said, "Honey, I made a mistake. I'm a failure. I have to close my business tomorrow, but before I do, I'm going to speak to my Partner. What He says, I will do." She accepted and I got down on my knees and prayed and then she knew who my Partner was. "Father," I said, "You know I have nobody. I am alone in the world. I know I have You. I offered You my partnership and I believe You accepted it. As my Partner show me what I should do. Give me one guest today and I will know it is your answer to keep the hotel open. If I don't get a guest today then I know your answer is that I should close."

After the prayer I got up and about 4 o'clock in the evening I went to meet the plane. I met the plane but there were no tourists. I came home with a heavy heart and said to my wife, "I got the answer. I'll close tomorrow. I'll send you back to Canada. I'll launch out somewhere else and if I make good, I'll bring you back." She accepted.

We were quiet and around 7 PM we were in our big dining hall. There was not a single guest. We were just about to have our supper. As I was picking up my soup spoon the answer that I looked for at the airport came from over the mountain. Not one but two guests. I asked for one but He gave me two and from the most impossible place. Two young American ladies had trekked over the mountains and come to the hotel. I cried for joy. "The hotel is yours," I said.

From that time on He sent more and more visitors. The guests started rolling in. The house started getting more and more full. He prospered me. Many people in this world, when they do well, forget God. I was no exception. I backslid and fell. Yet He had mercy on me. He prospered and established me.

One day I had a guest from New Zealand. The Lord spoke to me to ask him if he was a missionary. I didn't do it. Then the last day when he was leaving he came to pay his bill and the Lord spoke to me again to ask him if he was a missionary. I said, "Excuse me sir, but I have just been led to ask if you are a missionary." "Yes," he said, "I'm with Youth For Christ." I felt so happy. I said, "Thank you sir, and I will tell you that it was at a Youth For Christ meeting that I came to find the Lord." I called for his bill and I gave him a 50% discount because of my promise to the Lord that I would give 50% of my profits to Him. The balance of the 50% I gave back to him for the Lord's work in Youth For Christ in India. Then I said, "Now I can call you by name for you are my brother. Ray, I came to the Lord in a Youth For Christ meeting and now I'm being led to try to open a Youth For Christ work here in Nepal. Please help me."

Then he said, "Right now I'm going back but I'll think it out and write to you." So he went back but I couldn't wait. It had been more than a month and I couldn't wait anymore so I wrote and

said, "You must show me what to do. I'm not a missionary, I'm a business man but still I can work for the Lord." He wrote back and said, "Get hold of the different pastors in your area, form a committee and start."

I formed a committee and we started. I sent a wire for the first meeting and he came for the first day. It was not easy because the hierarchy in this land was against Christian work in Nepal. However the hierarchy were my friends, not because of myself, but I know the Lord did that. I put a notice in the papers about our first Youth For Christ meeting. I had phone calls from the ministry. "What's all this about?" "Come and see," I said. "I have nothing to hide. I'm having a Christian fellowship and a Christian service in my hotel. If there is anything wrong about it please let me know. Come and see for yourself and make a decision."

As far as I know they didn't come but a couple dressed in Japanese clothing, whether real Japanese or not, I do not know, did come and sat in the front row. They stayed for the whole service from beginning to end. After the service I went upstairs to see to the catering for the coffee and tea for the guests who had come to the service and when I returned I asked my wife about the Japanese couple. We looked and still today we don't know what happened to them. Maybe they were there just because they wanted to know what it was all about. That was the beginning of Youth For Christ work in Nepal

I heard there was a musical singing team coming from America to work with Youth For Christ in India. I wrote to the Youth For Christ authorities in India and said, "Please send them to Nepal. We will use them." They agreed. They wrote and asked what they were to do and what did we have in mind. I replied, "We are going to have an open air meeting for them so the public will know about Christ."

We had three months to get the permit to have this open air meeting. I dared not have a meeting without permission. The team came. Three months had gone by without permission even though the commissioner whose place it was to grant it was my fast friend. So fast a friend was he that he dared not say no to me and yet at the same time he dared not say yes because of his position. However, the team had arrived.

The first thing the team leader asked me was, "Have you got the permission?" I said, "Don't worry, you will have the meeting. You will sing and pray and give the message." They had arrived on Tuesday and the open air meeting was scheduled for Saturday. Saturday is a holiday in Nepal. Up to Saturday I did not have the permit.

I went to my friends house Saturday morning to catch him and take the permit from him. His wife told me that he had gone to another place. This place was near my hotel. I went to this house and asked for him and they said he had just gone back home to have his lunch. "Are you sure?" I asked. "I'm just coming from his home." They assured me that he had gone home. In those days there was no telephone so I drove back to his house and I kept the car outside in case he might see the car and know it was me and hide himself.

I walked into his house and as I walked in he was coming from the wash tap from washing his hands for lunch. I said, "Now I'm not letting you go. I'm getting that permit from you." He said, "All right. You go and wait for me at the police station." "I'll wait for you here and go with you," I said. "How's that?" "No," he said, "you go. Believe me, I will come."

I believed him and he came. He was very anxious to drive my car. It was a brand new automatic, one of the few of its kind in Nepal so I gave him the key and he said, "Now we have to go and see the Commander-in-Chief from whom we should get the permit. Then I will give the government permit but there is a snag. The law says I should censor the meeting before I can give the permit." I didn't know what answer to give but suddenly the answer came, "Very easy," I said. "While we are having it you censor it. If there is anything wrong, you stop it." He couldn't say no. I got the permit.

This was at 1 o'clock. At 2 o'clock we were to have the meeting. In the 9th hour the Lord gave me the permit, the 9th hour.

I had made pre-arrangements to advertise the open air meeting but I had not been able to hand out the leaflets without the permit. I hadn't been able to advertise on the radio either because I didn't have the permit. I got my drivers to go then and throw the leaflets out on the streets of Kathmandu. More than 1000 people came, 99% of them non-Christians, to listen to the Word. Praise the Lord! A Roman Catholic priest, Father Moran, came to me and said, "Wonderful Wonderful. This was a wonderful thing done by the Lord."

That was the first open air meeting in Nepal. From then on the Lord made a way for his work in Nepal. The Lord used me to start a vacation Bible school for the little children. We held it during ???, the big festival time when all the Hindu people go and worship. It is a big festival, like our Christmas. We wanted those children to come to a Christian worship rather than go there. We were trying to get these children away from their pagan gods.

The Lord prospered this. The first year we had about 150 children, a good size for a beginning. Then the next year we had 300 children, the next 400 children.

I thought I would hand over this work to the Lord's worker since I was but a business man, not an ordained minister, or pastor, or missionary. I arranged to have a regular worker from Youth For Christ. I handed the work over to him and to the committee. The devil worked hard to blast this and he succeeded, I'm sorry to say. Youth For Christ work is no more in Nepal for reasons we know but our heart is too stricken to say, however someday I hope it will restart again.

Now I must also tell you how the Lord used me with regard to this work here at "The Haven". It was the Lord who started this work. He gave me a dream while I was in the hospital in 1960 having an operation for my eye. In the dream, I dreamt that a train load of orphan children were coming from different hill schools of India with their principals to be given to different homes for the holidays. I said to my wife, "Honey, lets go and take them in." We went with the hotel bus, met the train and the children, put our arms around them and took them in. then my dream broke up. I tried my best to find out the meaning of the dream while I was in the hospital. I prayed and asked the Lord to show me its meaning. I came back home to my hotel without knowing the answer. But then suddenly, when I was alone by myself, I heard a voice from behind me saying, "That dream." I looked around and there was nobody there. I was sitting in my rocking chair. I got a bit scared at first and then again I started concentrating and praying and again I heard a voice, "That dream. Start now."

³ Ibid.

I jumped up and said to my wife, "Honey, I've got it." She said, "What?" I said, "That dream. He just spoke to me and said, "Start right now." So right now we started. We picked up two boys from the streets who were in sack cloth and ashes. It was winter time and they were cold. They had no other clothing but sack cloth and ashes. It took 4 or 5 baths to clean them and we kept them with us. That was the start and from then on the Lord sent children to us one after another. That is how the work started at "The Haven" and it is still going on. Praise the Lord.

You from Teen Missions have had a hand in it by coming here and working and showing the children who your Lord and Savior is. I'm sure that your example will be a blessing to them and they will understand and realize who the Lord Jesus is.

Before I came here to Nepal there were no Christian workers here but slowly, slowly, doors were opened and people came and the work started. But at the same time along with the work, the devil worked hard to fight against it. Some people in the government took it upon themselves to hinder the work and even now they are hindering the work. The Lord's work continues however. The people of Nepal are accepting Christ and many have become staunch in Christ and are even willing to be taken into custody and persecuted by the authorities. We keep on praying for them that His name might be glorified through them. The devil also works putting jealousy among the workers of the Lord to hinder the work. There is now much jealousy and disunity among the workers so I pray and call on you all to pray that there be unity among the Lord's workers in Nepal so that there may be one worker, Christ, and one work, His work, in Nepal.