Touching the Invisible 2

I was just a child, about 10 years old, and we were a large family in a small house. Dad had built the house with skill and grit and there was no mortgage. He worked on the house on weekends and long into the evening after work, paying for everything as he went.

We were very proud of him and of the small house, comprised of one adequate bedroom for mom and dad and a kitchen, dining room and living room. The back porch was screened in and served as a laundry room and another bedroom. We were stacked here and there, with three sisters, two half brothers and a half sister, plus an assortment of dogs, always a family necessity.

Our oldest half-brother escaped the confusion buy enlisting in the army, leaving just the 8 of us. Yet, by comparison to family size today, we did not know that we were poor, or overcrowded. We made do.

My bed was the couch in the living room, which was not an inconvenience at all. It gave me a place to read, sleep and, listen to the huge old radio, with its familiar adventures of The Lone Ranger, The Cisco Kid, Sky King, and a host of other popular fare.

We were Christians. Dad had pastored several churches, but was for that period of time, working for the school district. We raise much of our own food with a garden, an adequate supply of chickens, rabbits, a cow and several goats. The barn that Dad had also built was adequate for storage of animal feed, a variety of tools, supplies and enough misc. nuts, bolts, screws and other items to keep us from trips to the hardware store. It also gave ol’ Bessy shelter from the sun and rain.

The church we attended was just down the street a half block from the house, and we were there at least 8 days a week and 25 hours on Sunday. OK, I exaggerate a little, but not by much. We were involved. Dad was always there with his ever-present guitar and we sang. We sang at church, at home and often in other churches. Everyone in the family took music lessons and played something, and usually more than something. I started with an accordion, then the piano, then later in junior high school, took on the band, playing whatever needed playing.

But back to 10 years old, which is where my adventure into the invisible started. I did not know, until much later in life, that some people, even most people, did not feel God with them. That was something that I assumed was common, for since an early age, I had a sense that God was with me. Yes, part of that was the environment of our family, for we had daily devotions, prayer and of course church attendance. But there was something else. Although I had been taught that God was everywhere, I also felt and believed that He was with me, available to my needs, to my fellowship and to my conversations.

Yes, I talked with God, telling him stuff, things, you know, just keeping in touch about life. And I believed that He heard me and was present with me. But there was one occasion that stood out as different from a casual assumption of God’s abiding presence.

I was laying in bed, covers pulled up to my chest and starting to drift of to sleep, when a bright ball of brilliant light appeared in the room. It was about the size of a softball but grew to almost basketball size. It is difficult to describe, for it was the most brilliant white light I had ever seen. It spun, as though it was a miniature sun, yet not the color of the sun, but clear pure white. It suspended in the middle of the room for maybe 15-20 seconds, and then it vanished. In an instant it simply disappeared.

Although Mom & Dad were in their bedroom, with the door closed, just off of the living room, Mom came rushing into the room, astonished. “What was that,” she asked. I had no explanation, but became aware, as did Mom, of a sweet and pungent aroma, of roses, or of some unknown flower, that permeated the room. It was similarly indescribable, for it was more fragrant that any flower I had ever smelled. This aroma lingered for more than half an hour. Mom sat on the couch with me and we just sat silent, sensing a powerful sense of the presence of God. Tears flowed. I could not stop them. There was nothing spoken, nothing to be said. It was as though words or movement were inappropriate.

We talk about it later in the morning but there was no frame of reference or cultural history that gave definition to the phenomenon. What we did know for certain, was that God had, for some unknown reason, paid a visit to us.

I shall never forget that night, and I have no explanation for the event. But I am absolutely certain that I had, for one moment in time, stepped into the invisible world of spiritual reality and that it had forever altered my perception. God is real. He is transcendent and powerful beyond any description or sermon or any physical reality we know. God is!

I often remember the words of Moses as he met God on the mountain and he asked God to define himself and to give him a name. God simply said, “I AM!” Yes, I understand that. And in that simple statement is the explanation of everything. All questions are answered, all dilemmas are resolved, all of history is explained, all creation verified.

Somewhere, slightly out of our natural sight, yet existent in all time and in all space and in all matter, is the invisible, yet obvious presence of the eternal creator God. All is well.