

# TESTIMONIES

"Always be prepared to make a defense to any one who calls you to account for the hope that is in you..."

I Peter 3:15

**SOME WORDS FROM ONES WHO WORSHIP AT BROADMAN**



**BILL STOCKDALE** (born 1947) I was raised in a typical American family setting in the 1950's & 60's. My family did not attend church nor did they adhere to any religion. My brothers and I were taught that religion was OK but it was a private matter. We never attended church. On one occasion my aunt took me to Sunday School. It was Palm Sunday. I was about 7 years old. We made Palm Trees on craft paper. Other than weddings and funerals this was the extent of my church experience until I became an adult. I lived a good life up to the age of 30. I was married to a wonderful wife. We had our own home and good jobs. Yet something was missing from my life. My wife was a member of a Lutheran Church which she attended regularly. She invited me many times but I always made excuses not to go along. I began to search for a way to fill what was missing in my life. I tried self help books first. Then I got into astrology and finally studied reincarnation. But none of these were the answer. I knew that thousands of people went to church each week but really didn't understand why. I had heard some preaching by people like Billy Graham. I guess I always believed that there was a God who created us but never knew much about Him. At times I would get depressed and really not know what to do. I had been to doctors and was accustomed to taking tranquilizers for what they called nervousness.

One night as I went to bed very depressed I prayed to God. I said, "God I don't know if you are real or not but I've tried everything else so now I'm going to try you. I turn my life over to you to do with what you will." Then in tears I fell asleep. I did not fully realize what I had done that night. I knew nothing about Christianity, conversion, or salvation. I started feeling much better after that night not realizing why. I told no one what I had done not even my wife. I got an urge to read the Bible. I had tried previously but soon quit in discouragement because I couldn't understand it. I made myself a promise that I would read two chapters everyday until I had read the whole bible. About a year and half later I was reading in the book of Proverbs. I was awestruck by this book. It touched my heart so much that I read most of it in tears! At the same time we had hired a new employee where I worked. He was a mature Christian and began to tutor me in the bible. I finally understood what it is to be a Christian. My life was changed forever thanks to God and his wonderful gift of Jesus! Over the years I've come to learn that our relationship with God is one that grows as we work at it. God has provided us with this gift of salvation. All we have to do is receive it. He wants us to grow in fellowship with Him. He filled that void in my heart nearly 21 years ago [1988]. Now I have the "peace that surpasses all understanding" within me!

