



Treasures Among Us

Joy Chambers

Joy Chambers and her husband, Butch, were both born in St. Louis but attended high school in Vienna, Missouri. She grew up in a family of seven children (she is the oldest) near Vienna—her brother, Terry Parker, was the youngest child in the family.

Her dad was a public service driver in St. Louis until he had a heart attack and couldn't drive anymore, so they returned to the family farm at Vienna. Joy didn't like the farm because she worked helping her dad all the time. One of her tasks was milking cows. When they put up hay, they would have the team behind the barn to pull the ropes, raising the bales to the barn loft where her dad stacked them.

The family sometimes went into Vienna to her grandmother's house. They would make ice cream and sit on blankets until after dark. The kids would inevitably fall asleep, then have to get up to go home. She had to open all the gates on the way home, and it was pretty scary opening them in the dark!

Her dad had a big lake built on the farm, and they all learned to water ski on the lake. While the rest of the family enjoyed skiing and boating, her dad grilled hamburgers and had an ice chest full of soft drinks for anyone who was hungry or thirsty.

Her dad donated land for the first Church of Christ building in Vienna. Years later, they had been to Sunday evening services. When they got home, he keeled over from a massive heart attack and died.

When she finished high school, she wanted to be a nurse, but her dad didn't think that was a good occupation. He suggested she go to Warrensburg to the teachers college, but she didn't want to be a teacher. Her first job was at the Farmers' Extension Service in Vienna. Her dad was friends with Governor Blair, so she went to work in the state office building in Jefferson City. She and Butch were dating by then, and he got tired of going to Jeff City all the time and asked her to marry him.

Butch grew up in Vichy, Missouri, where his family had Chambers Store. He was a couple of years ahead of her in high school in Vienna, so she didn't really know him until he came home from the military. She continued working in Jeff City for two years while Butch was working for Missouri Conservation. After they married on April 13, 1949, Butch continued working for Conservation; and they lived in a small house in Vichy behind his parents' store. Later they moved to the St. Louis area. Butch worked for Monsanto Silicon Co., and Joy worked at McDonnell-Douglas for quality engineering for 8-9 years.

One interesting job she had was at Fort Leonard Wood in the 1950's. Her office was in the Post Headquarters, and she worked for a captain who was promoted to colonel. Her job was to interview officers going to Korea, then interview them again when they returned. Any officer up to the level of general would come to her office for the interview to keep records up to date.

Joy has a son (George), a daughter (Yvonne Edwards), 10 grandchildren and 13 great-grandchildren. Their son worked for Boeing Aircraft in St. Louis. Their daughter did live in Rolla and is a St. James school nurse (RN). She also worked part time at the hospital in Rolla.

When Joy's children grew up, she fulfilled her dream of being a nurse by going to O'Fallon College. She first got a degree in art, then was accepted into nursing school.

Even though she was older than the typical nursing student, the Dean of Nursing approved her for the program.

She and her four sisters used to get together in the summers, and they had great times together. Branson was a favorite destination, but they traveled to other locations as well, including Nashville. One of her brothers-in-law worked for an airline and could have gotten them cheap tickets to fly anywhere they wanted to go. One sister, however, just refused to fly at all; so they were only able to take trips within driving distance. Two of her sisters are now deceased, and poor health prevents the remaining three from traveling as much now.

For several years, she and Butch wintered in Arizona from November to April. In earlier years, they traveled extensively and toured Europe. Butch's sister's husband was over the oil platforms in that part of the world. They explored the fjords of Norway and toured London, France, Italy, and other countries. They planned to travel in the US after they retired, but declining health kept them closer to their home.

After Butch retired from Monsanto, they moved to the Lake of the Ozarks. They bought a condo, then wound up building a new home, a process that was "a nightmare!" Her last nursing job was at Clear Point, a drug and alcohol rehab facility in the Lake of the Ozarks area. It was an expensive rehab site, and quite a few celebrities were treated there. She is bound by privacy laws and cannot reveal who she saw there. She enjoyed her nursing career; but when computers came on the scene, she got very frustrated and decided it was time for her to retire.

While at the lake, Joy worked making cookies and helping with the summer Bible school. She also helped with the maintenance of the Church of Christ at the Lake. Brother Bill Stanley was a wonderful preacher there. The church later closed for lack of members to keep it going in the winters. Since the passing of her husband, she has volunteered as snack lady for Day School.

While they were at the lake, Butch was diagnosed with cancer. In 1999, they moved to Rolla. Thirteen years after his cancer, Butch had a spot on his lung, and half his lung was removed. She lost her beloved Butch in 2013, when he died unexpectedly from a blood clot.

One of her hobbies is painting, and she paints beautifully; several of her paintings grace her home. One unusual painting she did is on a large ostrich egg, which was given

to her. She has also collected figurines, most of which have been given to her.

Butch always respected her brother, Terry Parker. Terry was deeply concerned for Butch's spiritual condition; and for years, he frequently asked Joy if she had talked to Butch yet. She tried often, but he would always end the discussion. In January, 2012, Terry was nearing the end of his battle with pancreatic cancer. A few weeks earlier, he fell out of a tree stand while hunting and broke his leg. On the night of Josh and Kayla Adams' wedding, he asked Butch, "When are you going to be baptized?" Butch said, "How about tonight?" So the two couples went to the church building. Terry's wife, Barbara, wrapped his casted leg in trash bags and duct tape to keep the cast dry so that he could baptize Butch. It was such a joyous occasion for the entire family. About a week later, Terry passed away.

Joy is a Treasure Among Us who now volunteers at Day School and is actively involved with the Christian widows who live in her apartment complex. She lives up to her name and is a joy to spend time with.

NOTE: *This is the 22nd in a series highlighting noble Christian women in our congregation. We truly have many "treasures among us" in the women who exemplify Christianity in all its facets and have much to teach us all.*



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Nuriene Eroma
The Philippines

Where we are right now, I believe is the will of the Almighty. One week after our wedding, my husband left me in Zamboanga for Manila to find a job there. One week later, he notified me by telephone that he was in Cebu City and was already working as managing editor of Philippine Christian Chronicle, the national newspaper of the churches of Christ in the country. He said that while in Manila, he was offered work in the ministry. Because it was his prayer, he grabbed it without question. One week later he sent me a plane ticket to Cebu, so I left my home town (Zamboanga City) with only a bag of my clothes.

Since 2000, I have been away from my siblings and my hometown. After two years, we left Cebu to another island in the country for mission work while he continued working as the editor of the paper online. After a year, we returned to Cebu City for another mission work. I

thought we could then settle in a permanent place in the city, but I was wrong because we have moved to different places in the city nine times in 15 years. I believe we will continue moving, depending on the ministry work. As a woman, I long for a permanent dominion; but since I married a worker, I can only follow him, just as Sarah followed Abraham wherever he went. When we arrived in Cebu, there was nothing new with the culture of the people because basically we share the same culture. The only amazing thing with the culture in Cebu is that they are devotees of Senor Santo Niño (Baby Jesus). Cebu celebrates the feast of their patron every third Sunday of January. It is the mother of all festivals in the Philippines. During the celebration, millions of people flock to the city causing traffic jams in all streets, affecting even non-Catholic people going to their own churches. This is because Cebu is the seat of Catholics in the country. It is the place where Ferdinand Magellan of Spain landed in 1521, spreading Catholicism throughout the country from Cebu City. Now it is difficult to spread the true gospel to the people because they believe Catholicism, because of its antiquity, is the only true religion.

As a preacher's wife, it's my duty to support my husband's work. When I have opportunity, I share the gospel with people close to me. In fact, two of my nieces and three of my friends were baptized. My part to share the message is to do the introductory part, and my husband does the rest. At times I go with the group to find prospects by knocking doors from house to house. My only regret is that I was not able to share the message with my mother before she died.

In the beginning, being the wife of a Bible teacher/preacher was very difficult because I was not trained to be a missionary's wife. I did not even expect that I could marry a Christian because I grew up as a Muslim. It was not my dream to marry a preacher because when I met my husband, he was a teacher in our university. I did not know that he was the founder of a campus ministry and involved in a very active Christian movement on the campus. He did not disclose the real him in the beginning, but I gradually got to know him months after I accepted him as my boyfriend.

After two years, we decided to get married. I thought marriage was like a fairy tale where there is, "happily ever after;" but it was not because we had big disagreements with culture and religion. He is very outgoing, and I was not. I did not like people, especially men, because I was trained not to talk with men as mandated by Allah. Things got very bad between us because he used to bring preachers with him to dine with us at home.

In the beginning, there were moments when I wanted to go home and be separated from my husband because I could not understand the Christian culture. But my husband was patient enough to understand my attitude. After one year, I started to have a Bible study with his co-worker. I began to understand the message of salvation; so after several sessions of Bible study, I accepted the Lord with joy in my heart and tears in my eyes. Again things did not change overnight, but my husband was very patient and helped me grow. His efforts were not futile because I have become very active in the ministry being supportive to him and taking a lead with the ladies. My culture nowadays is the opposite of my previous culture. I now love to have Christians and preachers come to our house for fellowship. I have become very outgoing to everyone.

Being the wife of a minister is not difficult if you are prepared mentally and spiritually. I would tell ladies who are planning to marry ministers to prepare themselves with prayers. In the Philippines, to tell you honestly, ministers are not financially well off. Before you decide to marry him, make sure that you have already conditioned your mind not be enticed with material possessions and that you live by faith and not by the things you see around you, especially material things. You may have money, but it should be spent wisely. A preacher's wife must of course develop herself spiritually because people look at you as an example. There are instances when my husband and I have arguments; but whenever we are in the church, I have learned to set aside whatever problems I have. I need to project a positive outlook in the church to protect my husband's integrity. When you become positive in the church, things will become positive even when you go home because whatever arguments we have are settled easily. A preacher's wife should be strong spiritually, or she becomes a liability instead of an asset for her husband's ministry. One more thing, the wife should not demand more time with her husband because he needs to use more time with other people. That is his business.

Everything to me is a surprise, but the biggest surprise in my life was when I learned the true message of God, when I obeyed my Savior through baptism. When I was still a believer of Allah, I was already prayerful, and one of my prayers was that God would give me a God-fearing man. Truly, He gave me the right husband, and to me that is a surprise.

There are many programs of the church here involving women, such as our ladies class and ladies fellowship, which I am involved with. I always make sure that I can participate. We also have visitations and devotionals for our personal edification in the houses of different women. During our devotionals, we are given

opportunities to teach. What we do is rewarding and edifying. I also find time to talk with preachers' wives here to encourage them to be strong when they have problems, especially financial problems, which is common to local workers here. Connecting with them is easy because most of the ministers here were my husband's students in the Bible school. Recently, we visited two of his former students in their congregations more than 30 miles from our place. He talked to the husbands, and I talked to the wives one by one. Our efforts are fruitful because they are very thankful for our visit. My husband still connects with his former students to teach them about life. In the University where my husband works, I also assist him in his advocacy to feed unfortunate children. He has been doing that almost every Saturday and Sunday after our church activities. There are a lot of works here; we are only limited by time and resources.

The most challenging thing about living where we are now is being away from family. In the beginning it was very difficult. The difficulty gradually eased when we grew close with the members of the church. The most challenging thing is when we have emergencies because we have no one to turn to. Members are busy in their own works and lives, and our families are away from us. But somehow we learned to manage any predicaments with the help of God. We have learned to be strong and independent. We have neighbors, but culture in the urban areas is that neighbors do not know each other; they only care about their own business. My husband is different because he always finds time to talk to neighbors. We are still less than a year in our place, but he already knows the life of people here.

Living away from our family members has some benefits because we have become so close and excited to see each other. I may not be able to share the gospel with them due to distance. However, knowing that I have become a Christian may have a great impact on them. I hope that God will yet give me the courage and opportunity to share the gospel with them.

Our life is full of challenges, yet rewarding. The most rewarding thing we have is intangible. We feel so blessed to have the opportunity to work in the kingdom of God and to partner with you. Words are not enough to tell you how grateful we are for your help. Knowing that there are people who are willing to help, even though we have not seen each other, is more than encouragement to us here. I pray that our God will continue to bless our efforts.

NOTE: This is the 4th in a series about women in the mission field. Ruel and Nuriene Eroma are partially supported by Rolla Church of Christ.

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30 Books of the Bible Puzzle

There are 30 books of the Bible hidden in this paragraph. Can you find them? It's a most remarkable puzzle; my friend worked on it during a flight from Los Angeles to Honolulu, keeping himself occupied for hours. He passed it on to the rest of us, including one guy who used to do puzzles in his john boat while he fished. Another friend studied it while playing his banjo; Ellen Gray, a writer, mentioned it in a newspaper column. According to a local paper, the Chronicle, some Alpha Delta Phi lemonade booth set a new fundraising record when they featured this puzzle at an event. One friend of mine judges this puzzle to be such a tough job that before she starts working on it, she brews a cup of tea to steady her nerves. There are a few easy ones, for a fact. Some of them, however, may leave you in a jam, especially since the book names are not necessarily capitalized. The Truth is, from answers I've received, I have to admit it usually takes a minister or a scholar to see some of them, at the worst. I suppose something in our genes is responsible for blinding people to where some of those are. As my friend Daniel Humana humbly remarked, "They're all hidden in plain sight!" I've heard plenty of lamentations from people who simply can't find them all. One helpful revelation is that some books, like Timothy and Samuel, may occur without their numbers. Also, punctuation and spaces in the middle of a name are normal. A chipper attitude will help you compete really well against those who claim to know the answers. Don't make a disgusted exodus from the project; I assure you there really are 30 books of the Bible lurking somewhere in this paragraph.

The answers to the puzzle will be in next month's issue-

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Sunrise is a monthly newsletter written and/or assembled by Kathy Webber and Evelyn Waite, members of the Rolla Church of Christ. If you would like your sisters in Christ or your relatives, friends, co-workers or neighbors to receive it, you can share your copy with them. If they would like to receive it, please send their email addresses to evelynwa@fidmail.com. *Sunrise* may also be accessed by going to <http://www.seekgrowserve.org>. Once there, click on Resources, then on Sunrise Newsletter. You will find the current issue plus all previous issues.

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