

THE ISLES ARE SINGING

Chapter 4

THE DOUBTS ARE SETTLED

For God so loved the world,
that he gave his only begotten Son,
that whosoever believeth in him should not perish,
but have everlasting life.
John 3:16

One of my favorite choruses when I was a little child was

Jesus loves the little ones like me, me, me,
Jesus loves the little ones like me, me, me,
Little ones like me sat upon His knee,
Jesus loves the little ones like me, me, me.

Why would Jesus ever love the little ones like me? I was such a naughty little girl – mean and hateful to my older sister; disobedient to my parents, often willfully; speaking unkind words and thinking unkind thoughts; letting unrestrained temper control my words and actions. What would make a little girl like me throw a stone at a little boy and injure him?

In spite of my wickedness, I was assured by everything I learned from my parents, Sunday school teachers, and pastors that Jesus loved me. Not only was I taught that Jesus loved me, I was taught that the wages of sin is death and I would some day face God's judgment for my sin. However, God loved me so much that He gave His Son to die on the cross of Calvary and bear the punishment that I deserved. As a five-year-old child, with a heart full of sorrow, I repented of my sin and received Jesus Christ as my personal Saviour. I do not remember the exact day: but I do remember the event, Vacation Bible School, and the year, 1950.

Now that this disobedient child was saved, she would be sweet and submissive, right? Oh, that it were so! I found, however, that my old nature would rise up in sheep's clothing and tempt me to do that which the new nature did not want to do. How sad I felt when I went astray! I tried so hard. Why couldn't I be good? Maybe I wasn't really saved. Oftentimes during my childhood years, when it got to the point where my sin overwhelmed me, I would kneel by my bed and, resolving to do better, would cry out to God to save me again. Things would improve for a while after that, but then I would give in to another temptation, and another, and another, until I repeated the cry for mercy and for salvation.

During my teen years, due to the trauma of our family's move to New York state where we found the culture to be somewhat different from New England, I became very withdrawn and melancholy. Throughout my high school years, though outwardly I tried to be a good Christian, inwardly I was very miserable.

In my last year of high school, I was introduced to Bob Jones University in Greenville, South Carolina, and was accepted as a student there. I struggled through my first year, having many doubts as to whether I really wanted to be there or not. Toward the end of the year,

however, the preaching of God's word brought conviction of sin; and conviction of sin brought me to my knees seeking God's forgiveness.

I still struggled with doubts, however, until my third year of college. As I helped minister in child evangelism, one question that plagued me was "How can I help these young children find assurance of salvation if I am not sure of my own salvation?" My merciful Lord, knowing the desire of my heart to find assurance, sent a guest speaker to one of the Bible conferences on campus, who preached on John 3:16. The answer to my deepest need had been in my head and in my hand all these years since I was a small child, and I didn't even know it. The preacher emphasized that this verse is a statement of fact. It is a fact that God loved the world. It is a fact that He gave His only begotten Son. It is a fact that everyone who believes in Him will never perish, but WILL have everlasting life. The verse does not say that I can suppose I have everlasting life, nor perhaps, nor maybe, nor guess so, nor any other word of doubt. What peace and joy flooded my soul as those truths reached deep into my soul. Yes, I had believed on Jesus Christ as a little girl. My salvation is secure. It is everlasting. Glory I'm saved! It's real. It's real. Praise God! The doubts are settled, and I know, I know it's real!

Did I never sin anymore after that? How nice it would be if that were the case! But, no, the old nature is still with me. From then on I was confident, however, that sin couldn't take away my salvation. I didn't need to be saved again, but fellowship with God and with Jesus Christ needed to be restored through confession of sin. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. (1 John 1:9) My God is faithful and my God is just. He keeps His promises and grants forgiveness and cleansing. Hallelujah, what a Saviour!