



## A Miracle on Wheels

By Edwina Neely

*God is able to do exceedingly abundantly above all we ask or think. Ephesians 3:20 (NCV)*



My husband, Bill, accepted God's call to ministry, and we were at Andrews University in Berrien Springs, Michigan. I have a master's degree in Speech Pathologist and Audiology so I was planning to work while Bill was in school. To my amazement and disappointment, I was informed that Michigan state licensing was different from Virginia, where I had lived before. To qualify for a job in Michigan, I would have to take more courses. In my heart I knew God had a plan, and I began looking for other work. I decided to check on a substitute teaching job and was able to get several positions, sub the entire semester and get full-time pay. When one position ended I would get a call for another long-term position. I was content getting my "PHT" -- putting hubby through. I was thankful and knew God would supply our needs.

Money was tight and winter was right around the corner. Our old car had 230,000 miles on it and was showing its age. The heater had stopped working, and we had to wrap our three children in blankets to keep them warm during the long, cold Michigan winters. The defroster was broken too, and while my husband drove, I scraped ice off the windows so he could see the road. We did not go out much, but we faithfully attended Wednesday night prayer meeting and church service each week. Even though the church was 40 miles away, my husband faithfully fulfilled his pastoral duties. However, we were genuinely concerned about the children getting too cold.

My husband prayed for a "new" car asking God for enough time and money to fix up this old car to make it like "new." He planned to go to the junkyard to find parts to mend the dilapidated ceiling, and the broken heater, defroster and other items. Nearly a year passed with no time or money in sight.

God had faithfully provided me with jobs every year, but this summer I had no job. Fortunately, during summer break Bill got a job at a nuclear power plant. I was thankful, but very uneasy about his exposure to so much radiation every day. Bill had applied earlier for a job at the Census Bureau. While he was at the plant, they called our home with a job offer. I excitedly called him about the offer thinking it would be a healthier alternative: fresh air and sunshine. Bill didn't share in my excitement. Instead he preferred to keep his job at the power plant. I gave him the phone number and ended the call by saying sweetly, "I think you should take it."

Bill told me he dialed the number, planning to tell them he would not take the job. (Now I have to tell you this was in the days of the rotary dial phones). In disbelief Bill reported to me that each time he dialed a number he could hear my voice saying, "I think you should take it, I think you should take it," seven times as the phone dial rotated. So, when the person answered the phone, Bill said, "I think I'll take it." To his amazement he said those words when he had planned to tell them, "No."

He did take the Census job, and one sunny day he went to a house located on a 200-acre fruit farm. He knocked on the door and Mrs. T, an elderly woman with blue eyes that sparkled as she smiled, opened the door. It was a hot day and she so graciously invited him in for a drink of lemonade. During their short discourse he learned she was a widow and she and her daughter lived on the farm. He shared with her that he was a seminary student at Andrew University.

She had migrant workers on the farm living in small houses on the property. She explained that he'd have to go and talk to the foreman for an accurate count of the migrant workers on the farm. When he returned, the lady and her daughter had placed a bushel of apples and a quarter bushel of tomatoes in his car. He was so grateful for the kind gesture. As he was about to depart, she invited him to come back and bring me and the children. Her generosity showed through when she told the foreman to give us permission to come to the farm anytime and get apples, plums, and cherries. We went to visit many times. Bill played the piano, and we'd sing songs and pray with her. Often as we left, she'd hand me an envelope with some money in it. We were so grateful!

Time passed and the crisp fall started to roll in again. The car still had not been repaired.

One evening Mrs. T called and asked us to come over. We loaded up the children, and when we arrived she told us to pile into her car. She drove us through the fruit orchards toward a car dealer's lot. Once there, she pointed to a brand-new Buick LaSabre. She told us she had the dealer leave it open so we could get inside. The plush seats felt so good. Then she reached into her purse and pulled out a certified check. She said, "I don't like the color of the car, but if you like it, it is yours. We didn't waste any time accepting it."

Bill came back the next day to get the car and she paid for the tax, tags and title, and as he walked to the car she handed him a blank check and said "Take this to your insurance agent and write in enough for a year." The car dealer was so amazed as Bill walked towards the car he said, "This must have been an answer to prayer!" Then he continued, and said, "I put a lot of gas in the car so you can ride a while!"

When we remembered my husband's prayer, we thought God must have chuckled to hear it, because he had something far better in mind for us all along. God had a brand-new car for us.

I am so amazed when I think about how God orchestrated each part of this experience. We didn't dream of asking for a brand-new car. God is able to do exceeding, abundantly, above all we can ask or think. May I always remember that God can do more than I can imagine.