

# *Sentinel Points in My Life*

PART 5

## THE 5 MEN WHO SHAPED MY LIFE



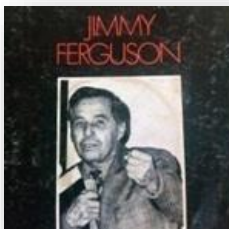
Rev. Rod Cole-Edwardes



Rev. Ernest Elmes



Rev. Murdo Gordon



Jimmy Ferguson



Bishop Stephen Bradley

## INTRODUCTION

*"The people who influence us most are not those who buttonhole us and talk to us, but those who live their lives like the stars in heaven and the lilies in the field; perfectly, simply and unaffectedly. These are the lives that mould us."*

**Oswald Chambers**

Here are the five men whom God used to mould and shape my life and ministry.

- **Rev. Rod Cole-Edwardes – A man with a burning heart**
- **Rev. Ernest Elmes – An extraordinary layman with a wartime mindset**
- **Rev. Murdo Gordon – A man with a deep love for expository preaching and books**
- **Jimmy Ferguson – A man with a passion for Missions**
- **Bishop Stephen Bradley – An humble man who modelled Servant Leadership**

One of the most incredible examples of how we can influence the lives of others is that of the Explorer, **Henry Morton Stanley**. This is his testimony of how, as an atheist, was won to Christ through the example of the life of **David Livingstone**. Read his moving testimony:

"In 1871 I went to him a prejudiced as the biggest atheist in London. To a reporter and correspondent such as I, who had only to deal with wars and mass meetings and political gatherings, sentimental matters were entirely out of my province. But, there came for me a long time for reflection. I was out there away from a worldly world. I saw this solitary old man there, and asked myself, 'How on earth does he stop here – is he cracked, or what?' What is it that inspired him? For months, after we met I simply found myself listening to him, wondering at the old man carrying out all that was said in the Bible. 'Leave all things and follow me.' But, little by little his sympathy for others became contagious; my sympathy was aroused; seeing his piety, his gentleness, his zeal, his earnestness, and how he went quietly about his business. I was converted by him although he had not tried to do it'. (Dawn, December 16, 1929).

In a small way, the following five men went before me, set me the example, which I now seek to try to follow. God sent them to shape and mold my life. I owe everything to them.

Enjoy the read ... and remember

**"The passion of the church and every follower of Christ should be that all peoples have an opportunity to hear, understand and respond to the Gospel - J. Rankin**



## 1. ROD COLE-EDWARDES

One of the most moving stories I have ever read is that of JOHN PATON, describing what it meant to say goodbye to his Dad when he left home to study. This is what he said:

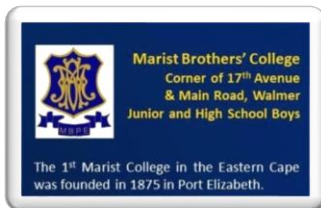
**"It is no Pharisaism, but deep gratitude, which makes me here testify that the memory of that scene not only helped, by God's grace, to keep me pure from prevailing sins, but also stimulated me in all my studies, that I may not fall short of his hopes, and in all my Christian duties, that I might faithfully follow his shining example".**

**David Livingstone** wrote the following in his diary concerning his father:

**"He deserved my lasting gratitude and homage for presenting to me from infancy with a continuously consistent example. I revere his memory."**

This is how I feel about my Dad ... I revere his memory ... and long to follow his example.

Looking back, I was given the perfect start to life from my dear Mum and Dad. I remember such happy times with my Dad. For a short time, we lived in Port Elizabeth



where I attended Marist Brothers College for my Primary School education. My Dad was the chairman of the Cricket Club and Captain of the 1<sup>st</sup> team, which meant our whole weekend was spent at the Club. I would tag along with my hero, watch him bowl and bat and I was so proud of my Dad.



We relocated to Boksburg where I attended Christian Brothers College for my High School years. Here I enjoyed one of my greatest joys, playing 1<sup>st</sup> League Cricket for CBC Old Boys where my Dad would bat third and I fourth. Wow ... what glorious days they were.

At the same time, my Dad was the Men's Tennis Champion and my Mom the Ladies Champion at the Club.



During the week, he would sell Cash Registers for N.C.R. and was always the top salesman ... my hero was the best!



Then in the sovereign will of God, I was converted in 1967 and my tears flowed as I longed for my Dad to be saved. The Lord graciously helped me to lead my precious Dad to Christ and ... it was radical. No more sport on Sundays, we all went to Church, things were totally transformed. My Dad now began to grow in the Lord, which was a miracle to witness. It then happened that at that point that we moved down to Cape Town and here the Lord had such amazing things in store for my Dad. The position of Administrator came available at our Church, so after much prayer, he applied and got the position. This meant a huge sacrifice, a massive drop in salary and he had to cash in his Pension ... but he did it, singing

**“All to Jesus I surrender, all to Him I freely give”.**

Two years later, to the amazement of all his old sporting friends, he was ordained as a mature candidate and together with my Mom, went up to St. Stephens in Rosentenville, Johannesburg to enjoy twelve years of an incredible ministry, where hundreds were converted. But, in the midst of all this there was a huge sadness – my sister died, she was his princess. One of the hardest memories I have was holding my Mom and Dad in my arms as they wept before God. At Bev's memorial service, my Dad preached one of his greatest sermons, but sadly, in some ways, he never fully recovered. He nevertheless was an Evangelist right to the end, a man with a burning heart, reaching out to souls for Christ, until he went home to be with his Lord and ... Bev ... I then had the task to take his memorial service and preach the sermon on my Dad, my hero, the man who shaped my life. The verse I preached on was:

**“I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith, now there is in store for me the crown of righteousness.”**

Looking back, there were three huge lessons my Dad gave me:

**(i) TOTAL COMMITMENT TO JESUS**

For my Dad, it was all or nothing! Jesus had shed His blood on the Cross and now demanded we lay down everything for Him.

**(ii) LOSING A CHILD**

Thirty years later, I was to hold my son's hand as he slowly slipped into Eternity and went to be with Jesus ... and to my Dad ... and Bev... I often looked back to my Dad; how he had coped with losing his daughter. I also often read the Puritan, Octavius Winslow, he wrote this, an article often quoted by my Dad:

“We are composed of varied emotions, which are inspired and called into play by different objects. And until the finer feelings of our nature have been trained in sorrow, interlaced and edged with suffering, our own humanity is but partially understood. We are unequal in the task of educating and moulding others, until we ourselves have been educated and moulded in the school of human sensibility, which is the school of suffering, the school of sympathy.

There is a depth of agony and loneliness in the sorrow of bereavement into the secrecy of which only the bereaved can enter. It touches the finest and most hidden springs of the soul. It lies fathoms deep and seldom passes the lips. The crushed affections – the annihilated hopes – the severed ties of friendship – the grave entombing life's charm, attraction and sweetness, - quenching the sunbeam that illumined the dreary wilderness. But, oh, to know that Jesus can enter into its sorrow, is touched with the feeling of this grief and is prepared to accompany us is a solace no language can describe. When death enters and sunders the domestic link and fills the home with mourning and the heart with woe, Jesus comes and makes grace abound, giving submission to the will, peace to the mind and consolation to the heart.

The sigh that bursts in secret from my heart is not secret to Him; the tears that are my meat day and night, drop unperceived, and unknown, are perceived and known by Him. Though now exalted at the right hand of power, where he has wiped away all tears from

all faces, yet He himself, still retains the feelings and the character of the 'Man of sorrows and of one well acquainted with grief'. Help me Lord, in such a way to look up to you and remember you.

### (iii) LOVE FOR US, HIS FAMILY

Growing up, we were my Dad's life, and my Mom his queen. He gave us everything he had, and gave us the most loving, perfect home into which we could live and fly.

He loved C.S. Lewis and often quoted the following:

"Give up yourself, and you will find your real self. Lose your life and you will save it. Submit to death, the death of your ambitions and favourite wishes every day and the death of your whole body in the end. Submit with every fibre of your being, and you will find eternal life. Keep back nothing. Nothing that you have not given away will be really yours. Nothing in you that has not died will ever be raised from the dead. Look for yourself, and you will find in the long run only hatred, loneliness, despair, rage, and decay. BUT look for Christ and you will find Him, and with Him everything else thrown in".



My Dad, my hero, truly shaped my life from an early age and today I am so grateful to God for giving me the most wonderful Dad who taught me:

- To put Jesus first ... give up yourself ... live recklessly
- How to cope with losing a child
- How to love your family

Today, I have his Bible next to my desk ... totally worn through!

## 2. ERNEST ELMES

In 1970 on my return from Rhodes University, I received a call ..."Good morning Warwick this is Ernest Elmes. I want you to start teaching Sunday School on Sunday ..."



That was fifty years ago, and Ernest Elmes was sent into my life to mould and shape me for ministry in Africa, building on the foundation laid by my Dad. I began to teach Standard three boys that Sunday, Ernest ran the Sunday School and his wife, Joyce played the piano, his daughter Mary taught the Pre-Primary. After church each Sunday, they invited me to lunch for a lovely roast dinner, and so I was ushered into this incredible family.

Later in 1974, I married Mary, Ernest's precious daughter. After we were married, he would phone his *princess* every Sunday evening and this he did for the next forty years ... it was beautiful to witness. He was an exceptional man.

Born and bred in Cape Town, he enjoyed a loving family upbringing and their home in Hatfield Street still stands today. Ernest attended SACS (South African College Schools) - SACS is the oldest high school in South Africa, founded in September 1829. It is arguably the most magnificent setting at the



foot of Table Mountain and Devils peak. Ernest also found great joy in playing for the SACS cricket team. He then volunteered and joined the Air Force where he served all over the world and he loved to tell us how while he was in Rome, the Pope blessed him ...

He loved his Air Force days and never got tired of relating his many wartime stories. After the war, his faith in Christ began to grow wonderfully and he embarked on his legal career, working alongside his father in the family Law firm. He married Joyce and together they enjoyed a fantastic marriage for over 60 years. The Lord blessed them with Mary and Mark. Mark took over the family business and amazingly, his son, Justin has now joined him as well.



The Elmes' home in Cape Town became a centre for Christian meetings. They ran a Bible Study for over twenty years and many Christian leaders looked back to that Bible Study as their grounding in the faith. Ernest worked under Dr. Louw Alberts and soon he became the chairman of Youth for Christ and an Elder in his Church. He was an exceptional layman, passionate for the Gospel and for bringing people to Christ. [John Piper](#) wrote the following:



“Desire that your life count for something great, long for your life to have eternal significance. Want this ... don't count your life without a passion.”

The Lord sent this amazing man to mould my life and these are some of the lessons he taught me, the most wonderfully father-in-law anyone could ever dream of having.

#### (i) AN EXTRAORDINARY LAYMAN

He ran one of the most successful legal firms in the country where all the Christians in the Western Cape would “go to Ernest” when in need. But, this paid the bills so that he could give him life to serving the Lord Jesus Christ.

- When I met him he was the Chairman of Youth for Christ
- An elder in the Mowbray Presbyterian Church
- The superintendent of the largest Sunday School in the Western Cape
- Ran a weekly Bible Study in their home
- The Chancellor of the Church of England in South Africa.

How he managed to do all the above is beyond me, he was the most extraordinary layman I had ever seen, with a heart to reach the lost.

#### (ii) LOVED PREACHING FROM THE OLD TESTAMENT

I would be invited to spend some weekends at the Elmes' home and every Saturday night up to mid-night, his old typewriter would be going flat out, typing out his sermon for Sunday. He became known across Cape Town as a wonderful preacher of the Old Testament, he loved preaching through the Prophets. Soon he became Bishop Frank Retief's assistant and was ordained into the Church of England ministry. People loved his sermons on the Old Testament characters especially, and the sermons were never longer than twenty minutes.



### (iii) LIVED A SIMPLE LIFESTYLE

Above his involvement in so many Christian activities and his preaching around Cape Town, there was the example of his life, which has left an indelible mark on my life. From his successful legal business, he could quite easily have lived in Constantia in Cape Town, sent Mary and Mark to private schools, driven a BMW ... but no, he chose to live a simple, humble lifestyle. We once wanted to buy him a nice watch, but no, he wore the same watch, which was repaired repeatedly. He had bought the watch when he joined the Air Force at the beginning of the Second World War in 1939. His last car was a second-hand Toyota Taz that my son Gregg got when Ernest went to be with the Lord. Material things did not matter to him, he lived with a "war time" mentality ... and this I greatly admired, and in my life, I seek to emulate this. BUT, then ...he had to have a hip replacement and while in hospital, his wife Joyce phoned us to say that she had received an account from the Municipality charging them for electricity ... Ernest did absolutely everything for Joyce. She must have been the most looked after woman in the world, totally oblivious to the demands of life ... not even knowing that she had to pay for electricity! Ernest looked after her; and he saw to everything ... everything ...

### (iv) HE PAID FOR ALL MY STUDIES

I was left speechless and overwhelmed by this amazing man. He paid for my studies at the Bible Institute, and later at London University, and when I studied for my Masters and Doctorate from the U.S.A. ... Ernest Elmes paid for it all. Never ever will I be able to express adequately my gratitude to him. Over these past forty years, he followed my ministry closely, and became my greatest encouragement. He followed my every move with great interest, which I think brought him much joy.

The Lord sent my Dad to teach me what it means to be a man with a burning heart, totally sold out to serving Jesus. Then the Lord sent Ernest Elmes to show me what it means to live a simple life style, with a war time mentality, pouring out your life for others and his family and paying for me to be trained for ministry into Africa, not being governed by materialism but using your money for the Kingdom. Ernest Elmes shaped my life and, although inadequate, Mary and I have followed his outstanding example.

[John Piper](#) summarized this perfectly when he wrote the following:

"I am wired by nature to love the same toys that the world loves. I start to fit in. I start to love what others love. I start to call earth 'home'. Before you know it, I am calling luxuries 'needs' and using my money just the ways unbelievers do. I begin to forget the war. I don't think much about people perishing. Missions and unreached people drop out of my mind. I stop dreaming about the xxx of grace. I sink into a secular mindset that looks first to what man can do, not what God can do. It is a terrible sickness. And I thank God for those who have forced me again and again towards a wartime mind set."



Ernest Elmes truly forced me again and again towards a wartime mindset and a precious treasure I have is his Bible ... worn through ...

### 3. REV. MURDO GORDON

1971 – 1974 were four of the greatest years of my life when I studied at The Bible Institute of South Africa in Kalk Bay. Throughout these years, Rev. Murdo was my mentor, lecturer, model and my Principal, whom God used to further shape my life.



*"In the concluding years of his life he was, as it appeared to me, obviously ripening for heaven, He had fought a good fight, he had finished his course. He had kept the faith. So that at the last his genuine humility before God, his joy in Christ Jesus, his holy zeal for the diffusion of the Gospel, his tender affection to his family and all around him, his resignation to the will of the Heavenly Father, and his exclusive trust in the merits of grace of his Saviour, seem to be little more to be done but for the stroke of death to bring him to his grave in full age, like as a shock of corn cometh in its sheaf".*

He was born at Lonfern in the Isle of Skye on 19 December 1924. The benefits of a Christian home were his and he was raised on the Short Catechism. Many of his students will remember how he could quote the Catechism from memory.

In 1944, he came to faith in Christ through the ministry of Pastor H.G. Goddard of the Cranford Baptist Church. In 1945, convictions of a call to the ministry continued to develop and he became one of the first students of the London Bible College. He was much indebted to the teaching of Dr. Earnest Kevan and the ministry of Dr. Martyn Lloyd Jones.



***This is a photo of Murdo with Dr. Lloyd-Jones taken in Dorset in the late 1950's.***

Murdo loved the Doctrines of Grace and Puritan Theology, but he could never be called a 'party man'. His love for Scripture never allowed him to become enslaved to a particular Creed or Confession.

He pastored churches in England for ten years before coming to South Africa as the Principal of the Bible Institute in 1960. He held this position until his retirement in 1981. He was an outstanding systematic theologian, yet had a great pastoral heart. Though he was the principal of a theological college, he was a pastor and counsellor to many of his students. He had a wonderful preaching gift, and many benefited from his vast reading and from his deep insight and knowledge of Scriptures. Many students will remember his lectures on the Doctrine of God, that often ended with the singing of an appropriate hymn.

In his later years, he pastored St. Mark's Church Plumstead and was loved and respected by his people. Despite his physical limitations, he was a prolific visitor and a wonderful pastor, a great example to many in the ministry today. The effects of his ministry can be seen throughout South Africa and in many other countries. Though handicapped by muscular dystrophy, he never complained, and his godly witness shone through to many in the medical profession.

His funeral was held at the Fish Hoek Baptist Church on 8 January 1993. It was a service where one was given clear evidence of the comfort and grace of God.





During my four years at The Bible Institute, I had the privilege of being the Head Student for two of those years, which meant that I spent time with Rev. Gordon, at least once a week in his office. They were such precious times for me and this is what he taught me about becoming a pastor:

- (i) **His PREACHING** lectures taught me that verse by verse expository sermons was the best way to ground your people. He of course, had seen this in the ministry of Dr. Lloyd-Jones and now he was passing it on to me. As I preached verse by verse from Genesis to Revelation, it was thanks to Rev. Gordon, my mentor. 
- (ii) **His love of the DOCTRINE OF GOD** – Grounded in the Puritans our lectures in Theology would often end in prayer and in the singing of a hymn, they were deeply moving and stirring.
- (iii) **His love of BOOKS.** His study walls were lined with books from the floor to the ceiling. He devoured books like no one else I have known and often during our one on one meetings he would say – “here is a great book, read it ... he got me going. Those who have seen my office will attest that in a small way, I have emulated what I learned from him. 
- (iv) **His example while going through tough times.** Physically he struggled with muscular dystrophy and then tragically lost his young son. What a witness he was to us students ... and little did I know that one day I would try to follow his example with the death of Jon.
- (v) **KMBC** – when I was feeling the need to open a Bible College, the KwaZulu-Natal Missionary and Bible College (formerly Trinity Academy) in 1986, I turned to the one man who could help me. Murdo would fly up from Cape Town once a term for a year, and spend a weekend with me as we dreamed KMBC into being. We put the Curriculum together and structured it on the lines of B.I., in many ways it was a second Bible Institute, he was so inspirational, a man who walked with God and shaped my life. I thank God for Rev. Murdo Gordon, and today a lot of my life is shaped on his example. Over these past forty years, I have tried to expound every book of the Bible, verse by verse, as he taught me. If you visit my “hut” at home office you will see the walls lined with books ... just like Murdo ... one of my heroes, a man God sent to mold my life.

After his death, his wife Margaret wrote, ***‘Murdo has left a gap – but it is more a legacy.’ Those who knew him will want to use that legacy to spur them on....***  
this is certainly true for me.

Hudson Taylor, the famous missionary who started the China Inland Mission, said this of **William Burns**:

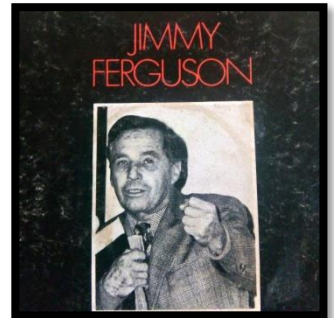
“William Burns is better to me than a College course with all its advantages, because right here in China is lived out before me all that I long to be as a missionary.”



**Murdo was my William Burns ... BETTER TO ME THAN A College Course!**

#### **4. JIMMY FERGUSON**

After my studies at the Bible Institute, I was given the incredible joy and privilege of serving the East Claremont Congregational Church for three wonderful years. It was there that I came to know the most amazing man ... Uncle Jimmy Ferguson.



Youth for Christ started in Cape Town South Africa in 1946. The YFC Training Centre was established in 1980 in Hekpoort Valley as a memorial to the late Jimmy Ferguson, who was one of YFC's pioneers.

**Dr. Louw Alberts**, the President of Youth for Christ, said the following about Uncle Jimmy:

“For some thirty years, I had the privilege of knowing Jimmy Ferguson, one of South Africa’s greatest sons. He often stayed in our home and, as in the case of the many other homes he shared, he was loved by the whole family. Children were always drawn to him because of his genuine affection.

It is not too difficult to describe such a single-minded person in a few sentences. Physically tough, a fine sense of humour, untidy from dishevelled clothing to crammed suitcase, but oh, what a compassion for lost people and a totally honest devotion to God. One could sense it whether he was nailing a Gospel placard against a tree, or groaning in prayer to God. In terms of talents he was what most people would regard as average, but, because of his total availability to the Gospel of Christ, God used those talents to the point of letting him add several pages to the Christian history of two continents. Such a privilege befalls only a few.”

Jimmy was a co-founder of Youth for Christ in Southern Africa. Pioneering new ground for Christ completely filled his horizon. The millions of young people needing to hear the Gospel was always the dominant topic of his conversation both with men and with God. After eighteen years of pioneering work in Southern Africa. And, by then as a grandfather, he went as a missionary to South America where he gave a further ten years. By then, living on borrowed time, he came back to South Africa to give his final years to the emerging black

youth before dying of a heart attack on 11 April 1978. His close friend, **Des Riley**, said this of him:

"To work and live with Jimmy Ferguson for any length of time is to experience something of the spirit that permeated the activities of the disciples in the Acts of the Apostles. His vision was not limited by man's possibilities but defined by God's certainties, which for him were assured by sustained, close encounters with the Lord he served unreservedly. He had the determination and confidence of a prophet of old who, having received his commission from the Lord, let nothing stand in his way in effecting its implementation. His driving determination very often made him a man in whose presence one felt uncomfortable, if one's life tended to be self-centred and spiritually unproductive. His zeal was a permanent challenge to action for all who knew him."

During the years that I was so privileged to get to know this incredible missionary, who was sold out for Jesus, I especially remember these two incidents:

I. Together with Des Riley, one day I went to Cape Town Airport to fetch Uncle Jimmy who was returning home from a rest from South America. **He was completely exhausted, unable to walk**; he had totally given everything to bringing the Gospel to South America. As I assisted him, literally carrying him, I was deeply moved ... here was a man who gave his all to missions and I said to myself "I want to be a missionary and burn out for God like Uncle Jimmy."

II. Later I became the rector of Holy Trinity Church in Pietermaritzburg where I was to serve for thirty years. Uncle Jimmy, who had returned permanently from South America by then, was passing through KZN and stayed in our home for a weekend, literally a few days before his death. Wow ... seeing his driving determination, his compassion, and his total abandonment to the will of God, left a lasting mark on my life. Way back then, the need to be a missionary was planted by Uncle Jimmy. Today, by God's grace I serve as a missionary to Africa, following in the footsteps of a man who shaped my life and gave me a passion for missions. I thank God for Uncle Jimmy Ferguson. As **James Stewart** wrote:

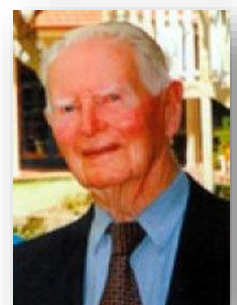
"I shall never be satisfied until I am in Africa with a Bible in my pocket."

As **Robert Kalley** once prayed, I pray

"Lord, Thou knowest all my weakness, my folly, my sin, my utter insufficiency. But here I am, oh, do Thou take me, make me what Thou wilt, send me where Thou pleasest, do with me what Thou seest fit, only let me feel Thou are with me."

## 5. BISHOP STEPHEN BRADLEY

The Lord had sent these amazing men into my life, to mold and shape me into what I was to become. Rev. Murdo Gordon taught me how to preach expository sermons, verse by verse together with a love for good books. Jimmy Ferguson modelled a life of a missionary before me;



planting a seed that one day would blossom into me becoming a missionary to Africa. But, I needed another crucial lesson for life – how to be a servant leader, and to teach me this lesson, God sent Bishop Stephen Bradley into my life. By any standard, Stephen Bradley was a remarkable man who left an indelible mark on the Church of England in Southern Africa.

Born in Egypt in 1909 where both his parents were pioneer missionaries, he was educated in Australia and worked as a Jackeroo, a position that required physical and mental stability as well as resilience of the first order.

Subsequently and after much soul searching, he became a Christian and was ordained in the Church of England in Australia. In 1936, he and his young wife moved to Durban, South Africa, at the suggestion of Archbishop Mowll of Sydney, to assist the Church of England in South African which church was facing great difficulties.



On arrival in Durban, he found himself Rector of Christ Church Addington and superintendent of the numerous Zulu churches. All of these were struggling and to make matters worse, Stephen Bradley was thought to be far too young for his position. At this point, his Jackeroo training came to the rescue and quite soon, he found himself in great demand treating cattle.

After the Second World War had broken out in 1939, the Bradley's agreed that Joyce should return to while Stephen remained in South Africa for the time being. In due course, he joined the Australian army and fought in the New Guinea campaign against the Japanese. He was seriously wounded by shrapnel and contracted malaria.

After the war, the Bradley's returned to South Africa ministering to churches in Cape Town and later in the Transvaal. He was consecrated by Bishop GFB Morris, previously Bishop in North Africa, as an assistant Bishop and subsequently elected presiding Bishop of the Church of England in South Africa. As such, he contributed significantly to the growth of the church, not only in South Africa but also in Namibia and Zimbabwe.

He was greatly beloved and respected by all who came into contact with him.

My contacts with this remarkable man took the following road.

- (i) One day while serving at East Claremont Congregational Church, I received a phone call from Bishop Bradley asking for a meeting. At that meeting, he asked me whether I would ever consider joining the Church of England in South Africa. At that time, the work was growing in KwaZulu-Natal and they needed ministers. Together with Murray Hofmeyer, they asked me to go up to Natal in 1977 and so my journey with CESA began in Pinetown. All the rules were broken as Bishop Bradley ordained me in 1977 even though I had never attended a CESA church – he took a huge risk with me. I owe so much ... my life...
- (ii) It was humbling to receive hand written letters from him encouraging me in the work. Later when I opened the KwaZulu-Natal Missionary and Bible College, he came up to preach in the church, lecture the students and spend time in our little home. He loved KMBC and was a huge encouragement to me.



- (iii) But perhaps, his greatest contribution into my life came in 1980 when he phoned to ask me to go up for him to Namibia and conduct a Bible School in Ondangwa for all our churches. It changed my life forever, and I began to dream of the day when I would do this full time and serve as a missionary to Africa. He was a huge inspiration to me, showing me what a missionary bishop could achieve in Africa. In all the years ahead as a missionary and as the Bishop of Africa, I would try to follow Bishop Stephen Bradley's example.
- (iv) But, above the invitation to join CESA, above the ordination, above the call to go to Namibia, there was the example of his life and the servant leadership he showed me.



**Albert Schweitzer** once wrote:

"Impart as much as you can of your spiritual being to those who are on the road with you, and accept as something precious what comes back to you from them. Leadership in one word is ....EXAMPLE."

**Hudson Taylor** once wrote these words about William Burns:

"William Burns is better to me than a College course with all its advantages, because right here in China is lived out before me all that I long to be as a missionary."

I cannot remember ever meeting him in his "posh" study, or have him drive me around in his car, he would walk miles and miles to get to meetings, or perhaps catch a train. He poured his life into his men and served them; never in an autocratic way, he was the perfect servant leader. Later as the Rector of two churches, and Bishop of KZN and of Africa, it was **Bishop Stephen Bradley whose example of a devoted servant leader which drove me forward.** I truly thank God for allowing me the privilege of learning from Bishop Bradley, a remarkable man, the men who modelled "a servant leader" before me. A man who took the huge risk to ordain me!

## **CONCLUSION**

**Philips Brooks** in his book on preaching wrote the following:

"It is essential to the preacher's success that he should thoroughly ENJOY his work – its highest joy is in the great ambition that is set before it, the glorifying of the Lord and the savings of souls. No other joy on earth compares to that ..."

The Lord has allowed me to have the greatest joy any man could ever have – no other compares to this, the joy of teaching the Bible, bringing souls to Christ and being a missionary to Africa. But to do the above God sent five incredible men to prepare my life and I am so indebted to them.

**William Law** once wrote:

"he therefore, is a devout man, who lives no longer to his own will, or the way and spirit of the world, but to the sole will of God, who considers God in everything, who serves God in everything, who makes all the parts of his common life parts of piety, by doing everything in the name of God."

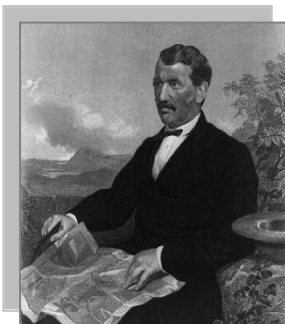


Here were five devout men who modelled in their lives, what I have become.

- **My Dad, the man with a burning heart, taught me to live a “reckless” life, abandoned to Jesus.**
- **Ernest Elmes, the extraordinary layman who taught me how to live a simple lifestyle, uncluttered by the world and using everything for the work of God and to care for your family.**
- **Murdo Gordon, the man who gave me a longing to teach the Bible, verse by verse, with an insatiable thirst for books.**
- **Jimmy Ferguson, the man who gave me a passion for missions and who burnt himself out for God.**
- **Stephen Bradley, the missionary bishop who modelled before me what it means to be a servant leader.**

These five men rebuke us for our coldness of heart, our lack of missionary passion, our ability to live comfortably with the thought that millions have still not heard the saving name of Jesus. In short, they challenge us to acknowledge our failure and to recognise what is our greatest need. As Timothy George so rightly says: ‘Today, more than a new programme of missionary training or another strategy for world evangelisation, the Church of Jesus Christ needs a fresh vision of a full-sized God – eternal, transcendent, holy, filled with compassion, sovereignly working by His Holy Spirit to call unto himself a people out of every nation, kindred, tribe and language group. Only such a vision born out of repentance, prayer and self-denial, can inspire a Carey-like faith in a new generation of Christian heralds.’

Let **David Livingstone**, my hero, close Part five of this sentinel in my life.



“I am a missionary heart and soul. God has an only Son, and He was a missionary and a physician. A poor, poor imitation of Him I am or rather wish to be. In this service I hope to live, in it I wish to die.”

Following these five men ... “in this service I hope to live, in it I wish to die.” God grant me grace to follow their example, even though it be such a pale reflection of what they were!