

Healing My Weed Poisoning

Psalm 107:20

*He sent His word and he healed them,
and delivered them from their destructions.*

Back in chapter two I told you about my battle with weed poisoning that afflicted me every year in July. If you've never had poison ivy then you don't know the agony of the itch and running sores.

Marilyn's dad said he never had poison ivy. He could tear it out by the roots and it wouldn't affect him. When we went to live with them in a big farmhouse before going to the mission field there was a whole slope of poison ivy growing by the pond. Marilyn assumed she was like her dad and never got poison ivy either. One day she took that weed whacker and started attacking it. When she finished she came into the house and showered. The next day her ankles were red and swollen. She had a severe case of poison ivy up to her knees.

I would get what looked like poison ivy, but it was called weed poisoning. It got so bad that I had runny sores all over my body. It would start out as that little blemish then spread. It would spread onto my arms, then to my torso and down to my feet and legs. It would get everywhere. All the parts of my body were infected with this thing.

As I mentioned in chapter two, they took me to the hospital because it was so bad. I actually had blisters all over me that ran with yellow pus that was constantly oozing out of them. Back in that day they didn't have some of the antihistamines and steroid shots like we do today. So they did experiments on me. I was the guinea pig. They put me in these purple baths. I don't know what kind of chemical was in it but they put me in this purple baths to soak. It was supposed to dry up the poison ivy or the weed poisoning. Well, it didn't. I was in the hospital for a week and it got worse. I had running sores all over my face.

Every year from the time I was eight years old to about sixteen years old, I had that disease every summer and they couldn't do anything about it. Eventually my mother sat down with me and said, "Dick, you said the Lord called you to be a missionary. But if you're missionary, you have to go out in the jungle. You have to go out in the weeds and you always get this weed poisoning. How could you be a missionary?" She wanted me to be a missionary, but she told me I really needed to think this through. Sadly, she said, "Unless the Lord heals you. I don't think you could be a missionary."

Well, I went to prayer. I remember the night I went to prayer on my knees down by my bedside and asked the Lord to do a miracle in my life. It was about this same time that I had rededicated my life to the Lord to be a missionary. "You need to heal me of this disease," I pleaded. "If you have called me then you must equip me to do your will. I ask you in the name of Jesus to heal this body."

The Lord did just that. After that, I would get little spots of poison ivy on me, but never this spreading disease that I had before. Jesus still heals today.