

ONE NOVEMBER

By Shirley Wratten

I did not know my future
But knew I could trust The One Who held it in His hands
As my husband and my children's father
Went to a war in a foreign land.

I opened my heart completely
Our times were in God's hands
He said He would never leave me and be always with me
On this my life did stand.

After delivering a 9 lb. 6 oz. baby boy
Uninvited . . . blood clots arrived at my door
This became a time to reflect on what I "*really*" believed
Should my life not be restored.

In the hospital I read:
"This gift was created by God Himself, in His image and
for His glory. Ours for today, he is God's for eternity"
This . . . summing up life's story
Our lives are not our own.

Six weeks after delivery, the year was 1966
In the wee hours of a November morn
Our life would be changed completely
A shock to us must be borne.

Awakened and running
A mortar attack from six miles away
Shrapnel . . . straight to my husband's heart
His soul departed this earth that day.

At that moment of departure . . .
Something wonderful must have happened I believe
Incredible to me . . . a smile upon his face
Forever . . . God's kind gift to me
And would speak volumes to all God wanted to see.

This forever took away my fear of death . . . and now with a real knowing
"To be absent from the body. . . now present with the Lord"
This peace and joy on His face showing
God's word of truth . . . and the smile

Made a major impact upon me.

So then what?
Life in the living looked like this

Five precious children under the age of nine and me
No immediate family close by
Learning to trust and lean hard on God
The word of God daily invested and continually speaking directly to me
My strength in **Him** needed to be.

Choosing to walk in God's way of thinking
Brought many challenges and often tears
Peace sometimes elusive, without understanding
Until humbled, I surrendered laying everything down at His feet.

Opening my heart and hands to receive from God
How often I did pray: "Thy kingdom come
Thy will be done on earth as in heaven this day.
As my day is, Your strength I need
Your love and mercy to supply
Our daily bread and needs, O God
Your manna for which I cry."

Whole and wholly mine, Jesus said
Is a heart transaction for the living
Now is the time
Do not harden your heart
I AM is here and here to stay
Each day a new beginning.

How often I thought of this provoking question:
"What would it profit a man to gain the whole world
Only to lose his soul
And what would a man give in exchange for his soul?"
Heaven or hell the goal.

A gifted surgeon with so much potential
Gone in a blink of the eye
I know he would not have given up heaven
For any earthly honor or what money could buy.

"For God so loved the world He gave us His Son"
He suffered on the cross for us that we might become one
The resurrection power that lifted Jesus from the grave

Made the way for us ...sin and death forever shattered

His invitation extended Jesus says, "Come"
I have prepared a place for you
To as many as receive God's gift of love
Heavens gate opened wide
Eternity spent with Him....in view.

Because of the nail prints in Jesus hands
Our lives are always before Him
Nothing can ever separate us from His love
A promise. . . . that really matters.

Now, near or distant
When it is time for that end of life call
"What have you done with my Son?" God will ask.
A crucial question to be answered by all.

That November 4 morn so many years ago
Seeming like just yesterday
Still finds me with God's hand in mine
Thankful never abandoned always with me faithful
A stabilizing blessing all the time mine.

Surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses
Who have gone before
This is written in the hope
That you too have answered God's call.