The Next Eight Seconds

Gary Kieswetter 27 February 2017



I have always wondered what it would be like to ride a bronco in a rodeo. In my youth, I did ride some horses whose lift did not go to the top floor (i.e. they were crazy), but nothing like the wild ride you experience on a bronco for 8 seconds (as per the rules of the rodeo), but I get ahead of myself.

It all changed for me during 2009. I am from a Methodist background and gave my life to Christ in my early teens. Two of our neighbours were major influences in my spiritual growth at that time (Okay, so it may have made things easier that both had pretty daughters). However it wasn't long, certainly by the time I was a senior in high school, before I was on the wrong path.

So back to 2009, where I (a number of years after first giving my life to Christ as a teenager) felt I wanted to accompany my wife Sue on a pilgrimage through Scotland and England. It was at this time, while walking across the causeway to Holy Island Lindisfarn, that I experienced the Holy Spirit. I had been praying a prayer that was on a pamphlet a number of times: 'Loving God, I ask You to forgive me for my sins, please cleanse me, set me free and help me to let go of all that weighs me down' (Matthew 11:28-30), when I had the sensation that I was floating across the sand as God lightened my load.

> **Forget the rodeo, give me 'eight seconds' of life with Jesus!**

I was incredibly blessed, because when a few years later, around the time I moved from my

secular job and joined Living Hope full time as operations manager, Living Hope partnered with Four12. This placed me in the middle of a church that was being transformed and I was exposed to excellent teaching. Shortly after this, God took me into the desert. There were areas of my character He wanted to change. Just as I thought it had come to an end, He went down to the next level and then the next. Those that God placed around me loving helped me walk in the truth. I am so thankful for these men. Oh, the ride, oh what a ride!

It was during 2015 that I sensed God was going to lead me into a new season. He spoke to me at various times and I had a strong sense He was leading me to Africa. While I generally knew where He was leading me, I did not know the 'how' or 'what'. Then the call came to serve Four12 and our partnering churches in Zambia – the next eight seconds. This journey that I am walking has been made so much easier with Sue, my wife, alongside me. She is an amazing woman!

Jesus has given me a verse at the start of each season. The verse He gave me for this past season was that I must become less so that He can become more (John 3:30). As I move into the next eight seconds, He has the reins. I know the ride will be wild, but there is no other way to face it other than with Jesus at the reins. Forget the rodeo, give me 'eight seconds' of life with Jesus!