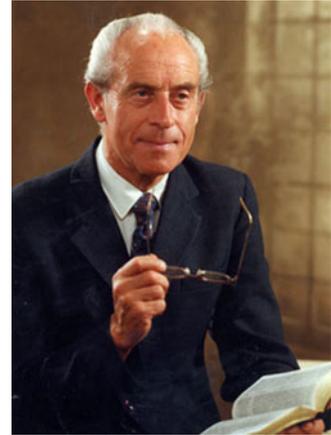


Dr. John Edward Hunter

John was born in Liverpool on the 8th January 1909. As a young boy he sang in the Cathedral Choir. He attended Quarry Bank High School, later made famous by the Beatles.

From there he went to Chester College to train as a teacher. He qualified in 1931, and began his career teaching at Hey Green Rd Council School, Wavertree, Liverpool. There he met a young lady on the staff called Christine Wheeler. Through her influence he joined the Plymouth Brethren. They married on July 14th, 1934, and moved to Carlisle, Christine's hometown.

John taught at Robert Ferguson School in Carlisle. Christine stayed at home as the children arrived, first Pat, followed by Malcolm and Stuart.



John began his preaching ministry preaching the gospel in the surrounding small towns and villages. He would ride his bicycle 20 or 30 miles, in all weathers, preaching sometimes to just half a dozen people; and then cycle home again. It was a profitable ministry, not because he saw many results, but because the Lord was using it as a training ground for the future.

World War II

Before the Second World War John had already joined the Auxiliary Fire Service and became a Section Officer. He also joined the RAF Voluntary Reserve. As the war began because he was in a reserved occupation he taught by day, and went out firefighting at night.

When the demand for Air Crews increased, as the war progressed, John was commissioned in the RAF as a navigator in aircrew. He was first stationed at Aberystwyth in Wales. He was due to be posted to North Africa, but another officer asked him to do a swap and he ended up with an Operational training unit in Lossiemouth, Cumbria, teaching navigational skills. The Lord was watching over him because the aircraft flying to North Africa was shot down.

While at Lossiemouth Winston Churchill ordered the first Thousand Bomber Raid. This had to include Training Units as well as Operational Units in order to achieve the required number of planes, which would have meant that John would have had to fly. John had a heavy head cold at this time, and he was prevented from flying because the Wellington bombers were not pressurized, and it was unsafe for him to fly. Once again his life was saved because the plane on which he would have been flying never returned.

After the War

Towards the end of the war he was returned to teaching in Carlisle. From there in 1945 the family moved to Wiltshire, where John became head teacher of Atworth Primary School. In 1947 the family increased as another son, Colin, was born. During the 12 years at Atworth John had opportunities to work as an evangelist throughout the summer months. Tent meetings were held in nearby towns every evening for 16 weeks. He also ran a "Coffee bar" type of meeting at the Firs Café in Bath each Sunday evening during the winter.

Later, at a meeting he was chairing in the City of Bath, John met Major W. Ian Thomas, who was the speaker on that occasion. From that initial meeting John was asked to visit Capernwray Hall, near Carnforth, a Christian conference Centre run by Major Thomas and his wife Joan. This led to the whole Hunter family being involved with Capernwray. Every school vacation the family invested all their time and effort in the work there. Christine was busy in the catering section, and John was occupied in counselling and working with teenagers.

During the 1950's John was very involved with the Billy Graham Crusade Meetings organising coach trips to Haringey, and speaking at the meeting held in Devizes, Wilts. In February 1957 the family moved to Kendal as John was appointed the Head teacher of St. Thomas' Primary School. In 1959, while still a school principal, he was invited to spend the 5 weeks of the summer vacation speaking at a Conference Centre at Highland Lake, New York. This was the door that opened up the Worldwide ministry that was to follow.

Stepping out in Faith

Easter 1960 saw John giving up his teaching career after 30 years, stepping out in faith, no longer having the security of a regular salary, he trusted the Lord to lead and provide. He became a missionary attached to The Capernwray Missionary Fellowship of Torchbearers, an international and interdenominational religious organisation, with its headquarters at Capernwray Hall, Carnforth. So began years of travelling, in the United Kingdom and abroad, sharing the Word of God, through lectures and study groups. He travelled widely in the United States, speaking at conference centres such as Cannon Beach, Oregon; Forest Home, Hume Lake and Mount Hermon in California; and The Firs in Washington State. He preached in many churches throughout the States, and was involved in the 1963 Billy Graham Crusade, in the Los Angeles Coliseum. John was on stage next to Billy Graham the night Billy received a death threat. Fortunately the crusade passed off without incident.

In 1965 John's writing ministry began when Zondervan Publishing House invited him to submit a manuscript containing material from his ministry. "Knowing God's Secrets" was the first book published. More than twenty other books followed, plus adult Sunday School material for Gospel Light Publications.

Worldwide ministry

His ministry has taken him to 22 different countries, including Africa (Ethiopia, Kenya, Liberia, Northern Nigeria); Austria; Australia; Germany; Hong Kong; India; Japan; The Philippines; New Zealand; South America (Colombia, Mexico); South Korea; Sweden and Vietnam.

In 1966 he received a Doctorate of Divinity from Biola College of Talbot Theological Seminary, Los Angeles "for his uncompromising stand for the faith; for his able exposition of the Word of God, especially revealed in his international reputation as a Bible conference speaker, and for his outstanding contribution to the Church of Jesus Christ."

In 1977 he was ordained in North Richland Hills Baptist Church, Fort Worth, Texas. John continued his Conference ministry, preaching, and teaching in Capernwray Bible schools throughout the world.

In 1984 Christine and John celebrated their Golden Wedding whilst at Cannon Beach Conference Centre, Oregon. Their four children and their spouses were able to be present, plus nine of their eleven grandchildren. This was a very special time as it was never easy to assemble all the family together in one place at one time.

Sadly over the next few years Christine's health deteriorated and she died on 29th November 1988.

John celebrated his 80th birthday in January 1989 at his son Stuart's home in Reno, Nevada, and then he continued to travel and preach.

In July 1991 he married for a second time. His bride being Ruth Nicholl, the Deputy Head of a Primary School in Kendal. They made their home in Kendal, Ruth continued teaching, and John continued teaching at Capernwray Bible School, but cut down his travels to school vacation times. Summer holidays were still spent on the United States Conference circuit.

John's last teaching week at Capernwray was in January 1994, as in February that year he suffered a stroke. Future Conference dates had to be cancelled. He took the stroke as being a sign that the Lord was telling him it was time to retire, and take a rest. He was now a househusband!

His ministry did not end at this point, as the Lord, in His miraculous way, brought a lady from Tennessee into his life. Jan McMurray had read one of John's books, and wanted to buy more for her Bible Study group. When she found out that Zondervan was no longer republishing his books, she formed a publishing company called Fresh Springs, and republished four of his books - Finding What's Missing; Let us go on to Maturity; Limiting God; and Knowing God's Secrets. She also had them published in Spanish and Russian, so they could be used behind the Iron Curtain and in South America!

“For This I have Jesus”

Throughout his ministry John has had a key phrase “For this...I have Jesus”. He told people who loved the Lord Jesus that whatever situation they had to face, they were never alone, the Lord was there beside them. John's former colleague at Capernwray, Charles Price (Head of the Bible School in the early 90's) was speaking at Spring Harvest here in England about his friend, who had a favourite phrase “For this...I have Jesus”. Graham Kendrick took the seed thought that Charles had sown, and was inspired to write the song entitled “For This I Have Jesus”. Graham wrote to John in June 1996: “Your wonderful phrase has been a constant reminder to me of the way that our Lord loves and cares for us in every situation. I have received numerous comments from people saying how this song has touched their lives, and I am indebted to you for providing me with the inspiration for the song”. So the ministry continues even through song.