

ABOUT THE AUTHORS

Howie and Dennie Dowell

Howie and Dennie became believers in 1976. Eleven years before, as a young man and a new father, Howie was diagnosed with an adult form of muscular dystrophy. The disease is rare, hereditary, terminal and one of the few diseases known to man that worsens in succeeding generations. Facing the deep emotional pain of Howie's and their son Peter's progressive and incurable disease, they were left questioning God's involvement in their lives. This induced deep insecurities about their future.

As new Christians, two significant things happened: both were given a great thirst for Scripture and deeply troubled people began flooding into their lives. Previously they knew nothing about the true God or His Word, nor had they been involved with troubled lives. As they read through the Bible several times, they noted verses that related to God's sovereignty in this vast universe and in individual lives. Coming to rest on the irrefutable fact that God was totally in control of every facet of their lives, brought the unsurpassed peace of which Philippians 4:7 speaks. Yes, they could truly rest in the arms of the One who was dictating the course of their lives. Because of His holiness and perfect love for His own, they had the assurance that He was always working for their good.

As a three-year-old Christian, Howie was taken out of the workplace and thrust into the life of a trailblazer. God prepared him for this call by stripping him of many earthly securities: a job, financial stability, and his own health. Eventually, even Peter was taken from him.

Howie was becoming a broken vessel, who was quickly cast upon the Lord and His Word as his means for spiritual, emotional and physical survival. Christ's plan had brought Howie to the end of himself, which was the beginning an understanding of how to draw on God's limitless resources.

The Dowells took the Word of God at face value. As they discovered step by step ways to implement God's commands in their own lives, they passed these principles on to others and witnessed Christ changing lives! By word of mouth, their home became an arena where the

validity of God's truth was modeled and taught. Surrendered to the Lord's direction and in the face of Howie's growing physical limitations, God created a ministry of biblical discipleship centered in their home. They devoted themselves to encouraging fellow believers to experience the fullness of a relationship with Christ Jesus through living obedient lives.

Although Howie was greatly weakened, often exhausted and frequently in pain from the devastating effects of the disease, he did not focus on himself or indulge in self-pity. Instead, he was thankful and happy about his Savior's plan for his earthly existence and for the abundant life he had received because of it. Christ loosened Howie's grip on a temporal focus and replaced it with an eternal perspective that was foundational to his philosophy of life. He viewed all that he possessed as belonging to his Master for the purpose of furthering His kingdom: his home, money, time, energy and material goods. Howie felt privileged to pass on to others the precious truths he had learned. God's faithful servant went to be with His Lord on January 20, 1995. A phrase often expressed about him is, "There is no one else like him!" It was Dennie's privilege to be his wife, friend and soul-mate for thirty-three years.

God has unfolded a new part of His plan for Dennie and the ministry by bringing Tom Patton into her life to serve as her husband and partner in ministry. Tom, a long time friend of Howie and Dennie, has been personally involved with the ministry and is a perfect match for Dennie. It is very evident that God has uniquely prepared Tom to love and lead Dennie, and to share his life in ministry with her. They serve together devoted to full-time discipling, writing and training.