

Properly Equipped

By Ada Brownell

“Do you see any truly competent workers? They will serve kings rather than ordinary people” (Proverbs 22:29. MLT).

I lay on the bed feeling like a wounded bird. I flew away from my job as a daily newspaper reporter at The Pueblo Chieftain years before, excited to be a stay-at-home mom again and spend more time free lance writing. But 15 years later, reality set in.

When I quit working, I thought I could earn significant cash with my writing as well as fulfilling my call to ministry. But we added three more children to the family, and four of the five needed money for college. Our oldest son already graduated.

The previous year, I sold almost everything I wrote: Fifteen book reviews to The Denver Post ; 12 articles to The Pentecostal Evangel; puzzles and fiction to Sunday school papers; articles to Christian education and ministers’ magazines; features to other publications. I received royalties on a book sold to the Assemblies of God.

In all, I received about \$600 that year. Book reviews sold for \$15; puzzles, fiction, features, interviews and other articles \$5 to \$35. Book royalty was 12 ½ cents each. Our children weren’t going to Christian colleges on that.

My husband worked two jobs when our oldest son went to Evangel University. A railroader, Les took a pay cut when we moved back to Pueblo, Colo., to a day job after working nights and evenings in Denver for 15 years.

I carried notebooks of tear sheets and spread them before an editor I worked with in the 1960s . He was impressed, but frowned. “You need a degree to work now.”

I had nine English credits from the University of Colorado. When reality took me down, God took notice of this sparrow and gave hope. I dried my tears and enrolled in the University of Southern Colorado. The school loans I took out helped two kids enroll in college. In two and a half years, by taking 22 and 24 credits a semester, I earned a bachelor’s degree in mass communications.

James wrote that faith without works is dead, so I accepted an internship in Lifestyle; buried my pride with an evening job as copy clerk, the newsroom gopher in charge of obits and births.

I graduated with distinction, but the morning newspaper folded that month. Yet, the Chieftain, the evening paper, created a reporting position for me. I wrote news 17 years, and all those children went to Christian colleges.

When I needed a job, God saw my need, and helped me find a way to prepare for the employment he would provide. He not only cares for the sparrows; He cares for me and you.