

CHAPTER 5: FACING BANKRUPTCY

It was 1975 a time of many activities, many staff and many volunteers, God was with us, so who was against us? We wanted to conquer the world. Weren't we not doing great? Were we not really reaching Europe?..... But sometimes large success can corrupt a lot. One of our record sales-and promotor persons had gone behind our back and had started direct negotiations with the foreign record labels that he could do much better. These guys broke our agreement and stopped delivering. In those days almost 80% income of the ministry came from our record-company, so that prices of concert tickets would be a minimum or not at all (love-offering), so that the concert-ministry would be as open as possible. Panic in the house. This became one of the most dramatic boardmeetings: it was decided not to go to court, as all that we did was such a clear ministry and call, we should ask God to fight for us, and so we prayed.....The coming weeks nothing happened.....slowly the attitude of the staff and some of the volunteers started to change. Instead of seeking God, they turned against Leen and Ria. It was all their fault.....there may be sin in their lives.....as income stopped staff had to be fired.....this increased the level of antipathy and finally in some, hate. It got so far that the person who was handling all finances declared that Leen had stolen money and put it on a Swiss account so that the moment the ministry would collapse, he would move to Switzerland.....How would you feel under such lies and circumstances? Leen and Ria could not defend themselves but could only cry to God for only He could justify..... but - no answer. Looking back it is clear that God did not want to intervene as time was needed to bring everybody's real motivation to the light. But in those days Leen and Ria felt terribly alone. Later the official audit showed that all these allegations were terrible lies. Finally as there was no income Leen was the last person at the office..... no money..... invoices and debts piling up.....left alone by most volunteers and all the staff had turned against him.....And this whole situation got public.....the same Christian leaders (who had opposed Leen many times) acted fast....yes, this is God's punishment, there is sin and arrogance in his life.....this was their moment for revenge. There was no possibility for defence.....how would you feel? The only thing that kept Leen going was the voice of God of 3 years ago: *'Do you want to do this for ME?'* Leen will never forget these terrible weeks in an empty office, crying to God.....Lord, why is this happening to your ministry and to me?.....Lord, I answered your call, You are my boss, I am your servant, so take care for the situation and me.....no answer.....it seems God was on holiday.....Finally there was not even money to buy food for the family and to pay rent.....At Last (where were you God.....???) the answer came: *"Leen, did I ever tell you this was going to be easy?"* Leen was crying in his total submission, yes how had Jesus suffered, how was He innocent, how didn't He want to defend himself.....Looking back, this traumatic period helped to develop more of the character of Jesus in Leen. It brought to light all the real motives, arrogance and real sins in the life of staff and volunteers.....Leen and Ria do understand the traumatic feelings of the staff and Leen and Ria are even now sad that the staff could not take the step into the larger picture and allow God to do His work, so they kept locked in sad negativism and accusations....It was Gods time for pruning and that hurts. Now the deep spiritual meaning was clear, but would He provide or would it all die as the time for this ministry, Gods ministry was fulfilled?