

TALKING WITH GOD

An AEAM Theological Commission Text

ONE

Grace and Fred Holland

Jim Brock

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GRACE AND FRED HOLLAND



Published by
Evangel Publishing House
P.O. Box 1015
Kisumu, Kenya

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Quotations in this book are from the New English Bible.

INTRODUCTION

This book is a new adventure. It is the first book to offer Bible lessons prepared for the churches of Africa in a style that can be used in daily home study and weekly discussion meetings.

The method of presenting the lessons in this book is called programmed instruction. The method of teaching through weekly discussion meetings is called theological training by extension. Use of this kind of lesson and method of teaching is being encouraged by the Association of Evangelicals of Africa and Madagascar (AEAM) Theological Commission (formerly known as the Association of Evangelical Bible Institutes and Colleges in Africa and Madagascar, AEBICAM).

The AEAM Theological Commission is composed of a group of Christians who want to work together to share information, to have fellowship and to encourage one another in training pastors and leaders for the church.

In 1970 AEBICAM co-operated with the Committee to Assist Missionary Education Overseas (American) in conducting workshops on theological training by extension and the methods of writing programmed instruction materials. Since then, writers' workshops have been held in several cities throughout Africa to prepare new texts.

It has been shown that programmed Bible lessons can be the most effective method of training pastors and leadership for the churches in Africa. The lesson books provide home study material and the weekly discussion meetings provide a centre for relating these lessons to life and current church problems.

These texts have been tested and validated. They are effective for Africa. This text on prayer was used with 50 extension students in five centres

over a 10-week period. The performance of the students was noted and then the material was revised for publication.

This is the second edition of this text. It has been revised considerably from the first edition.

There is great need for further testing and development of programmed instruction techniques suitable for Africa. Production workshops are now being held and more than 20 texts are in some stage of production. It is expected that a complete Bible training curriculum will be available shortly.

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HOW TO USE THIS BOOK

This book is to help you learn how to pray better. It is not just a sermon about praying, or stories of how God answered prayer. It is a book of lessons for you, so that you may know what the Bible teaches, and so that you may do what the Bible says. When you finish this book you should be praying in a new way.

The book is your teacher. It will talk to you in your daily lessons. Listen carefully to what it says. When a teacher tells you to take your Bible and read a verse, what do you do? Do you just look at him, or say that you will do it later? No. You take your Bible and read. That is what you must do with this book.

Notice what a teacher does in school. He tells the students the lesson. He explains it carefully. Then he asks questions. When the students answer right, he tells them that their answer is good. If they cannot answer well, then the teacher explains again.

This book uses the same method of teaching. First you are given a part of the lesson. Then you have a question to answer or something to do. You will be able to answer if you have read carefully. Answering the question does two things. First it shows you how to use what you have read. Second, it helps you to remember it.

Then the book, like the teacher, tells you whether your answers are right or wrong. How does it do this? At the end of every lesson you will find the answers to the questions. After you have written, you look at the answer to see how you have written. But here is a problem. Sometimes you will be tempted to look at the answer before you have written it. **BE VERY CAREFUL NOT TO DO THIS.** If you do, you will spoil your learning. You will not be hurting your teacher, but yourself. You will be like the student who steals the answers from people instead of writing his own. This kind of student does not learn well. Be honest with yourself. We have tried to help you by mixing up the answers so you will not see them before you want to.

And remember, you will write an examination at the end of this course. If you steal the answers, you will have difficulty passing the examination.

Sometimes you will have trouble to think of the answer. Do not look at the teacher's answer, but read that part of the lesson again. Read slowly and carefully until you are able to answer the question.

The lessons are given by weeks and days. You should read one day's lesson at one time. Do not read part of a lesson and stop. You will learn better if you finish a whole day's lesson together. Do not try to do a whole week of lessons in a short time. You will hurry and not remember what you read. Try to do one day's lesson each day, as you would listen to daily lessons from a teacher.

This book is prepared to help you. It is to be used with a weekly meeting. You will have a leader to help you with your problems. Your leader will also help you discuss with other students what you have learned from the book. If you have not studied the lessons before coming to the meeting, you will not understand what is being said. If there

If there is no leader who is coming to talk with you about these lessons, then call some of your friends who are studying the book. Choose someone among you to lead the discussions.

We think you will like this kind of learning. As you study you will try hard to get the right answers. You will be pleased when you get them. When you come to the questions at the end of the book you will see how much you have learned. May God bless you as you learn to pray better.

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