

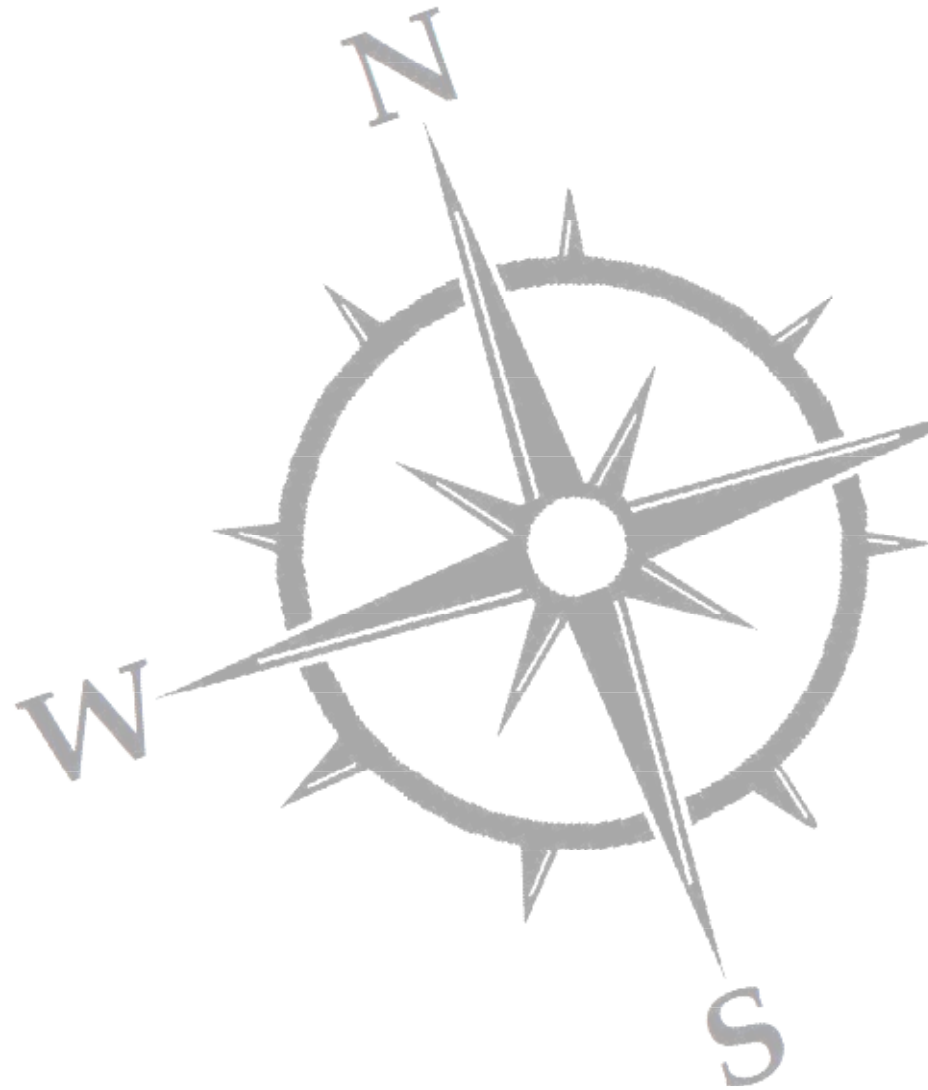
The Life of Betty Greene

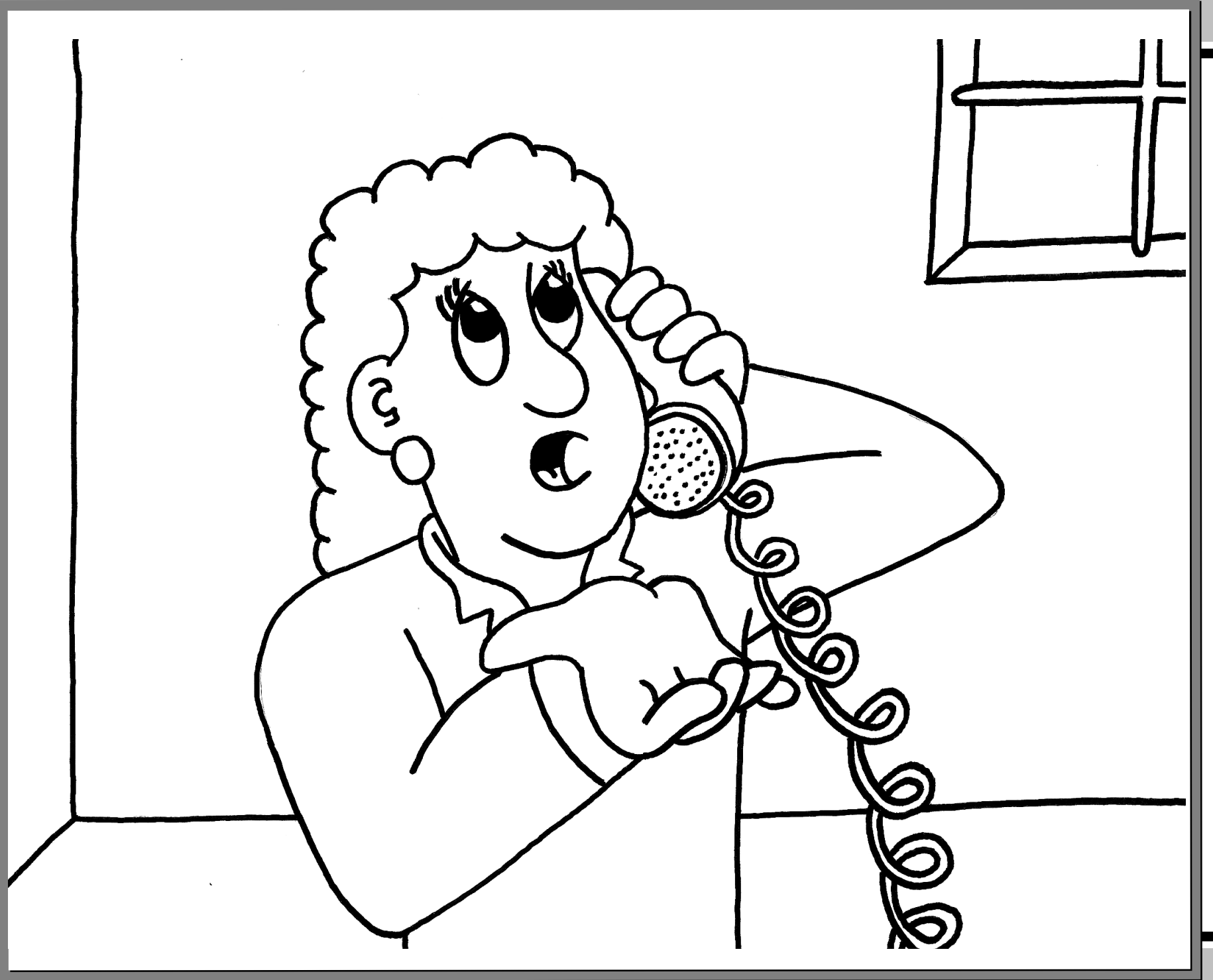
(1920-1997)

Lesson: 6.25 – Serving Missionary Snapshot Series

This story encourages Christians to be actively serving their Lord and to be ready for Jesus' return. The Lord wants to find His servants busy serving when He returns for them. Betty Greene went all over the world and used her love for flying to help serve missionaries and the Lord. She never gave up or quit serving the Lord. Betty was about to watch God do something amazing, but she needed to be ready and available for God to use her.

"But he that is greatest among you shall be your servant." – Matthew 23:11







Introduction:

Have you ever seen a house or building being built? People who build things use all sorts of different tools to make the job easier. Without a saw, cutting wood may take a while. Without a hammer, pounding in nails would be difficult with just your hands. Our story today is about a missionary pilot who used her plane to help missionaries tell people about Jesus' love. At times, this missionary was asked to help save people's lives. Will she be available to help a missionary? Will she get there in time to help? Let's listen carefully and see what happens in this story about Betty Greene...

Missionary Story:

"Please... we need you right away Betty!" a worried voice said on the other end of the phone. "It's an emergency, if I cannot get my daughter to the hospital soon I am afraid that she will die!" the voice continued. It was Roy Conwell. The Conwells were missionaries to people who had leprosy in the Nuba Mountains in Africa. After talking with Roy for a few minutes, I learned that his

young daughter, Loraine, had been snacking on some peanuts while she was playing on the porch when she suddenly began to choke. Her parents tried holding her upside down and smacking her on the back and even tried putting pepper by her nose hoping that she would sneeze whatever it was out, but nothing seemed to help. The peanut had got stuck in her windpipe and she was having a very tough time breathing. Roy could not stand around and watch his little girl stop breathing, he had to get help, but the nearest phone was 30 miles away. It was the rainy season which meant it could take a day or more to travel those 30 miles. Knowing the nearest hospital was about 320 miles away, Roy decided he must travel to the phone and call for me. It wasn't long before I was speeding down the runway. I smiled as I felt the plane lift up into the air. "Hold on Loraine... I'm coming," I said.

As I flew, I thought back to my sixteenth birthday. My father had given me and my siblings a birthday present I would never forget...a ride in an airplane! From that day forward, I knew that I wanted to be a pilot. I had saved every penny to take flying lessons and eventually got my pilot's license.

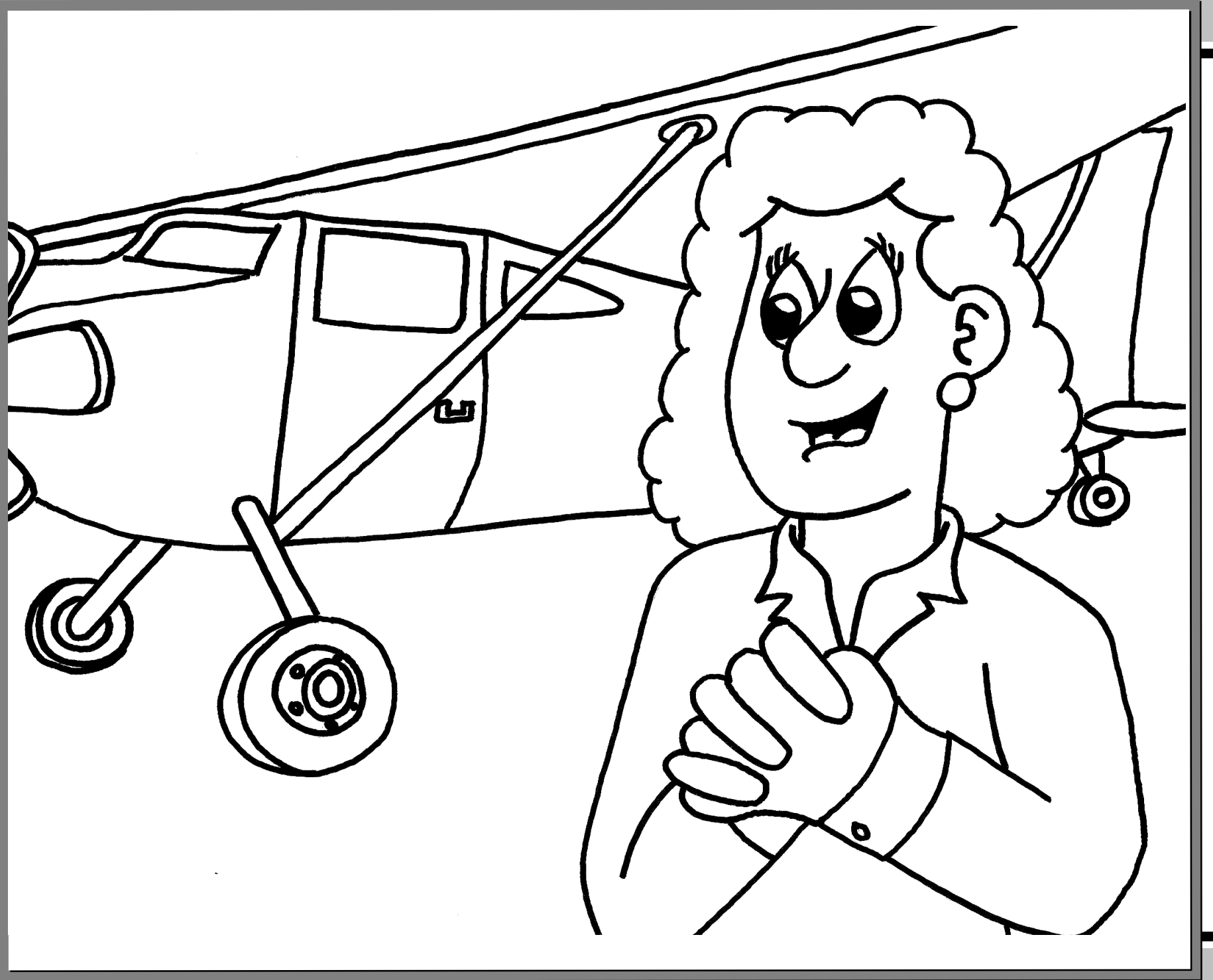
I wasn't sure what I wanted to do when I grew up, until one day when an older lady in my church suggested how helpful it would be if missionaries had someone to fly them around rather than having to hike through the thick jungles. Not only that, it would be very helpful if they had someone who could bring them supplies in the remote villages they were in. I decided that was just what I would do. I would become a

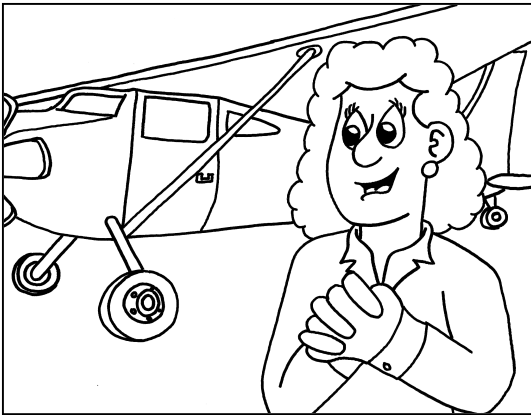
missionary pilot and fly supplies and missionaries all over the world so everyone could hear about Jesus.

World War II broke out before I had a chance to do that though. I volunteered and joined up as a WASP (Women's Air Force Service Pilot) and would fly new planes from the factories to where they were needed. It wasn't until after the war that I finally got a chance to do what I had hoped I would be able to. I helped a friend named Jim Truxton to start the MAF (Missionary Aviation Fellowship) and served as their first pilot. I got to fly our new red Waco Biplane down to Mexico to help the Wycliffe Bible translators.

BUMP! The wind outside the plane brought me back from my memories. I looked down at my instrument gauges and then looked out the window again. "Still a little ways away from Loraine," I thought. The turbulence reminded me of the time that I had to pick up a plane called a Grumman Duck in Peru. The duck was a neat plane that could land on water or ground which would be very helpful with all the rivers in the Amazon. The problem was that it was in Lima and the missionaries who needed it were on the other side of the towering Andes Mountains. "No woman can fly a brute like this...and especially not over the mountains," a military man had said when he saw me. But a few days later, I was climbing high into the sky over the peaks of the mountains and down the other side.

On the other side of the mountains, I ran into a problem...a thick blanket of clouds had settled in every direction. "I'll never be





able to find the runway at San Ramon in all of this," I thought. I knew that this area had many canyons, tall trees, and of course mountains. I couldn't take the chance of not being able to see where I was going. I began to pray for God to make a way in the clouds. I flew a bit lower hoping to be able to see, but I only found another blanket of clouds. Just as I was about to give up and turn around and go home, a small hole or window appeared in the clouds and I was able to bring the plane in for a safe landing. "You're the first woman pilot to cross the Andes Mountains," Cameron Townsend had said patting me on the shoulder.

I was grateful for the way that the Lord had allowed me and my planes to help missionaries in so many ways to take the gospel to the people of the world. It wasn't long until I felt the familiar bump of the wheels as the plane touched down on the runway. The Conwells were there with Loraine. They quickly climbed on board with poor, weak Loraine still wheezing loudly. Together we took off to begin our 320-mile trip to the hospital in Khartoum. "Making

this trip by car would take at least a week," I thought. Thankfully, on the plane, it would only be a few hours.

When we arrived, a specialist rushed Loraine right into surgery and performed a delicate operation to remove the peanut. "She's lucky to be alive," the doctor said soon after the surgery. I smiled, but I knew that luck had nothing to do with it. As we spoke more with the doctor, I saw how God had been watching over little Loraine in many ways that day. It just so happened that the doctor who had removed the peanut was scheduled to leave for London the next day. If Loraine's parents had tried to drive her to the hospital, instead of by plane, there would not have even been a doctor at the hospital who could have helped her and she may not have even survived the rough drive either. Also, just a few minutes after the surgery was completed, a terrible dust storm hit the city of Khartoum. It was so horrendous that everything turned as dark as midnight. The power was knocked out bringing everything at the hospital to a stop. "Thank you for coming so quickly," Roy said later on that evening, "that dust storm could have made it impossible to land in Khartoum, or the power might have failed while the doctor was operating on Loraine."

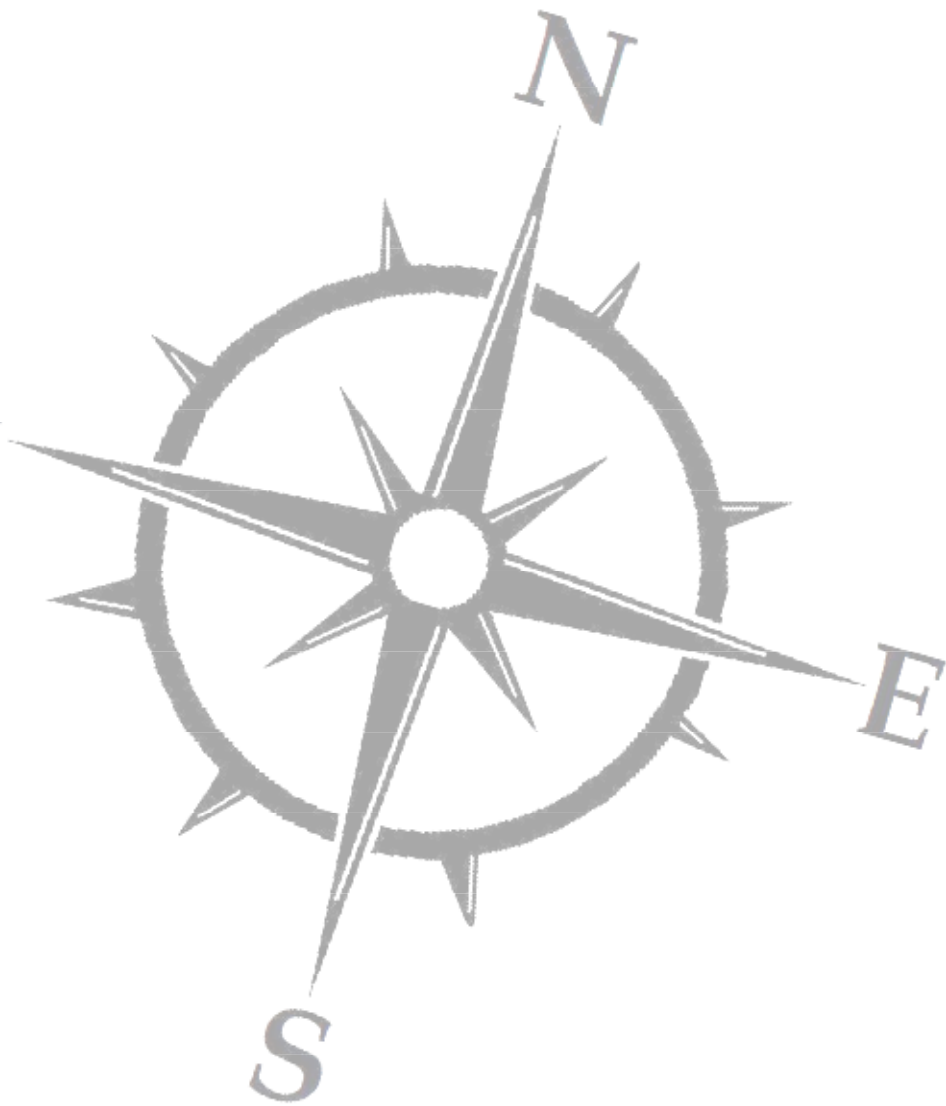
"God's timing is always perfect," I said. Yes...timing is very important to a pilot. "Even though we sometimes need to be patient and wait on the Lord, I don't ever want him to be waiting on me. Obeying His leading right away is always the best plan" I thought.

Application:

You know, boys and girls, Romans 6:13 tells us the importance of making ourselves available for God to use. We never know what God has for us or how we fit into His plan, which is why obeying God immediately is so important. Betty was always willing to help and flew many life-saving medical flights for patients who would have died without them. God protected Betty and allowed her to help many missionaries and people across the globe.

Over nearly twenty years, Betty Greene made over 4,640 flights bringing medical supplies and food to missionaries, moving planes to help in other areas, and transporting missionaries, dignitaries, cargo, and supplies to inaccessible corners of the world. She worked in 20 countries including Peru, Nigeria, Sudan, Papua (Indonesia), and many more before returning to serve MAF from its US base in 1962. Today, more than 70 years after the MAF's first flight, the MAF operates 132 aircraft in over 25 countries and is looking for a new generation of pilots to follow in Betty's footsteps.

*(For additional information, discussion questions, and materials on this lesson please refer to **lesson 6.25** on **page 90** in your **China Expedition - Leader's Guide.**)*



References

For further reading or to obtain more information on this portion of the life of this missionary, please consult the following sources from which we obtained information from:

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