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**MY EARLY YEARS**  
**And**  
**FIVE REVIVAL SERMONS**  
**By Ralph Goodrich Finch**

Cincinnati:  
God's Bible School and Revivalist

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**PREFACE**

Three years ago this month of April, 1929, I sailed for Africa, and after spending some time there THE HOLY SPIRIT led me on to India. During that year I was away from home over five months and on the ocean seventy days.

It was while I was on the ocean that Part I of this book was written. Never before nor since have I had the time to spare; but out there, where letters or phone calls could not interfere, God sweetly took me over the experiences and the incidents herein related.

These early years, of course, up to and including our first circuit, were spent in this country. But while we were in Aberdeen, GOD DEFINITELY LED US, and opened the way for us to go into Foreign Missionary Work. Before I was even saved, and naturally ever since, I have believed in Foreign Missionary Work and pushed it with all my heart. I have never been able to divorce a missionary spirit from a truly converted soul; I know there is NO such divorce. To tell the experiences that have happened in our ministry since launching out from those wonderful two years in Aberdeen would take more words by far than this book contains. The years on foreign soil include what would have often been withering discouragements if it had not been for the ABIDING SPIRIT. Along with deep valleys to fathom and high mountains to scale there have been, however, SUCH VICTORIES that none who saw them could say they were short of miracles.

The experiences of these past seventeen years, I trust, will some day make another book. But in order to bring this to pass, God may again send me out on the ocean where the sea breezes quiet tired nerves and the salt air revives the lost appetite, and where all else is shut out long enough for the PRECIOUS SPIRIT to bring to mind scenes so long crowded out by present demands.

However, I pray that my readers will be blessed and helped by reading this present book of early experiences and revival messages which the Lord has given us. The LESSONS, TESTS and HARDSHIPS I had in these early years, aside from the Gift of the Holy Spirit, truly have been my greatest means of PREPARATION for FOREIGN MISSIONARY WORK, while the revival messages give the FIRM CONVICTIONS which God has been giving through these years and which, EVEN NOW, He is deeply impressing upon my heart. All for Jesus and perishing souls,

Ralph G. Finch

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## CONTENTS

### PART I -- EARLY YEARS

- 1  
Youth and Its Lessons
- 2  
Conversion and Engagement
- 3  
A Vow and a Wife
- 4  
My "Call" -- Drawing Back and the Results
- 5  
Yielding to My "Call" and Some Lessons.
- 6  
Experiences at "God's Bible School"
- 7  
Learning the Value of Prayer
- 8  
A Camp Meeting and An Open Door

9

Our Trip Up the Ohio

10

My First Circuit -- Aberdeen

## PART II -- REVIVAL SERMONS

Introductory

1

Leaks That Make Lean the Soul

2

The Trinity Necessary for Lasting Revivals

3

Hell's Modern Trinity for Damning Souls

4

Our Leaders

5

The Spirit-filled Life

\* \* \* \* \*

## PART I

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Chapter 1

### YOUTH AND ITS LESSONS

Some years ago I read the following words: "I am an old man now, and have had lots of trouble, most of which never came to pass." Many times I have wondered if this is the experience of all old people, or just of those of great imagination, or only those who are built on a high tension. However, be this as it may, I have always felt, since reading these words, special sympathy and love for old folks.

As far back as I can remember it seemed that something was about to happen which would break up our home and get us so in debt we would land in a jail, an orphanage or a poorhouse. Many a night I hung out of my bedroom window listening for the return of father's wagon. The rest of the children would go to sleep, so far as I knew, but I could see the team running off, a train hitting them, or father getting arrested. However, he always returned in due time, unhurt; and then,

exhausted I would slip into bed more thankful than words can tell, as it seemed a ton was lifted off my heart and mind.

We have all heard arguments, pro and con, regarding the effect of environments; but, so far as I am concerned, I am sure some of the things which took place when I was but a child had much to do with my whole life, and especially with my religious experience.

When she was but five or six years old, my baby sister took sick and died. Before her death we four children were always gathered around mother's knee for our

"Now I lay me down to sleep;  
I pray Thee, Lord, my soul to keep;  
If I should die before I wake,  
I pray Thee, Lord, my soul to take."

Right after this prayer, we three older children scampered to bed, but little "Arlie" remained and gathered up the scattered clothing and neatly placed them on different chairs. This was a great joy and comfort to my parents, but a constant shame to me. Why did I not think to be careful and always remember my things as Arlie did? She was my ideal and I loved her. After she was gone it seemed that a cloud settled on the home. Many whys rushed through my mind, but mother told us she had gone to Heaven and we must be good so we, too, could go and sometime see her again.

Not long after this the family altar was abandoned. Later the Bible was seldom read and finally the reading was dropped altogether. During our teens there was no Bible reading nor family altar. However, that scene of lovely childhood thoughtfulness on Arlie's part and my prayers at mother's knee stayed with me all through the years of carelessness and neglect. In fact, there was never a time but what I wanted to grow up to be a good and clean man. Time and again I resolved in my boyhood days to become what in my mind was an ideal man -- one who was kind, patient and good to everybody, and like God. Thus, having such a high ideal, I was under conviction more or less all the time. Especially did I suffer when alone at night.

One experience I had when ten years of age renewed and increased the longing for God, although I did not always realize it was He whom I needed and longed for. Our pastor was holding the regular winter revival. It had lasted some weeks, and scores were going forward and claiming salvation. Finally, unable to hold back longer, up I went and, no doubt, was converted. After this for a year or more I reveled in the prayer meetings, the Epworth League and the Sunday School. I well remember going to the young people, older than myself, and asking them to read and sing, but they had lost interest and they put me off, until finally the League meetings were stopped as they were more like sparking parties than religious services.

After these disappointments my heart sank within me, and I concluded it was impossible to live a good life and grow up to be pure. I then decided the next best thing to do was to become a theatrical singer; so I spent much of my time learning all the ragtime songs I could get hold of. Many a time, while plowing, I stopped and sang with all my might. I would imagine that the stalks of corn were thousands of people that were being held spellbound with my wonderful singing.

In those years money was scarce with us and we had but few new clothes. However, useful articles were given to us by relatives and friends who were more blessed with means than we. Somebody, I remember, gave a pigeon-tailed coat and a pair of long pants. From the cut of the suit it seemed it must have belonged to a man up in years; he also must have been a small gentleman, for, although I was but thirteen, it fit me perfectly. I felt very much like a man when all dressed up and at home, but to face the boys and girls and the grown-ups with my long-tailed coat gave me quite a bit of trouble. And when the young fellows saw me and had their say, I would have taken three cents for my feelings. It never really made me angry, though, to be made fun of, but it did surely cause me much shame -- so much so that I would many times have been thankful if a hole in the floor or the ground had let me slip out of sight.

From thirteen to twenty my experiences were varied. Longing for success and realizing my lack of education kept me feeling as if I were an awful failure; it seemed I could also detect the same feeling in all who knew me. I would get work, but always felt held back. I wanted to rush with all my might, but every job I undertook seemed to hold me down and back. When about fifteen I drove a milk wagon. Each morning I left home about four o'clock, walked two and a half miles, hitched up my horse, loaded the milk bottles and drove eight miles to Cincinnati where I delivered the milk, and usually did not get home until eight o'clock at night. In all there were six drivers of us. We drove seven days a week and got six dollars for the work. The boss told us one day that he would give us a certain per cent if we secured over one hundred and fifty customers. Therefore, I went at it and soon had over my number, whereupon he took some of them and gave them to another driver. About this time some of the boys suggested a strike and I was ready. The morning was set when we were to refuse to go out unless given more money. The boss heard our story and then made his speech; whereupon all the other drivers sneaked into their wagons and started off -- I alone struck. I went home but was there only a few days when there came a letter promising me the only raise that was to be given if I would return; but I never went back, for I had gotten interested in farming by then. Later I worked by the month for fifteen dollars, but every day seemed a week, and by the time I was twenty I was no nearer my ideal than at ten. I was working here and there, but ashamed of my failure in life.

However, in these days of my youth, although it seemed my time was completely wasted, I had a few experiences that taught me some good lessons. Through life they have helped me to hold steady and to prove true. It is with the hope that they may also be a blessing to others that I now relate a few of these, just as I have told them to our children when they have asked for a story. One of the first in importance happened to me when I was about twelve years of age. For the sake of the children we will give this story a name. Let us call it "Twelve Pigs and a Storm."

### Twelve Pigs And A Storm

When I was a boy, no day was too long if we were working with horses, but when corn was to be hoed or onions weeded, each hour seemed a day. Therefore, you can imagine the thrill that went through my system when one morning my father asked me if I thought I could drive to Mr. Paddock's and get an old hog and her twelve baby pigs. Without a moment's hesitation I said, "Sure I can," and, although it was early in the day, I wanted to start at once. However, my father was not in such haste, and he decided I would have plenty of time after dinner. I tell you, that was a long

morning. To me this was one of the biggest undertakings of my life. I was always full of zeal, at least so long as interested, and I surely was interested this morning.

Plans now had to be made; so, while working the rest of the morning, I planned the afternoon's program. Having no wagon, double harness nor hog box, all these must be borrowed, and all this would take time if not properly planned. Therefore, after a hasty dinner I gathered up old collars, hames, traces and lines. I then rushed my old team across the field and borrowed a heavy platform wagon, hitched up and was off, happy as a king.

My team was not well matched. One was a little brown pony so badly spavined she went on three legs until the poor spavined limb got warmed up. The other was an old bay, with eweneck and a big stomach -- a lazy fellow nearly half again as big as Nellie, the pony. However, I had a team and felt the thrill of a true horseman as, with whip and lines both busy, I was on the road by one-thirty.

"Oh, if it were just morning instead of afternoon," I said to myself. In fact, this bothered my young mind quite a bit. I couldn't see how I was going to make the twenty-four mile drive before late in the night. Coming home so late gave me some fear. But, like a flash, the problem was solved. I would get Will Morgan to go along. What a relief! Sure enough he was home and his mother said, "Yes." Everything was now in good shape, so on we drove. However, the day was hot and, the team not being used to such a heavy load, the time went too fast for the miles we were making. By the time we reached Mr. Paddock's it was late in the afternoon and, by the time that chicken-eating old hog was crated and loaded and all her squealing family in the wagon, the sun was setting. Creepy feelings began going up and down my back as in the distance deep thunder rumbled over the still, gathering darkness. Mr. Paddock asked if we were hungry, but my only thought was home, sweet home. Off we went expecting to make good time, but our tired horses seemed to have none of the get-home-quick feelings which had now so possessed my whole system. Even the thrill of horses and lines had gone, and a nervous, high-tensioned condition had taken my appetite clear away. As we went through a little village I gave the only ten cents I had to Will, and he rushed into a store and bought a dime's worth of cheese and crackers and, so far as I know, ate every bite of it himself; one thing I am sure of, I had none, nor did I want any.

A great black cloud was now rapidly rising from the northwest, and flashes of lightning were coming more often, followed by fearful peals of thunder. All the while I was pressing the team as fast as I felt was safe for their health and, believing we could make time by a short cut on a dirt road through a heavy piece of timber land, we plunged in. But no sooner did we get well into this piece of forest than pitchy darkness settled around us. The only time we could see the road at all was when the lightning flashed, and it was doing this almost constantly. Each time it did, the little horse would jump and try to run while the old bay would jerk back and to the right. Soon the wind was sending trees and limbs flying, and the rain fell in torrents.

We both had put on overcoats before the storm broke. I had my father's on as it was warm and had a big collar. However, I was not to enjoy the overcoat long because the little pigs set up an awful squealing which made the old hog tear around until I was afraid she would break out of the old box. Also I was afraid that the baby pigs, which were only a couple of days old, would all be drowned. Therefore, there seemed but one thing for me to do, so I did it. I stopped the team,

pulled off the overcoat, got back and gathered up the half-drowned, squealing pigs, wrapped them all up in the coat and placed the bundle under the seat. At once their contented grunts paid me for the effort, and the old mother hog also got more quiet; but the storm continued to rage.

It seemed to me I would freeze. "Oh, why did I undertake such a trip? If I were only home! What if the old patched-up harness broke as my plugs pulled this way and that? My last time for such a trip as this! Why did I not keep on the main road instead of cutting across?" These and a thousand other thoughts flew through my mind. As we came through that woods, we could hear trees snapping and limbs flying. Dozens of times I thought I saw big trees falling across the horses and on us.

But finally we got out of the dirt road, which was now a mud road, back on the hard and well-kept pike. Soon the body of the storm had passed, but still a north wind blew keen and sharp. Drenched to the skin, hands so cold I could hardly hold the lines, and teeth chattering, I was thankful it was no worse than what it was.

By ten forty-five we came to Will's house. Another fifteen or twenty minutes brought me over the ridge where I could see my father's house. Lights were burning bright. At once my boyish heart took courage. From a wild-eyed, frightened, half-frozen boy I began to feel like a hero. As I drove into the yard, father met me with the lantern and told me to get down and run into the house and he would unhitch. My! what a big feeling went through and through me. Father going to unhitch and let me go into the house? It was usually the other way. I thought I knew then how big folks felt when they drove in and told the youngsters to unhitch.

My dear little mother met me at the door and, mother-like, let me know how glad she was I got back safely. It is a good thing folks don't burst when puffed-up feelings get bigger and bigger. My, what thrills I had as she helped me into nice warm, dry clothes and then dished out the splendid supper which she had kept warm all those hours her boy was struggling with a poorly matched team, mud roads, squealing pigs and a howling storm.

I suppose an experience like this will seem a small thing to many grown-ups, but I am glad it is such a big thing to me, especially the love manifested by my parents and the attention I received when I got safely home that night. May God bless our fathers and mothers and keep in the land many of this type, who will never lose genuine natural affection and old-time Bible discipline.

There was another experience I had, a year or two after the one just related, which I believe will be of practical value to our young folks. We will name this story "The Black Ghost."

### The Black Ghost

Having been told so many hair-raising ghost stories when I was a child, it was easy for me to see all kinds of spooky things at night, even when I was up in my teens. However, regardless of the untruth contained in most of these stories, we herewith tell one which is all truth, and one which proved to me that one can be scared so badly the hair will stand on end.

At the time this all happened, I was called a space reporter on the Commercial Gazette of Cincinnati. I walked three miles to the car line about noon and back home about midnight. The regularly used road was a bit longer, so when I could scrape up the courage I would take what was called the short cut. It had been the regular road in the past but was unused now on account of the steep hills, the mud and a falling bridge. There was something over a half mile of this old forsaken road, and brush and vines had about blocked it, especially in some places. However, it was so much shorter that I would usually cut across, always filling my pockets with good-sized stones before plunging into this jungle.

On account of the mud and the darkness one night I was having extra trouble in getting through. In fact, it was so difficult that as soon as I crossed the old bridge, which I was afraid was going to fall, I climbed over the fence to my right and continued my journey in the edge of the woods. It was much darker than in the road but better underfoot. All at once there was a crashing of bushes and vines that brought me to a sudden halt. Always having a stone in each hand I was ready, and I let one drive in the direction from whence came the noise, but all was quiet. At once I took to my heels as fast as trees, bushes and heavy shoes allowed.

When I reached the edge of the woods, at the top of the hill, I looked to my right and there, not more than two hundred feet away, was a black object keeping even pace with me. I stopped and it stopped. I went on and it went on. I stopped again and so did it. I let drive another rock and the object settled down to the ground. In fact, it seemed to go into the earth but, as soon as I started, it rose and kept even with me. Each time I threw a stone, it settled. That is all it seemed to do. I strained my eyes but couldn't tell its size. At times it looked as large as a cow.

Suddenly I thought of Robinson's Circus. They wintered just under the hill in those days, and every once in a while some wild animal would get loose and a reward would be offered for its return alive. I remembered a wild boar and a tiger had escaped. The tiger had nearly killed Mr. Robinson's son, and here I was in the woods so far from any house that no one could hear me call. Also my rocks were about gone, and no more could be found in the darkness. My terror was awful. I thought, "What moment will it break for me and tear me to pieces? How long will it be before my folks will find me? Is it an animal or not?" Then those ghost stories flew through my mind. "Is this a ghost haunting me? Well, there is but one thing to do, I must get home." Less than half a mile could put me home, so through the fence and back into the road I went and down through another hollow as fast as I could go, all the time hearing, or imagining I could hear, brush and sticks breaking beneath the feet of that monster. However, when I stopped I could hear nothing; so, gripping the last stones, I made a dash up the hill and as soon as I was past this hollow I looked on my right and there was my Black Ghost. Another rock hurled at it only caused it to repeat the sinking out of sight, and then rise and keep even pace as I went on.

By this time I was panting and dripping with sweat. Another few hundred feet and I would be at the crossroads where the church and the graveyard were. I settled to a walk. I crossed the road at the crossing, and it crossed, still the same distance to my right. I saw it was going to come right against the church, but, to my relief, it went to the side of the building opposite to me. Right then I took to my heels and fairly flew, hoping it would stay behind the church, but it did not. Right through the graveyard and among the tombs it easily kept even pace with me. Then to my horror it occurred to me that my last hope was being cut off. I had made up my mind to make this last dash

for home and scream for my father as I got near enough, but our house was on the same side of the road as the church, and if it proved to be some wild animal from Robinson's Circus, and I called for father, he would run right out into its jaws.

When in this plight, I remembered hearing of folks being scared until their hair stood on end. At once I felt mine, and it was either standing straight up with my cap on top or I was so scared I thought it was. As it was, I was sure it stood on end and this increased my fright all the more.

By this time I reached the lane going to our home, and the Black Ghost had reached the house. There I stood and there it stood. To call father might mean his life. I threw my last stone and that horrible black object settled to the ground. I started into the yard and it rose. I stopped and considered turning and running down the lane opposite our home, but felt sure it would believe I was really afraid and would easily overtake me in a few bounds. What could I do? Oh! what could I do!

Suddenly I thought of our dog. "I'll call our dog. If he gets killed, all right. I'll call old Nig," and I did.

At once that huge black object rose higher and higher in the air, for it suddenly seemed to take wings and with fearful leaps was coming straight for me. I stood like a statue. I couldn't move. I waited my doom. When within a few feet of me it fairly leaped against my breast. It was old Nig, our dog.

Nig was tickled to death to get a chance to come to me. He was wiggling all over. He was a huge dog and when standing on his hind legs was just as tall as I. I put his legs around my neck and kissed him in the mouth. I hugged him until he yelped for pain. I talked to him and loved him. Only my own heart and mind can ever know the relief I had when I found my Black Ghost was our precious dog. He had no doubt been on a lark out in the woods when I ran upon him. He wanted to come to me at once, but the occasional boulder kept him at a distance. He came close as he felt it safe and fairly leaped to meet me at one kind word. Thus it is that all ghost stories turn out in the end.

Then during these days there was another experience which taught me a needed lesson, but it was an expensive one. It is one every boy especially, it seems, has a hard time to get.

### My First Suit Of Long Pants

Not far from where we lived, a gentleman had a pony he called John. No doubt John was somewhere between twenty and thirty years old. He was so old that his head and neck were getting gray. His front legs stood forward like a milk stool, but, in spite of it all, he was a fine riding animal. No doubt he had been owned by cattle drivers and had gone thousands of miles in his early life.

One day we offered his owner five dollars for John and he took us up. Soon after this a neighbor wrote father to know if one of us boys couldn't come over and help him take some young cattle to Kentucky. Father consented to this, and also decided that I was the one to go.

Just before this my first good suit of long pants had been bought. It was a light-weight suit of fairly good quality, and since we were to go through Cincinnati on this trip I felt I must, of course, wear my new suit. But my parents said, "Never. Wear a new suit of clothes to drive cattle? Who ever heard of such a thing?" But I was not so easily convinced. My argument was: "Would I not have to go to the cattle man's house the day before and stay at his mother's the next night? How would I feel in their nice homes with old clothes on?"

The wearing or not wearing that new suit was the talk for days, or at least it was with me. It seemed to me I was about to undertake one of the greatest feats of my life and, of course, must wear my new suit. To my great sorrow later, they gave in, and, with my shoes shined, my stiff collar, my straw hat and my new suit I mounted old John for the trip of my life. But my spirit rather fell a bit when I rode into that farmer's yard and he laughed at me for coming to drive cattle all dressed up. Right then I began to see my mistake and lose all the joy out of life. But if the joy was gone the night before, you can imagine my feelings the next morning when I found it pouring down rain. It makes me sigh to this day as I recall my feelings on that morning, when I first woke up. By daylight we had those young cattle on the road, that is, they were on the road when they were not taking out across somebody's yard or up a lane. The farmer followed in an old buggy with a gentle old horse, old clothes, old shoes and old umbrella. I rode on an old pony, but I had on a new light-colored suit and a dressy, though cheap, straw hat. But my feelings were just about as old as my pony. Well, I was in for it, so did my part driving cattle.

Old John couldn't be beat. We soon got so we could keep those cattle close together walking fast or in a slow trot. It rained all day, but by dusk it blew up cold. We crossed the river on a little ferry which I was afraid would sink with that bunch of cattle, horse, buggy, pony and all. It was pulled across by a rope and was so slow that by the time we finally reached his mother's I was soaked to the skin and nearly frozen. My suit of clothes was ruined, my shoes were full of water, and my hat was out of shape. If ever a boy waded through a worse day than that, I pity him. I could hardly get my shoes off and was too tired to eat; so they put me to bed and dried my clothes.

The next morning I was up and off for home early. I think I got a dollar for that day's work, but money couldn't pay for the lesson I received. I learned that it paid to obey father and mother, for their advice was best. That suit of clothes never did look right after that day. My hat and shoes were a sight. My mind and heart were humbled and sick. The only thing which seemed to come through without a scratch was old John. He was one of the best animals we ever owned. He was always ready to do his best, whether hitched to a buggy or under a saddle. It seemed to me he understood my feelings; at least I patted him on the neck and told him all about it as we rode home the next day. Many have been the times I have hid my face in the mane of a horse I loved and, while tears flowed, told him my trouble. No doubt much of it amounted to but little, but to a boy with high ideals and more zeal than wisdom some of these little troubles seemed mighty big. Then a pony or a horse will do something very few people will do. They will patiently listen to all one has to say, without even seeming impatient or losing their appetite, and they will also faithfully keep every secret told them.

In closing this chapter there is one more story of my childhood days I want to give. The incident which I have reference to happened when I was quite young, but the lesson it impressed upon me still remains, even though more than thirty years have passed by. Like many of my childhood experiences it has to do with animals.

### My First And Last Mule

My father and I were hoeing strawberries one spring morning when into the patch walked the assessor. After a while, when he was about to go, he turned and asked me if I would like to own a mule. He told me that if I wanted one to come over to his place and he would give me his. It didn't take as long to let him know I would take it as it is taking to write about it. As long as I could remember I had wanted a horse. I believed that to own a horse would put me in such a contented state of mind and heart that I would never want another thing as long as I lived. It was a horse I wanted. I hadn't thought of mules, but a mule was so much like a horse I figured it would be just as good.

I begged my father to let me go to get the mule at once, but he said there was no need of breaking a day up like that; so I hoed strawberries and dreamed mules until noon. By the time dinner was over, I had begged and pleaded until father let me start right off. I had about one mile or more to walk, or to run; if I did walk all the way it was at a speed no other boy ever walked. The old assessor was not there, so one of his grown sons took me to the barn. On the way out he told what a splendid single line plow mule the mule was; how he could, and had pulled a carload of coal by himself. He said many a team had failed to move a big car-load of coal, but every time this mule was hitched to one he leaned into the collar, stuck in his toes and stayed right there until the car moved. By the time we reached the barn, my love and admiration for that mule knew no bounds. I felt as though I could farm any farm and pull any load with my mule. I would jump on him and ride him up through the village, to the envy of every boy and man and the admiration of the girls and the ladies.

But by the time we reached his box stall, my heart began to sink. My feelings flattened as I looked at that poor old mule between thirty and forty years old. I was informed that he could not hear a thing, but that with a slight jerk on a single line he would go gee and with a light pull haw, and a heavy pull would make him stop, and a slap with the line would make him start. I was told also he had not been curried all winter, neither had his stable been cleaned. They didn't have to tell me this, for it was evident he had not been curried for the winter; it looked as though instead of the mule shedding his hair the year before, the old hair had just continued growing. And what manure was not sticking to him somewhere was piled so high in one corner that the old fellow was nearly standing on his head, at least he was far from standing level. He had not been out of the stall for months, and his feet were grown out and crooked. Indeed, he was a sight. However, he had been given to me, and, as I looked him over, my mind worked hard for plans to improve him.

I decided, however, to wait until after dark to take him home. I figured that it would be better to wait until I worked my new mule over before I let folks see him. So as soon as it was dark, I put on the bridle I had brought with me and lead him out. He took his time to get out of the stall, in fact he had to take his time. He was so rheumatic in one shoulder and in the hip on the

opposite side that he groaned as he pulled his poor old stiff limbs over the doorsill. Three times, before we got home, he fell down and had a time getting up and starting again. However, I had recovered from the flattened feelings I received at the first sight of him, for I believed I had a cure.

The next morning I begged mother's scissors and went to work. I cut the manure off his sides and belly as best I could. I curried, washed and dried the old fellow. I begged father to let me get a bottle of Sloan's Liniment, and faithfully applied it to his rheumatic spots. With a long rope I tied him out at nights so he could get the grass. I could see him improving as he got green grass and shed his wool. I say "wool," because his coat of hair was more like stiff wool than anything else.

Many times that summer I wished I had never seen that mule. Especially was this so when he would break the rope about midnight and get into the corn patch, and father, hearing him, would call to me to get up quick and get that mule out of his corn. Half asleep and in not any too good a mood, out through the wet corn I would wade to find the old fellow happily feasting on roasting ears sweet and fresh.

However, my reward came at last. We found that old mule was everything the assessor said -- deaf as a stone, but a good plower. We plowed the strawberries, the corn and the garden truck all summer. In fact, we hauled off much of the berry crop and we were hauling the peaches when I found a buyer for him. I was returning from selling some peaches when, half a mile or more from home, I met a huckster driving a team of mules. I stopped him and asked if he wanted to buy a mule. He said he did, and soon sized up my mule. He asked what I wanted, and I said ten dollars. He offered five, and I let him have the old fellow. As soon as he took the mule, and I got the money, I ran the wagon into a barnyard near at hand, and took across the woods for fear he would back out.

But I started to tell how I got rewarded for my mule. A neighbor of ours bought a splendid Clydesdale colt that spring, and of course his son had a right to smile out of the corner of his mouth as we passed each other -- he with his quick, young horse and I with my slow, aged mule. I always wilted at such times and felt pretty cheap, until one day he came over and asked me if I would come and plow corn for them a couple of days. They said their corn must be plowed at once or the weeds would take it, and if I would bring my mule, plow and harness, they would give me fifty cents a day. I jumped at the chance and the next morning was over early, with my plow in their little wagon. We had about three miles to go, so they drove their young horse and I led, or rather dragged, my mule behind. I sat flat in the wagon with both feet braced against the tail gate, as it was taking all the strength I had to pull my mule along as fast as they wanted to go. I knew how they were feeling about the mule and it made me feel awfully whipped. Then to add to it all, we went right through the village where I got him. No doubt my face was red, at least I felt as if everybody was looking and laughing at the scene as we passed along.

As soon as we reached the field, we hitched to our cultivators and went at it. That boy would do two rows to my one. I did everything I knew to hurry up my mule, but he had a certain gait he had kept for some thirty years and was not so easily changed by a boy in his teens. I could see that the neighbor, who was cutting weeds with a hoe while his boy plowed, was beginning to feel that I was hardly earning my fifty cents, and I was a bit shaky about it myself. After a while I

settled it to let the mule have his gait and do a good job of plowing, even if I couldn't keep up with the colt. But by noon the colt was panting and foaming under his harness and was going no faster than the mule. By three o'clock in the afternoon the mule and I were doing more rows than the colt, and by four he was in a fence corner, done for the day, while the old mule, at the same gait with which he started, went right on until quitting time. My! but I became a hero those last few hours. I felt as large as any man walking, and I thought my mule was worth two Clydesdale colts. The farmer changed his attitude toward me, and the son also lost his corner-of-the-mouth smile, especially as we wended our way slowly home at night. The fifty cents was gladly received but the record my mule made was worth more than money could buy.

I learned a lesson from that steady old mule which has helped me in many a hard battle since then. How much better it is to start out with a steady gait one can keep, and a determination that will take one through, rather than to start in haste and excitement and with display which will only end in hysterical defeat. It is best always to take time to acknowledge God in all our ways so that He will direct our paths.

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## Chapter 2 CONVERSION AND ENGAGEMENT

When I was about twenty years old, my cousin was teaching in our school. But she was to be married the following year, and so would soon be giving up her school. I knew that this meant a new teacher, and I predicted that the next teacher would be a beautiful, brown-eyed, brown-haired girl, and that I would marry her. In my heart I doubted it, although, boy-like, I wanted a romance and hoped it would turn out as I predicted. Sure enough, when the new teacher came she was all I had prophesied. She was as pretty as a picture, with rosy cheeks, wavy, golden-brown hair and eyes to match. So far all was well and good, and I was elated; then it would dawn on me that I was a failure. I had no education to speak of, while she was a teacher. Timidly, I did everything possible to get acquainted with the new teacher but she seemed not to care to meet any one. School-teaching seemed her business altogether. Fall came on and passed into winter. I was more discouraged and disgusted than words could tell. I was making no headway at all toward making a success in life or getting any closer to the beautiful teacher.

About this time the midwinter revival broke out. It ran about five or six weeks, and scores went to the altar. Some of the crowd I ran with were up in front helping in every way possible to get souls saved. I sat in the back of the church with the boys who were backsliders and sinners. For a while I held out stout against all pleadings. Could Christians chew tobacco, dance, go to theaters, listen to and tell dirty, smutty stories? If I went as a seeker I knew these should go also. However, although turning aside one after the other, I didn't get rid of conviction, which was weighing me down heavier day by day. There was one woman whom I feared and respected. She did lots of praying, but let me alone for a while. I didn't know what I would do if she came to me, for I knew she was living a Christian life. She was never invited to worldly functions; but when trouble or death entered some home, she was at once sent for. I can see her yet, as, with white waist and dark skirt spotless and clean, she would take her Bible and go on her mission.

I afterwards learned more about her. When she was fifteen years old she had been converted and called to work in the Salvation Army; but, instead of obeying, she married, and for years lived a backslidden life. But she continued praying to God to convict her just once more. Her first husband died, and later she married another man and lived nearer the church. Finally, after getting back to God, she realized herself too old and poorly to do the work God had ordered years before; therefore, she began praying for a substitute, and God burdened her for me. I never knew this until after I was saved; then she told me how many a night, when she knew I was at a dance, she was on her knees at the midnight hour prevailing for my salvation. She began praying for me four years before this revival began. After this meeting she was a mother in Israel to me. Many a time I have fled to her home for spiritual help, and she always wept and prayed until, when I left, I was strengthened and encouraged and determined to press on.

By the time this meeting had run three weeks, I was so miserable that I knew not what to do. Each night I thought I would make my last, but next night off to meeting again I went. I got so distressed I couldn't sleep or eat. One day my brother and I went to town, three miles way, and bought our first bottle of whisky. We intended to drink it, and see if we couldn't throw off the spell of distress and feel better. On our way home we tasted it but, as we were not drinkers, it seemed like liquid fire. It burned so badly we threw it away and suffered on. On Saturday night my brother and I were sleeping downstairs in our parents' bed as they had gone away for a few days. Midnight found me wide-awake and so convicted that I was afraid to sleep for fear I would die before morning. I would hold my hand on my heart. It would beat a few beats and stop. I felt my brother's pulse, and it was steady as he slept away. Cold sweat broke out on my forehead, then all over me. It seemed that demons were dragging chains up and down the dark and lonesome stairway. My past life all loomed up before me -- the wasted days, weeks and months! What a miserable failure I had been! Oh, that I had never been born! But there I was facing God; it was a case of taking Him or rejecting Him. In terror I promised myself and God, as best I could, that if I lived until Sunday night I would go to the altar and get right with Him. In that revival one of the principal songs was "Is Thy Heart Right With God?" This question whirled through my mind like a buzz saw through a green log. It had faced me every moment day and night. But after making the above promise, I went to sleep.

The next afternoon, (Sunday) as my usual custom was on Sunday afternoons, I gathered with the boys, this time at my cousin's. Stories were told, but I was mum. I had but little to say until all had left the room but my cousin. He was a man much older than I. He had once been saved and had been superintendent of the Sunday School. As soon as we were alone, I told him that I was going to the altar that night. He looked at me and said, "You are right; that is the thing to do."

As I went into the church that night I stopped to talk to a backslidden class leader. I was losing courage and began to feel I could not go; but he looked at me and, with tears running down his cheeks, told me to go. "Go, go by all means! I would give anything in the world to be back in grace where I was once!"

I have no idea what the preacher preached about that night. His text, if he had any, has been long forgotten; but when the invitation was given and that great crowd stood and sang one of those grand old invitation songs, I fought the mental battle of my life. My promise made at midnight stood before me. I wanted to go, but couldn't move. We all sat down, whereupon the preacher stood up

and said something like this, "There is some one here who promised God that he would come to the altar tonight. He has not yet come, and I fear it is his last call." Cold sweat stood on my body. It seemed that all were looking at me and knew what I had promised God. Then the preacher said, "Let's stand and sing that chorus once more for that soul." As we rose to our feet I made for the altar, right up the center aisle, and fell heavily on the old mourners' bench. Seven nights and days found me right down there seeking God. To this day I can hear Sister W\_\_\_\_\_ praying for me. She then talked to me and I wanted her to talk. In fact, I always believed she had the real thing and I expected to be just like her when I became a Christian. I expected, after God saved me, that I would testify as she did. I thought I would be able to kneel, turn my face Heaven-ward, fold my hands, and talk to God until all heads would bow and stillness would reign as when she prayed.

On the seventh night I lifted my head and with a groan begged God not to leave me. At once and like a flash it seemed that a ton of hot lead was lifted off my heart. I stood up. I was a Christian and knew it. My sins were all under the Blood. My heart was right with God What a wonderful relief and rest and joy!

The next night the preacher called on me to pray. I knelt, as Sister W\_\_\_\_\_ did, looked up and began, but lo! it didn't work like it did when that old war horse prayed. My words were few and badly put together, and at once the enemy jumped on my back. He made me so ashamed that I got down where no one could see me and stayed there until all had left the church. He told me I was not saved at all, but only hypnotized. As I slowly walked down the aisle after all had gone, I remembered a verse of Scripture which says something about God having no pleasure in him that taketh hold of the plow handle and then turns back. At once I put out my hands as if I were holding a plow handle, looked up into God's face and, with my nails sinking into the palms of my hands, promised Him I would ever faithfully walk with Him and do His will, whether I ever prayed like Sister W\_\_\_\_\_ or anybody else. I then and there set my face like a flint to go through. Many battles have since been fought, but the enemy sneaks off when I remind him of my conversation with God as I walked down the aisle in that country church, over twenty-six years ago.

In my struggle for God I thought but little about the school teacher, until one night she stood and clearly witnessed for her Savior. At once I decided to ask her to let me walk home with her, but she politely reminded me she was with Mr. and Mrs. W\_\_\_\_\_ and of course would get safely home without my assistance. I soon learned of a fine young gentleman who was making friends with her parents, thus hoping to win her hand. Another, too, was very attentive to the family where she boarded, hoping by such diplomacy to finally win the teacher. The latter heard that I was somewhat interested, but laughingly declared, "That awkward farmer has no chance whatever!" But while the other two were busy courting parents and the folks where she boarded, I went straight for the teacher.

At the same time I got desperate about getting work which would support us as well as convince her folks that I could succeed. To have God to now talk to was such a help. Before this I had, many a time, hid my face in the mane of one of our horses and told him my troubles. Now I had One who really could help. About this time I was offered an ice business, but I needed a few hundred dollars to purchase wagon, team, harness, etc. For days I went here and there trying to borrow money, but each time met defeat, until I was about hopelessly discouraged. Then I thought of one more person who might help. To this elderly lady I went and asked if she would go on my

note for so many hundred dollars. "No, sir." She would go on nobody's note. "Never!" Then she stood and watched me wilt. About the time I felt, and no doubt looked, like a dish rag, she said she would not go on a note but would gladly loan me the money. God had answered prayer. Only God knows the thrill as, on my big ice wagon, I drove the roads and streets selling ice with a spark of hope rising in my life.

Meanwhile I had been going to see the teacher regularly for months. So far as I was concerned I loved her better each week but, as she was of such a reserved nature, I was afraid to breathe my feelings to her, until one night when a storm greatly helped me out. Realizing that the storm was soon to break and that it might last longer into the night than I should stay, I rose to go and she followed me to just outside the front door. I turned and was shaking her hand and saying good-night when suddenly there was a fearful flash of lightning, followed immediately with crashing thunder which fairly shook the house. Unconsciously, she made one step toward me, whereupon I put my arm around her and kissed her on the forehead. Then we both stepped back, she to quickly return inside, and I back home. I was thrilled through and through, but what had I done? We had parted without a word, so how did she feel, and would I dare return? My mind was in a whirl, but to really live I had begun. If only I could succeed. If only I could come back to her again.

After our action that night it would now be necessary to say something. I must open my heart fully and tell her how I felt; so just as soon as possible when we were alone I looked into those wonderful eyes and asked her if we were engaged. With cheeks aglow and as sweet as honey and as innocent as a lily she said, "Yes."

But there was some one else to ask about this. This was Ruth's father. So the following Sunday evening I drove over to see him. He was known as the squire and, although as big-hearted as could be found, he seemed to be firm and of a make-up which I feared. However, Ruth said she would stay in the front room and pray for me while I went in and asked him. They have always declared I went right up to his bedside and told him we were going to get married. But I am sure I asked him if he cared if we got married. He looked at me a moment and then asked if Ruth loved me. I said, "Yes." He then asked if I loved Ruth and I again answered, "Yes." He then said he had no objections.

Our hearts were now light and happy. I worked early and late to get the borrowed money paid back, and to get some ahead.

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### Chapter 3 A VOW AND A WIFE

During the time that Ruth taught, the schoolroom was poorly heated and as a result she caught cold after cold. She could hardly get through the year, and spent as much time resting as could be spared from her work. As soon as school closed, she went home and was poorly all summer. School opened again and she was on hand, but was not well. Before the year closed, she was down with tuberculosis of the spine. We were afraid it would prove fatal and we prepared for

death. Day after day I drove my team with a heavy heart. All my bright future seemed suddenly and cruelly thrown into darkness and suffering. However, this very shadow drove us to more prayer and gave us a deeper determination to serve God. It also was the means of helping me to make some promises to God which I have never forgotten.

During these trying days I went through another revival, in which I claimed to be sanctified. At once I counseled with Ruth about it, but she didn't seem enough concerned. I read the Word and ran into the Scripture which says, "Be ye not unequally yoked together." I so feared God and that I might lose Him that I promised to break the engagement unless she also got the blessing. You may rest assured that I then did some praying for her, and in a few days I called her up over the phone and she was through. We later found that neither of us was sanctified, however we claimed the blessing and got all the persecution of the fully sanctified, if none of the benefit. After this experience I poured my soul out to God. I promised to do anything and to go anywhere if He would heal Ruth and let us marry.

In addition to this there were other burdens: I had to pay for the harness, for feed and the upkeep of the wagon, etc. Each night I gave my money to my old aunt for safe keeping, as she had a big trunk which she kept locked. However, with all my carefulness in keeping down feed bills, keeping the ice bills paid, etc., it seemed I was making no headway. At the end of each month I was but little ahead. These were trying days. My sweetheart was slowly dying with tuberculosis, and I was working from before daybreak until dark with seemingly no success. Hoping against heavy odds kept me mighty serious, I tell you. However, that summer's experience brought me closer to God than if it had been spent on flowery beds of ease. In the fall I became desperate. The note was due and I hadn't enough money to meet it. I wouldn't ask the good lady to renew it so I sold my best horse and paid it off. I also needed at least one hundred dollars to set up housekeeping if we did get married in December as had been planned.

Facing these facts I hid away, and on my knees prayed a prayer which to this day holds me steady. In fact it keeps me going from place to place in my Master's vineyard. Even now, while I am typing these lines, I am sailing down the west coast of Africa, having been to South America four times, across the United States once, and from state to state time and again, besides many trips up and down the West Indies.

On my knees that day I promised God, the rest of my life, every day and every hour, to be anything He ordered and to go anywhere He called. Little did I dream what it would mean. I didn't know nor care, but meant it from the depth of my heart. I put all on the altar forever. All I asked God for was Ruth. I promised Him the above, then claimed Ruth's healing, so she could be my helpmate through life. God took me at my word. She began to recover at once, and by the twenty-eighth of December was as pretty as a rose bud and fair as a lily. I am glad for my vow to God at that time. It stands before me all the time and holds me steady and plodding on in God's sweet will.

One day just before our wedding I was discussing the matter of money with my folks. After squaring up everything for the summer's work I had my ice wagon left, one horse and a set of double harness. This was not enough to set up housekeeping with, and I was distressed. But my aunt took me aside and gave me one hundred dollars. I could hardly believe my eyes. She then told

me how, each night, after I went to bed, she opened her trunk and slipped some change out of my pocketbook and hid it. When the ice season was over, she found she had saved this amount for me.

My father-in-law, to be, drove me to the county seat and we secured our marriage license. The wedding day was set and invitations were sent out. My sweetheart wanted her father and mother to plan this great day to their liking, and they did. It mattered but little to me just so I got the girl. I will confess that the nearer that day came the more nervous I got. When it finally arrived I was up before daybreak. I shaved so close I nearly took skin and all. Soon after a nervous breakfast I hitched up to the buggy and, with my wedding suit, shoes and necktie under the seat, I was off for the next county. I wanted to get there before anybody else, and I surely did, for I came nearly getting there before the folks even had their breakfast.

As I came to a clearing where I could see the house in the distance, there on the porch stood my darling waving her hand. My heart nearly leaped out of me. Could it be possible? Was it a dream? Had the past two years been real? Had we gone from the mountain peak of bliss to the valley of gloom, then been lifted up again to this paradise so thrilling? Soon I was in her presence. To me she looked like an angel with her golden-brown hair so soft and waving and her eyes that fairly spoke love without making a sound, and she was nearly normal in health. Her red lips and rosy cheeks were perfected by a complexion as fair as a lily. She was steady, composed, sweet, and the queen of the day. I should, it seems, have been king, but instead I was blushing, restless and unsteady. I was given the front room upstairs where I began dressing. My hair couldn't lie just right, and of all the times I ever had it was while I was trying to tie that necktie. I got nervous and excited and began to think the noon hour would come and I would be still wrestling with my tie. However, at last I was fixed -- my black suit and shoes on -- and an hour or more to wait.

The time came. With Ruth's arm in mine, we slowly went down the stairs to the parlor. Ruth says she was as happy and light-hearted as could be. She would look right into my soul and give me courage as we faced the relatives and friends that wonderful day. After the preacher made us man and wife, which didn't take long, we went to the table for the greatest feast I ever saw. But, although not having eaten much for a day or two, I was so conscious, or thought I was, of all eyes on me that I nearly choked trying to eat. Ruth laughed and ate, as cheerful and free as a bird, while I felt as if my face was red as fire and my hands as big as my feet. Many times since I have wished I could have that day over, especially the meal. I now believe I could sit up, look them all in the face, and enjoy every bite.

In a few days we left her mother's home for my neighborhood, where I had rented a small farm. Not being able to get possession for a month, we stayed with my folks. During this month we bought what furniture was necessary and, with some things given us, we were soon very snug in our new home.

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#### Chapter 4 MY "CALL" -- DRAWING BACK -- AND THE RESULTS

In an Easter program in March Ruth sang a song, the chorus of which was something like this, "Lovest thou me? Oh, lovest me? Then go feed my sheep wherever they be, etc." I thought but little of it until I was breaking the soil that spring. As I followed my team I usually sang, and at this time found myself singing this song, and especially was I gripped by the chorus. Slowly it began to dawn on me that God wanted me to preach. Fear seized me. I was so afraid of even the thought of preaching that I prayed for God to make me forget the chorus; but, although I tried to sing every other song I knew, this one constantly rang in my mind. How could I go feed God's sheep? How could I feed His lambs? I was willing to give fifty per cent of all I could make to help others preach, but I couldn't see how I could do it myself. Then my promise to God before marrying Ruth stood before me. If He would heal her, I would do whatever He ordered.

We had bought a set of Dr. Godbey's commentaries and every spare moment I had I spent reading them. At my noon hour, in the evenings, on Sundays and every chance I had, I spent feasting on these books. This, with the song, was used of God to fully convince me of my calling into the ministry.

Everything began to work together to force me off the farm and to the pulpit. I would promise to go, but where was I to go, and how was I to get started? Sister W\_\_\_\_\_ was one of God's handmaidens, and God used her to get us looking in the right direction. She told us of a great Holiness camp meeting to be held in June in the next county. At once we began planning to go. The time came and we had no money. A tollgate was on the route and we did not have even enough to pay the toll. What could I do? I began looking over our few belongings to see what we could sell and what we could do without. Finally I decided we could farm without fly-nets, therefore, I sold them and off we went to camp meeting.

Well, I have been in some great meetings in the last twenty years but none like that one. There were ten thousand people on the grounds. We sat not far from the front in the big tent. Time and again my wife would touch my arm and tell me to sit back on the bench. When sitting back like the rest she would whisper to me that I was staring at the singers, exhorters and the preacher with my mouth open. She told me that I was so near the edge of the bench she was afraid I would fall off. For a moment I would feel very much ashamed and wonder how many others saw me when I was in such a position, but soon I would be lost again in the hilarious singing, shouting and fire-baptized preaching until my wife brought me back to my seat and the earth. I must have looked ridiculous indeed, but I absorbed things that day which were used in my ministry for years to come.

During that summer my wife's father bought a farm not far from his home, and wanted us to move over and take charge. Here is where my mental battles got keener and keener. The spirit was willing but the flesh weak. I intended to go preach sometime, but did God want me to go now, or should we move to Father Wood's farm? About this time we got in touch with God's Bible School in Cincinnati. Sister W\_\_\_\_\_ wanted us to go there at once, but we had no money and not enough faith to launch out, while at the same time we did not feel good and clear about moving to father's farm. However, something had to be done, for the owner of the little farm we were living on wanted possession, as he was soon moving back. It seemed there was nothing to do but move to the farm my wife's father had bought. We moved late in the fall, with many misgivings. It seemed we were moving away from God's will instead of farther into it. But we could see nothing else to do at

the time so we moved and began work on the new place with all our might. I tore down old fences, fixed up the stable a bit, and made things look as well as possible outside. My wife worked to get the old house clean and neat like our first home we had left. However, neither of us ever felt contented in this place; especially was I distressed.

Before moving, and right after my call became perfectly clear, one thing after the other went wrong. Each time something happened, I would promise God afresh to go preach. My team consisted of a big bay coach horse of very fine stock, and a neat dun a trifle smaller and an excellent buggy horse. Right in the midst of my first summers farming the bay, which had cost me one hundred dollars, went wrong. He lost control of himself and grew worse until, while in the hands of a horse doctor, he broke his neck. In despair I promised to go preach. Working so hard and thinking harder nearly ruined my health. The work was enough, but to be constantly feeling that I should be preaching kept me in an awful state of mind. Realizing I must have a team, I decided to sell the dun the first offer I got. About that time he stepped on a rusty nail and it looked as if I would lose him, too. Just then my brother came to my rescue and bought him. He gave me a hundred dollars, so I bought two plugs for the hundred and perhaps ten dollars more. With this team we moved to Father Wood's farm.

Things here, however, only kept getting worse. Soon after moving we were in need of money, so I sold one of the plugs for sixty dollars and paid the bills due. This left me with a fifty or sixty dollar plug, so I sold him and began to look for two more for the sixty dollars. Soon I had them -- both over thirty years old and pretty shaky-looking animals with which to run a farm. As I was going from bad to worse in horses, my feelings were also sinking. Somehow I must preach. We went to church regularly, and I led prayer meetings when opportunities offered, and testified. People told me I could farm and still preach enough to please God. However, it did not so work.

One day I asked a pastor if he was saved. My convictions were so high I couldn't believe he was a saved man. He said, "Yes." So I asked him how he knew it, whereupon he said because he loved the brethren. I went home and told my wife what he said, and we concluded that he must be saved, for we had read the Scripture he quoted but a few days before. We were getting ready to go to the camp meeting at God's Bible School. It was their regular camp meeting and knowing the preaching would be very close, I was getting everything so arranged that I would not be hit when some preacher touched on owing no man anything. I had just bought some hay of the preacher just mentioned and owed him eight dollars. Soon after our above conversation, I started over to pay him. At the same time he started over to see me. As we drew nearer to each other, I saw he was furious about something, and before he was near enough to decently hold a conversation he jumped onto me. Never in my life had I ever gotten such a tongue lashing as I did that morning. He asked how I could profess to be a Christian and run off to a fanatical, "holy-roller" meeting while owing my neighbor. He skinned me and hung me up to dry. The camp meeting, too, got some blisters. It was a good opportunity for him to air his views, and nothing escaped. As soon as I could get a word in edgewise, I told him I was not going without paying him and, in fact, was right then on my way to his house to pay the eight dollars. I pulled it out and handed it over. He tried to cool off and act civilized, but I suppose one in such a state of mind requires more time to become normal than what I gave him. At least he was still red to the roots of his hair and looking fierce when I turned for home. I walked into the house and told my wife that the preacher was not a saved man. She

asked how I knew, and I told her how he loved me up there in the road before I had time to pay him..

In January, after moving onto Father Wood's farm, our first baby was born. I wanted a boy but my wife had prayed for a girl, and, sure enough, it was a girl and as fair as her mother. This was a new experience for us. The suffering my young and lovely wife went through nearly crushed me. At once I renewed my promise to go preach and to do so the first opportunity I had. Just back of the large front room was our bedroom, and in the big room itself was an old-fashioned fireplace where we kept a big fire going day and night. It was as necessary at night as in daytime, because, as regularly as we dropped off to sleep, every night about nine o'clock our baby woke up with a sharp cry, and the screaming she did for the next two hours not only kept us awake but kept me pacing the floor. At that time I could handle most any kind of a horse, and no job looked too big or hard, but that little girlie had me whipped every night for at least two hours. I would plan what to do during the daytime, but everything failed; so I humbly packed her back and forth, sang soothing songs, coaxed, begged and gave her hot water. Aunt Martha, too, trotted around, as well as my wife, but baby defied our heroic efforts, kicked, cried and twisted until about eleven o'clock, then, after a good belch, she relaxed on my shoulder and slept. I always felt the heaviest job of the day was done at those times, and rolled in to make up for lost time.

It was at midnight, after one of these scenes, that both my wife and I woke up and sprang from our bed to find the house on fire. The roar was awful, as it was a cold, still night. The flames had reached from the foundation under the old fire place to the top of the second story windows, and the smoke had settled down inside the front room to within three and a half feet of the floor. My wife grabbed our precious baby, and I started for the pump, which was outdoors and on the same side of the house which was on fire. We neither stopped to dress, nor even put on coats, although the ground was somewhat frozen. While I pumped water, she ran for a neighbor. The pump was not in good condition but surely I made it fly as, with all the strength I had, I threw water against the flames. It seemed most of the water splashed back, feeling like ice on my thinly covered body. Thoughts flew through my mind. Father Wood knew I was not contented. Would he think I set it afire? Would the neighbors also think so? They knew I felt I should preach and was restless on the place. Oh, how I prayed as I threw water! I promised God to go preach at once if He would only put out the fire. My throat was dry as I panted and prayed. Meanwhile my wife returned and, having things upstairs she wanted to save, rushed up. She stayed so long that I got uneasy and rushed up for her, but the smoke was so dense I couldn't see, breathe or speak. I was desperate as I felt around, and have always believed that God directed me, for she was lost and about suffocated when I got hold of her and led her downstairs. It was a narrow escape. After all these years it frightens me as I write about it.

As soon as all was quiet, and the smoke cleared out, we went in and dressed. We built a fire in the kitchen stove and got warm. Then I said, "Let's see what God says," and opened my Bible. My eyes fell on the following verse, Psalm 29:7, "The voice of the Lord divideth the flames of fire." We kneeled and prayed. We thanked God for putting out the fire and for saving Ruth from suffocation.

Several men, who came to see next day, declared that half a dozen men could not have thrown enough water with buckets to put out the fire. God put it out. God, Himself, answered

prayer. After it was over, it was found that the fire had even burned through the upstairs wall and was eating its way over the floor.

I believed God had spoken again and in no uncertain way. I was convinced I must preach. The fire was another warning to go, and the Scripture a promise to divide every flame we ever had to go through. I so stated to my wife, and the years which have come and gone since then have surely proven it to be true.

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## Chapter 5 YIELDING TO MY "CALL" AND SOME LESSONS

My mind was now fixed. I was determined to say good-bye to the farm and go preach. My confidence in our preacher was gone. It seemed the neighborhood was without a shepherd. I became burdened for the lost. On every hand were friends and neighbors without God, and nothing happening to awaken them. Those who were hungry received no food; so I started cottage prayer meetings. God honored from the first one, and souls got help and learned how to pray.

An old gentleman attending our prayer meetings heard us sing and pray. He listened while we read and talked from God's Word. He was about seventy-five years old and soon he took sick and died. On his deathbed he told his wife to get me to preach his funeral sermon. He said he wanted me to conduct the whole service, for I was a real Christian and called to preach. This was my first sermon. Another old man, and one who knew God, watched from the start to the finish and afterwards told me no preacher could have done better. This caused me to bow in humility and thanks to God, and was another seal that proved He was wanting me to preach.

By this time the tension in the church and the neighborhood was getting high. I was called about everything that the disciples of old were named by the scribes and Pharisees. I was advised by relatives to go easy and not be so radical, but God had put a fire in my heart which made me hate sin and give it no quarters, whether in pulpit or pew. I saw we were making lifelong friends, also bitter enemies. The church member sinners were being exposed so they declared I was splitting the church. Starting prayer meetings and getting folks to seek God was all that I was doing, still I was getting it right and left. All this drove me more regularly to God and prayer.

When I was cultivating corn the first time, a woman from Hyde Park stopped in and asked if I knew where she could buy a cow. I told her, and she went at once and purchased same. On her way back she stopped and wanted me to deliver the cow for her. I promised to do so, but before letting her go I told of my salvation, sanctification and call to preach. In fact, I witnessed to everybody who would listen. By the time I reached her place the next day she had a plan whereby I could go to school. She told me that she was a widow and, although owning a palatial home and seven or more acres in Hyde Park, Cincinnati, she had to make her living by selling milk. She told how well she was acquainted with God's Bible School and how she helped them feed the down-and-outs at Thanksgiving time. She said for us to move right down into her home; we could occupy the lower floor, my wife do the cooking while I milked the cows morning and night and delivered the milk to near-by customers. This could be done easily before and after school, thus I

could attend Bible School during the daytime. This all looked so good that I at once accepted, although my wife hesitated. She was not clear and time proved that I had better have listened to her. My desperate state of mind caused me to have zeal without wisdom and to rush without taking time to pray. I have since learned that it never grieves the Holy Spirit to prove Him. When an impression is of God, it will slowly but steadily grow on one's hands until it becomes a conviction. When of the enemy, it will come like a cyclone and demand instant action. I was to have each day, after the milking was done and until school opened, to go back and forth to the farm, so I could attend to my crops. Meanwhile I offered them for sale right in the field.

We moved to this place, I think it was, in June. But what a mistake we made! All this work on the farm and on the widow's place was working me nearly to death. I soon got desperate and offered everything we had on our farm for sale.

Not many days after we were in our new residence, we began to see that something was wrong. Instead of being in a good lady's home who wanted to help us through school, we were in a dangerous house and with a woman with whom the less we had to do, the better. Meanwhile my father had called me to his home and told me what he thought. He felt I needed a horse-whipping. My father-in-law was disgusted and ready to give me up as hopeless. At the time it nearly killed me. I couldn't make them understand my convictions and God's leadings. As I look back over the past I can easily see how they felt, and what a dunce I must have looked to them. I do not blame them at all, for surely I did some strange-looking things.

When we found we were in a trap in the Hyde Park affair, we planned to get out the safest and easiest way we could. We figured it best to move back to the farm in the night, so as to escape at least a little of the gossipers' shot and shell. So one evening we loaded up our wagon ready to travel early next morning. We left the chickens until the last thing, when, to our dismay but not surprise, we found them locked up and the woman gone. In the deal we lost about eighty as fine young Plymouth Rocks as could be found. However, we were glad to lose it all in order to get away. We took the first good long breath we had taken for some time, soon after midnight, as we drove away from what had proven one of the most questionable houses in which we ever lived.

That was one of the grandest early morning rides of my life. As we drove home in that July night with our furniture, the stars were brightly shining above. We were both young and strong, and our precious baby was sleeping on her mother's lap. We had, no doubt, made a mistake but we were not defeated. I determined to preach as soon as we got to school. It surely looked as if I had made a fool of myself. No wonder folks were talking. But as we rode along in the cool night, with nothing to break the stillness but our team, we told each other how we would stand by each other, how we loved each other; and although my wife had warned me about that move she never once said, "Didn't I tell you so?" No, sir; she just nestled up to me and kissed the fever from my troubled brain. And this she has had to do many times since. I think I would have gone crazy more than once if not for her sweet voice, patience and love when my zeal got me in a mental whirlwind.

However, one good thing came out of this experience. While at this woman's home I had cut and mowed her hay. To get from the meadow to the barn I had a steep hill to pull. One day while I was going up this hill, a contractor happened along. He stopped and watched the old team wiggle up that hill with the hay. When I returned, he was there to see me. I stopped and he asked

what I would take for them. I told him to come up to the farm on a certain day and I would lump my tools, wagon, team and harness at a reasonable price. I had taken good care of them and they looked fairly well. So one day after we returned home, right in the midst of the potato digging, the contractor drove in. As he wanted to see the team plow, I started them up. It was an awfully hot day and the team was slow anyway. I threw clods and potatoes, and yelled, but couldn't get them out of their slow, lazy gait. We then went and looked at the other things, and I told him I would take \$200.00 for the lot. It seemed more than they were worth and, in fact, was more than they cost me, but he said for me to deliver them the next day. I couldn't have gotten more than half that amount in our neighborhood. A year later I ran across him and he said that old team made him five dollars a day. They were just what he wanted, for his drivers couldn't hurry them too fast. This was a great relief to me. I was glad to know that after a year he was still as satisfied with his purchase as I was.

As I now think over this trip to Hyde Park, I cannot help but be reminded of an incident that occurred when I was a boy, which illustrates so well the folly of hasty action.

Father, in those days, had a horse, if I remember right, for which he had paid only fifteen dollars. She was a perfect animal except one hind leg. This leg had been so long spavined [crippled, deformed -- DVM] that the knee was hopelessly enlarged, and so stiff that after she stood a bit she would have to go nearly a mile before she could use it without hobbling and limping in a pitiful manner. After getting warmed up she could travel all day. In fact, father used to say she could go as many miles in a day as the next one.

However, fall was coming on and but little feed for the animals was on hands. At different times during the summer I would hear my father say he wished he could sell Nellie, that her spavin was getting so bad she would be of but little account in time. This kind of talk put the idea into my head that she was about to bring us into financial disaster, that she was a bad horse to keep on hand and the sooner rid of her the better.

Early one fall day a pack-peddler came into our place selling jewelry. As it happened, I was in the yard and met him first and got interested in his ware. In fact, I got wild to own what he said was a real gold watch and chain. I felt I must have that watch but did not know how to get it. While rolling the matter over in my mind I remembered about Nellie, the spavined horse, and at once had the matter solved; that is, if I could make the peddler want the horse as badly as I wanted the watch. So I up and asked him if he needed a horse. He said he might use one if it suited him. I then made the best use of horse-trading language I knew. I led her out, but didn't trot her. I drew his attention to her head, neck and shoulders. In fact, I talked until I began to believe she was worth more than his watch and chain; so I asked him what else he had. To the best of my recollection he had one watch, three chains and a handful of collar buttons. I said, "I'll give you the horse for everything you have in your box." He took me up and led the horse off while I mosied back to the house with my jewelry.

As I drew near the house I began to feel cold and hot in turns. My steps also were slower. A few moments before I felt like a Fifth Street horse dealer looks, but now my feelings were wilting. My, what if that watch should prove to be brass! In fact, I began to believe it was brass. My feelings by this time felt like tin, and mighty thin tin at that. Father's horse was gone, the one he

drove about every day as he went about his business, and in its place a brass or tin watch, brass or tin chains and some collar buttons of about the same material. However, the trade was made and I must talk about the gold watch and chains like the peddler had talked to me about them. Into the house I went. I told mother what I had done and she looked at me and then took the jewelry and looked at it and then said, "Wait until your father gets home and see what he has to say." This was about noon, and of all the afternoons of fear, terror, hating myself, regretting there ever was a peddler, wishing I could get Nellie back and wondering what father would do.

Night came, bedtime came, but father was not yet home. I went to bed to think, fear, agonize and suffer. I dozed off to soon awaken, startled, and to begin all over the horse trade of the day. Finally, exhausted I went sound to sleep, but not for long. About midnight father came home. Mother showed him the price of his horse, and upstairs he came. He woke me up and made that jewelry look so cheap I hated it. I felt I had ruined the family. He told me he should make me get up at once and start hunting his horse, but as it was midnight I could wait until daylight, and then must get up and start out and hunt Nellie until I found her.

In the morning I put the jewelry in my pocket, and walked and walked. I asked of all I met if they had seen our horse, and then described Nellie. Two weeks went by but I found no trace of our horse. Those were two of the darkest weeks of my life. That jewelry haunted me day and night, and to this day I have had no use for jewelry. I think I was cured by that experience. I never wanted rings or stick pins after those two weeks. I do not know how far I walked during those days. One evening I came home and father told me he had located Nellie, and for me to take the jewelry and go after her at once. He told me to leave the jewelry with the farmer in whose pasture Nellie was and bring her home. I was to tell the farmer to give the jewelry back to the peddler when he came back for his horse, and to tell him not to show himself around our place again, as he had dealt with a minor. I fairly flew to the farmer's and did what father said and brought our Nellie home. I hugged her, talked to her, and again felt as if I could live once more.

In this present experience I felt very much as I did then. How foolish I had been! Why did I go into this thing so quickly, anyway? But, thank God, we were back home again and there were better days ahead.

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## Chapter 6 EXPERIENCES AT "GOD'S BIBLE SCHOOL"

In the fall, by the time God's Bible School was to open, I had my crops sold, debts paid and was ready to go. We had a couple of barrels of potatoes and half a barrel of flour to take along, but by the time we paid the moving expenses and it month's rent we had but one dollar left to live on. If ever the devil himself jumped on a man, he jumped on me during those next few months. We lived on bread and potatoes three times a day. A few times I bought a beefsteak for a nickel, and an old widow, the poorest woman in our neighborhood back home, occasionally brought us butter. God bless her memory! We surely got hungry for fruit, plenty of butter and jelly, but our faces were set to go through, and I was doing everything I knew how to get prepared to preach.

The first month drew to a close and we hadn't money to pay the next month's rent; so I sold our front room bedstead, springs and mattress. With this money we paid the rent. Another month rolled around and no money. We rented out the front room and lived in the kitchen. From this we paid rent again. Down in the basement of this old tenement house I had a big piece of pasteboard. Many a day I wrestled there in prayer. In later years the lady on the first floor told me my prayers at that time kept her under conviction constantly.

At one time the rent was due and we had nothing we could sell and no money. In despair I repaired to the cellar. How I did pour my heart out to God! That evening I went to George Street Mission and came home pretty heavy-hearted. The rent would be due Monday and it was pay or move. On the side of the door casing outside was a tin mail box. For the first time at night I put my hand in that box. I didn't think of getting anything but, to my joy, there were just enough nice new dollar bills crumpled down near the bottom to pay our rent.

This kind of food and living would have kept us alive all right, but the enemy hounded me constantly. He suggested I had no salvation, faith or anything. On top of this I found it a proposition to study. For years I had been out of school and my mind wouldn't work like I expected it would. However, God helped me. Some of the Scriptures and truths I learned while there have been of greater value than I can ever tell. There were some practical lessons, too, that I received. However, there are two outstanding things that happened while we attended Bible School which have been of inestimable value in my work all through life. First, I discovered I was not sanctified; and in the second place, I learned to prevail in prayer and to keep my face set like a flint to go through, regardless of my feelings.

The first night, in the school tabernacle, as I saw those boys and girls sing, testify and pray with such liberty and power, I looked on with amazement. By the third night, which was Sunday night, I went over an hour early, and as I walked toward the front I heard a boy say to another that he had to get sanctified or leave the school. He declared it was too hot for him. I spoke up and told them I was in the same condition, only I had to get through, as I had but a dollar left and couldn't leave. Off we went to find a place to pray where we would not be disturbed.

Boys were in every room on the floor above so we went to the third floor, but it was the same way. Every room contained boys and men praying for the night service; but the bath room was empty. In it we three knelt to pray. The white boy knelt at the foot of the tub and I at the head while the black boy knelt just behind me. No one had to pound us on the back and urge us to pray. We both were desperate to be made holy. We believed in the baptism with the Holy Ghost, heart purity and power. For thirty minutes I poured out my soul to God. I prayed at the top of my voice, not that I thought God deaf, but my desperate feelings and determination caused me to fairly scream.

In the midst of my praying the enemy seemed to perch himself in the little window above us and laugh and sneer. He suggested the yard below was full of folks who were listening to us screaming up there, and were laughing at us. He overstepped himself right there. Once before he defeated me in prayer by such talk, so I plunged into prevailing all the harder. When seeking to be converted in the old Methodist Church, or just before making a public start, the enemy bluffed me one morning by his talk. Coming from a town three miles away, I promised myself to go into the

church and pray if the door was open. I was sure the door would not be open as it was below zero and a northwest wind was blowing. But, to my surprise, as I came in sight of the old church, one door was wide open. I hitched old Prince, threw a blanket over him, went in and right to the altar, kneeled down and was just beginning when the devil suggested that folks were looking in the windows and laughing at me. Without ever looking to see, I jumped up and went home. Now he was trying to work the same bluff again. How plain and real he can seem; but I knew that trick of his, so kept right en praying. My voice got so weak and my throat so hoarse that I prayed only in a whisper; then I threw up my hands and told God I would be made pure or stay there until I died. At once my voice began getting stronger and in a few moments cleared up while all the time I was climbing in desperation and in faith. The black boy had stopped praying. I wished he would keep on but feared to stop myself long enough to urge him for fear I might lose the ground I found myself gaining. Suddenly with a rushing, mighty flame of invisible fire I was consumed. It struck me in the tips of my fingers, then rushed through my whole body. I was melted to a helpless condition and fell back on the black boy, able to move but one hand and my head and to shout, "This is that! This is that!"

As soon as I could struggle to my feet, I staggered down and into the tabernacle. As I started downstairs, the black boy caught me and straightened out my hair and clothes as best he could. I staggered for the first time in my life. But what did I care; I was drunk on God's love. I was filled with the Holy Ghost. I was so thrilled it seemed I would have died in another minute if God had not withdrawn the emotion. As I walked into the tabernacle, Sister Peabody, the speaker, gave me the floor and at once I witnessed to what had happened -- how I had thought I was pure within, but how I found out different, and how now the work was done.

I felt I must witness to everyone I met. In fact, I was impressed I would lose the Spirit if I once failed. The next day I met a man on the street and stopped to tell him. He listened quietly, then grinned and told me I had come in contact with an electric wire, and he walked off. Next night at prayer meeting I jumped up to testify and to do just as I had done on Sunday night; but, lo and behold, it was not the same. We all kneeled in prayer, whereupon I was impressed that what the man I met that day had told me might be true. I was also impressed I had made a fool of myself, and that all saw it, but that if I pulled off my necktie and dressed modest I might come along all right. With my head under the chair I took the tie off, but felt no better. Home I went to let the enemy drive me farther into gloom. I got so confused I shut myself up and fasted for five days. I got on my knees at last and begged God to witness to my purity again, and to my great joy, He did so. But with it came such a shame for doubting and letting the enemy whip me so badly that I promised God to never doubt Him again.

These days spent at God's Bible School I have never gotten over. My only sorrow is that they were so few, but it seemed that Providence had ordained it thus. Knowing that our baby was to be born in April, and living in such limited quarters, and with no money, we concluded it necessary to move back to the country for a while at least.

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## Chapter 7 LEARNING THE VALUE OF PRAYER

After we had moved back from the Bible School, into my old neighborhood, I worked at anything I could find to do. For a while we lived in two upstairs rooms and I sold books. Selling Holiness books is a training every boy and girl needs. I walked the roads until my feet were sore. At many a place they tried to shut the door in my face as soon as I told my business. Some of them I hindered by keeping a foot in the way, and often sold books at such places before leaving. Time and again I would kneel in a fence corner to pray before stopping to sell books. Most of the time it was like crossing a spiritual desert. However, here and there I found Spirit-filled people. At such places it was like Heaven. We would shout, pray and talk as long as possible. This would encourage me greatly to press on.

I was never appointed to lead prayer meeting at the home church after moving back from the Bible School. However, time and again I got the chance as the appointed leader would often fail to be there. No one else would lead, while I was always ready and thus had the opportunity to witness often in the church. Folks looked at me in both disgust and pity. At one time my father asked the district superintendent to speak to me for he thought I was losing my mind as I talked nothing but sanctification and tithing. The superintendent agreed, but told father that what I had he had been seeking for twenty years. He said it was in the Methodist manual and in the Bible.

At times I drove an oil wagon for my father. I enjoyed this work as it gave me such an opportunity to witness to folks and pray with them. In fact, I had my mind on the testifying and praying more than on the oil business -- so much so that I nearly caused serious trouble by getting gasoline in oil cans and oil in gasoline cans. One morning a big colored woman came running out to meet the wagon. I saw she was greatly excited. "You nearly burned me and our home up the other day. You put gasoline in my oil can and when I lit the lamp it was awful. I don't know how we escaped at all."

On this same route I met a young man who had the blessing. I loved to talk with him and receive his encouragement. He and I planned to go into well digging, as both of us were Bible School boys and felt we could work together until getting into the regular ministry. I therefore got a well to dig, but had it all to dig myself. I found God had a path for me, separate and alone with Himself.

All the feelings of being a failure, which so crushed me a few years before, now came back like a flood. I was accused of not keeping my marriage vows. I had promised to support my wife, and had she not been compelled to live on potatoes and dry bread? I was told I should be horsewhipped for taking a lovely girl from a splendid home where she had everything she needed. I was reminded of her ability to teach school and make a good salary while here I had her living on nearly nothing, and I was not making even as much as she could make at teaching. At one time she was advised to return to her mother and home. This nearly killed me. I asked what she was going to do. "I did not marry you to return to my mother. I am going to stay right with you," she told me. And with her arms around my neck she kissed me and encouraged me by asking if she looked as though she were starving. Her cheeks were rosy, her eyes sparkling, and she was as happy as a schoolgirl.

Soon after we returned from the Bible School, an old gentleman, living in the next neighborhood to us and an old-time Methodist, came over to see me. He said he was hearing so much about us he wanted to meet us and know more. He asked all kinds of questions, and then asked if I would come and preach for them in the Methodist Church in their village every other Sunday night. The Methodist preacher would be there the other Sundays. I agreed, providing the pastor had no objections. In a few days the old gentleman came over again and said it was all right and I was announced for the following Sunday night.

During the next few months I passed through epochs which did more to establish, settle and prepare me for service as a minister than any other one thing, outside the baptism with the Holy Spirit. The lady who nursed my wife in April, when our second child was born, was a "tongues" woman. That is, she believed speaking in an unknown tongue was the evidence that one had received the Spirit, and that unless one could speak in unknown tongues he had not yet received the baptism. She told me I had not been baptized with the Holy Spirit, and brought all the Scriptures she could find to prove it. At the same time the devil told me I had committed the unpardonable sin, because I broke a vow with God. When I pulled off my necktie at God's Bible School, I vowed to God I would never put it back on. Later, I felt it was a wrong vow and, feeling a bad vow was better broken than kept, I put it back on. The enemy argued his point until I was fully persuaded, in my mind, that I was doomed. For several months I suffered under this cloud. But, while my mind was convinced, in my heart I never let go of God.

It was when I was wrestling over the two things just mentioned that I was also speaking every other Sunday night at the Methodist Church in the next village. God blessed the first service so much that each time the same ones returned and brought more folks along. By the second or third Sunday night service I gave an altar call and several came forward. One of them is a missionary in Venezuela at this writing. I threw my spirit, soul and body into the service. I sang, preached and prayed with all my might, but constantly labored under what the nurse had said about my not having the Spirit, and what the devil had said about my having committed the unpardonable sin.

The old gentleman who got me to speak in these meetings lived on the same road over which I had to walk to get home, therefore we walked together as far as his home after each meeting. He gave me much instruction and encouragement, also correction. One night on our way home he slowed up a bit and said, "Ralph, no doubt God has called you to preach. You are going to make a preacher if you learn enough. At present you are the biggest failure in some things I ever saw, and you will have to improve or never succeed. One thing is your altar work. You get them to the altar all right, but then don't know what to do with them." I went the rest of the way with my head hanging. I couldn't tell him my trouble, or thought I couldn't. I am now sorry I didn't. He could have helped me out of it, no doubt. I believed every word he said and determined to succeed at the altar. Heretofore, as soon as I got seekers at the altar I kneeled behind the pulpit to pray for myself. This would not do. I must get this awful night mare off my mind. I would get so distressed I would get up in the night, build the fire and walk the floor. Such spells of fear and horror would seize me that I would gladly have let an arm be cut off for relief.

One lonely night, walking the road alone, I looked up to God for help. For months I had suffered untold agony in wrestling against the argument of the nurse and the accusation of the enemy. I got where I could shed no tears. I begged God to let me just cry good once more. But few

grown-up people know the relief of a good cry -- one when the soul fairly sobs. As I walked the road that night, I looked up and told God, though it seemed evident I had committed the unpardonable sin and at death would be cast into the lake of fire, that on account of my loved ones, friends, enemies and the heathen I would live a holy life and preach His Word until that time. I said, "I will serve Thee though Thou slay me." This was no doubt what God was trying to get me to say all the time. This was what all the suffering was leading to. This was the best lesson I ever learned. From that day on I believed God. I never went on feelings, but kept my face set like a flint to go through. It was not long until I realized I had not committed the unpardonable sin, nor any other, and would not go to hell when life's race was run. However, but little feeling came that night; it was not feeling I needed. I had settled it to walk by faith and that was what God wanted.

A few days later I settled the nurse's story. After wrestling over the matter nearly as long as over the other, I got it settled on a rail pile in a pouring rain. I was cutting across a field to get home and out of a pour-down when my heart couldn't stand it longer. To my right was a pile of rails. I climbed to the top, knelt down and looked up while the rain poured in my face. I asked God what to do. Did I have to speak in tongues to know I had the Spirit? Like lightning this flashed into my mind: "Have you received the baptism with the Spirit or not? This must be settled the first thing." At once I remembered my experience at God's Bible School. I then remembered what Matthew says about speaking a word against the Son and being forgiven, but that the unpardonable sin is to resist the Spirit, to deny Him and reject Him. I couldn't say I had not received Him, for I had and I knew it only too well. That settled the question, and home I flew to tell my precious wife that another battle was fought and won.

Toward the last of the meetings in the village we had a peculiar experience, but one which taught me to hold steady in trying places. I saw how a pastor must be an example of quietness, steadiness and faith to become a good shepherd. One warm night we had sung and prayed, and I was speaking when a man, with his shirt unbuttoned, barefooted, and with pants and sleeves rolled up, walked up and looked in at one of the side windows. As soon as my congregation saw him, the children and some of the young folks fairly flew to the other side of the church, some sitting on the laps of the older ones and all crowding together. I didn't know until later that he was an engineer on the railroad, who had lost his mind. His son was following close behind, crying, but unable to do a thing with his father. I was saying something about the Father, Son and Holy Ghost and the Trinity, whereupon he ordered me not to so say as there was but one God. Then he walked to the door, came inside and straight up the aisle to me. I had no fear whatever but stood smiling at him. By the time he was near enough to touch me, the expression on his face changed from rage to tenderness, and he hugged me, then sat down on the pulpit sofa and told me to go ahead but to be careful what I said. I looked at the frightened folks and told them this was the time to exercise faith, that this man had been there long enough so we must believe him out. At once he jumped up, shook hands with one or two and went out by the side aisle. As he went he looked at me, smiling, and he kept waving, and I looked at him and waved back. I was told that he went from our crowd to the saloon and ran them all out and broke a number of their beer bottles. He was a fine man when well, and had a lovely family who are walking with God to this day and who are among our strongest supporters in the missionary work. He rapidly grew worse and later died.

I have thanked God, time and again, for all these experiences. Almost everywhere I go I find folks who are being whipped about by the enemy, and I have been able to help them by simply relating how God, through prayer, has worked and delivered even me.

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## Chapter 8 A CAMP MEETING AND AN OPEN DOOR

During this same summer we went to everything that looked like a revival, that is if we could get there. My business was preaching and I left no stone unturned to find God's place for us.

We heard of the Methodist camp meeting to be held on the Loveland camp grounds and decided to go. My wife didn't see how she could possibly go, so told me to go alone. I took the train one morning and had such a good day that I went home in the evening to get my family. We decided that we would go and trust God about getting back, for we had only enough money left to reach the camp grounds. We packed a box with bread and tomatoes as that was all we had to eat. I got a neighbor to take my wife and babies to the depot while I cut across the field afoot. The day before I met an old lady at the camp who had a cabin all to herself. She told me to go get my family and we could have the upstairs and we all would eat together downstairs. The cabin was so close to the tabernacle that we put the children to sleep and then both of us slipped in and enjoyed the meeting. Everything went well for a day or two. So far as our housing was concerned, it was good. The good old lady made us partake of her food, of more variety, while she enjoyed our tomatoes and home-made bread. But one day there was a love feast. Everybody was there to testify. I kept quiet until several had spoken, then I was up and shouting out how God had saved and sanctified me wholly. My wife also testified. Well, I don't know why it should, but it seemed to kill the meeting dead. The leader got peevish and dismissed the whole thing. We went to our rooms to talk it over. It was a fact, I got pretty loud and happy. I swung my arms and drove the truth home with tongue, hands and feet, then sat down and wiped sweat. After a similar testimony meeting at a young people's service a day or two later a gentleman walked up and made over our children and left some money in their hands. It proved enough to get us back home when time came to go.

Late that night, when we were having our family prayer, my wife became so burdened for her father she could hardly stand it. She became desperate and determined to have him saved. We placed the Bible on a chair between us and she talked to God, amidst groans, tears and agony, until I could not keep from opening my eyes and watching. She got the witness he would be saved, and he is now in Heaven. God did other things to bring him into the fold, but she prayed through for him that night, and the way she did it made me rejoice for her as never before. I saw God had given me the helpmate I needed in my calling.

The next day the presiding elder called me aside and asked where I was preaching. I explained matters to him, whereupon he declared he would have me sooner or later. I was frightened to think of taking a circuit of Methodist churches. I expected to begin in a log cabin church in the backwoods some place, having no idea I was able or fitted for a circuit.

From this time on my physical strength began going. When I could get work, try all I could, I felt I was not earning the dollar and a half I received. I was never happy except in some place of worship, or in doing some kind of religious service. Fall came on and I was digging potatoes. At night I would be so tired I could hardly get home. One night I got as far as the kitchen when I gave up and fell on the floor, completely discouraged and so weak in body I could go no farther. Failure, failure, failure rang in my ears. Then my wife came to my rescue. She told me to go to the phone at once, call up the presiding elder and tell him I would take a circuit. My strength came back. I revived and went straight across the field to a phone, called him up and asked when I could see him. "Monday evening at seven o'clock," was all the answer I got.

This was Saturday night. Sunday was spent as usual, and just as the town clock was striking seven Monday evening I was knocking on the elder's door. He came out, took my hand, and in a distant and reserved mood asked what I wanted. I wondered if, after all, he was not going to give me work. This and many other thoughts flashed through my mind. I wished I was out of sight of his penetrating eyes. But I determined to clearly state my case and take what came. If he gave me work all right; if not, I would return, pray and plod on. So I looked him in the two eyes and said, "Brother Aultman, I am called to preach and it has gotten to the place where it is 'preach or die.' I remembered what you said to me at the Loveland Heights camp grounds, but at that time I thought I was not educated enough to take a circuit. But Saturday night my good wife told me to call you up. She said we had prayed for God to open a door and this one had stood open for months. So I am here." His attitude changed at once. Tears were in his eyes. He pulled two chairs close together and we sat down. He talked quick and earnestly. He said he had four circuits, one paid six hundred, another seven, etc. He told me I could have my choice. I stopped him and said I had no choice and didn't want to hear about money. All I was wanting was a place to preach. I told him to send me where he believed God would have me go. "All right," he said, "I want you to go to Aberdeen, Ohio. I started there thirty years ago when I was a boy like you. It was then in good condition, but at present is backslidden. But you will succeed because they know they are backslidden. If folks are backslidden and don't know it, it is hard to help them, but they know it up there and you will make it. The conference meets soon, and I will send word for sure by the pastor of your home church." He shook my hand warmly and I went for home. My morning seemed to be dawning. Hope revived. The next days were spent in work and prayer. One day the old pastor drove by and called to us and said, "Brother Aultman said for you to get ready and move to Aberdeen at once."

We told our parents. My wife's folks thought she had better come home and let me go try first to see if I could make it go. They thought it unwise to move clear up there and then find I was a failure and have to move back. I looked at my wife and asked what she was going to do. She flew into my arms and told me she was going right along. She said I might not make it alone but we could when pulling together. This put a determination in me to succeed if it killed me. If nobody else in the world believed in me, my wife believed I was a success and would make anything go that I tackled. I would succeed for her sake and for my Savior's sake.

The next thing was moving. We had no money, as usual, and it would take at least forty dollars. What could we do? We feared to ask any one to loan it, or, perhaps, dreaded being turned down. Then we remembered meeting a hanker at Loveland camp meeting, and were sure he would loan the money to us if we could get security. But getting security was the worst part. Then my wife

suggested I go see him, tell him the whole matter and ask him to loan us forty dollars. Off I went and into his bank. I told him our circumstances. I told him that we needed money to move but could give no security. "How much do you want?" he asked. I wished afterwards I had said eighty dollars, but we figured forty would get us moved nicely. He shoved the money into my hands and wished me God speed. Back over the four miles I walked as lighthearted as a bird. Again, I was living. I saw a way through where there seemed none a few weeks earlier.

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## Chapter 9 OUR TRIP UP THE OHIO

My next thought was to get to our place of labor as quickly as possible. Brother W promised to take our household effects to the wharf boat on the following Thursday. The boat was by far the cheapest route, so by boat we went. The Courier steamboat made the run regularly between Cincinnati and Maysville, Kentucky. Aberdeen, Ohio was just across the river from Maysville. The boat was to leave the foot of Broadway at five o'clock in the evening. We were right there in good time with everything on earth we owned. No one came to see us off but Brother Hanna. God bless him! He had been a real friend to us during our battles in the Bible School. He it was, I learned years later, who put the money in the mail box, which paid our rent one month when we hadn't a cent.

I went into the wharf boat office, bought our tickets, and paid the freight on our belongings. The agent then informed me that the boat was late in arriving on account of low water, and that it was doubtful when we would get off. Hour after hour slowly dragged by. Our little girls were getting very tired and sleepy. Finally we saw it was likely to be an all-night affair on that old, musty, foul-smelling wharf; so I untied our feather bed, laid it on a horse blanket, and my wife and girlies lay down and slept. I couldn't think of sleeping with that boat likely to swing in any time. Then the mosquitoes were so thick and so big I had to sit up and fan them off the mother and babies so they could sleep. It was one of those hot, sultry nights. I was tired out, hot, and thinking at a fearful speed. Big rough-looking men occasionally went by and looked at us in a way that made me keep on guard.

About midnight the enemy assailed me; he drew my attention to facts. What would Ruth's father and mother say if they could see their daughter lying on the dirty floor at midnight in that old, foul-smelling wharf boat? Why hadn't I been man enough to go alone as advised by our folks and friends? What an awful disgrace to have a lady of her type, with her little children, lying around on the floor all night in a wharf boat where no one stops except the big burly Negroes who load and unload the boats? Minutes dragged into hours. I was so tired I could hardly sit up, but the minute I stopped fanning the mosquitoes lit on the fair and tender faces of my babies so on and on I fanned and fought sleep, discouragement and the devil.

Just at daybreak the boat whistled. Soon we were all up, the feather bed again tied into the horse blanket and on board. Oh, what a relief! We took the children to our cabin and to bed. Finally breakfast was called, and we were ready to eat. It was so hot I went to the table in my shirt sleeves. No sooner did I sit down than the steward stepped to my side and informed me that all

men folk had to wear their coats to dine. I sneaked to the cabin and got mine on. That experience had such effect on my mind that I have never from that day to now allowed myself in the presence of ladies without my coat, especially in the parlor, or the church, or at the table. I suppose it is all right for men to go coatless; at least see some of the best men I know do so. However, try as I may, I cannot help but feel more or less ashamed for them and especially so for a speaker when he leaves his off.

As we sailed up the Ohio River that Friday I planned my work. I lived a year ahead. I was determined to work as hard as any member on my circuit. I would hold up the Bible standards as I understood them. I wouldn't compromise for favors, friends, foes or money. But before going very far I began to notice tobacco patches on either side of the river, and the nearer to Aberdeen we got the more tobacco patches there were. I wondered if all my members were tobacco raisers.

On the boat there was a horse-shipper and one of his jockeys. I talked with them freely when I found they were from Aberdeen. In fact, I began to preach the truth and to witness to what God had done for me. They saw us pray before each meal, and during that one day's travel I so won the hearts of those men that they were among the best friends we had all the time we lived in Aberdeen. The shipper was also a big tobacco dealer but would come to hear me preach He would get hit right and left almost every time, but when he heard I was leaving the town he said if money would keep me he would make it up himself.

It was a great trip that we made that day up the Ohio River. However, there was one thing that was very sad to me. As we stopped to unload cargo, there was a black man's body floating in the water. He had fallen over and drowned the night before. I was awfully distressed. I wondered if he was eternally lost.

Finally we landed at Aberdeen, but it looked as though a storm was about to break. Our goods were piled on the river bank in haste so the boat could clear out before it started to rain. I rushed up to a drayman and asked him to please take my things up to the parsonage at once as it was then beginning to sprinkle. Whether he suspicioned I was the new preacher or not, I never learned, but with a gruff voice he told me my things were no more important than anybody else's and would be taken when their turn came. The lightning was flashing and the thunder rumbling. I looked up and saw it would pour in a few moments. The clouds were fairly flying up the river right toward us while it was rapidly getting darker. Before the drayman could possibly take our things they would be drenched. We then and there fell on our knees and poured out our hearts to God. I told Him we had come for Him and His glory. I then asked Him to stop those clouds and not let them come a bit nearer, or let any more rain fall, but to turn them south over the river hills of Kentucky. At once they turned and no more rain fell.

No one had met us, but knowing the name of one of the leading families in town, we started out to find them. Finally we reached the place and knocked, but got no response. I left my family sitting on the edge of the porch and started out to find them. Soon I found the man of the house, and he returned and brought his wife downstairs. We were later given supper and a room for the night. I hope I was wrong, but I felt at once that we were not any too welcome there, so started right out to get our things into the parsonage; but my wife wouldn't let me go until I had eaten. By this time it was dark and it was one of the darkest nights I ever tried to work. At one time, when alone on the

bank of the river that first night in Aberdeen, such a darkness settled on me that I thought I would die. It seemed the enemy was as determined to kill me as I was to defeat him. Then, he knew that I was in a weakened condition, having rushed for the last few days and having sat up all night, so he took advantage. I threw up my hands and cried to God, whereupon I was lifted as never before. God assured me He would see me through. All these things were developing faith and preparing me for my life's work.

I wouldn't want any one to think I was having a hard time. The very fact that I was washed in the blood of the Lamb and filled with the Holy Ghost made every moment more precious than any whole year was before I was saved. However, I feel it would be of great benefit to write, as I have in this book, and let struggling souls see how the enemy will scheme and fight to ruin those who are called for special work in God's vineyard. Perhaps most young men enjoy their first years of married life more than I did. If we only could have begun when we were married where we did when we finally got established in the Aberdeen Circuit, it seems we would have missed much suffering. But we would also have missed a training which resulted in success that many beginners never have had.

I am sure but few women would have so patiently stood by my side as did Ruth. Never once did she murmur nor complain. I am sure she was hungry for a variety of food many times, but she would prepare what we had and together we would enjoy it. We learned by experience that it does not require money, fine clothes and lots of food to make a happy home. Many times when I knew my wife was tired, and feared was tempted over my failure, I would slip up behind her as she worked over a hot stove, put my arms around her and tell her what she meant to me and how I loved her. I would ask her if she was tired, whereupon she always said, "Love Lightens Labor." The day after I was converted I saw the effect of letting others know we love them. In fact, that day I was awakened to see how I had neglected my mother, so that from then until now I have done everything I can think of to make up for the years in my teens when mother cooked my food and washed my clothes. I have been more sorry than words can tell for every time I did anything to give her grief, for during those years I could have lightened her labor by loving her as I have loved my wife these many years. I remember that the next day after I was converted I wanted to make up for the years I had lost in this matter. I waited until mother was alone and, walking up behind her, took her hands in mine and her in my arms. I did this so she couldn't see my face. I then told her she was the best mother in the world for me. I told her how I loved her and was sorry for all my neglect and carelessness. She tried to turn around but I held her tight. She was trembling and could say nothing for the tears. Many times since then she has met me as I have gone home to visit, and she always got the love I should have given regularly those earlier years.

During all the struggles my wife and I had to make ends meet we never let any one but God know our needs. We believed He would supply all our needs and we so witnessed. In fact, I always declared our every need was supplied and praised God just the same as if we had been living on a salary of a thousand dollars a month. We didn't let our folks know that in the winter time I wore two suits of old underclothes to keep warm. I believe, though, that all who knew us in those years would say we looked as well dressed as the average young folks. We kept clean in body, our clothes washed and ironed, shoes shined, suit pressed and as neat as possible. We both did our weeping and praying in secret and went before the world with a smile and with joy in our hearts, although much of the time without money and sufficient clothes. We believed God was

giving us what we needed and all we should have for what we were worth to Him and the Kingdom. I believed that as soon as we could do more for Him we would get more. I believed a laborer was worthy of his hire and would get it. With this belief in our hearts we had come up the river and landed in Aberdeen to undertake our first real pastorate.

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## Chapter 10 MY FIRST CIRCUIT -- ABERDEEN

We were now in Aberdeen. We had received our reception to our first circuit. So, early the next morning, which was Saturday, we went to look at the parsonage and plan for housekeeping. It was a good building and on the same lot with the church. It was south of the church, on the same side as the river, and by the front porch stood a great soft maple. Back of the church, which was a neat, red brick building, was also a stable for the horse and buggy. In the parsonage itself no one had lived for some time, and it was a sight. Soot and ashes were everywhere. My wife said it would be impossible to set up housekeeping until the place was properly cleaned. This being Saturday I felt I must have most of the day for prayer and preparation for preaching on Sunday. We therefore laid on bedding on the floor and camped until Monday. We had just one dollar left, after paying the drayman and getting cheese, crackers and milk enough to run us over Sunday; but there was a relief in being independent, which caused the cheese and crackers to digest better, perhaps, than better food in a home where we were not sure we were wanted.

How I did pray that Saturday! I looked for a text, read and prayed much of the day. The only thing I could get settled on was, "I have set my face like a flint, and I know I shall not be ashamed." I went to the livery stable and arranged for a horse and buggy so I could go to the country points in the morning and afternoon. It was the custom on this circuit for the pastor to be at the country points in the morning and afternoon and always in town at night. This was the regular day for Fitch's Chapel and on the following Sunday Ebenezer and Bradysville were to be visited. These, with Aberdeen, made the four points of my circuit.

With my Bible and Methodist Manual, I drove to Fitch's Chapel in the morning. Upon arriving I found I had been wrongly informed and this was not the right Sunday for this place. But it was too far to make it to the other points, so I did the best I could for the few stragglers who had come out to Sunday School. I told them I would be right there every other Sunday morning, rain or shine, and that services would begin on time whether there was any one on hand or not. After the service I was taken home to dine with Brother and Sister Wiles. Here I enjoyed one of the best chicken dinners of my life, topped off with peaches and cream and chocolate cake. Many times afterwards I was entertained in their lovely home. To this day they are among the best friends we have or could have.

As the night service at Aberdeen drew on, I became more and more restless. My soul and spirit were champing the bit to tell the world what God had burned into my heart, but to overcome a human timidity which possessed me took all the courage I could scrape up and lots of boosting from my wife. I waited until just time for the last bell to ring so I could begin at once. The janitor was ringing the bell as I entered the church. I thought my knees would fail to hold me up as I

walked down the aisle. The building was full. The leaders of the town were in the choir, among them, one of the doctors. His wife sat at the organ. The seats were amphitheater style. High stained windows and heavy chandeliers gave the place a richness which awed me into feeling about as big as a mouse. A long time afterwards a lady, after I told her how I felt that night, laughed and said, "How strange! As you walked in that door you looked so large and carried an air that frightened me at once. I felt like getting up and running, but I wanted so much to hear what you said that I stayed. And it was that way until I got saved. You walked in and down the aisle like a conqueror. After that first night we could not stay away." My one thought that night, as I went down the aisle, was to get behind the pulpit and pray for help as quickly as possible, and this I did. I knelt and asked God to please help me that once, for Jesus' sake. When I rose, some one in the choir handed me the numbers of the songs to be sung. I called one and it was sung so slowly I could hardly sit still. However, I felt I had better go a bit cautiously. After prayer I rose and took my text. I told them I had been sent by the elder and was going to stay one year at least, and by God's help preach what they should hear rather than what they might want to hear. I don't remember much I said but God surely helped me that first night. The following Sunday night my crowd was right there, but the choir had nearly evaporated altogether. It was no doubt a bit close to a fire-baptized preacher who gave no room, especially in the choir, for sin or worldliness in any shape or form. I rose and said we would like some one to come up and play, however, if no one cared to do so we would sing Quaker fashion. From then on the choir corner slowly filled again, but with those who wanted to be spiritual and who loved the truth.

During the next few days cleaning and setting up house went on as fast as possible and fairly well until one day I couldn't find my wife. After hunting and calling quite a while I found her under the stairway, in a dark closet, crying. "What in the world is wrong, honey?" I asked. She tried to smile but tears would come. At last she said, "I didn't want to tell you, but I got a little discouraged. I have tried and tried to get things clean but have not had any soap for three days. I am so tired I just had to cry, and so I hid in here where you would not know it." I do not remember what I did, or how it came about, but before many hours we had thirty dollars or more and soap to spare. In fact, if we have ever been without soap from that day to this I don't know it.

One thing which bothered me from the start here was the tobacco problem. It seemed everybody raised tobacco, so I figured we would be supported on tobacco money. After waiting on God prayerfully I was persuaded to say nothing about tobacco for a while. God kept me still until we so won the confidence of the people that we could preach anything. By this time a few of the leading men at each point had become devout Christians and had quit the tobacco business and urged others to do likewise. Their action did more, perhaps, to stop the tobacco business than all the preaching did. "If I be lifted up, I will draw all men unto me," is the Word. I constantly preached Christ, Victory, Love, and the Fruit of the Spirit. This kept the people hungry all the time. Then, too, God helped me preach in the demonstration of the Spirit. The Spirit is dove-like, kind and longsuffering.

However, as soon as I had won the confidence of the people, and several had been saved, I preached against tobacco in every form. This of course hit the people hard who belonged to the New Light Church and claimed full salvation, but who still raised and often used the weed.

On my route to Fitch's Chapel lived one of his kind. He liked to hear me preach, if only I would leave tobacco out, and he was bold to so speak. However, the time came when he was in deep and serious trouble. He had brought up a girl who was like a daughter. She married, and was the mother of four children before far past her twentieth year. She knew for some time that she was so poorly with tuberculosis that she would die if God didn't help. She wanted her father and her husband to ask me to come and pray for her healing, but, being tobacco raisers and users, they put it off. Some time before this I had been called to the bedside of her husband's father to pray for him. The first thing I did was to ask him if he would stop raising tobacco if God would heal him. As he was not willing, my prayers were of such a nature that I was afterwards called a Job's comforter. On this account tobacco folks hesitated about calling me to pray for them when sick.

However, this young mother got so low one Saturday night they all thought she would die. In her agony she begged God to let her get strength enough to cough out the phlegm once more, and let her live until Sunday afternoon. God answered, and as I drove up the road to my preaching point, the old gentleman stood in the middle of the road. He was not smoking that day but seemed to be in trouble. I stopped and he told me of the night's experience. He said, "She can't live long, so please come right in and pray with her." I told him if God had kept her alive that long we would keep her until afternoon and, as I always got to my points on time, I would wait and stop when coming back. About three o'clock I got back and went in. There she lay, skin and bones. Her arms were like bean poles, her eyes sunken and cheek bones standing out. She could hardly turn her head, but set her eyes on me with such a pitiful hunger for help that I fell on my knees immediately. I asked the mother-in-law to pray. She was the one who said I was a Job's comforter after I had prayed with her sick husband. She would shout and have a big time at meeting but raise tobacco; however, here was the supreme test.

Here was her loved one dying. She got down on all fours and cried and said, "I can't pray, I can't pray." The husband was lying across the bed, sobbing and begging me to pray. I then up and asked him if he would quit the tobacco business if God would heal his wife, and he bawled out, ""Yes, yes, yes." I looked up and asked God to rebuke the devourer, told Him I believed He did it, and walked over and asked the sick mother if she believed with me, and she nodded, yes, with eyes full of hope. The following Thursday I dropped in, and she had been sitting up all morning. A week later she walked to a neighbors and spent the day, and a few weeks later drove in and brought us a basket of peaches. Years later I was speaking in Maysville, when I walked this very woman with her husband and family. She had grown big and stout and was a picture of health and strength.

The question of my support came up at the first quarterly meeting. Not more than half the amount due came in, so plans to raise it were discussed. The year before lawn fetes, ice cream suppers, etc. were held, at which cigars were sold along with other things; still, with all that effort, the preacher left without near his full allowance. At once I informed them we would run the church God's way for a year, and if short at the end I would stand for the rest and give a receipt in full. I then told them there would be no suppers or feasts to raise money, but we would give tithes and offerings as the Bible plainly taught. They agreed. Soon after we held our first revival at one of the country points. It had run about five days before I gave an altar call. By then hearts were so hungry they were glad to seek. I taught and preached holiness each morning, and judgment and sin at night. I gave the first altar calls in the day meetings. This got my best members straightened out and many

sanctified, so I had help for the night meetings. When this revival closed I had to borrow a one-horse wagon to haul home the hams, chickens, potatoes, canned fruit and lard which were given. By the time the next quarter rolled around we had held another revival or two and were paid up in full. Our cellar shelves were filled with canned fruit, our potato bin was well filled and we had chickens in the lot. My wife at last could eat all the potatoes she wanted. As I look back now, it seems to me there was never a Sunday but something in the food line was put into my buggy. I was supposed to get \$600.00 for that year's support. Instead we got \$750.00 besides all the things which were given. I loved my people and worked with all my strength, and this is always appreciated by any people any place. No lazy preacher can be successful.

My wife's father, not being well that fall, loaned me his splendid driving horse, buggy and harness. She was among the rare drivers. No one but a young circuit rider filled with the Holy Ghost and heavenly fire, with a big circuit to drive with as fine and as fleet-footed a young horse as could be found, with a lovely wife at home who always had a good warm fire and meals in order, and with sweet babies to love, can know the joy and thrill I experienced in those days. I would enjoy every foot of road as we sped up and down hills and valleys, often lifting a hand in prayer and thanksgiving to Him who called and placed me there. There were not many evenings I could spend at home as midweek prayer meetings were started at each point. This kept me driving much at night. Many a summer night my soul turned somersaults for joy as I came, late in the night, in view of the great Ohio River Valley literally lit up with millions of lightning bugs. I would imagine it was the Holy City and just revel in the scene.

Then as I drove into the sleeping, dark old town of Aberdeen, I let my horse slowly walk up the street lined with great maples in which one of God's mocking birds would be nearly bursting his throat. I knew all were asleep, no doubt, but myself, so that bird must have sung his midnight songs for his Maker, just as I was giving every moment of my time for the same great Master.

Those were some of the greatest days of my life. The greater part of each morning I spent in prayer and study, mostly in prayer. In the afternoons I called on the sick and the old folk and the shut-ins. The only complaint ever made to the presiding elder about me, that I know of, was that I didn't visit enough. But I found it impossible to visit except where I was the most needed, and then but a few moments at a time I was happiest in my room upstairs where I studied and prayed. By being faithful in this I was always able to feed the flocks on Sunday. Each morning I was up early, built the fire, then fed, curried and looked after the horse. I also helped with the dish-washing, which was soon all done and out of the way so I had most of the morning upstairs in my study.

We always had our family prayer in the morning as I was so often gone at night. At breakfast we tried to teach our children manners, or at least as many as we ourselves knew. It was at one of these meals I learned that, although sanctified, we still need often to ask forgiveness. Catherine, like all little tots, would often reach for things instead of asking. For so doing I would thump her fingers. One morning she suddenly shot out her little hand and, thinking she was grabbing for something, I thumped. At once she began crying and went to her mother. When asked what she was reaching for she said she was reaching for father's hand, I wanted to love him." It hurts me to this day to even relate the scene. I grabbed her, asked her to forgive me, amid tears and kisses; and

of course she did. Not only did she forgive me, but has stuck close to her daddie all her life. She is grown now and a comfort and joy in our home which words cannot tell.

I had preached but my second or third Sunday in the town church when I pretty well knew my crowd. Among them was an old lady, I should think between seventy and eighty, who was of the old Methodist stock. I could see her chin quiver and the tears drop as I preached. At my first visit in her home she told of the meetings sixty-five years before in which she was converted. Her mind was as clear as a diamond, and she had the doctrine as taught by John Wesley straight as a sunbeam. Not only did God soon revive her first love, but sanctified her wholly, and she was one of my best supporters " years we labored on that circuit. She was always at prayer meeting and first in everything spiritual. She died after we left Aberdeen and I always felt that what she received from God through our ministry more than paid us for those years on the banks of the Ohio.

Another case was a little girl who was so crippled she never left the poor house in which she lived. Her mother was dead, and her sister and her father worked in Maysville, Kentucky. Thus she was alone all day, but no one ever saw her sad or grouchy or heard her complain. She, herself, learned to read, write and figure, although she had no teacher except what we and others gave her during our short visits. It was my joy to lead her to Jesus fifteen years ago, and, although still shut in her home, and a hopeless cripple, she is well read and a beautiful writer. I send her my missionary letters regularly, and she answers in such a tone of victory that her case alone has more than paid for those busy days and weeks spent on our first circuit at Aberdeen.

The two years we pastored this circuit we had around eight hundred seekers. Many of them became established in grace and to this day support our missionary work.

God helped us hold revivals in each of the four churches on the circuit besides three or four out side, each year.

My burden day and night was to GET THE GOSPEL TO THE ENDS OF THE EARTH. Therefore, I constantly urged the young converts to get into Bible Schools and become missionaries. However, in due time the SPIRIT spoke plainly, asking me TO GO MYSELF. From then until we were off for the West Indies and South America, we left no stone unturned to be off.

We had started to go all the way with our GOD, and these two years in Aberdeen were so owned of GOD, so full of victory in our own lives, and so many precious souls were saved and filled with the Spirit that nothing seemed too hard to undertake for HIM.

Little did we know what was ahead for us as we bade farewell to our first and only circuit in the United States, to go to the regions beyond. However, in the battles the following years we realized the value of being true to GOD and our FELLOW MAN as a GOSPEL PREACHER. Many of the folks who prayed through under our ministry those two years are walking with GOD TO THIS DAY. They have stood by us in prayer and funds until we believe they, with others like them from one end of the land to the other, will share in the rewards of FAITHFUL STEWARDS when the rewards are given.

It is by their faithfulness we now have a missionary work consisting of 265 missionaries and native workers, thousands in the churches and Sunday Schools, and property worth a few hundred thousand dollars.

Little did we dream of ever being Superintendent of such a missionary work when going through the battles and struggles described in this book. And, to be true to what we believe, let us say in closing, "WE WILL HAVE TO GIVE ALL THE GLORY, HONOR AND PRAISE TO OUR GOD WHO SAVED, SANCTIFIED, CALLED AND EQUIPPED US." Also, to the pastor who preached us under conviction, friends who prayed for us when feeling our way into HIS WILL those early days, a wonderful father and mother, a faithful wife, and the many who were patient with us in our first pastorate and since.

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## PART II FIVE REVIVAL SERMONS

### INTRODUCTORY

We believe the success that has been ours in our GOD-CALLED MINISTRY is due to a few simple rules and practices in life.

First, by getting a clear and definite experience. When my mind was once made up to get salvation, I was determined to get all God had for me and to get as far from worldliness as grace would lead. Nothing was left undone in seeking, making restitution, obeying GOD'S WORD and following the leadings of the precious Holy Spirit. No relative or no friend nor foe was ever allowed to influence me not to "Seek first the Kingdom of God and His Righteousness." God knows I tried never to be rude nor unthankful for advice from any. I so loved God and feared Him that no move was made until I believed IT WAS HIS WILL.

Second, by having firm and definite convictions regarding my duty as a minister. When once convinced I was to preach, my attention was immediately turned to finding what God's MESSENGER should preach and what he should do. The thing that was pressed on my mind from the start was TO HATE SIN AND TO GET AS FAR FROM EVEN THE APPEARANCE OF EVIL AS POSSIBLE, SO THAT I MIGHT LEAD OTHERS INTO THE SAME WAY. With this desire fixed in my mind I sang, prayed, preached and wrote for this purpose alone. Every prayer meeting was conducted with this end in view. Every service, pastoral visit, funeral and wedding was conducted with a determination to force back the powers of darkness and to open my people's eyes to GOD'S TRUTH.

On one occasion, after I had preached a funeral sermon to a large crowd, some of the men present were discussing it. They concluded it was not a funeral sermon at all, but a straight evangelistic message. This was just what I wanted it to be; in fact, my favorite text for funerals was, "It is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment." Following a funeral service of this kind, a revival broke out in which a number of souls got right with God, some of whom are now in Heaven while others are mighty Saints, helping now to support the Missionary Work.

God has helped us down through these years TO CRY ALOUD AND SPARE NOT WHEN WARNING THE PEOPLE OF THEIR SINS. Many times, however, when starting to deliver what I knew was GOD'S MESSAGE, my knees would tremble from human timidity. But, having set my face like a flint to go through with God and to be true to Him and the people, unction would be given, w hereupon I would forget everything but the truth my dying congregation must have or be lost.

The following sermons, which have been written at different times, bring out fairly well the type of preaching God has led me into and has blessed, and upon which NOW, even in these days of worldliness and indifference, He is still so graciously PUTTING HIS SEAL.

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### Sermon 1 LEAKS THAT MAKE LEAN THE SOUL

Eighteen years ago, when I was a Methodist pastor, I noticed that the members of my congregation who read novels were the most difficult to get through at an altar -- next to impossible to get saved. It seemed that constant fiction reading ruined them for believing that God is, and that He is a rewarder of them that diligently seek Him.

We were used to hearing God-called, Spirit-filled preachers cry aloud against five and ten cent novels. This kind of reading was classed with the sins of tobacco using and drinking.

Now, beloved, has it changed the novel to charge a dollar for that which used to sell for so much less? Has the soft, love-story fiction stuff become refined, cultured and Christianized these last days? Or have our ministers, their wives, and laymen let this spirit-demoralizing, prayer-blighting, backsliding and money-wasting habit steal God's power from their hearts and His Word from their minds?

It is sad to hear spiritual leaders wasting energy arguing for some great writer who, if he were in a red-hot prayer meeting, would coil like a snake. "A great book except for a few slang words," says the booster. We can get plenty of clean reading which is free from even one slang word or suggestive phrase. Such books and papers do not make soul-winners. They are leaks that slowly but surely make lean the soul, steal away that sweetness and peculiar power which wins souls, casts out demons and heals the sick.

I write all the above to lead up to what I have to say on Revivals of Religion. It may be a relief for evangelists to sweep out of town with laurels a-plenty and flags flying high having had a so-called "landslide." I say relief, but what will happen to the fruit of the meeting when the thunders begin to roll, the winds to blow and clouds shut out the glare, glory and spectacular of those closing days? When the acid test is on how many of those counted either saved or sanctified will find their building on the rock? And how many on the sand?

We realize this is a delicate subject; but the constant increase of worldliness in the Church makes us believe there are more people building on sand than on rock. We are alarmed over the lean souls and non-discerning spirits everywhere. Thus we have been searching for the reason -- for the leaks -- and fiction-reading and daily newspaper addiction are among the most subtle we find.

We will get revivals of lasting results when we ministers, church members and laymen swing clear and clean of this leak, when we work at our job as faithfully as Mr. Edison works at him.

In prayer today I wondered what would happen if every preacher spent as many hours in prayer and ministering God's Word as the Bible requires (Acts 6:4), and gave as much attention to his work as do successful men at the heads of business firms; or if we preachers were as regular even as our children are in their school work. I have watched the children and noted how they have but little time day or evening for play since they are in High School or College. Beloved, every hour spent reading newspapers and foolish fiction is robbing our hearts and minds of just that power and grace we would have gained in the time spent in prevailing prayer and reading solid matter. Not only that, but the fearful fact stares us in the face that many souls will go to hell because we are short of this power which was within our reach but which we lost because of a wasteful and useless habit. Newspapers alone cost from one to five cents daily -- not less than three dollars a year. Have you looked poor and pitied yourself at camp meeting when Holiness books were being sold and then declared that you were unable to buy even a one dollar book after spending several dollars thus?

Mr. Muller declared that his success rested in several things, one of which was dying dead to this old world. The Bible speaks of folk being enemies to God who love the world, and if the majority of papers and fiction are not of the world, what are they of?

We want revivals, but are we willing to pay the price for them? Are we able to get beyond the modern idea of revivals, into the spiritual realm where souls are born into the Kingdom until they "conform not to the world."

Mr. Finney says, "I gave myself to a great deal of prayer. After my evening services I would retire as early as I could, but rose at four o'clock in the morning, because I could no longer sleep, and immediately went to my study and engaged in prayer. And so deeply was my mind exercised, and so absorbed in communion with God that I frequently continued from the time I arose at four o'clock till called to breakfast at eight o'clock.

"My days were spent, as far as I could get time, in searching the Scriptures. I read nothing else all that winter but my Bible, and a great deal of it seemed new to me.

"Again the Lord took me as it were from Genesis to Revelation. He let me see the connection of things, the promises, the threatenings, the prophecies and their fulfillments; and, indeed, the whole Scriptures seemed to me all ablaze with light; and not only light, but it seemed as if God's Word was instinct with the very life of God."

Beloved, do we not all remember right after being converted how God's Word was the dearest thing in life? And was it not so as long as we held to it closely and let nothing steal our time from its sacred pages or from the sweet hour of prayer?

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Sermon 2

THE TRINITY NECESSARY FOR LASTING REVIVALS

Confession -- Restitution -- Separation

The revival in which Charles E. Cowman was converted was called a failure. He was the only convert, and was merely a boy in his teens and not very demonstrative. But that one revival will never die nor stop saving souls; it has spread to Japan, China and other lands; it is gaining momentum daily until sanctified Japanese are returning to Mexico and Southern California as missionaries.

Another revival, with altars lined, and with excitement from start to finish, was heralded as supernatural, indescribable, the greatest in the history of the church. But, in this meeting, seekers left the altar to sit down. No passion for lost souls seized them until soul-saving was their first and last thought daily.

Please do not think I object to the demonstrative revivals. I like them. Religion without demonstration would be like an engine without fire, a meal without food, salt without saltiness, and sugar without sweetness. But, to get lasting results, seekers must not be plucked too green nor pressed too fast at altars. Too often the revival is for the evangelist -- ten days for so much money; for the church -- wonderful specials and great sermons.

We will have God-sent revivals -- revivals turning out preachers, singers, and missionaries -- when we have evangelists who weep, pray and fast for God's message; when we have people in the churches whose motive is pure and whose conduct such that their lives are a constant rebuke to all sin; churches that delight in a night of prayer or a day of fasting; pastors and laymen who search the Word and then line up with it in manners, dress, buying, selling and living.

In eighteen years' ministry I have found three things absolutely necessary for lasting results in revivals. The neglect of any one of them by the evangelist or by the seekers is fatal to spirituality. The first is CONFESSION. "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins. -- I John 1:9. A simple statement but meaning worlds to a seeker. I have wondered who will receive the greater condemnation, the workers who neglect souls on this line, or the souls who ride over and past this faithfulness of God to forgive when they confess.

It is not necessary for us to review history to know that a soul cannot get victory without confession; in fact, there is no hope without confession. "He that covereth his sins shall not prosper; but whoso confesseth and forsaketh them shall have mercy." -- Prov. 28:13. Beloved, it is cruel to fail souls along the confession line. God keeps His "shalls," so let us go in for God's order in revivals. We may not have as many seekers with this kind of revivals, but Heaven will rejoice, and souls will meet us ten thousand years from now and thank us while they play on harps of gold.

If this vital subject is neglected, these same souls may meet us on the sidewalks of hell to curse and gnash on us forever.

Second, RESTITUTION. "And Zaccheus stood, and said unto the Lord. . . If I have taken anything from any man by false accusation, I restore him fourfold. And Jesus said unto him, This day is salvation come to this house." -- Luke 19:8, 9. Jesus surely wasted no time putting His seal on this man's determination to make everything right with his fellow men. It seemed to move His heart at once, and so much so that salvation was given not only to Zaccheus, but it came to his house that very day. God demands a square deal. He orders us to owe no man anything but love.

A revival which is sown with God's Word will have the hearers informed so well that they will know restitution is necessary before they go to the altar. Where restitution is neglected or passed by no lasting work is done. A seeker was pressed to straighten out, mind the Word, etc. After several efforts she went to her father and asked him to forgive her for stealing money from his pocket. She was soon praising God. A blind preacher in a mighty revival asked another minister to come to him. He then said, "Brother, I never have spoken a word against you, but I thought wrongly. Will you please forgive me? Please tell me you forgive me!" About that time they were in one another's arms, and glory filled the church.

John Wesley said that confession hurts no meeting. And, beloved, remember that unconfessed sins never go under the Blood. Bold and brazen testimony means nothing but greater condemnation where confession and restitution are needed and neglected.

Third, SEPARATION. "Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers; for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness?

"And what concord hath Christ with Belial? or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel?

"And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? for ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people.

"Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you.

"And will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty." -- 2 Cor. 6:14-18.

I often wonder what the modern church folk think God means when He commands us to "be not conformed to this world. Does God just mince and play with words? Never! We are bemoaning the fact of this fast and fascinating age -- colors and gaiety until one is dazzled and dizzy in a whirl of flashing display day and night. There is no escape from it any more. It is on platforms, in trains, on sidewalks, up aisles in churches, and in the pulpit and pew. Some say we

are in a different time and age, but has God changed? Has His Word changed? Does God make fads and fashions, or is He the same yesterday, today and forever.?

Samson never lost his power until he laid his head in Delilah's lap. The church or individual never gets power while leaning toward the world, nor ever keeps power after imitating the world. "Come out from among them and be ye separate" is God's order and it must be kept. So long as the seeker fails to separate from the world, whatever he or she may seem to get will not be from God, and will soon evaporate. Refusing to separate even in fads and fashions rapidly makes lean the soul and surely ends in total backsliding.

I have the first real lasting soul-winner to meet who failed to separate from the world, the flesh, and the devil. We have seen some lovely people who were refined, educated and social.

separate -- failed to conform wholly to God's Word in modesty and spirit. Because of their natural talent, soothing voices and harmony, many Christians look at them and wonder what is wrong. These Christians do not have discernment, and do not know that these parasites have but the form of godliness, having denied the power which demands separation..

Shall we not stand by God's Word and prevail in prayer together until a revival breaks out in which the repentance will be so deep that seekers will confess, make restitution and separate from the world, the flesh and the devil?

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Sermon 3  
HELL'S MODERN TRINITY FOR DAMNING SOULS  
Fashion -- Pride -- Disobedience

The old-time low-down theaters displayed dancing girls exposing half their bodies, kissing, mincing and acting out the modern petting party and dances. But it was done in theaters condemned by churches. However, knowing the trend of the depraved and carnal heart, hell's forces pressed the fashion craze, here a little and there a little, until through half-baked officials and church members even the church-going people are more or less aping in dress the dancing girls of those theaters.

A modernly dressed Sunday School teacher goes to visit a home consisting of a good mother, but a sensual husband and sons like the father. Before she enters the house those men have seen her flesh-colored, form-fitting and expensive stockings. Thus, instead of appearing as an angel of light and an example of BIBLE STANDARDS (I Tim. 2:9, '0 and I Peter 3:3), instead of lifting their thoughts heavenward and into the spiritual realm, she has, by exposing half her limbs, pulled them down deeper than ever into the baser, lower and sensual realm of thought. She has half defeated her mission before entering the needy home. She now enters the home to talk salvation to minds made unfit beyond what any innocent girl can imagine. But to make it worse she forgets to constantly pull her short, dark skirt over exposed knees and limbs, and these degenerate, red-blooded men sit across the room fighting to hear the good things she is saying, while her

shifting legs covered with glaring stockings constantly attract their attention, and that all the more so because of the dark dress worn.

What nonsense for any person knowing the nature of mankind to condemn men as weak who are affected as above described? What cruelty to fall to a fashion which creates sex thoughts and adds fire to already inflamed humanity!

The Pittsburgh hospitals receive no girl even in training unless her skirts are not more than eight inches from the floor; and the French government has passed laws against short dresses. Therefore, in the name of decency, where have church members drifted who need reproof on such an unreasonable fashion which has such serious results? How can decent women be caught by so glaring and evil thought-producing fashion?

With GOD'S WORD IN PROPHECY regarding, "FALLING AWAY," "RUNNING TO AND FRO," Lukewarmness, etc., now so plainly fulfilled, should not some one awake and CRY ALOUD AND SPARE NOT? Why fight tobacco and liquor and sanction this lust-producing fad?

Just as wet or dry have been the main issues in this last presidential campaign, so will the modern dress (or undress) be one of the main issues in the now-at-hand world-wide revival. How can a LADY criticize a prophet of God who cries out against this brazen evil, while tens of thousands deplore it in silence and shame?

Carnality never hatched up a thing which caught, gripped and kept more men from full salvation than the secret and oath-bound societies. It seems almost impossible for a man to come out from among them and be separate when once he is entangled. This man-made religion saps manhood of deep spirituality. If the women had not held out, God only knows where we would be today. But now, the soul's enemy has taken advantage of the weakness of womankind (pride) and has caught her in a net which is as hard for her to wiggle out of as the men their oath-bound societies. The enemy could not catch them on tobacco, drink and blasphemy so he used pride to begin developing this immodest fad. However, this step downward is being followed by cigarettes, and the end is not yet.

As soul-blasting as is the secret society, it is not compared in its damaging effects to the fashion of dress. This curse keeps women from deep spirituality as does the secret and oath-bound societies the men. It pulls men down to depths of thought which lead to deeds too vile to write.

Yes, of course there are men who favor the present form-fitting and body-exposing fashions of the fairer sex. So do others tobacco, rum, gambling and robbery. But, thank God, there are still gentlemen on earth ashamed of the modern fashion so boldly ignoring Bible standard.

ALL, I SAY, ALL, for that is what I mean, ALL CHRISTIANS who love GOD LOVE TO KEEP HIS COMMANDMENTS. In fact, a proof of loving GOD is that we DO KEEP HIS WORD. The world will know by dress, as well as by action, those who are GOD'S AND WHO ARE NOT.

God's women adorn themselves in modest apparel. They do not deck out in ornaments, curl hair or use costly array. (1 Tim. 2:9-10 and I Pet. 3:3.)

A Chief of the Fiji Islands, recently traveling in the United States, compared the modern dress to that of his people before they were saved and while they were still cannibals.

This is my first article on this subject. Those who have heard me preach know that I have said but little thereon. No doubt, not enough; but God is pressing me sore to plunge into this latter-day evil and stop its in-rushing before the whole church loses out.

When I read in HIS WORD that HE HATES EVEN A PROUD LOOK I am alarmed. I prefer that we all suffer and die for HIM than allow a spot or wrinkle to remain in our life, habits or dress.

When I see what it means for our young people to get far enough from the world, the flesh and the devil to get an experience and to keep it, my soul cries out to GOD FOR HELP.

Cannot we have a revival today which will put folks where they will be known as CHRISTIANS? An infidel student told one of our preachers that "THE FIRST CHRISTIANS LIVED SEPARATE FROM THE WORLD UNTIL ALL KNEW JUST WHO THEY WERE."

It is an alarming few today who WANT ALL ON THE STREETS OR ON THE TRAINS, IN THE PARLORS, OR IN THE CHURCHES TO KNOW THEY A R E AMONG THOSE WHO HAVE COME OUT FROM AMONG THE UNBELIEVERS. I can endure the wicked, lost in their bobbed hair, short dresses and flashing hose, but shame on all who pose as the temple of the Holy Spirit, and then parade in private and public in a way diametrically opposed to GOD'S WORD.

In a certain school of higher learning, a company of young women were so drunk they could hardly walk. "AWFUL" many say. "They should be arrested," etc., but my dear reader, don't be too hard on the drunk gurlies. Were they not allowed to ride over the rules of the home when babies? Did they not defy father and mother when in their teens? Where did they get the nickels to attend their first movies? For fear of offending touchy neighbors were they not allowed to attend parties where good and bad assembled? Could they be allowed to mingle with the gay and worldly-dressed, then attend the suggestive movie where actors cracked jokes about PARSONS, HORSE-TRADERS, BOOZE and divorce without having an effect on their plastic minds and hearts?

Moonshining and bootlegging is law breaking, so is neglecting the place of true worship. No need for a father to laugh and crack jokes about breaking speed laws and escaping the COP and not expect his offspring to do worse. We reap what we sow only MANY FOLD.

Mothers break GOD'S law of modesty by exposing the calves of their legs when standing and the knee when stooping or crossing them, and the daughters will show the knee when standing or walking and worse when stooping or crossing the legs. Women thus dressed, if blessed prostrate like old-time Methodists or Quakers, would, by their nudity, shame even decent sinners; thus this fad hinders revivals.

Grumble and fuss about "THE PREACHER BEING TOO PLAIN AND OLD-FASHIONED" and the children will believe YOU; but the next scene is a drunken brawl, and the next in hell.

If this soul-damning trinity is stopped or even slackened in its glaring degenerating business it will be by mighty prayer, fasting and OBEDIENCE TO GOD'S WORD AND THE PRACTICE OF THE SAME.

This demon of pride is so deeply rooted it will not come out but by fasting and prayer.

To get a BIBLE revival which will separate individuals from the world, the flesh and the devil WE WILL ALL HAVE TO STOP PITYING THE CARNAL MIND and line up in repentance, confession, restitution, consecration and obedience to the Word.

Seekers are in different classes, but all have to come to the death of the old man, the carnal mind, or sooner or later drift back into SIN AND FINALLY LAND IN HELL.

If half the folks at camps and revivals who get down to help seekers would pray through themselves, we would be getting in better condition or revivals. My heart aches as I see carnality on the pulpit side of the altar, dolled up like a dude or a flapper, trying to instruct seekers.

Preachers and workers who gad about all day, talking, gossiping, playing games, and laughing, cannot get into a spiritual condition by a few moments' prayer just before service. They are in no shape to help a soul.

Only those who PREVAIL DAILY, THOSE WHO PRAY THROUGH, THOSE WHO KNOW GOD WELL ENOUGH TO BE LED BY THE SPIRIT, ARE FIT TO GET NEAR A SOUL HOVERING BETWEEN ETERNAL LIFE AND ETERNAL DEATH AT AN ALTAR OF PRAYER.

We will get a real revival when enough of us get humble enough to eat and dress as becometh godliness, and fast, pray, weep and suffer with Jesus until the majority of the crowd we minister to have no doubt but we are temples of the Holy Spirit.

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#### Sermon 4 OUR LEADERS

I fear that our mistakes often get in the road our progress. No doubt one of the great mistakes the Church is making today is found in would-be leaders -- people who want to be leaders while at the same time they are SCRIPTURALLY UNPREPARED and UNEQUIPPED.

In John Wesley's time he had laymen who were mighty exhorters and pray-ers, but he never thought of making them more than this. A person may be an orator, a fine singer or pray-er, but that is no proof that he or she is fitted for the office of a SPIRITUAL LEADER.

We have all seen persons who would have made good laymen pushed into the pulpit and ruined for life. They would have still been testifying on street corners and praying in Sunday Schools and giving of their means, if over zealous laymen or unthinking preachers had not rode over GOD'S WORD and got them out of Divine order. It is a pity, if not a crime, to spoil a good farmer by letting him take to the pulpit to be a sorry preacher, and to finally become a practical failure. What a mistake for able laymen or successful teachers and professional men to become pulpit dwarfs for life; whereas, if they had continued where they were succeeding, their success would have meant financial help for the Work. Spiritual laymen in their place means thousands of additional souls won for God, both in home and foreign lands. Successful spiritual laymen, with a vision of the need, are a greater help to the Church than unsuccessful, though earnest would-be preachers.

In fact, all we have to do to prove to our readers that all are not, or cannot be, spiritual leaders is to turn to the WORD OF GOD. There is given therein a Scriptural plan for God's leaders. First, certain requirements are demanded of them that are not demanded of others; second, special preparation is expected of them.; and third, there is a general rule under which they should work while delivering God's message.'

First, the requirements demanded of them. The kind of messengers who are to do this work is described in I Tim. 3:2-7. Here is the foundation on which any church must begin, if it succeeds. The title Bishop means A SPIRITUAL OVERSEER OR DIRECTOR. Therefore, any person having the oversight of the spiritual welfare of the souls of men, whether pastor, evangelist, missionary, district leader or general leader, comes under the office of a Bishop.

The first verse of this chapter reads, "This is a true saying, If a man desire the office of a bishop, he desireth a good work." No one doubts that it is good to be able to be a SPIRITUAL LEADER. Glory to God! But GOD SURELY MAKES IT CLEAR IN THE FOLLOWING VERSES THAT HE HAS A STANDARD FOR SUCH LEADERS.

One demand alone in God's requirements of leaders, given in this chapter, will CULL OUT numbers now posing as teachers and preachers. "One that ruleth well his own house, having his children in subjection with all gravity; (For if a man know not how to rule his own house, how shall he take care of the church of God?)" But some one says, "He prayed so well and could preach like a house afire, so we engaged him." Ah, right there is the trouble today. We have made the mistake of putting in as leaders those who do not measure up to Scriptural requirements. We have sacrificed GOD'S WORD AND COMMAND instead of obeying it. And, as a result, but few of the flock have real Christian discipline in their homes. No doubt ninety per cent of the LACK OF REVERENCE among the young people, for their Christian parents and for the House of God, is traceable to the example set by leaders who fail to measure up to the Word. With hardly a single exception, the truth is that THE PEOPLE WILL RISE NO HIGHER THAN THEIR LEADERS.

"Not a novice." God forbids unprepared Christians becoming leaders lest they be lifted up with pride and fall into the condemnation of the devil, and be lost.

It is often noticeable how young and inexperienced leaders, full of zeal and physical strength, sway and persuade older people. Especially do they wield an influence over older people who have lost control over their own children and have let them get the rule of the home, and in many cases completely subject father's and mothers will to theirs.

There is something wrong when sheep are moping and restless and when lambs are dying. But a novice does not know, as a rule, what the trouble is. He is likely, when acting as shepherd of such sheep, to be so foolish as to begin clubbing the drooping sheep to make them eat and whipping the lambs to make them play. Such sheep need some salt or nux vomica, maybe, but not a dose of pepper. They need to be led to green pastures and still waters. Other flocks, that are fat and woolly, need to be sheared and butchered.

God's leaders should be past the novice stage. They should be able to preach a skinning sermon, when it is needed; moreover, they should know **WHEN SUCH A SERMON IS NEEDED**. They should know how to indoctrinate their flock and how to keep them interested and loving to come to church. Such leaders do not throw boulders into the quiet stream about the time the fish begin nibbling. They are fishers of men and not drivers of goats. They lead and feed the sheep and the lambs, and at the same time keep appetizing bait out for sinners.

I will not go over the rest of these five verses, but I ask that you will please take time to meditate and pray with them before you.

Second, the special preparation expected of these leaders. It has been hurled out from the pulpit to the pew, by some stentorian-voiced orators, that all God-called men have to do is to open their mouths and God will fill them; cut loose and go, cry aloud and spare not, dig, slash and hit sin between the eyes. No doubt God's messengers should be bold and fearless in denouncing sin; but is that all they have to do? According to the Word there is something else. "Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the **WORD OF TRUTH**." Enough is said in this one verse about the preparation of these messengers to prove to the world that God expects all who are called to be leaders to prepare. Too many are put to shame because they fail to study the Word. Saints, too, have been embarrassed by seeing some overzealous youth, while trying to drive home his ideas, go through such physical contortions in the pulpit as to cause his clothes to become unbecomingly twisted and loosened. At the same time these saints kept quiet, prayed and endured because of the love of God in their hearts, which is longsuffering and kind. Zeal is good and sanctioned by God's Word, but for the purpose of assisting **KNOWLEDGE** and **TRUTH**, and not of substituting them.

For years I have traveled over the land, visiting and laboring in churches, missions and camps, and have noticed everywhere that most of the preachers who are holding large crowds year in and year out, and who are bringing things to pass for God, are men well trained, taught and drilled. They have studied humanity from every point of view, and are good all-round men. They have through study and experience become able teachers and preachers.

Some who dread the grind of prayer and study may use as argument, the poor and unlearned fishermen. Such we will refer to Paul and to the WORD OF GOD above given. God used in those days the men who would and could be used, and He is doing the same today. But would it not be better, instead of taking forty years to accomplish our mission, because we are unprepared, to OBEY GOD'S WORD by spending the years that are necessary in school under older preachers, as John Wesley's workers did, and thus be able to do ten times as much in the same forty years? In other words, save the present loss of ninety per cent of our time.

Last, the rule under which God's spiritual leaders are to work. This is made clear in Acts. the sixth chapter. It seems that away back in those days there was murmuring because the ministers did not feed the widows and the orphans and run farms for the poor. But the answer to such complaints is surely clear in the second, third and fourth verses of this chapter. "Then the twelve called the multitude of the disciples unto them, and said, It is not reason that we should leave the word of God, and serve tables. Wherefore, brethren, look ye out among you seven men of honest report, full of the Holy Ghost and wisdom, whom we may appoint over this business. But we will give ourselves continually to prayer, and to the ministry of the word."

As Holiness people, we have condemned church suppers and every form of commercialism in the church for making money, and at the same time EVERY DEPARTMENT OF GOD'S WORK IS SACRIFICING GOD-CALLED PREACHERS FOR WORK THE LAYMEN SHOULD BE DOING.

The above Bible system carried out will give our ministers so much more time for study and prayer that they will become spiritual dynamos; and thus, being better equipped in every way, their influence will be of such persuasive power that all classes, from the most humble laymen to people of the highest professions, will be caught in the Gospel net.

Where would our Pilgrim Holiness Church be today if every real preacher, called of God and well prepared for this sacred and high calling, were giving one hundred per cent of his or her time "to prayer and to the ministry of the word?"

No wonder God demands such a strenuous schooling of HIS SHEPHERDS. He knows the thorns and burrs in the pathway of His sheep, also the wolves to tear their flesh and the dogs to worry. He knows the green, sweet leaves of the poison laurel that grows along the singing streams, the loose boulders along the cliffs and the slippery places above the falls. He knows how easily lambs are led astray and how often sheep are deceived and lost. Therefore, He laid down rules for all shepherds or spiritual leaders; and if we as Holiness people will settle down to GOD'S WORD along this line, we will have accomplished one of the greatest victories of our age. We will have then built more nearly according to the Heavenly pattern and program. The result will be that people in our cities, villages and rural districts will be stirred and hungry for salvation. Instead of only a few leaders and congregations of this kind here and there they will be everywhere. GOD'S WORD CANNOT FAIL. "The word of God increased; and the number of the disciples multiplied" -- it always does when the WORD OF GOD IS PREACHED.

Therefore, in choosing our leaders let us make sure they measure up to I Tim. 3:2-7 and 2 Tim. 2 15. Then let us turn to our laymen and choose from them deacons who are "of honest

report, full of the Holy Ghost and wisdom" to look after the business of the Church, so the ministers can give ALL THEIR TIME "to prayer, and to the ministry of the word."

Earnest prayer among God's people is bringing SOME results. Thank God for it! But WE MUST STUDY THE WORD AND OBEY IT as well as pray. Is it not a fact, too, that some prayers are for the purpose of trying to make God see as we see -- trying to persuade God to make our plan work, instead of our saying, "Thy will be done?" If we want to see what is possible and what is reasonable to see in the way of a genuine revival among God's children and in Holy Ghost conviction upon sinners, we must begin to OBEY GOD'S WORD in these matters and REALLY GET INTO HIS PROGRAM FOR HIS CHURCH.

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## Sermon 5 THE SPIRIT-FILLED LIFE

We will never see folks getting filled with the Holy Spirit until they are saved from sin and living a joyous, victorious and free-from-the-world life, until they have come out from among them and become living epistles read and known of all men. It is cruel for folks to think that they can dress, eat, and live so much like the world that they will not be known as Christians until they are sanctified. A child of God is different from the world, and so much so that he lives as holy as he will after receiving this mighty baptism with the Holy Spirit. In fact, the only hope of receiving this baptism is in saying an everlasting good-bye to the world with all its charms however fascinating. This fullness of the Spirit is given only to those who already have the Spirit with them constantly in the experience of Regeneration. John 14:16, 17 reads, "And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever; even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye know him; for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you." What a farce to tell a soul to seek this baptism to get peace with God! Is that what the Scripture says? No, but it does say, "Therefore being justified (not sanctified) by faith, we have peace with God." -- Rom. 5:1. A seeker who repents of his sins, makes confession and restitution, and separates from this old world with all its charms, and is justified by faith has just exactly what God's Word herein states: Peace with God.

Some one says, "I just can't keep from talking about folks. I can't love folks who cross me." There is no need to seek Holiness with a mind, heart and tongue running rampant. I John 3:9 says, "Whosoever is born of God (not yet sanctified, just born of God) doth not commit sin." James says in the first chapter and 26th verse, "If any man among you seem to be religious, and bridleth not his tongue, but deceiveth his own heart, this man's religion is vain." We cannot measure ourselves by ourselves or by the opinions of others, however gifted or refined, but we must line up by the Word of God.

I have seen great sermons circumscribed and all but ruined by the flashily-dressed minister who looked far more like a dude than even the average sensible business man. Also, lovely solos and duets fail to accomplish results desired, because the singers defy God's Word, which declares plainly, in Peter and Timothy especially, that immodesty in dress and disfiguring hairdressing are forbidden, and that even a proud look is hated, to the degree of being an abomination in God's

eyes. (See Proverbs 6:16,17.) A soul born into the Kingdom lives above sin and studies to show himself "approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth." He will study to please God in every detail of life whether eating, sleeping or preaching; in fact, he will do all for the glory of God, and thus he is a subject qualified for the mighty baptism with the Spirit.

"I just can't love him," some one may say. Think of a person seeking the Second Blessing with hatred in the heart in face of the plain Bible statement in I John 3:14, "We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren." Notice this plainly states that one evidence of eternal life in the heart is love for the brethren -- love for the yellow, red, brown, black, and white brethren; love for them regardless of their church relation, their caste, their work, their peculiarities, or their strange sermons and prayers; love even for those who rebuke us.

In a recent revival fourteen or fifteen students went to a saintly old teacher who had been praying for them while they slept, and whose wife had been fasting for them while she cooked their meals, and asked the old gentleman to forgive them. They had gotten out of fix at him because he had rebuked them for their worldly dressing. We wondered what they would have done if Jesus had come and talked to them as He did to some of the folks in His day. He called those folks thieves right in the house of prayer. The very act of Regeneration which changes from death to life places the soul where it loves the brethren. Some folks try to tell us that the Spirit is not with us in the first work of grace; but the fact is, it is He who, by our side, leads us into His Baptism or filling. This is plainly stated in the Scripture before used in this article (John 14:16,17). The world cannot receive Him in His fullness because they do not see Him. But He is with the child of God and shall be in him. A still more forceful Scripture declares, "For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God." -- Rom. 8:14. Spirit led believers belong to God's kingdom as well as Spirit-filled believers. However, being led by the Spirit and protected by His constant presence is not sufficient to measure up to the Scripture, nor to satisfy the regenerate heart very long. That restless thing called the old man, original sin, carnality, will sooner or later try to usurp leadership and rulership and again occupy the heart's throne. Thus it has been ever since the fall, this same root of bitterness left in the heart very long after Regeneration will try to lead the babe in Christ astray. It is a case of getting rid of this evil tendency, or it may get rid of our spirituality.

God's Word plainly commands us to be filled with the Spirit. In the first chapter of Luke we read that John had this filling from his birth, also that Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Ghost, and that Zacharias being filled with the Holy Ghost prophesied declaring the Lord had visited and redeemed his people. There are many other instances in the Bible and history which tell of individuals, churches and whole districts being shaken by mighty revivals in which the well-saved believers were filled with the Holy Ghost. Such revivals of Spirit-filling have always been followed by the spread of evangelism, and by the definite call of some into the ministry.

Finney says:

1. If we are not filled with the Spirit, our guilt amounts to disobedience to God.
2. It amounts to all the good we might do, if we had the Spirit fully.

3. Our guilt is further measured by all the evil in consequence of not having the Spirit fully.

Sanctification, or the Spirit's baptism, is the padlock to keep Divine love in the heart, the seal to keep infectious germs from the heart it preserves. It is our privilege not only to have the Holy Spirit with us, but to have Him dwelling in our hearts. Romans 8:11 says that this same Spirit which raised up Jesus from the dead will dwell in our mortal bodies and quicken them when tired, heal them when sick, and raise them in the resurrection. Do you think I can treat lightly a Guest with all this power when He offers to me much benefits?

There is little trouble, if any, in getting folks into this baptism when they are right with God. Jesus declared, "Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled." To be filled with the Spirit the seeker must be in a blessed state of grace. Have you ever noticed how many dejected, defeated, disarmed and melancholy folks come forward seeking Holiness? Whereas, only those blessed and enjoying victory in grace can possibly present themselves living sacrifices. Sinners and backsliders are dead in trespasses and sins, while those who are born again have a living sacrifice to offer.

One of the best evidences of what is in the heart is what a person talks about. Many testify that they are sanctified, others that they are filled with the Spirit, and others of a power they received. This and much more may be talked about and witnessed to after the Spirit comes, but regardless of all such witnessing there will still be a better and surer witnessing resulting from the mighty baptism. The Bible gives a sure rule regarding the conduct of the Spirit-filled. In Acts 1:8 we read: "But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth." Here are two of God's shalls, and God keeps His word. God herein declares that the person receiving His Spirit shall become a witness. Whatever this power is, or is not, it makes the possessor a witness. It makes the possessor do something at home, in the next county, the next country -- clear to the ends of the world. It makes missionaries who witness everywhere.

Now, what is their message? Of what are they to witness? We have heard folks from pulpit and pew declare how they were sanctified, filled with the Spirit or power, but much of their witnessing was exposing a weaker brother or sister. Any witnessing or praying in a manner which hits at or exposes some one in a way that lets most of the hearers know just who is meant is not witnessing in the Spirit at all. This is one of the lowest and most cruel forms of gossip. In Acts 5:29-32 we have a good picture of what will be the burden of the message of those who are Spirit-filled. Here we read: "Then Peter and the other apostles answered and said, We ought to obey God rather than men. The God of our fathers raised up Jesus, whom ye slew and hanged on a tree. Him hath God exalted with his right hand to be a Prince and a Savior, for to give repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sins. And we are his witnesses of these things; and so is also the Holy Ghost, whom God hath given to them that obey him." Here is a clear declaration of that to which Spirit-filled saints will bear witness. They will talk of Jesus. They will be filled with His history, His love, and will declare these things so powerfully that folks will be cut to the heart. Although the apostles aroused the enemies of the Gospel until it brought blows to their backs and commands from government officials to speak no more in the name of Jesus, they went cheerfully on rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer shame for His name.

Today we are far from being Spirit-filled saints -- we are filled with talk about getting prestige, guarding our reputation, looking out for number one, etc., etc. We want the revival which pays best -- but those men filled with God went daily into the temple, and in every house they ceased not to teach and preach Jesus Christ. The above-mentioned men were declaring Jesus, and the Scripture quoted above states clearly that they were witnesses of what Jesus had done, and so is also the Holy Ghost.

There will be something happening where Spirit-filled folks neglect not the assembling of themselves together, exhorting one another, praying and testifying of the things given by God. Where the Spirit is there is life, energy and power. If we are drifting into a form of godliness without any power, let us fall to our knees and get back to God.

Spirit-filled folks will gladly acknowledge God in all their ways and then be content in doing God's will, regardless of the physical suffering or isolation from home and friends.

It is all right for the world to do strange things, such as dancing continually for one hundred hours, standing on the spire of a tall building for twenty-four hours, climbing the outside wall of a skyscraper while thousands cheer and pay, and some even catch cold and die from exposure. Such things are lauded by daily papers as heroic, mighty endurance, etc., while it is fanatical for a saint to pray all night, fast a meal now and then, stand in a train and declare Jesus, pray in a restaurant, shout in a bus or paint Scripture on an automobile. The world can use the prettiest pictures of women to advertise tobacco, movies or rum, but the saints must do all their advertising of truth in the church, and all that in one hour on Sunday morning. What a farce!

I want to declare right here that I fear too many of us know very little about the Spirit-filled life. When we who profess Full Salvation really are filled with the Holy Spirit and possess the mind of Christ, we will always be on the job in reading God's Word, praying everywhere and witnessing with such unction that hell will be stirred and revivals will break out. The only reason that there are not revivals everywhere is that Spirit-filled folks are not everywhere. When folks possess and practice all God's Word teaches regarding the Christian life, there will be souls getting under conviction and crying, "What must I do to be saved?"

God is the same yesterday, today and forever. Carnality is the same and, though attacks are made differently, God still honors His Word and keeps His shalls. So let us go in for the Spirit-filled life and a revival among preachers and laymen which will be world-wide. Amen!

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THE END